

THE WINDMILL

COVID-19 Expense Reimbursement:

The September 15 deadline is rapidly approaching, all cities have an allocation of CARES Act dollars.

[Applying for Reimbursement from the Local Government Relief Fund](#)

•All cities have an allocation for reimbursement and are encouraged to apply. The application deadline is quickly approaching. All cities with public safety payroll expenses should apply.

•**STEP 1:** Go to: <https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/pages/local-reimbursement>

- Read all information on the page
- Download:
 - [RFR Cost Summary Workbook](#)
 - [FAQ](#)

•**STEP 2:** Read all instructions in the FAQ's and then the Workbook

•**STEP 3:** Fill the Workbook out in its entirety and gather supporting documentation** start by calculating 25% of your public safety payroll costs for the applicable time period

•**STEP 4:** Fill out the [Intake Application](#) and upload the Workbook with all supporting documents

•**STEP 5:** Submit your Intake Application, Workbook and all supporting documentation.

** Although local government budgets were approved prior to March 27, local governments may presume that 25% of payroll costs for public safety employees are payments for services substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

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A View From the First Tee



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

First off, I would like to congratulate Madison County. They have been awarded \$450,000 in Community Attraction and Tourism Grant funds from the Enhance Iowa Board. The funds will be used for the County’s planned Nature Center. The Madison County Conservation Board led the project. SICOG staff prepared the successful grant application

In response to continued COVID-19 virus mitigation, SICOG has been awarded funds (\$1.4 million) to loan to all businesses that have been affected. The program offers a 0% loan of up to \$350,000 (maximum of \$50,000 per job retained or created) with no payments due until July 1, 2022. The terms of the loans are generally dependent on what is being financed. The funding cannot duplicate recovery funding from other agencies. The funding may be used for working capital, purchase of machinery and equipment, and/or purchase of real property. The federal funding is being provided through the Economic Development Administration (EDA). However, three rules are being excluded including: minimum interest rate, a ‘turn down’ letter from a bank, and a percentage of funds required to be contributed to the project by the business owner. Additionally, SICOG will waive the “loan-processing fee of 1.5%. To apply, businesses should contact their local Economic Development Group for assistance with the application process. Approval of the SICOG Board of Directors is required for all loans. Any questions may be directed to Timothy Ostroski

Speaking of “What have we done for you lately”? So far this fiscal year, your staff has placed on the COMPLETED PROJECT spread sheet (as of June 1) 117 separate and distinct projects ranging from grants to planning projects. This year, SICOG set a goal of assisting cities and counties in receiving \$2 million in grant dollars. As of September 1, the total is in excess of \$3.2 million. And there are still 4 months left in the year.

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".

I would highly recommend reading the rest of this newsletter.





RPA 14/ATURA
Transportation Planning Affiliation

ATURA Transportation Planning

RPA-14/ATURA is beginning the process of updating its Long-Range Transportation Plan. This plan will be the overarching guide to the RPAs (Regional Planning Affiliation) work regarding the regions transportation network. This includes all aspects of transportation including streets, sidewalks, trails, rail, multi-modal and inter-modal facilities, safety, storm water, and many other pervasive aspects of our daily lives. The plan, in accordance with Iowa DOT guidance, will have a 20-year horizon date and will be updated again in 2026.

In the near future, RPA-14/ATURA staff will be recruiting stakeholders and soliciting public input in order to create the most locally informed plan possible. If you are interested in playing an important role in this planning process or if you have any questions about the agency and its LRTP, please contact Stu Burzette (burzette@sicog.com or 641-782-8491).



2020 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
- 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
- Tyler Insurance Services of Creston & Mount Ayr
- 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
- 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 County Development Association
- Union State Bank of Greenfield
- Union State Bank of Winterset

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

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 let us know.

| Source/Program | Funding Uses | SICOG Due Date |
|--|---|---|
| Empowering Adair County Foundation | Projects focused on the following priorities in Adair County: tourism and beautification, public services, economic well-being, recreation, arts, culture, and entertainment. (Eligible: Adair County entities, including local governments) | September 20 |
| Iowa Tourism Grants | Grants from \$2,500 to \$5,000 to promote tourism in Iowa by funding tourism-related marketing initiatives, meetings and events that benefit both local economies and the state's economy. (Eligible: any tourism-related entity located in Iowa, including local governments, nonprofits, and regional agencies) | September 20 |
| Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants | IDNR small grants for the purchase of wildland firefighting equipment, such as hoses, slide-in units, portable tanks and pumps, PPE, and communications equipment. (Eligible: Fire departments) | October 1 (if funds available) |
| Historic Preservation Tax Credit - Large Projects | Offers tax credits to developers who sensitively rehabilitate historic buildings to offer them new life. Iowa offers this tax credit program to ensure character-defining features and spaces of buildings are retained to help create distinct and vibrant communities (Eligible: eligible taxpayer, who owns or leases eligible property) | October 1 |
| Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Grant | The RHRA program provides assistance to bring in a team from Iowa State University Extension office to lead the community through the process of determining readiness for housing activities and providing guidance in improving readiness. | October 1 |
| Iowa West Foundation | Community development, economic development, education, and human needs projects (Eligible: local governments and nonprofits serving Adams and Taylor Counties) | October 1 |
| Branching Out | Tree planting projects in public spaces (Eligible: Cities served by Alliant Energy) | October 1 |
| IDNR Wildlife Diversity Funds | Grants for research, habitat management, and environmental education supporting non-game wildlife. (Eligible: Any wildlife management organization (including local governments) | October 10 |
| Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) | Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects, such as museums, libraries, swimming pools, trails, large recreational areas, amphitheatres, etc. (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits, some private entities) | November 1 (if funds available) |
| CDBG Water and Sewer Program | Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc. (Eligible: local governments) | November 1 (next quarterly round) |
| IDNR Fish Habitat Program and Wildlife Habitat Promotion | Programs and projects to improve fishing and wildlife habitat. (Eligible: County conservation boards) | November 1 |
| IDNR Solid Waste Alternatives Program | Program to encourage landfill alternatives – recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc. (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits) | December 1 |
| 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) | December 31 |
| FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program | 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) | Floating December 31 (NOIs as soon as possible) |
| 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 |
| 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 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.

Clearfield, Prescott, and Osceola Awarded FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant

The Cities of Clearfield, Osceola, and Prescott were among the earlier round grantees for the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grant. Clearfield's application is for extrication equipment and Prescott's application is for personal protective equipment. Osceola was funded for much needed communications equipment. To date these are the only fire departments in the region that have received awards for firefighting equipment, PPE, and vehicles of the twelve applications involving SICOG this year. We expect other applications to be funded over the coming weeks until the FEMA funds are exhausted. Osceola was awarded funds from the AFG COVID Supplemental grant. This grant funds a department's need for safety and sanitary supplies and small equipment. Another round of COVID Supplemental AFG funds is planned for this fall, but no date has been announced. This funding round is dedicated to volunteer and combination departments. **Congrats to these communities.**



Madison County Conservation Center Receives CAT Grant

Madison County Conservation Board was recently awarded a \$450,000 Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grant from the Iowa Economic Development Authority for the Madison County Conservation Center. The Center, to be built at Pammel Park just southwest of Winterset, will provide conservation education, natural displays, and a conference room in a natural setting near the scenic Middle River. The CAT grant funded the final ten to fifteen percent of the project budget. SICOG assisted the conservation board in the preparation of this application. Construction is set to start this fall. We do not know when the next round of funding will be available for this program. If you have a capital project that serves educational, cultural, recreational, or entertainment needs, please contact SICOG for more information on this program. **Congrats to Madison County.**

Contractors Needed

18 Contracts Available to work on Residential Properties

The Cities of Dexter, Fontanelle and Leon will each be bidding projects to repair and install safety and energy efficiency updates in six homes. Construction will begin in 2021. Contractors do not need to be bonded, however, contractors need to be registered and/or licensed with the State of Iowa and carry liability insurance with limits of \$1-\$2 million and be lead certified.

The projects are funded by a federal grant awarded to each City. The Southern Iowa Council of Governments (SICOG) in Creston will handle the bid process and manage the construction projects on behalf of the City.

For each project, the contractor will have a chance to bid on the work in a contract with the city. Work may include: new roofs, electrical systems, HVAC systems, plumbing, windows and doors, siding, foundation work, and other improvements.

Any contractor or sub-contractor interested in being part of these projects Should contact either Stu Burzette or Rana Scarlett at SICOG at 641-782-8491 to discuss their interest and learn more about the projects. Email is welcome to burzette@sicog.com or scarlett@sicog.com. Those contractors that are added to the list will be notified of the bidding opportunities when they open for each community.



ISU Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Program

The Iowa State University Extension is taking applications for a second round of the Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Program. It is designed to help communities create their own answers to the critical question, “Where do we start?”

The best feature of this program is that it is a relatively quick, simple, and affordable way to organize a community to identify problems and address housing needs. The program includes an initial meeting with ISU Extension staff and the provision of resources to begin the self-assessment process. A community participating in the RHRA process commits to the four components: a) fulfilling pre-workshop requirements; b) the RHRA Educational Workshop; c) a Public Input Workshop; and, d) Action Planning.

Integral to the success of the RHRA is the formation of a dedicated housing steering committee for the local community or the adoption of addressing housing as central to an existing committee or commission. It will be the committee who receives the educational workshop and, based on the knowledge and understanding gained from the workshop, will recommend the direction of local housing strategy in the action planning session. The committee will either be formalized as an advisory committee via ordinance or will have purview over housing included in their duties if drawing on an existing committee. In both scenarios, we encourage inclusion in city ordinance as a way to institutionalize housing as a central community concern and to demonstrate municipal support.

Before the educational workshop, existing documents, plans, and ordinances will be reviewed. The educational workshop is a 3 to 4-hour event for the housing steering committee and other interested city officials and community members. Using an interactive format, Extension specialists will walk through the workbook and the community’s workbook responses to demonstrate how the information discovered through the inventory process reveals factors that support or inhibit the provision of multiple housing options in the community. The workshop will discuss the broad range of housing options possible in communities.

After the educational workshop, they will be ready to develop elements of a local housing strategy. The committee will provide Extension specialists with the identified interest areas to focus on as part of their action plan. However, public input is crucial in order to help prioritize where resources and efforts should go. Extension specialists will conduct a 2-3 hour public input session that helps build consensus and prioritize action items.

Finally, Extension specialists will convene and facilitate a three-hour action planning workshop a few months later. Participants will develop housing-related short- and long-term goals, and action plans for implementing those goals. Also during the process, additional key stakeholders, funding opportunities and responsibilities, and individuals/groups tasked with implementation will be identified, along with timelines for measuring accomplishments.

The fee for conducting this program is currently \$5,000. SICOG believes a service like this is valuable because it encourages communities to take specific actions on housing rather than simply identify needs and hope someone will come to town to address them. Contact your SICOG office to work on a housing assessment process.



Events Calendar

October 6, 2020

SICOG Executive Board Meeting.
SIDG Executive Board Meeting
Housing Trust Fund Meeting

October 12, 2020

Columbus Day

October 31, 2020

Halloween



Setting up for Success: Iowa's Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant Program

Historic properties and heritage tourism can dramatically improve the attraction and economic health of a community. However, planning to preserve or restore these aging cultural assets can be an expensive and time-consuming challenge. The Certified Local Government (CLG) Program creates a path for local governments to:

- Build a base of volunteer support in the community for long-term projects,
- Train and support staff who can serve as a liaison between the volunteers and the municipality,
- Create local experts to advise elected officials on historic preservation and projects, and
- Access State funding through the CLG Grant Program

The Program is a partnership between the National Park Service, the State Historical Society of Iowa, and local governments, specifically City and County governments. The goal is to help communities save the irreplaceable historic character by fostering a commitment to preservation on a local level.

Taking the First Step. Local governments complete a certification process, which entails passing local legislation and establishing a Historic Preservation Commission. The State Historical Society of Iowa supplies a step-by-step Certification Guide. Local Commissions are often available to share their success stories and experiences with communities interested in the process.

Iowa has one of the largest CLG programs in the nation with over 90 cities and counties as members. Commissions can encompass a city or county area. Historic Commissions exist in Adams and Madison Counties and the cities of Creston, Greenfield and Osceola.

Picturing the Work of a Historic Commission. The volunteer members of the Historic Commission have access to resources on historic preservation, technical services, and a network of other Commissions to consult and learn from. Commissions in the Southern Iowa Region have used historic preservation projects and the CLG status to make lasting impacts in their communities. Including:

- Revitalize downtowns and stabilize historic neighborhoods (**Historic Districts in Creston, Winterset and Greenfield**)
- Preserve individual historic buildings (**Courthouses in Adair and Madison Counties, Opera House in Greenfield**)
- Develop heritage tourism programs based on unique historic resources (**Adams and Madison County, Greenfield, Osceola and Creston**)

Using the Grant Program to double the impact of budget dollars. Municipalities with CLG status can apply for State funds for local projects. SICOG staff is adept at working with CLGs and Historic Commissions on funding applications. Grant writing and consulting services are available to SICOG members at no cost to Cities or Counties. Eligible grant activities and a few examples include:

- National Historic Register nominations
- Education projects (for local schools and visitors)
- Surveys (the first step to a National Register nomination)
- Planning for preservation (creating a roadmap to restore a building or structure)
- Planning projects (identifying cultural assets)

Interested in learning more about the funding and process? Contact the SICOG office at 641-782-8491 or email Jeremy Rounds at rounds@sicog.com or Rana Scarlett at scarlett@sicog.com.

Southern Iowa Council of Governments Executive Board

| | | |
|-----------------|---|------------------|
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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

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