

THE WINDMILL



SICOG Busy With FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants

Most years, the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) are among the most popular. After a few years of minimal submissions, SICOG this year helped ten area fire departments submit twelve applications. Prescott and Clearfield led the way with two applications – one for a vehicle and one for equipment. The following departments submitted one application each: Bridgewater, Corning, Dexter, Fontanelle, Lamoni, Leon, Lorimor, and Osceola.

The total amount requested was \$876,481.19. SICOG worked hard with each applicant to help them identify and seek the kinds and quantities of each item to ensure each application would be most competitive. We anticipate award announcements will begin in July and end in September.

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SICOG Staff

Timothy Ostroski	Executive Director
Judy Brimm	Finance Director
Jeremy Rounds	Regional Planner
Joel Lamb	Regional Planner
Stu Burzette	Transportation/Regional Planner
Nancy Groth	Office Manager

Contact Us

Southern Iowa Council of Governments
101 E. Montgomery Street
Creston, Iowa 50801-2406
Phone: 641.782.8491
Fax: 641.782.8492
Email: sicog@sicog.com
Internet: www.sicog.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SICOG
To email individual staff, use last name@sicog.com



A View From the First Tee



I am sure that you are mostly in overload from the number of emails and newscasts that you receive every day. So, I will not discuss Covid-19 in my “A View From the First Tee.” But please know that we are working for our members and continue to complete applications and projects everyday. Just a reminder that the seven (7) water and sewer and DTRs are progressing, the seven (7) CDBG Housing grants are continuing, comprehensive plans are being written and new CDBG housing/water and sewer/DTRs/and other projects are moving forward.

On March 25, 2020, the SICOG’s Board of Directors held its 46th annual meeting. The meeting was the start of our 47th year. Yes, it was 47 years ago on September 12, 1973, that the Southern Iowa Planning Agency incorporated. It has been a rewarding history with over \$166,000,000 dollars being brought into the area through the grantsmanship and technical assistance this agency has provided to our members.



*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



I would like to thank the members of the SICOG County Boards, the SICOG Project Board and the SICOG Executive Board for all of their hard work, dedication and commitment to this area over the past year. At our annual meeting, the election of officers was delayed until May. I will update you after the election of officers is complete.



As many of you are aware, we continue our “Partnership Program.” This is a program to expand our services and work efforts to our member area. Elsewhere in this newsletter, is a page identifying our current partners. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the individual organizations and financial institutions that have joined the “Partnership Program 2020.”

Finally, we have completed two documents that you may be interested in viewing. The first is the “Annual Report 2019” and the second is “CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.” These can be found on our web site <http://www.sicog.com/publications/>

I would highly recommend reading the rest of this newsletter to explore the grant opportunities and how they may be of benefit to your community.




 A banner image showing a rural street scene with houses and trees, overlaid with a green tint. The text "RURAL HOUSING ASSESSMENT GRANT PROGRAM" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center.

RURAL HOUSING ASSESSMENT GRANT PROGRAM

New Program Opportunity: IEDA Rural Housing Assessment Grant Program

SICOG is looking to partner with communities in applying for the new Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Rural Housing Assessment Grant program. This grant supports housing maintenance and development by ensuring the appropriate ordinances, development codes and incentives are in place. As always, SICOG will assist at no cost, communities with writing the grant, participate in the assessment and provide follow up services in the identified areas of need. This \$10,000 grant requires a \$5,000 community match. Contact SICOG's Jeremy Rounds for more information.

Complete the 2020 Census Today – Shape Your Future!


 The logo for the 2020 United States Census, featuring the text "United States" in a small font above "Census" in a large, bold font, with "2020" below it, all in white on a dark blue background.

United States[®]
Census
2020

Health clinics. Fire departments. Even roads and highways. The census can shape many different aspects of your community. The form is easy and takes just minutes to complete. **SPREAD THE WORD!**

<https://my2020census.gov/>

Healthiest State Initiative

Many of us are spending more time at home and outside of our usual routines of going to work, school or recreation facilities. While we are adjusting to this temporary “new normal,” our health and wellness doesn't have to suffer! It is more important than ever to prioritize your physical, mental and emotional health during this unprecedented time. **The Healthiest State Initiative has many suggestions and resources for working from home, eating well, moving more and feeling better!**

Visit their website for helpful ideas:

<http://www.iowahealthieststate.com/resources/individuals/5210/work-from-home-wellness/>



Events Calendar

May 5
SICOG Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m.

May 12, 2020
RPA / 14 ATURA Policy Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m., Adams County

June 2
SICOG Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 p.m.





RPA 14/ATURA
Transportation Planning Affiliation

ATURA Transportation Planning

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

The RPA-14/ATURA Draft FY 2021 Public Participation Plan (PPP) is now available for public review and comment: <https://tinyurl.com/ATURA-FY21-PPP> The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide to public participation strategies regarding RPA-14 work in the public transportation systems of Adair, Adams, Ringgold, Taylor and Union Counties. There will also be a public hearing regarding the adoption of the Public Participation Plan by the ATURA Policy Board on May 12th, 2020 in Adams County (exact place TBD) around 1:00 pm. Please direct all comments and questions to Stu Burzette by email burzette@sicog.com or by phone 641-782-8491 by May 5th, 2020. Thank you.



IRDC Power of Connection Community Grant Program

ITC Midwest and the Iowa Rural Development Council (IRDC) have launched the Power of Connection Community Grant Program to facilitate economic development in rural communities across Iowa. The program's objectives are to provide technical assistance and the potential for grant funding to rural communities seeking to build capacity, drive new projects, expand leadership opportunities and plan strategically.

This innovative economic development program is designed to pair rural communities seeking assistance with IRDC resource teams. Those teams drive both community conversations and solution development for problems or projects. Power of Connection grant dollars cannot be used for construction, real estate or equipment.

For more information about program details, contact your SICOG office or IRDC Executive Director Bill Menner at: director@iowardc.org or 641-990-4757.

2020 SICOG Partnerships

PLATINUM (\$2,500)

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

DIAMOND (\$1,500)

- 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 of Ankeny
- Michael Foods of Lenox
- North Stone Apartments & Corkrean Construction of Winterset
- PCSB Bank in Clarinda, Corning, Creston, Lenox & Mount Ayr
- Southwest Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative of Corning, Mount Ayr, & Stanton

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
- Ringgold County Development Corporation
- Saylor Realty, LLC of Osceola
- Snyder & Associates, Inc. of Ankeny and Atlantic
- Southwestern Community College
- State Bank of Brooks
- TS Bank of Corning
- Union State Bank of Greenfield
- Union State Bank of Winterset

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Wellmark Foundation Small MATCH Grants

The Wellmark Foundation will soon open the 2020 Small MATCH grants. These grants fund small to medium sized projects, such as:

- ❖ Edible orchards;
- ❖ Community gardens and greenhouses;
- ❖ Food preparation methods;
- ❖ Farm/field/garden-to-table projects, including education;
- ❖ Policies or councils working to create access to healthy foods and nutrition education;
- ❖ Public playground structures and spaces;
- ❖ Outdoor recreation and sport courts or fields;
- ❖ Public swimming pools, splash pads, aquatic centers;
- ❖ Trails, including links, spurs and connectors;
- ❖ Safe Routes to School plans and infrastructure;
- ❖ Accessible and safe walking paths or routes;
- ❖ Share-the-road plans and infrastructure; and
- ❖ Bike-share program infrastructure.



This list is not exhaustive. Applicants can be local governments and 501c3 nonprofits. The Small MATCH Grant is up to \$25,000 and is due in early June. Contact SICOG for assistance with your project by early May.



Community Attraction and Tourism Grant On Hold



Enhance Iowa provides Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) funds to assist projects that provide recreational, cultural, entertainment, and educational attractions. The next application deadlines is May 15, 2020. However, this funding is tentative only and the deadline may be moved back, due to the suspension of the legislative session. The General Assembly did not yet approve a budget for next year, so the CAT funding is not yet assured.

In the meantime, local governments and non-profits can move forward with applications to be submitted when the next funding round is available. SICOG is ready to assist with this last-in funding program.

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 in submitting the best possible applications for these funds. **There are many other sources, so if you have a project, please contact us.**

Source/Program	Funding Uses	SICOG Due Date
AARP Livable Communities Community Challenge	Grants for temporary demonstrations, permanent improvements, and innovative programming that make an area more livable. (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits)	April 15
USDA Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant	Awarded to providers of assistance to communities and organizations working on USDA Community Facility projects. (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits)	April 15
Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines Affordable Housing Program	Housing subsidies, development, and rehabilitation for owners and renters. (Eligible: local governments and nonprofits in partnership with FHLB member banks)	April 15
BUILD Grant	Major transportation projects that transform communities, such as “complete streets,” major bridge improvements, and similar projects. (Eligible: local governments)	April 15
2020 CDBG Programs	This includes all the Community Development Block Grant programs except the Water/Sewer Fund, which is quarterly. CDBG also funds downtown façade grants, housing grants, community facilities grants, and storm water grants. (Eligible: local governments)	April 15
USDA Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI)	Grants from \$50,000 to \$250,000 to develop the capacity and ability of community-based housing and community development organizations and low-income communities to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or economic development in rural areas (Eligible: public, non-profit, and certain private organizations that serve as an intermediary)	April 15 (webinar on April 7)
USDA Housing Preservation Grants	Grants for the preservation/rehabilitation of housing – both owner and rental (Eligible: local governments and non-profit organizations)	April 15
Wellmark Foundation Small MATCH Grant	Grant funds for wellness, fitness, recreation, and access to healthy foods. Funds programs and capital projects that improve health and wellness. (Eligible: local governments and nonprofits)	May 1 (see article)
Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)	Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects, such as museums, libraries, swimming pools, trails, large recreational areas, amphitheaters, etc. (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits, some private entities)	May 1 (see article – funding is tentative)
USDA Households Water Well Grant Program	Funds grants to organizations that create RLFs to lend to private property owners who need to build wells on farms and other areas where potable water is unavailable. (Eligible: non-profits)	May 1 (tentative)
CDBG Water and Sewer Program	Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc. (Eligible: local governments)	May 15 (next quarterly round)
IDNR Solid Waste Alternatives Program	Program to encourage landfill alternatives – recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc. (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	May 15
Iowa West Foundation	Community development, economic development, education, and human needs projects (Eligible: local governments and nonprofits serving Adams and Taylor Counties)	July 1
REAP Parks and Open Spaces Program	Funding with minimal matching requirements for parks, recreational development, conservation, and open space projects (Eligible: local governments, conservation boards)	July 1
RISE Local Development Program	Funding to provide road/street access to expand business parks and development areas (Eligible: local governments)	July 1
Alliant Hometown Safety Grants	Grants up to \$2,000 to purchase emergency equipment, such as Jaws of Life, AEDs I public buildings, thermal imaging cameras, and more (Eligible: response agencies and property owners served by Alliant Energy)	July 15
Alliant Energy Foundation Community Grants Program	Grants for playgrounds, health and wellness projects, public safety, education, culture and arts, and other local needs (Eligible: local governments and non-profits in communities served by Alliant Energy)	July 15
ITC/ IRDC "Power of Connection" Community Grant Program	Grants up to \$5,000 for capacity building, strategic planning, studies or assessments for a variety of community programs and issues (Eligibility: rural communities)	Ongoing (see article)
Highway Safety Improvement	Provides grants for low-cost, systematic safety improvements in the \$10,000/mile range, focusing on lane departure crashes. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing
Small Town Sign Replacement Program	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
Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP)	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 only construction, but also operations. If your community has a problem that outside funding might address, please contact your SICOG office. We would be glad to help and can attend a local meeting at no cost to our members discuss the project or idea.

From the Planner's Desk...

Free Community Data and Tools

Understanding our communities better can help us to prepare for development and serve our residents more effectively. A FREE on-line data tool, called StatsAmerica, is available with the original purpose of providing actionable data for economic developers to use in site requests, developing metrics, grant writing and strategic planning. The site is located at <http://www.statsamerica.org/>

Unlike many platforms, this data includes smaller communities. Data/Tools are available in 21 apps that come in a variety of forms including: calculations, graphs, comparisons of time or geography, time series, a guide for long term growth, and maps. Much of the data can be customized to areas that you want to analyze.

Apps specific to economic development feature include: cluster mapping by industry, labor market information and commuting data (including customized regions), and workforce indicators.

The coordinator of the site (Indiana Business Research Center) obtains thousands of data items from hundreds of data sets from dozens of federal and state sources, along with some commercial, and private source data. These items are provided to us at no cost because of the financial support provided to the IBRC by the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

We hope to be able to use this kind of information in the future for our own planning purposes.

Thoughts on Planning a Local Housing Program

All of the focus on isolation and staying at home as much as possible leads me to thinking about housing. Is our housing decent, safe, and efficient?

SICOG often places articles in The Windmill about housing grants and it seems like few of our members and partners contact us to apply for these funds. Therefore, other regions are receiving those grants. We would argue that the need here is greater than almost anywhere. Unfortunately, the only way we will attract developers of the housing we need is to be aggressive. This means pursue housing development actively rather than just say we have some incentives. We must pursue development, not just let it happen. However, housing development can be intimidating, in part because we spend time and money on a housing study but then are not sure where or how to start. We cannot get caught up in "paralysis by analysis." Rather, we must actively take some concrete steps and a grant program offers this opportunity. Because housing is such an issue, State and Federal agencies, as well as non-profit and corporate sources, are likely to award a grant for a thoughtful housing effort, even if the concept is non-traditional. Finally, it must be said that today's housing grants are not solely targeted to low-income housing. Government agencies recognize the need for workforce-style housing or quality but affordable and energy-efficient housing that you would be proud to have in your community.

SICOG is hopeful we can sit down with our communities and draw up some concrete steps to help you implement your housing studies and/or take your limited resources and mold them into a project that can make a physical difference in your housing stock when combined with grant funds.

Southern Iowa Council of Governments Executive Board

Dan Christensen	Decatur County	Chairperson
John Twombly	Adair County	Vice-Chairperson
Karen Zabel	City of Lenox Representing Taylor County	Secretary
Ron Riley	Union County	Treasurer
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Doug Davidson	Private Sector Representative	
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William Trickey	Private Sector Representative	
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.

SOUTHERN IOWA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

101 E. Montgomery Street
Creston, IA 50801-2406