

2021 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Prepared by SICOG Staff

SOUTHERN IOWA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS 101 E Montgomery Street, Creston IA 50801



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document is split into five primary sections: an introduction, summary background, SWOT analysis, a strategic direction/action plan, and an evaluation framework. A short overview of each section is given in this executive summary.

INTRODUCTION

This section describes the purpose of the CEDS, which is to formulate a comprehensive regional economic strategic plan using the input of public and private stakeholders. This is followed by a description of the structure of the Southern Iowa Council of Governments and description of the structure of the CEDS Strategy Committee and the SICOG Executive Board. This section can be found from page 6 to 12.

SUMMARY BACKGROUND

This section provides an overview of the region regarding the natural and built-environment, demographics, workforce, educational attainment, industrial-mix, wages and income, housing, land values, and opportunity zones. The region is bordered on two sides by interstates and holds two Amtrak stations. The natural resources of the region are primarily related to agriculture and outdoor recreation, such as hunting, fishing, and recreational trails. The primarily rural region only has two towns with populations over 5,000 according to the 2010 Decennial Census (Creston and Winterset). A third, Osceola, is expected to be marked above 5,000 in the 2020 Decennial Census. The racial make-up, unemployment rate, and labor force participation rates are all similar to the State of Iowa overall. However, due to the small regional population (around 70,000), quality job opportunities are often scarce, resulting in around 42 percent of residents living in the SICOG region but working elsewhere. Residents of the SICOG region are about eight percent less likely to have a post-secondary degree of any kind. This results in an industry with a higher concentration of industries that do not require post-secondary skill sets. Due to these lower skill requirements, the wages and household incomes are lower than the State of Iowa, on average. Land and housing stock values are also much lower than the statewide average. The housing stock is also much older than the state in most counties. However, the low wealth in the region has allowed portions of four counties to gain the Opportunity Zone status. This section is largely unchanged except a short section about the economic impacts of the pandemic is added. This section can be found from page 13 to 38.

PRIORITIES ANALYSIS

IN 2020, SICOG surveyed the region's partners about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). This was not repeated this year but will be repeated for the next five-year CEDS due in September 2022. Reflecting changing needs and projects SICOG has been asked to facilitate, SICOG updated the list of priorities this year, so the result may reflect great change from the past years. Also, SICOG only sent surveys to member local governments and not also to private sector partners and board members. The top regional priorities, in order, *transportation, housing, and protecting the existing economy* finished first, second, and third respectively. They were followed by *recreation,*

economic development/entrepreneurism, and sewer round out the top six. This section can be found from page 39 to 41.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION/ACTION PLAN

This section describes and lists the goals and objectives that have been created to fulfill the purpose and intent of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The following are the goals of the 2020 SICOG CEDS, updated with comments on progress for 2021:

- Improve and maintain the quality of life for residents the region;
- Improve economic resilience;
- Promote regional collaboration; and
- Improve environmental resilience.

These goals are then broken into individual sections with objectives for each goal and actions for each objective. Each action has a corresponding schedule and a list of partners(s). This section can be found from page 42 to 63.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

This section describes the way in which SICOG will measure the progress made towards fulfilling the goals of the 2021 SICOG CEDS. This includes a list of general statistics, SICOG-specific statistics, and tools or resources to possibly be utilized to measure progress. General statistics include demographics, income, housing, and wealth statistics. SICOG-specific statistics include the number of projects utilizing the benefits of Opportunity Zones, the number of housing projects in progress or completed, the number of comprehensive plans in progress or completed, and others. Tools and sources that will be utilized include the US Census Bureau, the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, an annual SICOG survey, and others. This section can be found on page 64 to 66.

INTRODUCTION



PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The development of this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) contributes to effective economic development in the Southern Iowa Council of Governments (SICOG) region through a locally based, regionally driven economic development planning process. This process serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. This CEDS provides a capacity-building foundation by which the public sector, working in conjunction with other economic entities (individuals, firms, industries), helps to create an environment for regional economic prosperity.

The 2021 SICOG CEDS serves as a very modest update of the previous regional plan (2020 CEDS). This CEDS will be submitted to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) by March 30, 2021, and will fulfill Economic Development Administration Reform Act of 1998 guidelines. A more significant update will be made in 2022, which is when the five-year plan is due.

The 2021 SICOG CEDS will provide a background summary, an analysis of local priorities, and a series of goals and objectives followed by an evaluation framework. This report will also address economic resilience by incorporating the concept throughout the document. The information in this document serves a variety of local and regional decision-makers. SICOG staff used established EDA guidelines to prepare the 2021 CEDS.

THE SOUTHERN IOWA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

OVERVIEW

The 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.

SICOG serves an area in south central Iowa that includes Adair, Adams, Clarke, Decatur, Madison, Ringgold, Taylor and Union Counties. It is bounded on the north by the Region XII Council of Governments, on the south by the State of Missouri, on the west by the Southwest Iowa Planning Council, and on the east by Chariton Valley Planning and Development Council of Governments.

STAFF

Timothy J Ostroski, Executive Director
Judy K. Brimm, Finance Director
Jeremy Rounds, Regional Planner
Rana Scarlett, Regional Planner

GOALS

The overall goal of SICOG is to provide a framework within which to create a comprehensive approach to area-wide development and the orderly conservation of resources in the region. Services provided by SICOG include, but are not limited to:

- Economic Development: community marketing plans, development projects, and financial packaging;
- Community Development: grant application and administration, special projects, and information resources;
- Planning: comprehensive plans, recreation plans, zoning and subdivision regulations, annexations, site designs, neighborhood studies, hazard mitigation plans, and transportation plans;
- Housing: grant application and administration, housing needs assessments, first-time home buyers' program, housing rehabilitation programs, special projects, housing trust fund, and information resources;
- Financial Assistance: revolving loan funds for: industries, businesses, home-owners, housing, and communities; and
- Technical Assistance: grant and funding research, budgets, census data, zoning, annexation, codification, geographic information systems, assistance to those performing industrial recruitment, and housing development.

The Southern Iowa Council of Governments serves as the region's Economic Development District (EDD). The counties and cities in the region rely upon SICOG to meet federal and state planning requirements, as well as provide individual services to meet local community and economic development needs. SICOG's goal is to be on the cusp of changing, evolving, and emerging issues as described in this report.

EXECUTIVE BOARD AND CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE

In 2007, SICOG restructured its Executive Board to better meet the requirements of the EDA and to better represent the population that it serves. Since that time the CEDS committee has consisted of persons representing:

Agriculture	Finance	Local Government	Utilities
Business	Health Care	Recreation	Women
Civic Organizations	Housing	State Government	
Econ. Development	Industry	Tourism	
Education	Land Use	Transportation	

The CEDS Strategy Committee was created to consider all major interests of the eight-county region. It is made up of the SICOG Project Board members. The SICOG Executive Board and our member communities have approved the committee makeup and structure.

The CEDS Strategy Committee includes a representative from each county, the largest city in each county, the second largest city in each county, and the third largest city in each county, two (2) representatives from the private sector, as well as a member-at-large who is elected from one of the following groups: Executive Director of a Chamber of Commerce, a representative of an institution of post-secondary education, a representative from workforce development, or a representative from the labor groups. This committee structure is designed to maintain a strong presence with and connection to these entities to ensure the CEDS is meeting its roles and responsibilities of promoting the CEDS regional goals.

FIGURE 1. SICOG EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Name	Elected Government Representatives
<i>Jerry Walker</i>	Adair County Board of Supervisors
<i>Doug Birt</i>	Adams County Board of Supervisors
<i>Austin Taylor</i>	Clarke County Board of Supervisors
<i>Dan Christensen</i>	Decatur County Board of Supervisors
<i>Diane Fitch</i>	Madison County Board of Supervisors
<i>Colby Holmes</i>	Ringgold County Board of Supervisors
<i>Ron Riley</i>	Union County Board of Supervisors
<i>Karen Zabel</i>	City of Lenox, Mayor (Representing Taylor County)
Private Sector Representatives	
<i>Doug Davidson</i>	Orient Express
<i>Beth Waddle</i>	Precision Pulley & Idler
<i>William Trickey</i>	First National Bank
<i>Tom Leners</i>	Union State Bank
Stakeholder Organization Representatives	
<i>Tom Lesan</i>	Southwestern Community College

FIGURE 2. 2021 SICOG CEDS COMMITTEE

Name	Government or Company Representing
<i>Jerry Walker</i>	Adair County Board of Supervisors
<i>Mary Sturdy-Martin</i>	Fontanelle
<i>Jimmie Schultz</i>	Greenfield
<i>John M. Larsen</i>	Adair
<i>Doug Davidson</i>	Orient Express
<i>Paul Nelson</i>	Union State Bank
<i>Doug Birt</i>	Adams County Board of Supervisors
<i>Bert Peckham</i>	Corning
<i>Gary Page</i>	Prescott
<i>Gary Poen</i>	Nodaway
<i>Beth Waddle</i>	Precision Pulley & Idler
<i>Larry Kester</i>	Red Star Feed
<i>Austin Taylor</i>	Clarke County Board of Supervisors
<i>Thomas Kedley</i>	Osceola
<i>Pat Collins</i>	Murray
<i>Denny Cottrell</i>	Woodburn
<i>William Trickey</i>	First National Bank
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Clarke County Private Sector Rep.</i>
<i>Dan Christensen</i>	Decatur County Board of Supervisors
<i>Douglas Foster</i>	Lamoni
<i>Jason Weir</i>	Leon
<i>Craig Stogdill</i>	Grand River
<i>Shane Akers</i>	Farmers Bank of Northern MO
<i>Shannon Erb</i>	Gilbert Home Comfort
<i>Diane Fitch</i>	Madison County Board of Supervisors
<i>Andrew Barton</i>	Winterset
<i>Jeff Lillie</i>	Earlham
<i>Dennis Smith</i>	St. Charles
<i>Brian Downes</i>	John Wayne Birthplace Society
<i>Tom Leners</i>	Union State Bank
<i>Colby Holmes</i>	Ringgold County Board of Supervisors
<i>Steve Fetty</i>	Mt Ayr
<i>Lester Elliott</i>	Diagonal
<i>Cody Doolittle</i>	Kellerton
<i>Tracy Barnes</i>	US Bank
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Ringgold County Private Sector Rep.</i>
<i>Doug Horton</i>	Taylor County Board of Supervisors
<i>Karen Zabel</i>	Lenox
<i>Frank Sefrit</i>	New Market

<i>Chris Knox</i>	Clearfield
<i>Don Keast</i>	Keast Accounting
<i>Vacant</i>	Taylor County Private Sector Representative
<i>Ron Riley</i>	Union County Board of Supervisors
<i>Gabe Carroll</i>	Creston
<i>Shelley Burger</i>	Afton
<i>Timothy Sly</i>	Lorimor
<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Union County Private Sector Rep.</i>
<i>Gary Riley</i>	Central Plains Electric
<i>Tom Lesan</i>	Southwestern Community College

COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION

Community input is critical to the CEDS planning process. An outline of the public input process follows:

- A survey is conducted among member cities and counties from SICOG’s eight-county region to determine their priorities and their economic development plans for the upcoming year. Responses are then compiled and prioritized by SICOG staff.
- Draft copies of the CEDS document are compiled.
- The SICOG Executive Board, who has an opportunity to provide input into the planning process, reviews draft copies of the CEDS.
- The Draft CEDS document is made available on the SICOG website and in hardcopy format to interested parties for a thirty-day period.
- SICOG staff publish notice in The Windmill (SICOG’s newsletter distributed to cities, counties, economic development groups and other interested parties throughout the region), on its website and on Facebook. Public comments are solicited during a thirty-day review period.
- The Final CEDS document is approved.
- An annual CEDS performance report document is prepared by the SICOG organization.
- A new CEDS document is prepared every 5 years or sooner depending on various circumstances

The priorities, goals and objectives listed in this document reflect the combined efforts of the CEDS Committee and input received in our annual CEDS questionnaires/surveys that ask communities to identify their goals for the coming years.

The CEDS Strategy Committee is comprised of representatives from various segments of the region. The committee represents all major interest groups providing viewpoints that give a well-balanced perspective for the region. The trends, opportunities, and limitations affecting the economic growth of the region have been identified and related to the trends of the national and global market. The mission/vision and goals of SICOG have been adopted and used as the vision for the CEDS process and are used as the foundation to build upon when developing goals and strategies for the region. The CEDS Committee composition, the community input, and the process for the analysis and

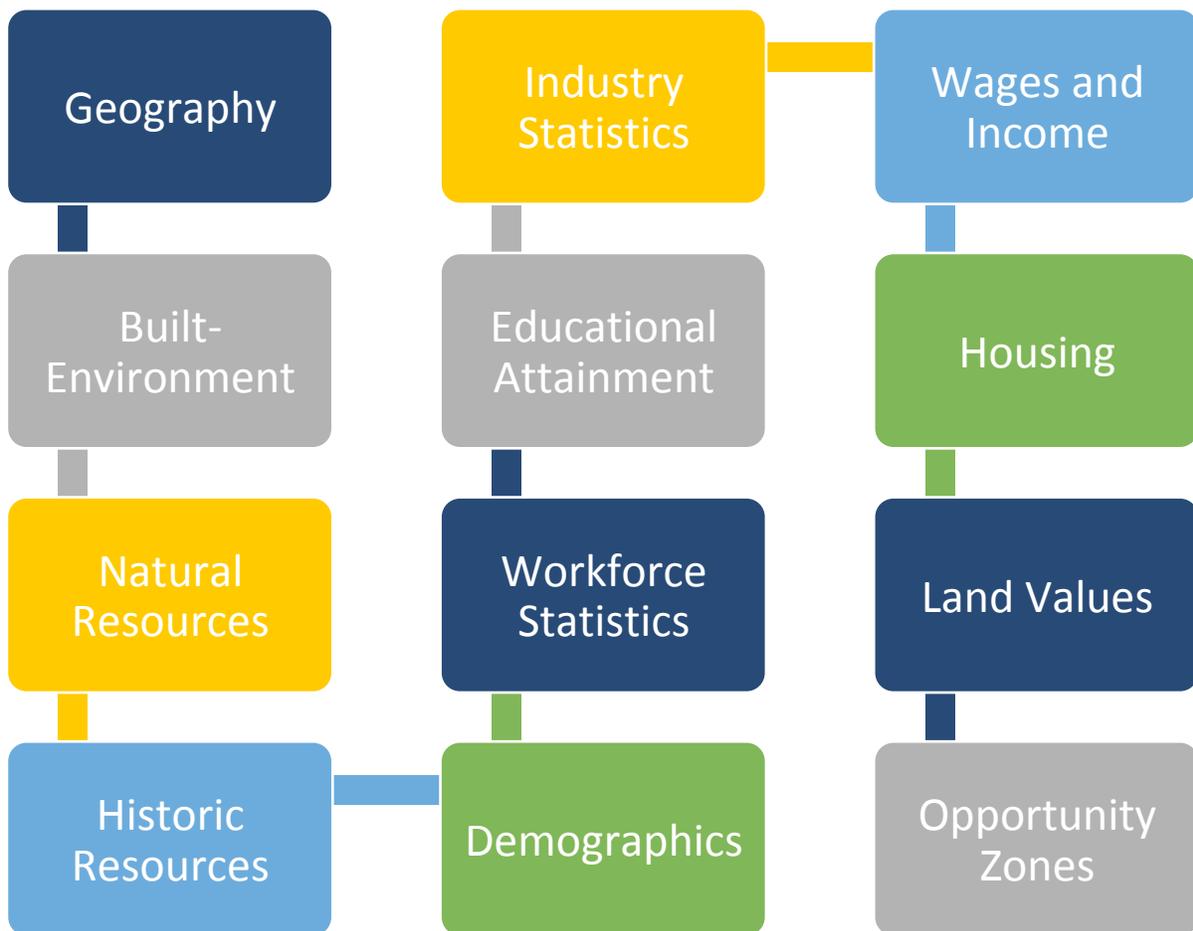
formulation of this document have provided ample opportunity for community and private sector participation.

DRAFT CEDS REVIEW PERIOD

February 24, 2021 through March 25, 2021

The draft CEDS is available for review and comment by the public for a period of at least 30 days prior to submission of the CEDS to EDA. The Draft CEDS document is made available in electronic or hard copy format to the public during this time period. Interested parties (cities, counties, economic development organizations, regional transportation organizations, major employers, etc.) receive a copy or are notified of the availability of the Draft CEDS document, allowing for review and comments during the 30-day period. The availability of copies of the Draft CEDS document and the opportunity to participate in the comment period are also advertised in the SICOG newsletter, on the SICOG website, and on the SICOG Facebook page. Copies of the Draft CEDS are made available in hardcopy form from Southern Iowa Council of Governments, 101 East Montgomery Street, Creston, IA 50801, 641-782-8491 or from rounds@sicog.com. Electronic copies are also available by download from the SICOG webpage <http://www.sicog.com/>

SUMMARY BACKGROUND



GEOGRAPHY, BUILT-ENVIRONMENT, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

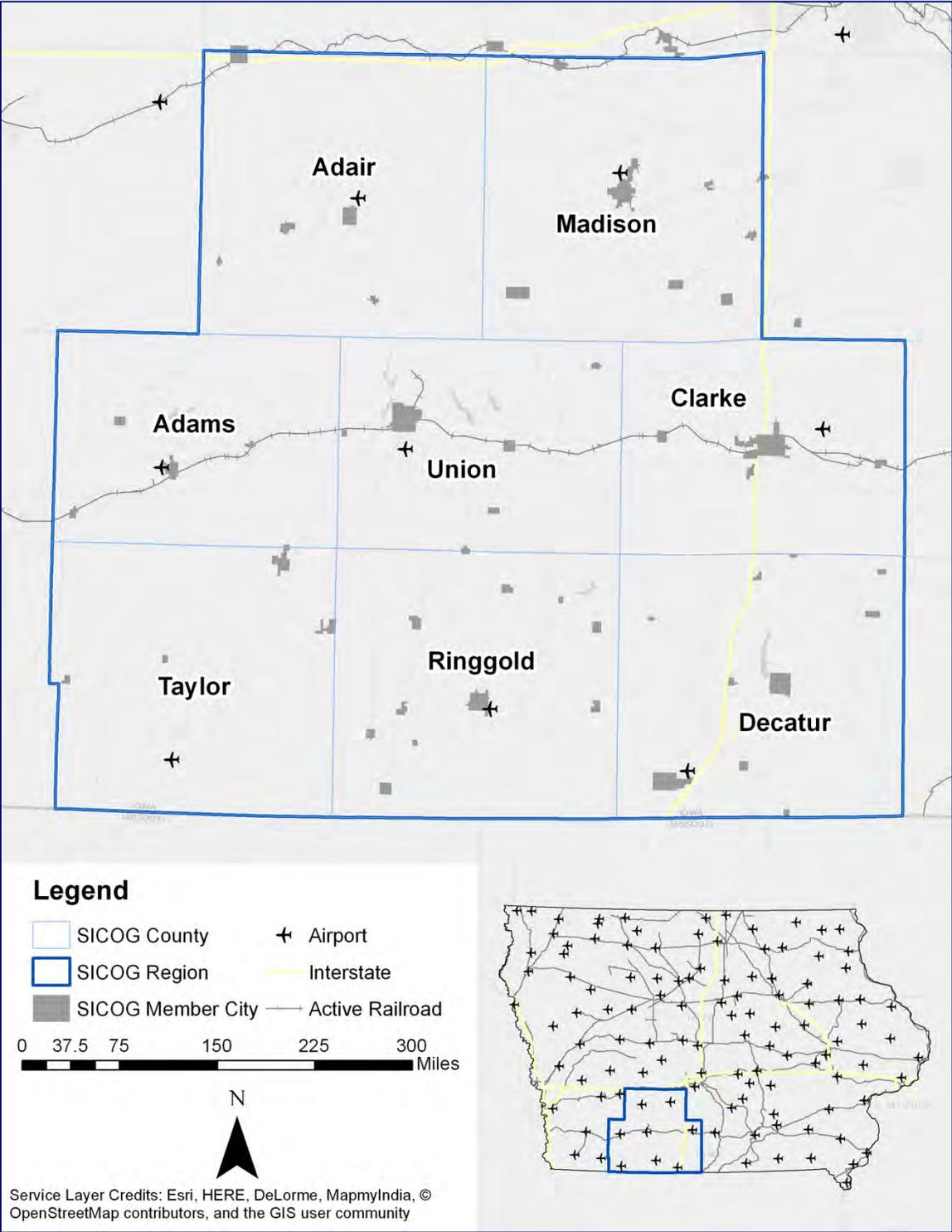


FIGURE 3. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF SICOG REGION, COUNTIES, MEMBER CITIES, INTERSTATES, RAILROADS, AND AIRPORTS | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU & IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

GEOGRAPHY AND THE BUILT-ENVIRONMENT

The SICOG region is located directly southwest of the Des Moines Metropolitan Area and covers eight counties. The eight counties have an area of 2,566,458 acres or 4,009 square miles. The major metropolitan centers exerting an influence on the area include Des Moines, Iowa, Omaha, Nebraska, and Kansas City, Missouri. Interstate 35, the major north-south highway connecting Kansas City, Des Moines, and Minneapolis/St. Paul, traverses the Southern Iowa region on the eastern edge. Interstate 80, the major east-west highway connecting Chicago, Des Moines, and Omaha traverses the region on the northern edge. The Burlington-Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad runs across the center of the region with stops in Osceola and Creston. There are eight small airports in the region located in Bedford, Corning, Creston, Greenfield, Lamoni, Mount Ayr, Osceola, and Winterset. The closest commercial airport is located in Des Moines.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The region, along with the rest of Southern Iowa, lies in the Southern Iowa Drift plain. This results in rolling hills and more mature streams and hydrologic features than other topographical regions of Iowa. Four geologic ages cover the region, which can be seen in the appendix. Due to the geologic history of the region, there are two major land resource areas (MLRAs) that split the region in half. Those major land resource areas are the Illinois and Iowa Deep Loess and Drift and the Iowa and Missouri Heavy Till Plain. A majority of the land in these two MLRAs is used as cropland followed by grassland and timber. A map of the MLRAs can be seen in the appendix. The most predominant rock types in the region are limestone, sandstone, and shale. The second most predominant rock types in the region are claystone and siltstone along with limestone, sandstone, and shale where they are not the most predominant rock type. Maps of the predominant rock types can be seen in the appendix.

WATER RESOURCES

Like all of Iowa, the region has many rivers, streams, tributaries, and lakes. Many of these hydrologic features are used as water sources including Three Mile Lake, Green Valley Lake, Platte River, Little River and Little River Lake, and others. Many of these major water sources are also considered impaired rivers and lakes due to various pollutants, commonly related to agricultural runoff. Associated with these hydrologic features are floodplains, which run through the region like veins. Floodplains are very important natural features to consider, due to damage floods cause. As climate change continues to impact the region, floods will become more extreme and/or more common. This makes it more important than ever to know the locations and extents of the 100-year floodplains and the 500-year flood plains in the region. At a larger scale of water movement are watersheds. The SICOG region intersects or contains 39 watersheds. Many of these watersheds reach far beyond the region into neighboring counties. Thirteen watersheds reach into Northern Missouri. Maps of hydrologic features in the region can be seen in the appendix.

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The region lies in the humid continental climate zone, which covers most of the north-central United States. Warm summers and cold winters are common with high fluctuations of precipitation and extreme temperatures year to year.

As a result of the natural resources noted previously, the ecology of the region is split into two ecoregions. The ecoregion with the most cover, Southern Iowa Rolling Loess Prairies, covers 100 percent of Taylor, Adams, Adair, and Madison Counties, about 75 percent of Union County, and about 25 to 30 percent of Clarke and Ringgold Counties. The rest of the region, 25 percent of Union County, 70-75 percent of Clarke and Ringgold County, and 100 percent of Decatur County are included in the Loess Flats and Till Plains ecoregion. The Southern Iowa Rolling Loess Prairies ecoregion is characterized today by cropland and small areas of deciduous forest. Historically, the ecoregion was covered by bluestem prairie and oak-hickory forest. This ecoregion also stretches from the SICO region all the way to the Mississippi River near Davenport and also near Burlington. The Loess Flats and Till Plains ecoregion is a much smaller ecoregion in Iowa. It covers most of the southern border of Iowa and has much of the same current and historic land use and land covers. The major difference is a more prominent pastureland use in this ecoregion.

Both of these ecoregions provide for a wide variety of animal habitat as well as vegetation habitat. The most important of these to consider are the endangered species. A list of endangered species in the region is shown below.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Status</i>
Indiana Bat (<i>Myotis sodalist</i>)	Mammals	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)	Mammals	Threatened
Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid (<i>Platanthera leucophaea</i>)	Flowering Plants	Threatened
Mead's Milkweed (<i>Asclepias meadii</i>)	Flowering Plants	Threatened
Prairie Bush-clover (<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>)	Flowering Plants	Threatened
Western Prairie Fringed Orchid (<i>Platanthera praeclara</i>)	Flowering Plants	Threatened
Topeka Shiner (<i>Notropis topeka</i>)	Fish	Endangered (Critical Habitat)

FIGURE 4. ENDANGERED SPECIES IN THE SICO REGION | SOURCE: US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

The SICO region has many buildings and structures listed on the national register of historic places. This includes 76 buildings and 12 structures (mostly bridges). A large portion of these historic places are located in Winterset and rural Madison County. The SICO region is also home to a stretch of the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail. This trail runs across the SICO region from the northeast corner of Decatur County, through Clarke and Union Counties, and out the southwest corner of Adair

County. This historic trail is commonly used for recreational purposes and runs through multiple state parks and conservation areas. A map of the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail can be seen in the appendix along with the public conservation/recreation lands in the region. Maps of all historic buildings and structures can be found in the appendix as well.

REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

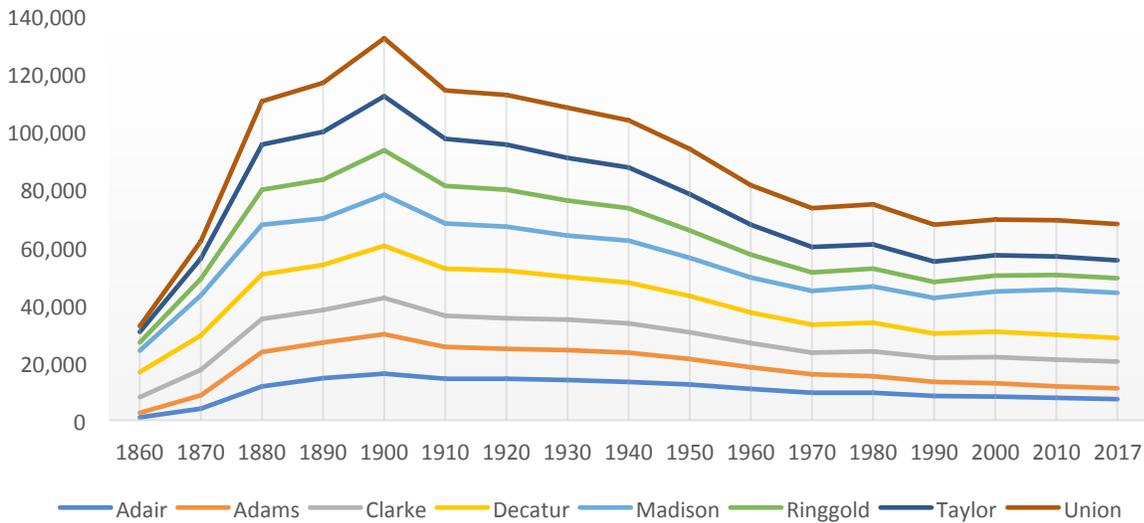


FIGURE 5. SICOG REGION POPULATION | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

The figure above displays the populations of each county stacked on top of each other to give the total regional population. As seen in the figure, the regional population of the SICOG Region peaked at nearly 134,000 in 1900. Since then, it has declined, resulting in a 2017 ACS 5-year estimation of about 70,000 individuals. This number has stayed around 70,000 since 1990. Therefore, no significant growths or shrinkages are expected from a regional perspective in the foreseeable future.

Figure 6 shows the regional population by county. Madison County has the highest share of individuals in the region, followed by Union County and Clarke County. The smallest counties in terms of population are Adams, Ringgold, and Taylor, which sit at six, seven and nine percent of the regional population, respectively.

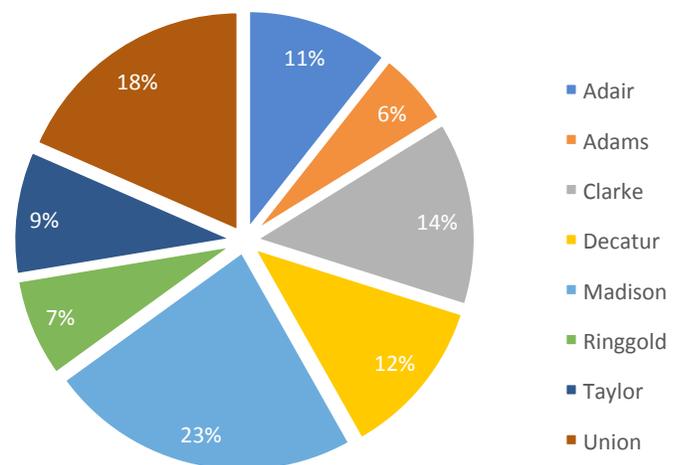


FIGURE 6. REGIONAL POPULATION BY COUNTY | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

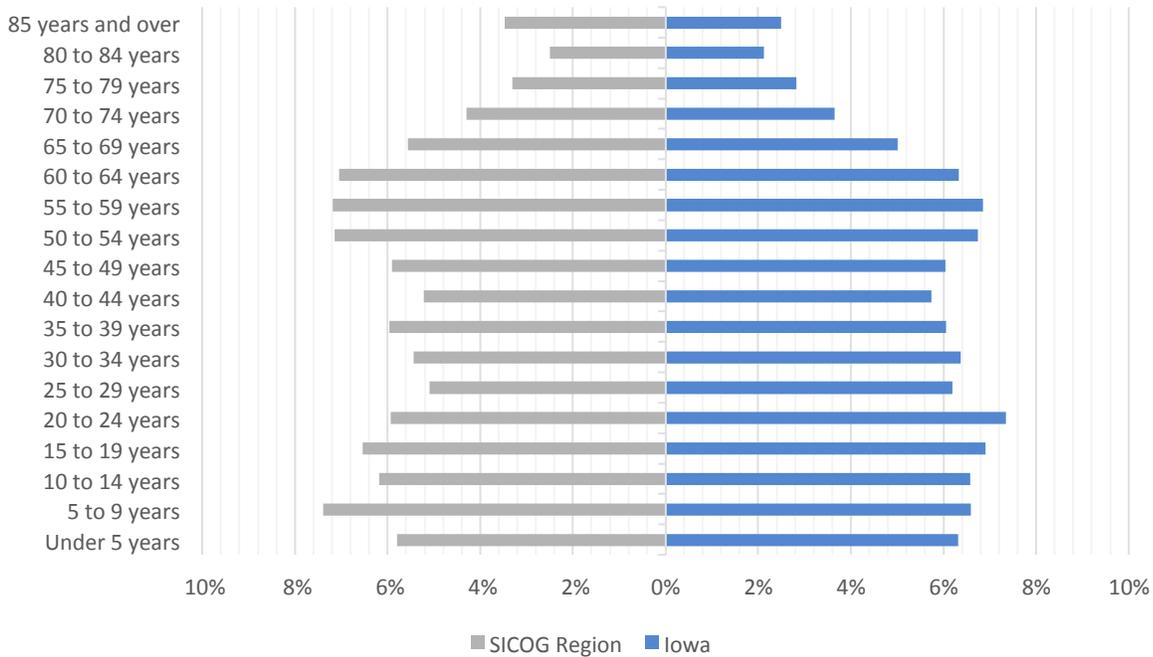


FIGURE 7. REGIONAL POPULATION BY AGE COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

Figure 7, above, is the population of the region separated by age compared to the State of Iowa. There are not many significant differences between the two geographies, however, the SICOG Region generally has more individuals in retirement age or reaching retirement age within the next ten years and more children aged five to nine years. There are also fewer individuals between the ages of 20 and 35 years.

The median age of residents in the region (Figure 8) varies by county. The lowest median age was found in Decatur County at 36.5 years and the highest was found in Adams County at 47.7 years. All counties, with the exception of Decatur, were above the statewide median by at least two years.

The aging population that the region is experiencing will likely need to be addressed in all aspects including economic development, housing, transportation, and others. This will be especially problematic if the younger generations do not stay in the region or the ones who left do not begin to return to the region to take over the jobs of the retiring generations as well as develop a regional economy and society that allows for continued support for the aging population.

Geography	Median Age
<i>Adair</i>	45.7
<i>Adams</i>	47.7
<i>Clarke</i>	40.7
<i>Decatur</i>	36.5
<i>Madison</i>	40.8
<i>Ringgold</i>	45.0
<i>Taylor</i>	43.3
<i>Union</i>	40.1
<i>Iowa</i>	38.1

FIGURE 8. MEDIAN AGE BY COUNTY COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

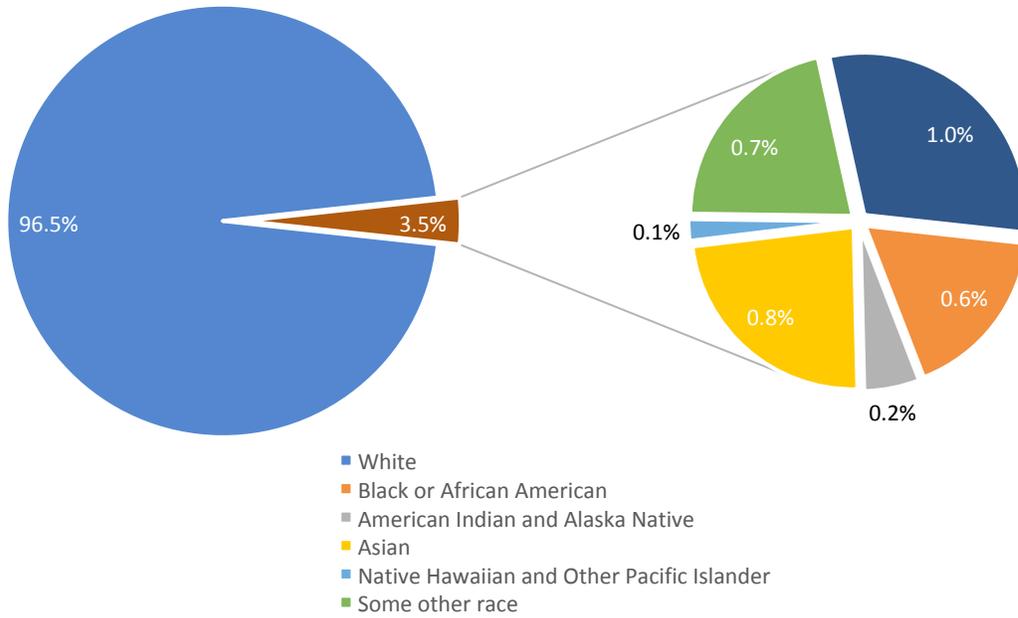


FIGURE 9. REGIONAL RACE AND ETHNICITY | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

The figure above shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of the regional population. The region is mostly white with only 3.5 percent of individuals identifying as non-white or two or more races. Similar percentages are seen when examining the Hispanic or Latino population. A vast majority of the region is non-Hispanic or Latino. These statistics are very consistent across all counties with the exception of Taylor County and Clarke County who have Hispanic or Latino populations equal to 7.5 percent and 12.7 percent of their total population. The figure to the right shows the proportion respectively of Hispanic or Latino individuals compared to the statewide average. They are very similar.

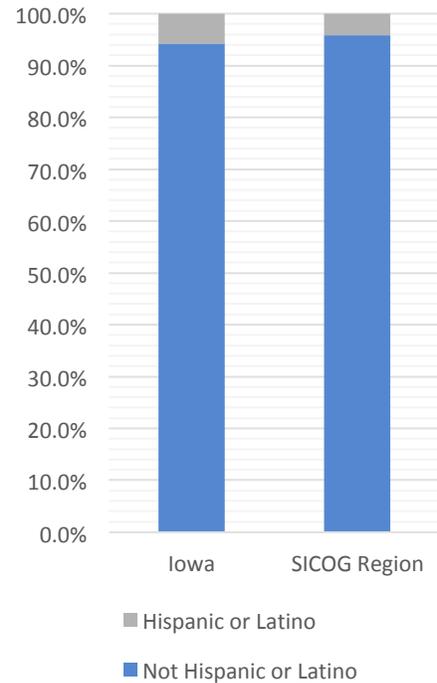


FIGURE 10. REGIONAL HISPANIC POPULATION COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

WORKFORCE

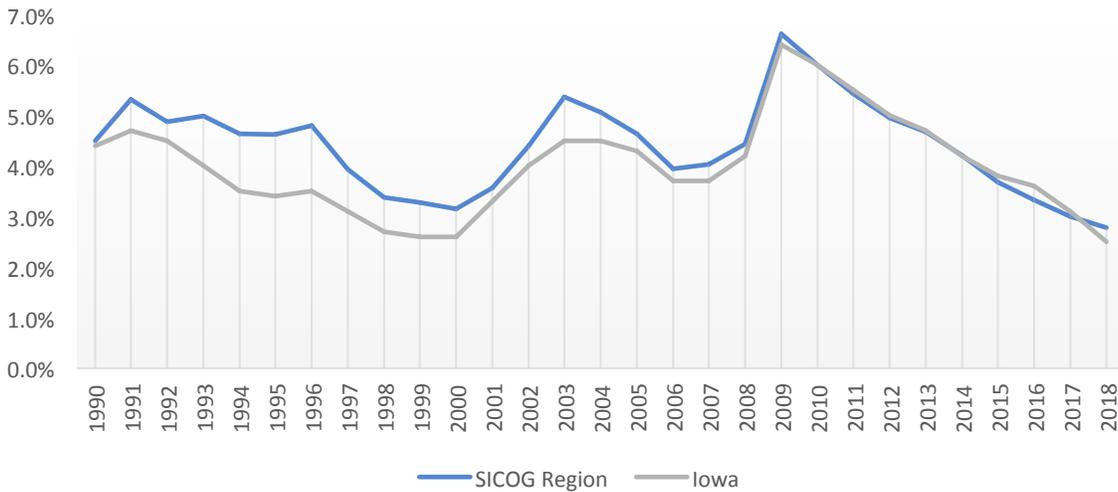


FIGURE 11. REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

The unemployment rate, seen in the figure above, has largely followed the statewide trend throughout the last two decades. Beginning in 2008, the regional unemployment matched the statewide average almost exactly. This mirroring of statewide unemployment could indicate that this regional economy is very similar to the State of Iowa economy, which relies on an agricultural backbone that does not sway as heavily as other economic sectors. While this chart does not show data through 2020, the economic slowdown created by the pandemic also did not have quite the effect in the region as other parts of Iowa, and Iowa did not suffer as much as the nation as a whole. By January 2021, the State’s unemployment rate was similar to what it was before the pandemic and was one of the lowest in the nation. While this is good news, our region takes longer to recover than the nation, even when the initial shock is less severe.

Figure 12 shows the breakdown by county in the number of unemployed individuals over time.

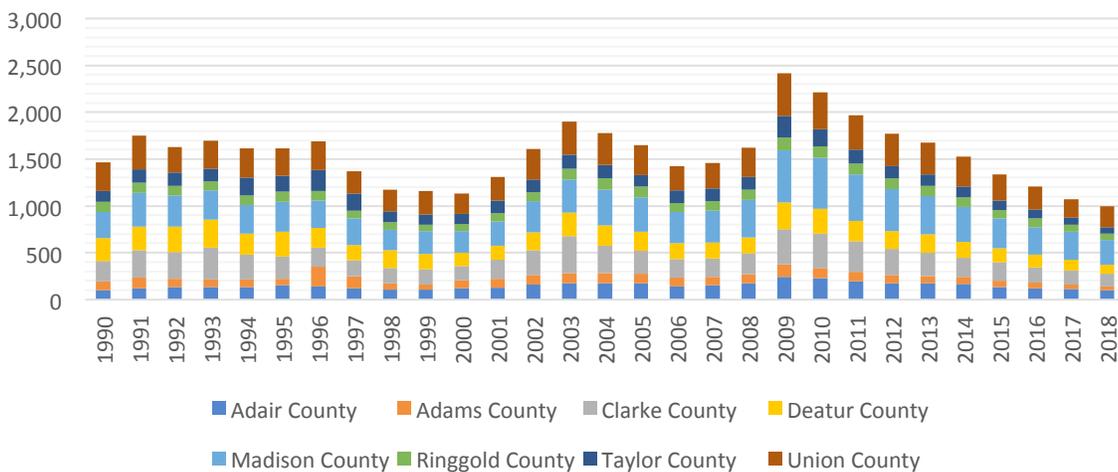


FIGURE 12. REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT BY COUNTY | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

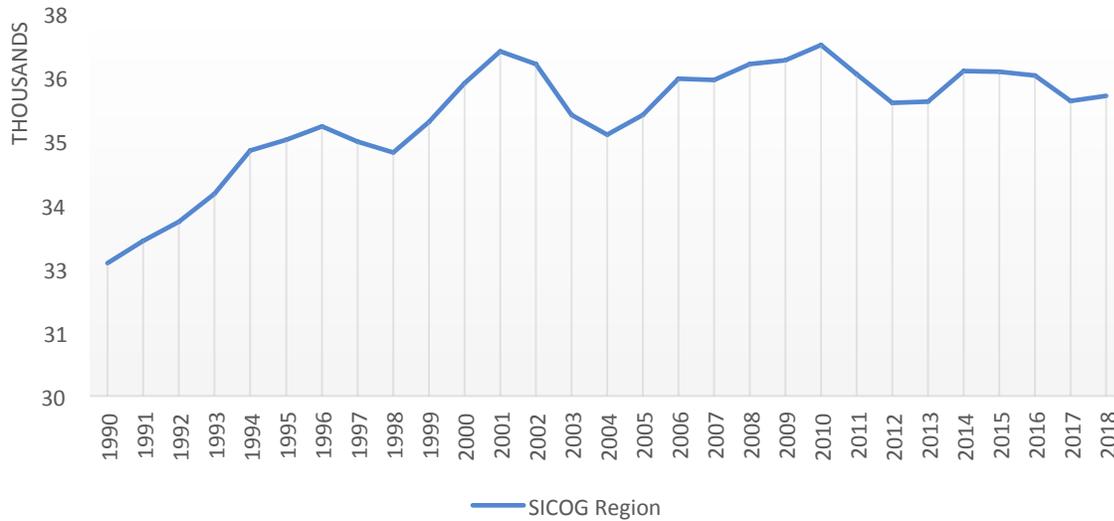


FIGURE 13. REGIONAL LABOR FORCE | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

The regional labor force in the SICOG Region, seen above, has risen by about 3,000 since 1990. Most of this growth occurred in the 1990s, however, and initially peaked in 2001 before a sharp drop. The labor force peaked again in 2010 at about 37,000 and has remained mostly steady, with a slight decline, since then. There is little indication, barring an economic recession, that the labor force will change significantly. Generally, the labor force participation in the SICOG region is similar or slightly lower than the statewide average. The only county with a labor force participation rate higher than the State of Iowa is Madison County. The lowest participation rates are found in Ringgold, Decatur, and Adams Counties as seen below.

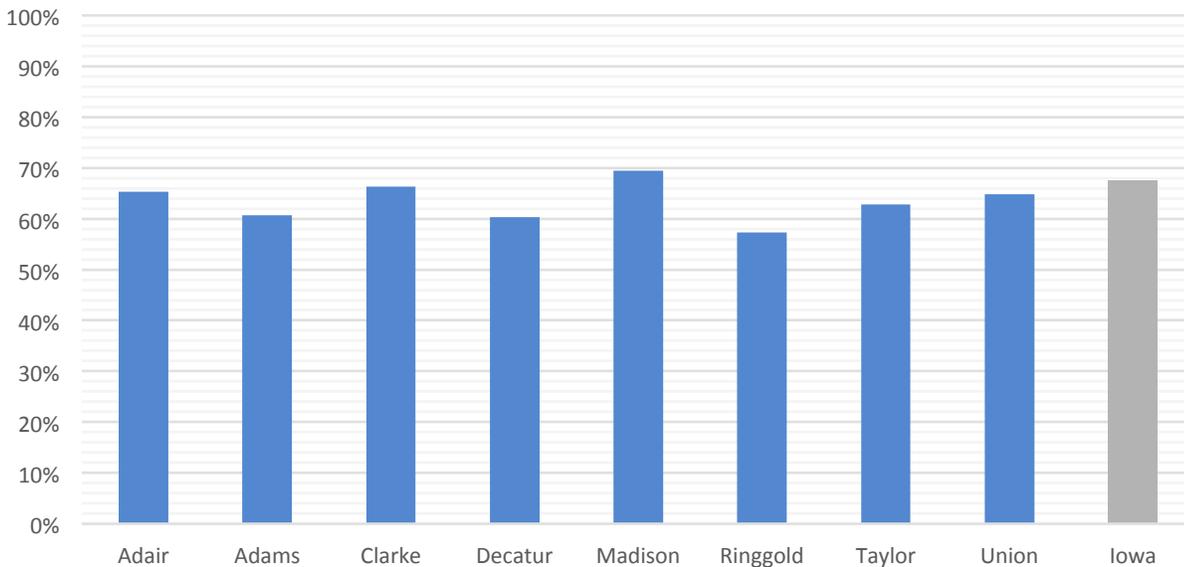


FIGURE 14. LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES BY COUNTY COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

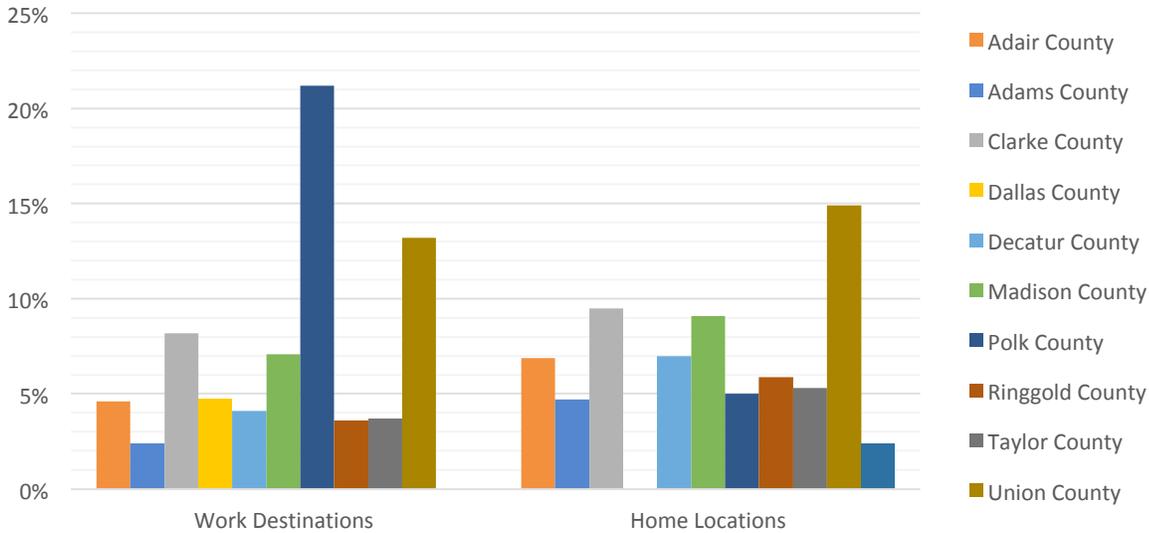
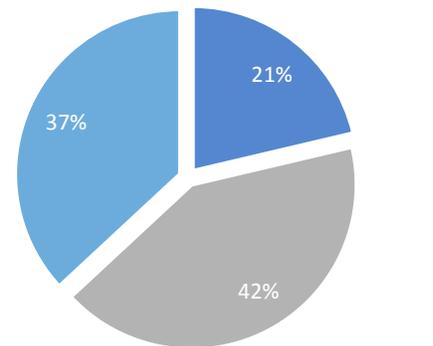


FIGURE 15. COMMUTING PATTERNS FOR WORKERS IN THE REGION BY COUNTY | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

The commuting patterns of the labor force are important to consider as they could give an indication of the quality of life in the region as well as an indication of the quality of jobs in the region. Figure 15 shows the work destinations and home locations of workers in the region broken down by county. Polk County is by far the single largest work destination of workers in the SICOG Region. This is expected since Polk County is the center of the Des Moines Metropolitan Area. Very few people commute from Polk County to the SICOG region, as seen on the home locations side. Union County is a major work destination and home location in the region. This is also predictable, as Creston, the largest city in the region, is located in Union County. Clarke County (Osceola) and Madison County (Winterset) are also major sources of and destinations for workers.

The chart to the right shows the overall proportions for commuter habits in the region. Almost 80 percent of workers live in the SICOG region but less than 40 percent of them work in the region as well.



- Employed in SICOG Region but Live Outside
- Live in SICOG Region but Employed Outside
- Employed and Live in SICOG Region

FIGURE 16. OVERALL COMMUTING PATTERNS FOR WORKERS IN THE REGION | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

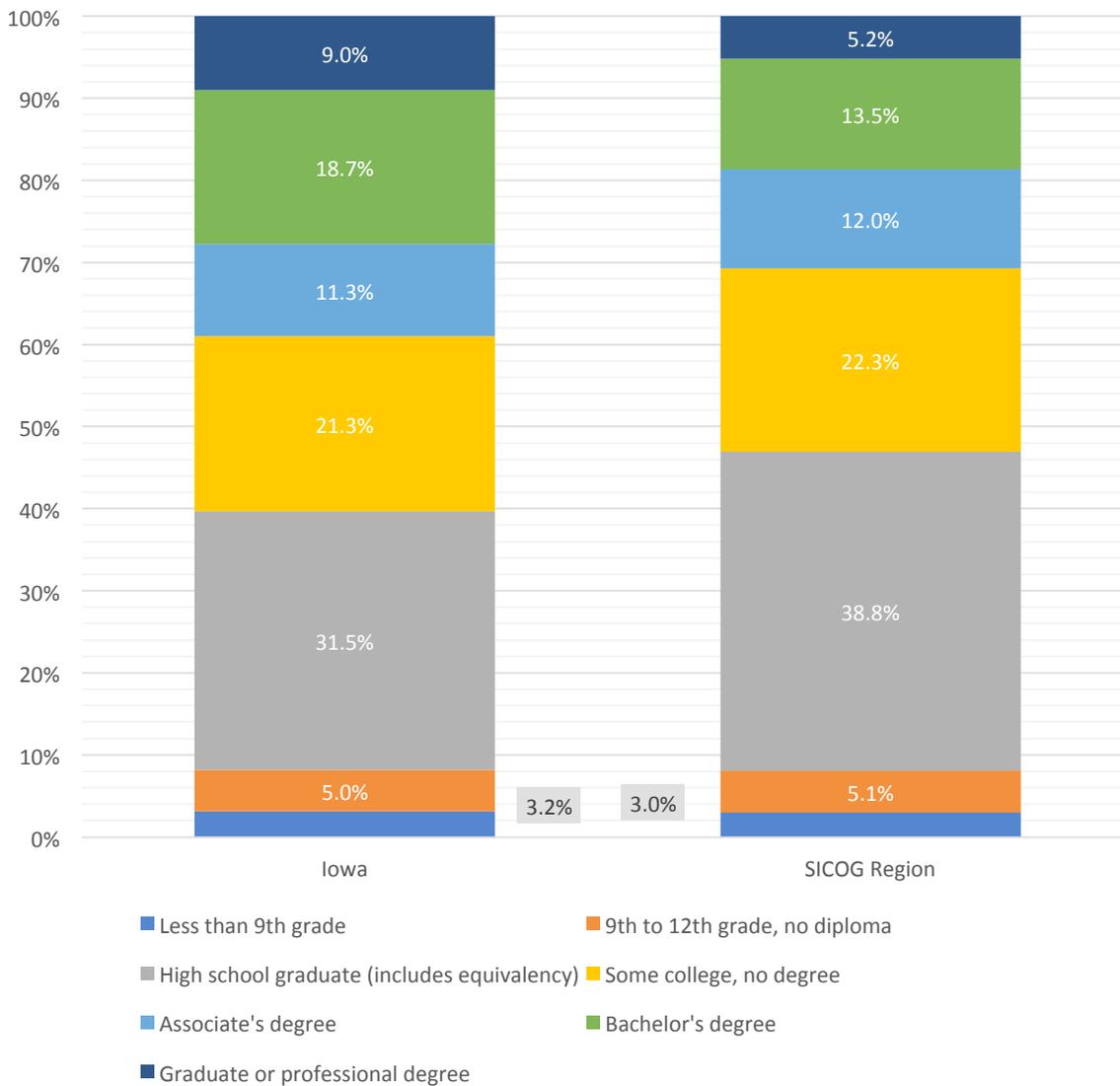


FIGURE 17. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN THE REGION COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

The educational attainment in the SICOG Region is similar to the State of Iowa overall in most respects as seen in Figure 17. They have similar percentages with individuals with an educational attainment less than a high school diploma along with similar rates of individuals who have started college but have not finished an associate’s degrees. Where the two geographies differ, is in the percentages of individuals with high school diplomas, individuals with bachelor’s degrees, and individuals with graduate degrees. About seven percent more of the SICOG region population has an education attainment of a high school diploma. This is mostly balanced by the negative differences in the bachelor’s degree and graduate degree categories.

INDUSTRY

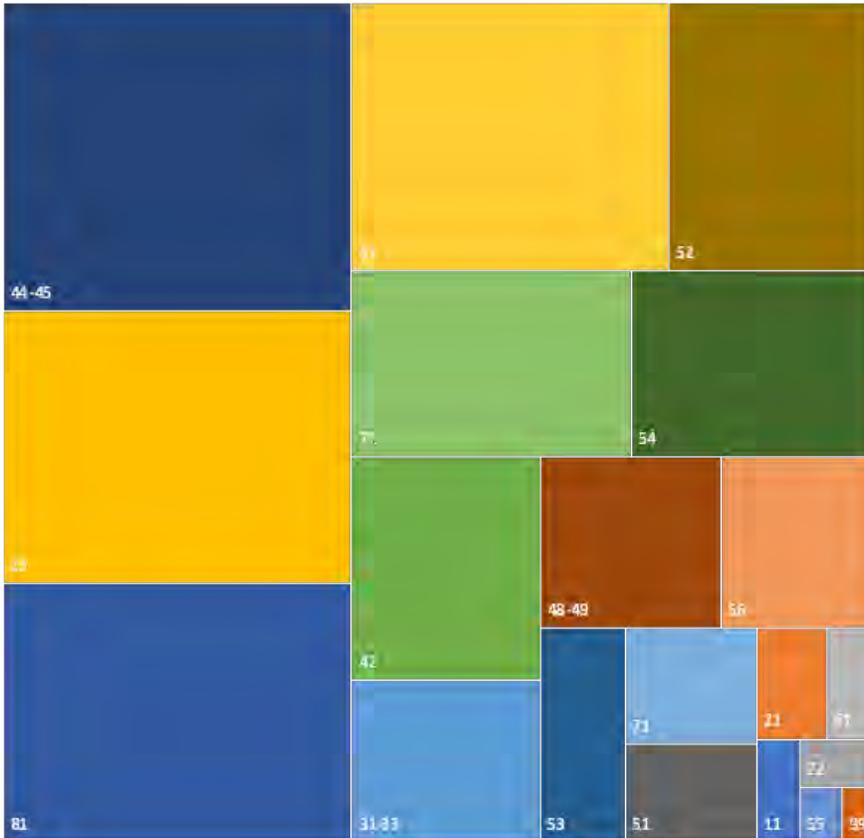


FIGURE 18. INDUSTRY MAKEUP OF THE REGION BY NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS| SOURCE: US BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

Figure 18 shows the industry of the region by the number of establishments, labeled with their NAICS code. These codes are labeled in Figure 19 on the next page. As shown, NAICS Industry code 44-45, Retail Trade, is the largest industry in the region with 234 establishments. The industry with the second highest number of establishments (207) is the construction industry (NAICS code 23). No other industry topped 200 establishments. NAICS code 81, Other Services, reached 197, but the category is miscellaneous in nature and the establishments in this category likely fit into other industry categories as well.

NAICS Code	Industry Description
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
21	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
22	Utilities
23	Construction
31-33	Manufacturing
42	Wholesale trade
44-45	Retail trade
48-49	Transportation and warehousing
51	Information
52	Finance and insurance
53	Real estate and rental and leasing
54	Professional, scientific, and technical services
55	Management of companies and enterprises
56	Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services
61	Educational Services
62	Health care and social assistance
71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation
72	Accommodation and food services
81	Other services (except public administration)
99	Industries not classified

FIGURE 19. NAICS INDUSTRY CODES

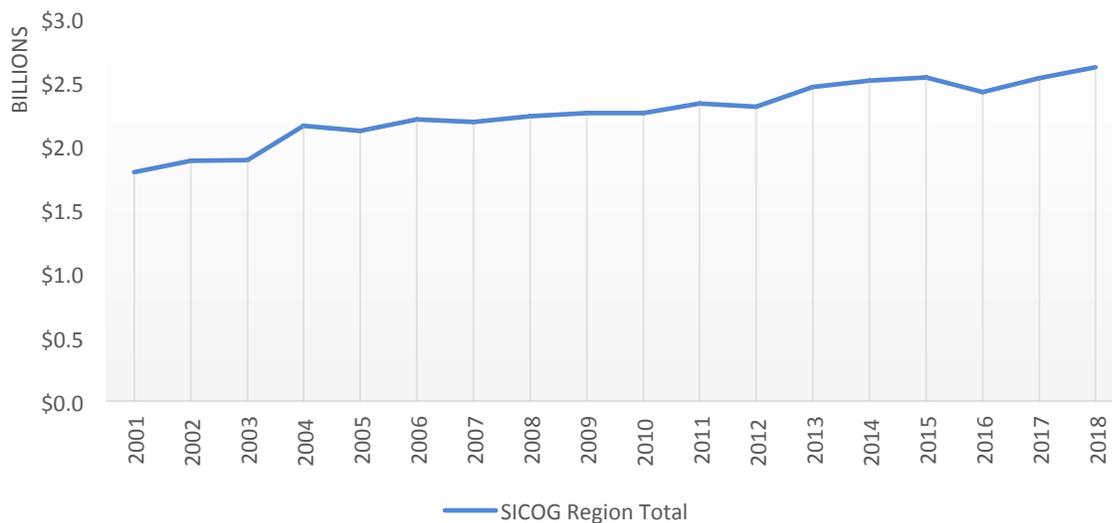


FIGURE 20. REGIONAL REAL GDP | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The total Real Gross Domestic Product (Real GDP) of the SICOG region is shown above. Since 2001, it has increased from \$1.8 billion to about \$2.6 billion. The graph of all Real GDPs of the counties in the

region is shown in Figure 21. Union County has consistently had the highest Real GDP since the turn of the century, likely due to its county seat city, Creston, which is larger than some of the counties by itself. In recent years, Adams County has moved from second lowest Real GDP to top five, just below Adair due to manufacturing growth.

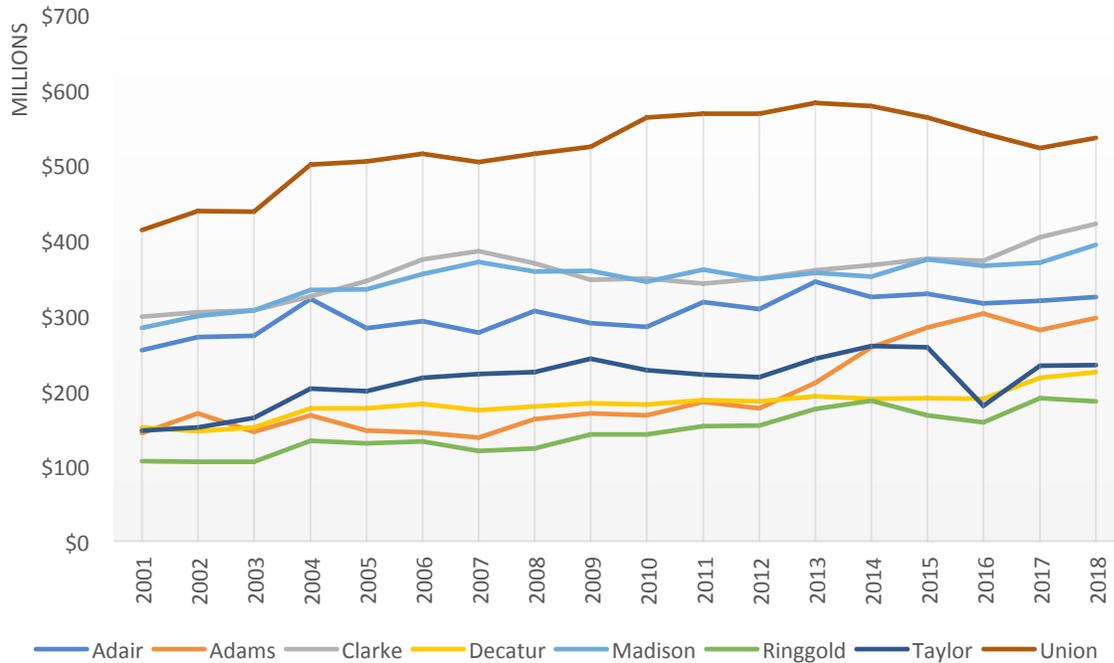


FIGURE 21. REAL GDP BY COUNTY | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

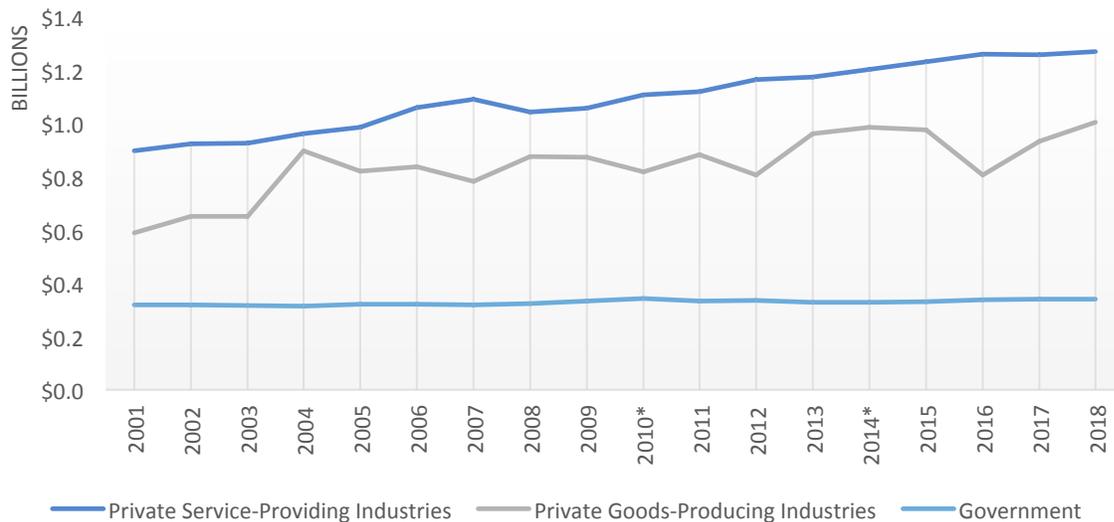


FIGURE 22. PRIVATE SERVICE-PROVIDING, PRIVATE GOODS-PRODUCING, AND GOVERNMENT REAL GDP | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS | *ONE OR MORE VALUES WAS IMPUTED DUE TO DATA LIMITATIONS

The graph above shows the regional real GDP broken into private service providing industries, private goods-producing industries, and government. The real GDP of government has increased only seven

percent since 2001. In the same time period, private sector service-providing industries real GDP has increased almost 42 percent and private sector goods-producing industries real GDP has increased 71 percent.

The graph below details the percent of total regional real GDP that is attributed to the private sector service-providing and private sector goods-producing industries along with the public sector.

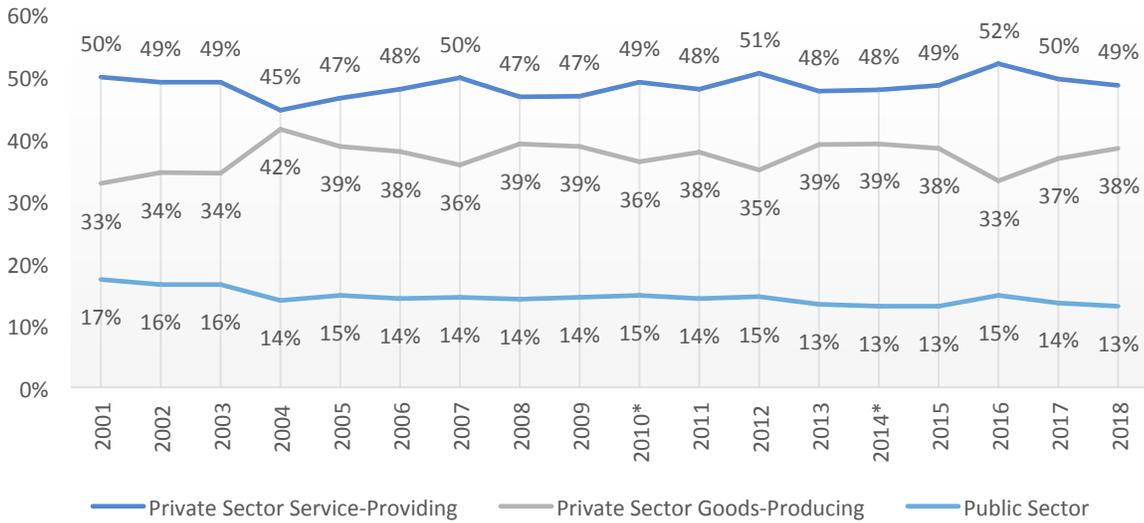


FIGURE 23. PERCENTS OF TOTAL REGIONAL REAL GDP BY SECTOR AND BASIC INDUSTRY | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS | *ONE OR MORE VALUES WAS IMPUTED DUE TO DATA LIMITATIONS

WAGES AND INCOME

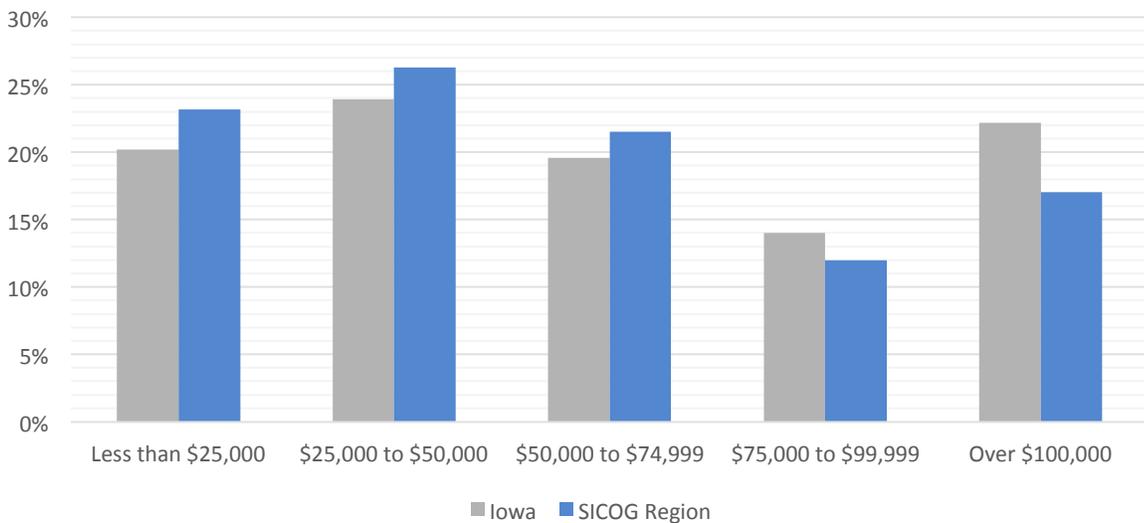


FIGURE 24. REGIONAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

Figure 24, above shows the household income for the SICOG region compared to Iowa. The regional population is much more concentrated in the bottom three tiers than the State of Iowa overall. The general pattern of the household incomes is the same, except for the final tier, which is the second highest for the State but the second lowest for the region. This could be an indication of higher income equality in the region when compared to the State of Iowa in general.

The graph below, Figure 25, shows the median household income by county for the region. Madison County is the only county in the region with a higher median household income than the State of Iowa. All other counties sit within \$4,000 of \$50,000 except for Decatur County, which sits at \$41,042.

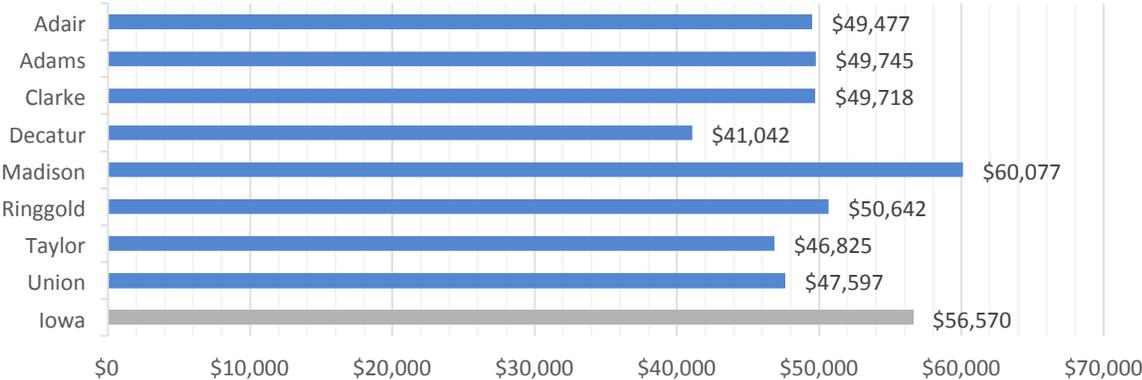


FIGURE 25. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY COUNTY COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

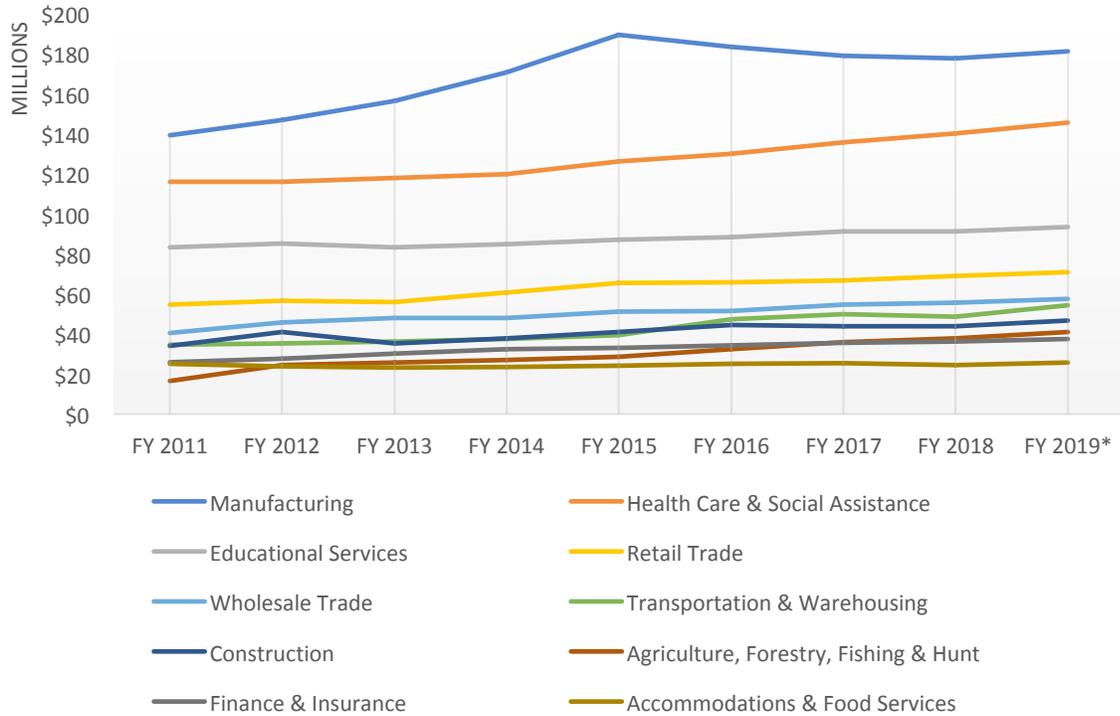


FIGURE 26. TOTAL WAGES BY INDUSTRY (TOP TEN) | SOURCE: IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | *ONE OR MORE VALUES WAS IMPUTED DUE TO DATA LIMITATIONS

Figure 26, above, displays the total wages by sector for the top ten sectors in the region. Most of the industries follow the same pattern of growth since FY 2011. The highest wage payer in the region, Manufacturing, peaked in FY 2015 then slowly recovered and can likely expect to reach the peak again in a few years. The second and third highest wages payers, Health Care and Social Assistance and Educational Services, are both mainly government or government-related services. This is despite real GDP from government work having a minimal role in the regional real GDP.

The figure to the right shows the same data as a percentage of total regional wages. It shows, among other things, that the Manufacturing, Health Care, and Educational Services industries are responsible for over 50 percent of wages in the region.

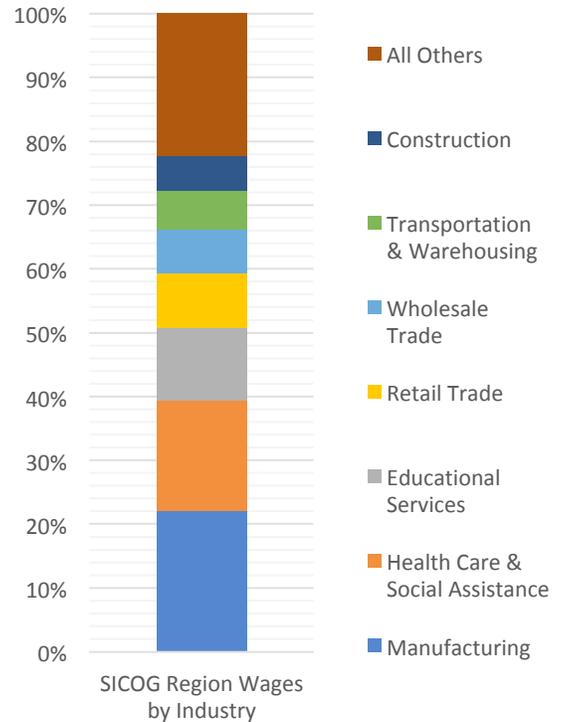


FIGURE 27. TOTAL WAGES AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL REGIONAL WAGES BY INDUSTRY | SOURCE: IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

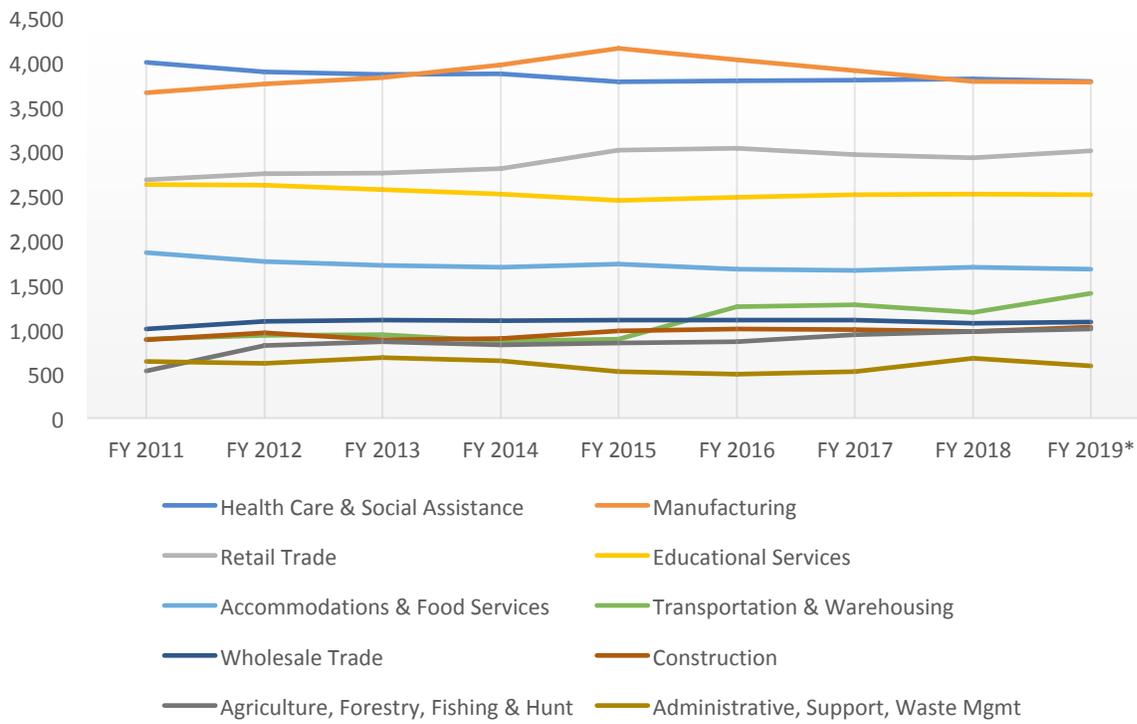


FIGURE 28. TOTAL REGIONAL EMPLOYEES BY INDUSTRY (TOP TEN) | SOURCE: IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | *ONE OR MORE VALUES WAS IMPUTED DUE TO DATA LIMITATIONS

Figure 28, above, shows the top ten employing industries. In the SICOG region, Health Care and Social Assistance and Manufacturing are the two largest employers. They are followed by Retail Trade and Educational Services. All other industries employed fewer than 2,000 individuals in the region.

The chart to the right shows the percentages of employees by industry in the region. The top four employing industries are the same as Figure 28 with Health Care and Social Assistance and Manufacturing each employing about 17 percent of the total regional employees. Retail Trade and Educational Attainment employ about 13 and 11 percent of the total regional employees. All other industries were below ten percent.

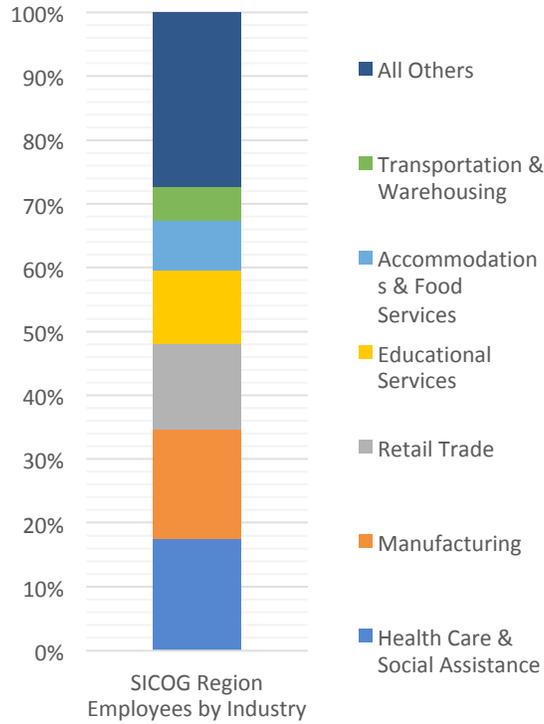


FIGURE 29. TOTAL REGIONAL EMPLOYEES AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL REGIONAL EMPLOYEES BY INDUSTRY | SOURCE: IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

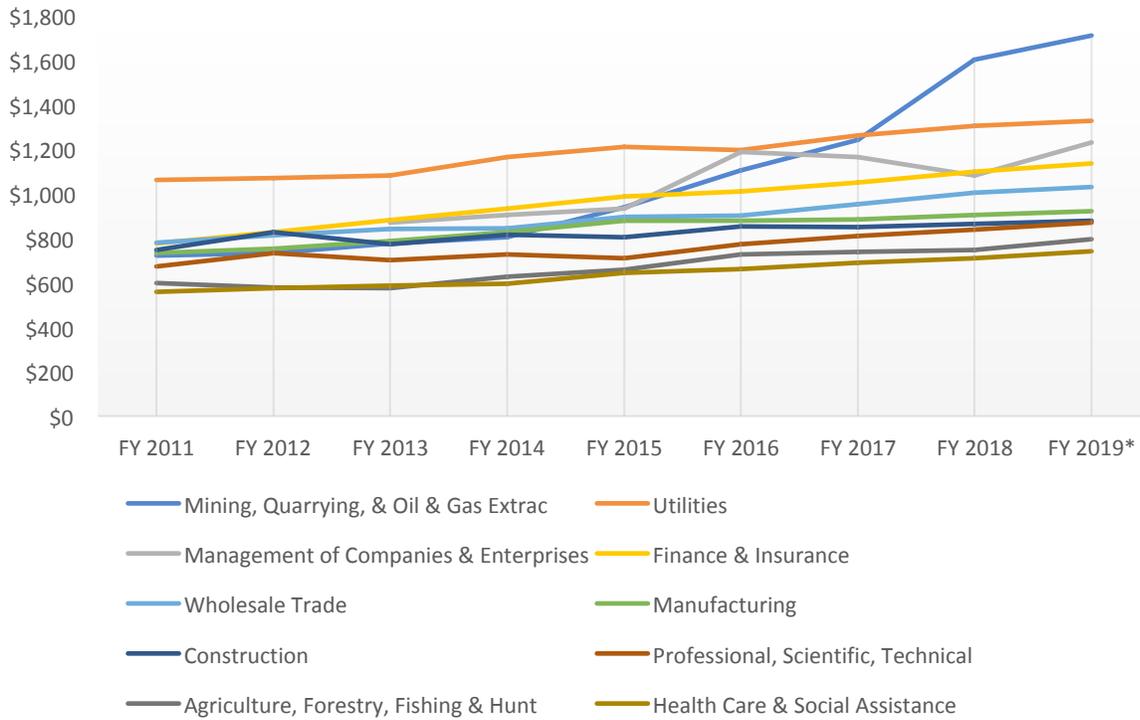


FIGURE 30. AVERAGE REGIONAL WAGE BY INDUSTRY (TOP TEN) | SOURCE: IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT | *ONE OR MORE VALUES WAS IMPUTED DUE TO DATA LIMITATIONS

The graph above shows the average regional wage by industry for the top ten industries. In general, wages have grown. For some industries this growth was slow; for others, it was fast. Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction had the fastest growth and the highest average weekly wage. This industry was followed by Utilities, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Finance and Insurance. Wholesale trade rounds out the top five and is the last industry with weekly wages over \$1,000.

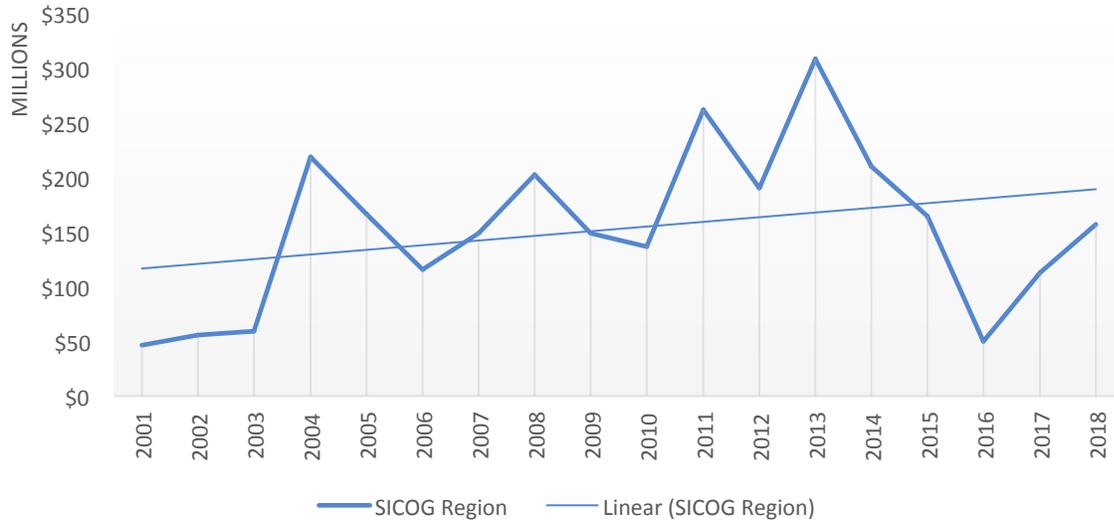


FIGURE 31. TOTAL REGIONAL FARM EARNINGS | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Since the SICOG region, and Iowa overall, is held steady by a farm economy, it is important to consider its health. The figure above displays the total regional farm earnings along with a linear that shows the general growth of farm earnings in the region. Since the turn of the century, farm earnings have generally grown but have experienced multiple peaks and valleys. The most prominent peak occurred in 2013 and was followed almost immediately by the most prominent valley that began in 2014 and ended in 2016. Since 2016, farm earnings have increased back to 2010 levels. It appears that farm earnings have recovered but, given the volatility of the statistic, this may be untrue.

The same statistic, broken into the counties, is shown below.

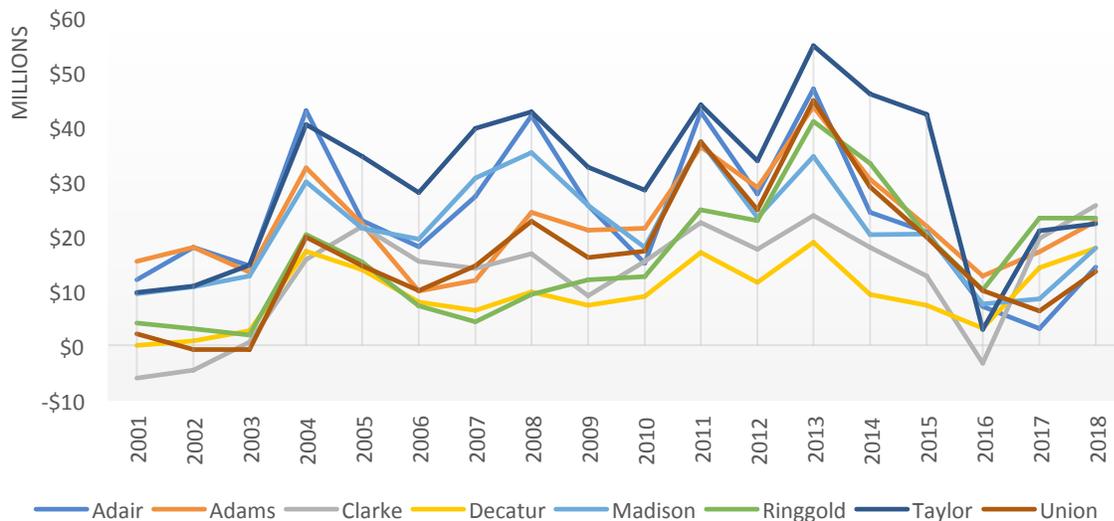


FIGURE 32. TOTAL REGIONAL FARM EARNINGS BY COUNTY | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

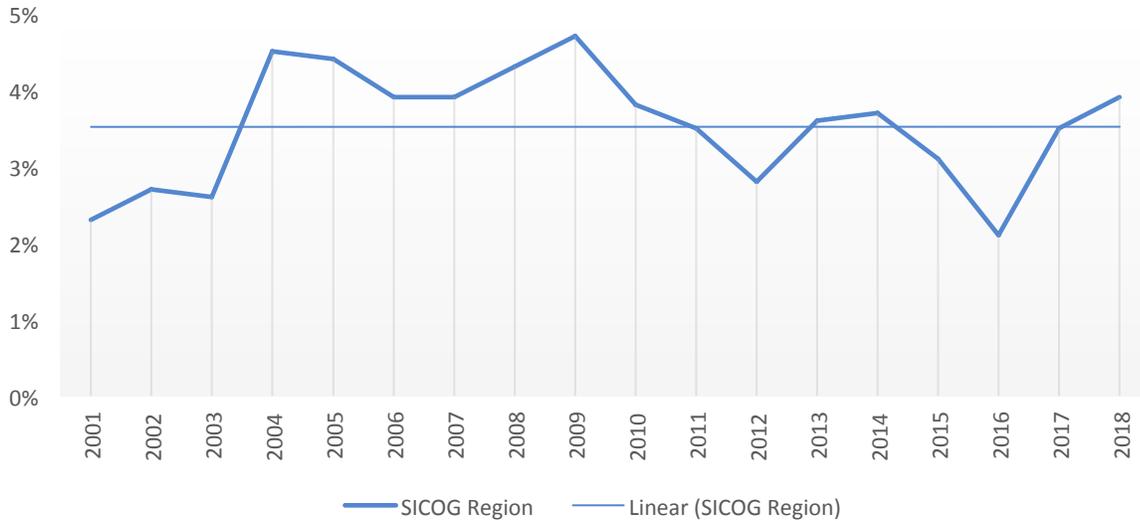


FIGURE 33. TOTAL REGIONAL FARM EARNINGS AS A PERCENT OF STATEWIDE FARM EARNINGS | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

It is important to consider how the SICOG region’s farm earnings have contributed to statewide farm earnings in order to gauge its growth relative to the average. The chart above shows the total regional farm earnings as a percent of statewide farm earnings. The region has remained within two to five percent of total statewide farm earnings since 2001 with an average of about 3.5 percent. This could indicate that there have not been any large permanent shocks to the system since the beginning of this data.

The same statistic, broken into the counties, is shown below.

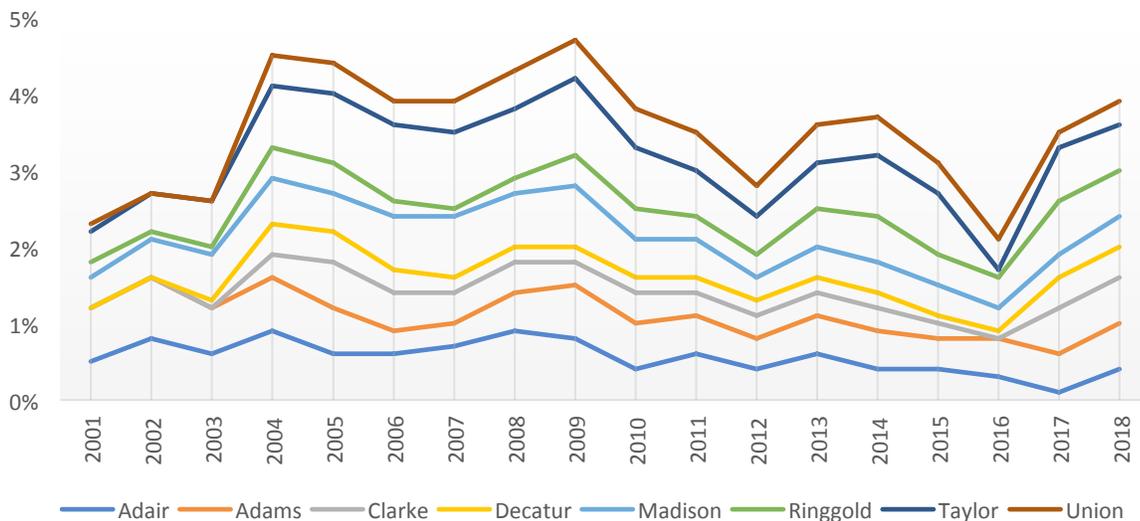


FIGURE 34. TOTAL REGIONAL FARM EARNINGS AS A PERCENT OF STATEWIDE FARM EARNINGS BY COUNTY | SOURCE: US BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

HOUSING STOCK AND LAND VALUES

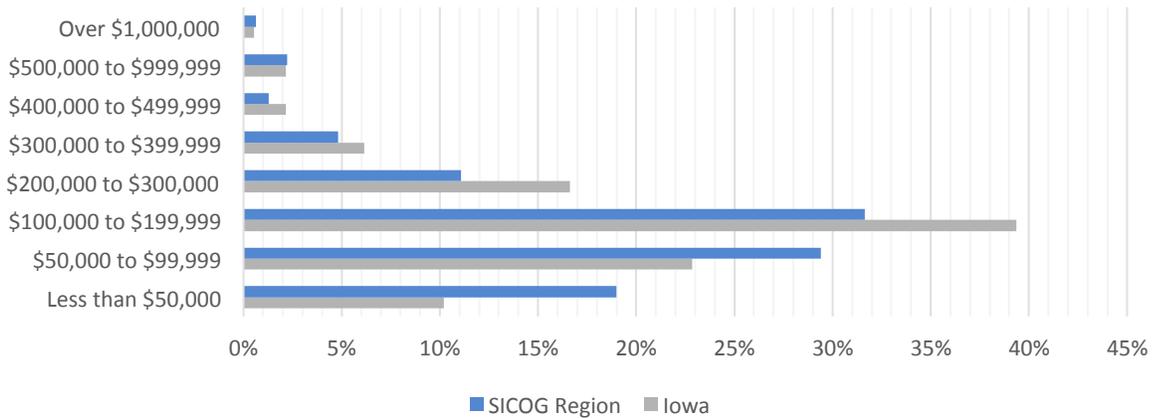


FIGURE 35. REGIONAL HOUSING VALUES COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

Regional housing and land values are very important to the regional economy as they are commonly a basis for loans and because a higher valued housing stock in a community is more attractive for employers who are looking to locate in the area and need quality housing for their employees. The chart above compares the housing values of the SICOG region with the State of Iowa overall. The distribution of the housing values for both geographies peak between \$100,000 and \$200,000. However, there is a much larger percentage of housing values below \$100,000 in the SICOG region than Iowa but there is a higher percentage of housing valued between \$100,000 and \$300,000 across the state.

The chart below shows the median housing value by county in the region compared the State of Iowa overall. Madison County is the only county in the region that exceeds the state overall. This graph is also very similar to the median household income chart (Figure 24 on page 27).

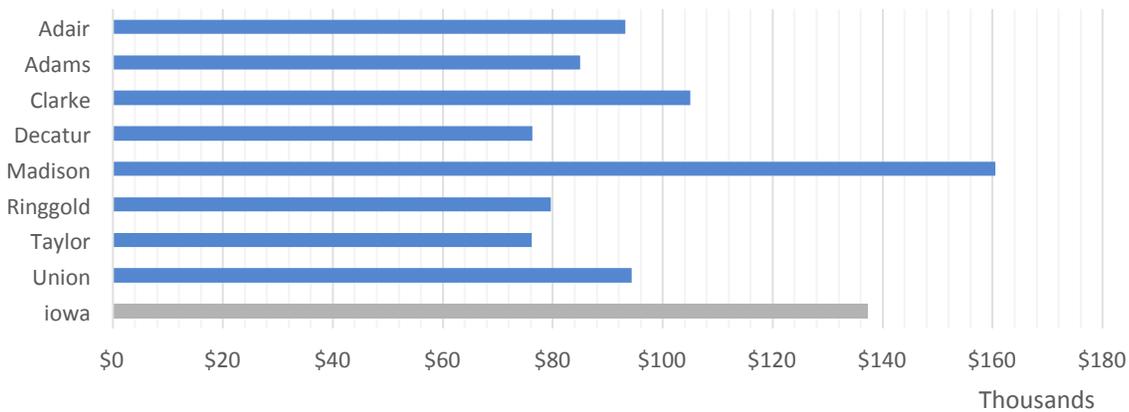


FIGURE 36. MEDIAN HOUSING VALUES BY COUNTY COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU 2018

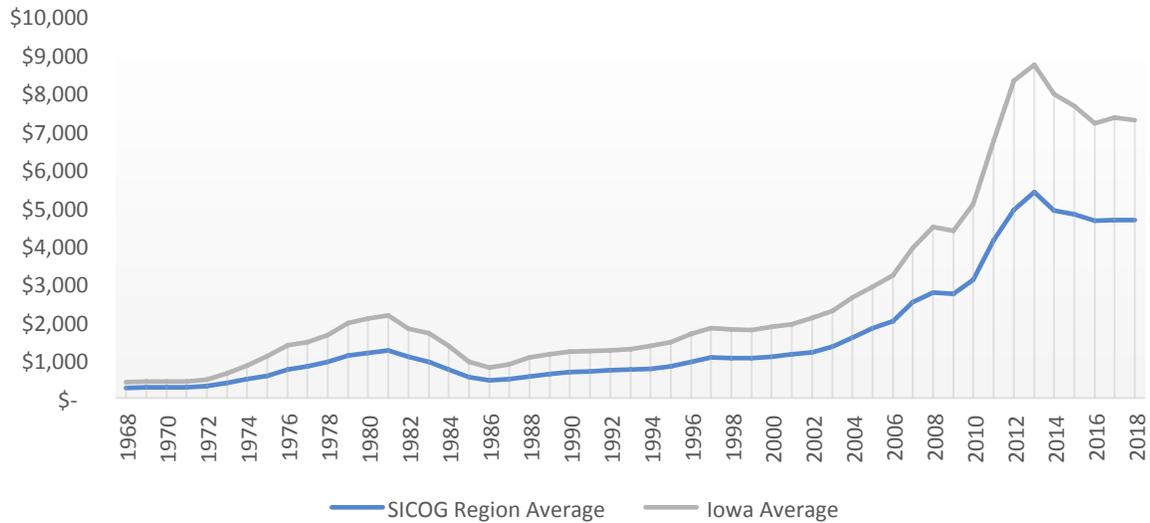


FIGURE 37. AGRICULTURAL LAND VALUES COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The chart above shows the agricultural land values in the SICOG region compared to the State of Iowa average. As seen, the agricultural land values in this region, as well as Southern Iowa in general, are significantly lower. This leads to a smaller economy in the region since Iowa economies are farm-based. Therefore, if the farmland values are lower, the economy is smaller.

The chart below shows the average agricultural land values in each of the SICOG counties compared to the State of Iowa average. Adair and Madison have the highest values in the region while Decatur and Clarke have the lowest. Decatur County, in particular, has the lowest agricultural land values in the entire state. All counties in the SICOG region are at least \$1,000 below the state average.

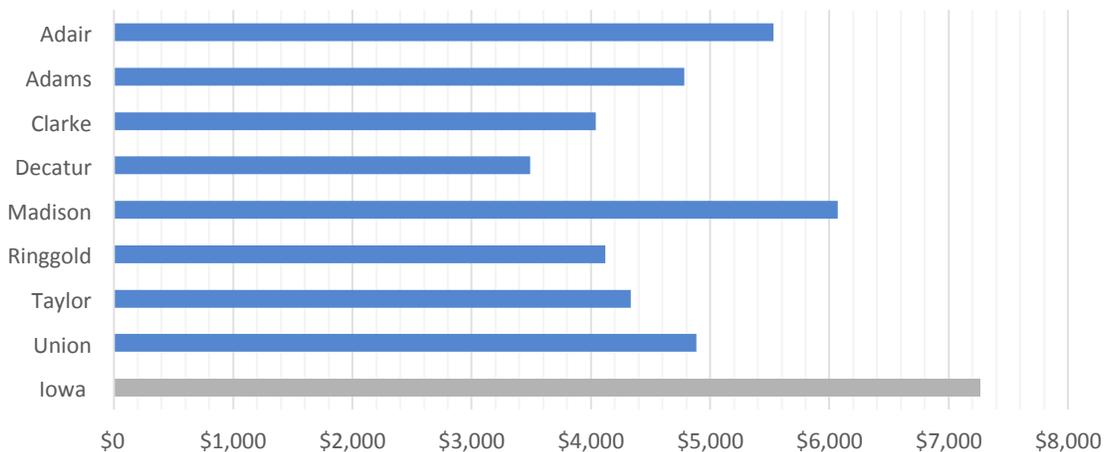


FIGURE 38. AVERAGE LAND VALUES BY COUNTY COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The age of the housing stock in the region is very important to consider as it can serve as an indication of the condition and quality of housing. Older houses usually require more maintenance than newer houses, which increases the costs associated with owning homes. This may dissuade potential homeowners from investing in a new home and steer them towards rental housing. Generally, houses that are renter-occupied instead of owner-occupied become dilapidated more quickly and as a result, have lower values. In the chart to the right, the age of the housing stock in the SICOG region is compared to the State of Iowa overall. In the SICOG region, a higher percentage of all housing units were built before 1940. This means that about 36 percent of housing units in the SICOG region are at least 80 years old. These units undoubtedly have higher maintenance costs associated with them.

The median age of the housing stock of the SICOG region, broken into counties, is compared to the State of Iowa in the table below. Two counties, Madison and Ringgold, have lower median housing ages than the State of Iowa. One county, Clarke, has an equal median housing age. The rest of the counties have higher median housing ages.

<i>Geography</i>	<i>Median Age</i>
Adair	62
Adams	77
Clarke	52
Decatur	55
Madison	49
Ringgold	50
Taylor	66
Union	61
Iowa	52

FIGURE 39. MEDIAN AGE OF HOUSING STOCK BY COUNTY COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

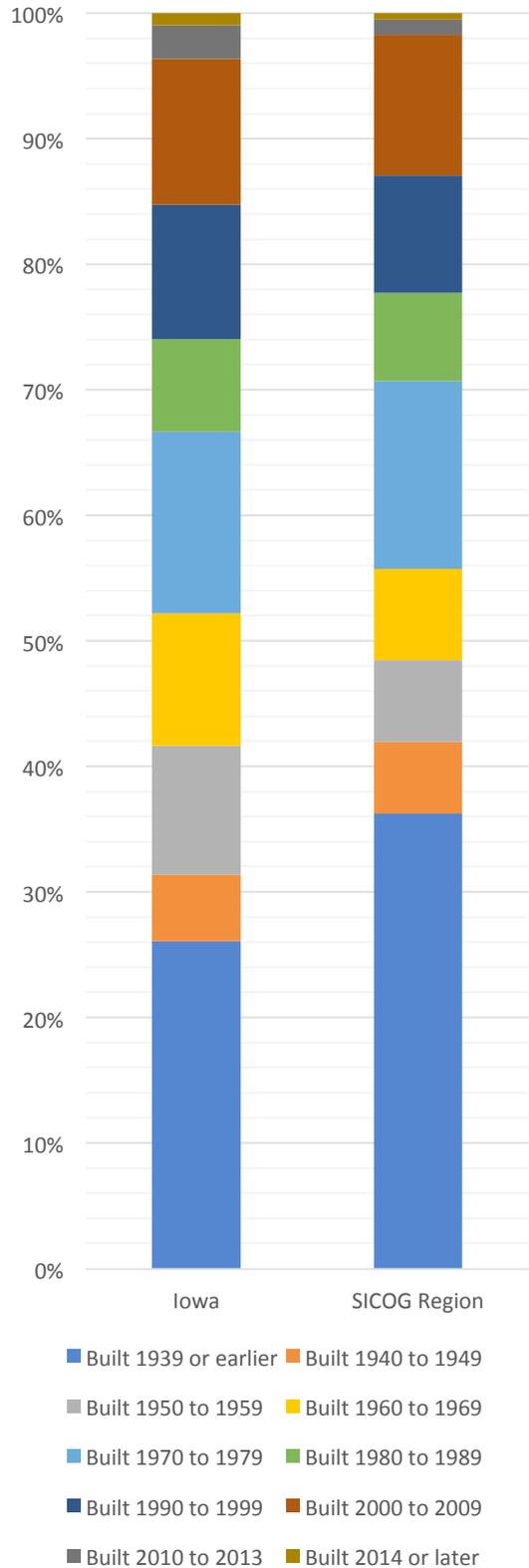


FIGURE 40. AGE OF HOUSING STOCK COMPARED TO THE STATE OF IOWA | SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

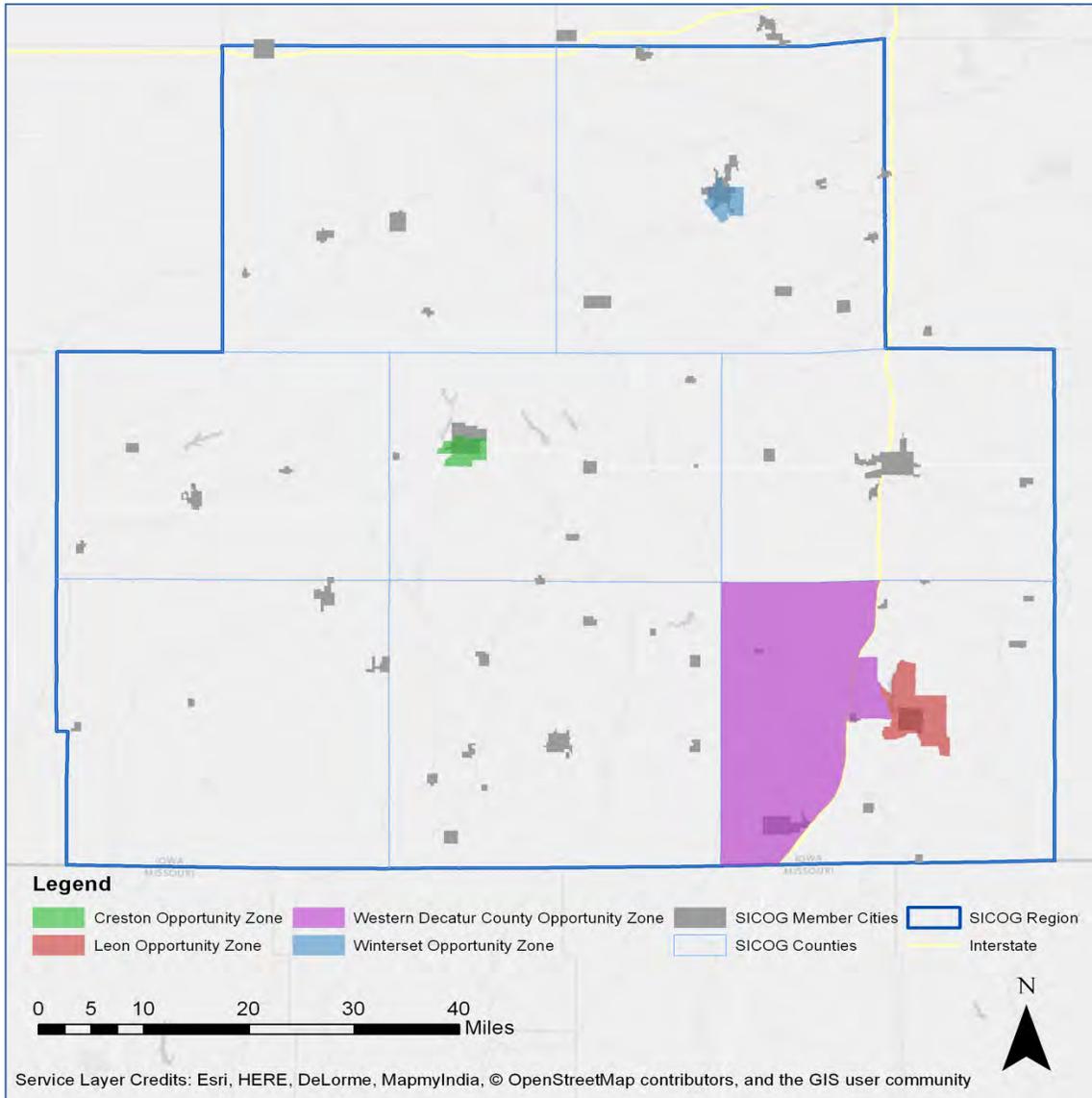


FIGURE 41. OPPORTUNITY ZONES IN THE SICOG REGION | SOURCE: IOWA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

An Opportunity Zone is a designation given to communities that are considered “economically-distressed.” These zones were created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which was signed into law in December of that year. There are almost 9,000 Qualified Opportunity Zones located in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and five US territories. These zones allow private investments in the designated communities to be eligible for a temporary deferral on their capital gains taxes if they hold their investment in the community for at least five years. If the private investors hold their investment in the community for ten years, they are eligible for a permanent exclusion from capital gains taxes on the dollars used for that investment. More information can be found at <https://opportunityzones.hud.gov/>.

There are four Opportunity Zones in the SICOG region. They are seen on the previous page (Figure 41). Two of the Opportunity Zones are located in Decatur County while the other two are located in Union County (part of Creston) and Madison County (part of Winterset). Of the two zones in Decatur County, one covers all of Leon and its surrounding area and the other covers almost the entire western half of the county using Interstate-35 as most of the boundary line. This second zone covers the entirety of Lamoni, Grand River, and Decatur City. So far, there has been little success in gaining quality investment in these areas. As technical assistance from the state and federal government begins to become more readily available, this may change.

The hope of this designation is to incentivize investment from the private sector into disadvantaged communities. It will certainly be a priority of SICOG and other partners to ensure the success of these communities by utilizing this new tool.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the regional economy, as was the case nationally. The Coronavirus Pandemic 2020 was devastating to the local economy causing layoffs, unemployment, and business closures. The local economy has benefitted from the activities conducted during the last 12 months and will, in the future, due to SICOG planning activities, RLF Funds and the guidelines presented in this CEDS. Following is a summary of the area economy. SICOG was awarded EDA Planning Supplemental Funds, as well as, an EDA COVID-19 RLF program. Since the program launched, SICOG has fielded 28 contacts for ~\$2.1 million. Currently SICOG has awarded funds totaling \$962,000, and have five pending applications. Most of the loans are for projects that were in the planning stage and for businesses opening right when the pandemic hit, which delayed the opening or other needed investments. Most are small businesses that are looking to add employees.

The region is primarily rural, with only three towns having populations over 2,500: Creston (7,834), Winterset (5,190), and Osceola (4,929). Seventy-four percent (74%) of the residents of the region live in very small towns (less than 2,500 population) or in unincorporated rural areas.

The Southern Iowa region has been transformed and land uses continue to evolve. Much of the land is still used for farming; hogs and cattle are raised in the region in large numbers. In recent years, wind farms have been developed. It is anticipated that solar “farms” will be built in the near future.

The population continues to age, fewer residents exclusively farm as a living. Farm Census data indicates there are fewer farms and their size has increased. Natural resources in this region are primarily the rich soil suitable for farming, farm products, wind energy, sand, gravel, and limestone.

Economic development has been slow in the smaller towns in the region. These smaller towns do not have the quality infrastructure, housing, site, or financing capabilities needed to promote extensive economic growth. Ongoing efforts using programs, such as CDBG and USDA-RD, have steadily improved economic development potential in the smallest of communities through infrastructure and housing improvements.

County seat towns generally house the government centers and many essential medical, educational, and social services. County seat towns draw from the rural areas and smaller communities to supply employees, and they generate the capital to improve infrastructure and housing. This trend is more noticeable in the SICOG region than in many areas of the state. It is expected that this trend will continue with a “no” or “slow’ growth of the county seat towns. The pandemic will accelerate decline in some of the most economically unviable towns in each county.

Southern Iowa continues to lag behind the rest of the state economically. Declines in population and slower per capita income increases in relation to the rest of the state continue to affect the region.

The region has many positive attributes that are conducive to a positive economic climate and the attraction of new or expanding businesses. The region is centrally located near Interstate highways in the central United States with proximity to the major urban areas of Des Moines, Omaha, and Kansas City.

Analysis of the region indicates prior to COVID-19 that the SICOG region is facing several issues:

1. Lack of available workforce.
2. Lack of quality broadband connectivity.
3. Continued development of regional centers replacing small communities as the focus of the region’s economy.
4. Continued movement toward regionalization as a whole and greater dependence on urban influence and shopping opportunities.
5. Continued struggles due to taxation policies and disparity in local budgets, combined with loss of state and federal budget support.
6. Increased competitiveness for federal, state, and corporate funds.

The following key findings related to the Coronavirus Pandemic should be noted as they are observed in our region:

- a. Business lost to the economic downturn.
- b. Unemployment due to the pandemic and closures related to the quarantines needed to curtail the spread of the virus. (10.2% July 2020 at its peak)
- c. Lost capital by existing, mostly Main Street, businesses.
- d. Inadequate broadband utilities and infrastructure.
- e. Lack of child daycare providers.
- f. Poor distribution of healthcare supplies.
- g. Supply chain disruptions.
- h. Curtailed new entrepreneurship opportunities due to uncertainties.
- i. Transformed retail economy - acceleration toward online shopping – small “Mom and Pop” not equipped technologically for this transition.
- j. City and county loss of revenue due to less “use “ tax (Hotel/motel, sales, road use).
- k. Evictions and Foreclosures.
- l. Decreased incentive to invest in commercial or industrial expansions/new ventures due to uncertainties down the road.

SICOG provides a wide variety of planning activities and services to address our current economic situation and COVID-19 aftermath. The following are the major programs and services delivered to our membership and other regional and local organizations in our effort to serve the diverse and broad needs of the entire region:

- Economic Development: comprehensive loan packaging, development projects, and financial packaging;
- Community Development: grant applications and administration, special projects, and information resources;
- Planning: comprehensive plans, recreation plans, zoning and subdivision regulations, annexations, neighborhood studies, and transportation planning;
- Housing: grant applications and administration, housing needs assessments, first-time home buyers program, housing rehabilitation programs, special projects, housing trust fund, and information resources;
- Financial Assistance: revolving loan funds for: industries, businesses, home-owners, housing, and communities;
- Technical Assistance: grant and funding research, budgets, census data, zoning, annexation, codification, geographic information systems, industrial recruitment, and housing development.

SICOG's CEDS will help the area to assist the region "prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus" or respond to "economic injury as a result of coronavirus."

From the vast amount of contacts and conversations during the last 12 months, SICOG has unveiled many projects that could assist with the prevention, preparation, and response to coronavirus or response to the economic injury as a result of coronavirus. Projects include:

- Small business recovery due to closures (working capital, inventory etc.)
- Small business renovation to accommodate building use due to smaller occupancy rate
- Large business expansions to respond to the pent up demand for existing products
- Expansion of Daycare facilities
- Training facilities to re-train lost positions
- New startup businesses
- Expansion of existing small businesses
- Broadband infrastructure
- Working Capital needs
- Technology equipment and resources (selling on line).

In direct talks with our local bankers and SICOG economic development partners, all feel there is a place for financial assistance through a revolving loan fund. The bankers all stressed the fact that businesses will be very cautious to taking on new debt, but without access to low interest capital, many businesses will be unable to recover, which will have a lasting detrimental impact on many of our smaller rural communities.

During the last 12 months SICOG has processed, reviewed and responded to 28 requests from businesses that have been affected due to the pandemic. This increase in RLF activity accounts for an

increase of ~200% in SICOG's business loan activities. The 12 months prior to the pandemic we assisted 10 businesses. During the 12-month after the start of the pandemic we have assisted 28 businesses totaling over \$2.1 million in requests.

During this economic crisis, it is essential to make available technical assistance to businesses, assistance to our member governments and low to no interest capital to help our struggling businesses. By making funds and assistance available to businesses and technical assistance and grantsmanship to member governments in our region, shows a commitment to being an active economic development partner and concern for economic recovery during this health emergency. SICOG has strong support from its board, development groups, and member jurisdictions to overcome the COVID-19.

As a result of the COVID-19 health pandemic, availability of the planning resources and access to funding is even more critical than ever before.

The significant economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak should become clearer as data and information is developed through the next months and even years. As part of the implementation of the CEDS and pandemic recovery SICOG will complete a Comprehensive Pandemic Recovery Strategy. Many changes will occur in the Southern Iowa Council of Governments Region during this time and the Region will work together to become more resilient. Included in the Comprehensive Pandemic Recovery Strategy will be data sets, methodology, and indicators that will provide not only in the independent strategy but also be included in subsequent CEDS updates or strategies. Finally, the strategies developed for recovery efforts will be specific to the SICOG's region.

Southern Iowa Council of Governments Region's plan for responding to the pandemic threats is the 2020 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). However, SICOG will be directing its attention to business economically affected by the economic shutdown. These businesses will be generally small in size and employment numbers with emphasis more on service and retail businesses. Although the CEDS was adopted pre COVID-19, the guidance still provides direction during this turbulent time and the 2021 CEDS update will address COVID-19. The following excerpt summarizes the 2020 CEDS:

CEDS Vision. Through the collaborative efforts of the Region's public and private leaders, the implementation of SICOG's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was created and will continue to emphasize an economically resilient region that attracts and retains both businesses and a talented workforce.

CEDS Goals. The current CEDS includes nine goals designed to enhance the economic growth of the Southern Iowa Council of Governments Region. The overall goal of SICOG is to provide a framework within which to create a comprehensive approach to area-wide development, and the orderly conservation of resources in the region.

CEDS Economic Adjustment. It is the goal of the Recovery to provide long-term, low or no interest financing to businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and to retain, expand and diversify

businesses to improve the region's economic resilience to economic downturns by creating and/or retaining jobs. The following will be the business development objectives of the Recovery Plan:

- Assist eligible businesses in recovering from the economic downturn caused by the pandemic.
- Assist members improve infrastructure.
- Support development that generally strengthens the region's economy against future economic downturns.
- Retain/create jobs.
- Lost capital by existing, mostly Main Street, businesses.
- Inadequate broadband utilities and infrastructure.
- Daycare providers.
- Healthcare supplies.
- Supply chain disruptions.
- Curtailed new entrepreneurship opportunities due to uncertainties.
- Transformed retail economy - acceleration toward online shopping – small “Mom and Pop” not equipped technologically for this transition.
- City and county loss of revenue due to less “use “ tax (Hotel/motel, sales, road use).
- Evictions and Foreclosures.

The program goals are intended to enable economic development, community development, workforce development and job creation/retention. This aligns with goals in our current CEDS. In summary, SICOG efforts will address five key elements:

Activity 1 - RESILIENCE OF AGENCY

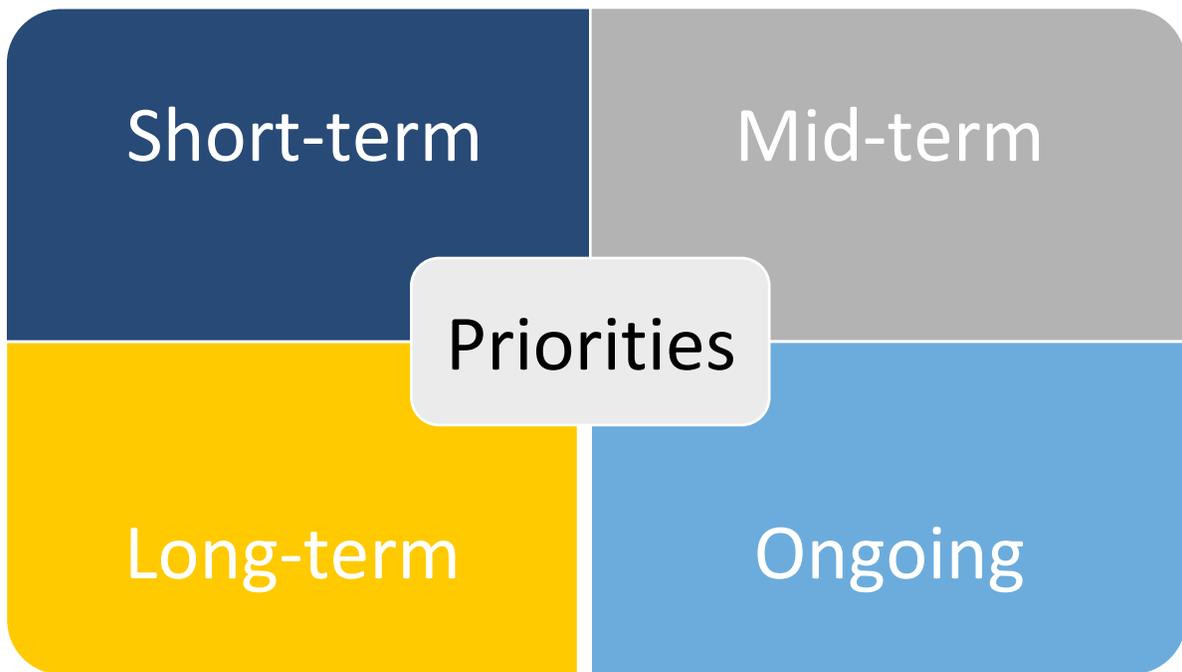
Activity 2 - BUSINESS RECOVERY

Activity 3 - COMMUNITY RECOVERY

Activity 4 - DEVELOP ADVANCE RECOVERY MATRIX – develop a matrix to determine businesses in the EDD region that are of a higher risk for failure due to the pandemic.

Activity 5 - DEVELOP A PANDEMIC RESILIENCY TOOLKIT - develop a Statewide Pandemic Resiliency Toolkit.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES



SWOT SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

The region has many strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. As part of this annual update, SICOG chose not to ask the membership about current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). SICOG will complete a full analysis and survey the membership and key partners as part of the next full five-year update in 2022. There are not enough changes from year to year to necessarily complete the process each year.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

As SICOG has done every other year, SICOG prepared a regional priorities questionnaire this year. The priorities category is notably different than in past years. The goal was to reduce the number of priority categories to a management number, remove some that have not been popular in many years or that are addressed by other entities, and diversify some of them to be more specific. For example, we divided “economic development” into two categories, one related to supporting the existing economy and one related to growing the economy. Further, we only sent the surveys to member and associate local governments and not to economic development groups, board members, and other partners. The following shows the general results.

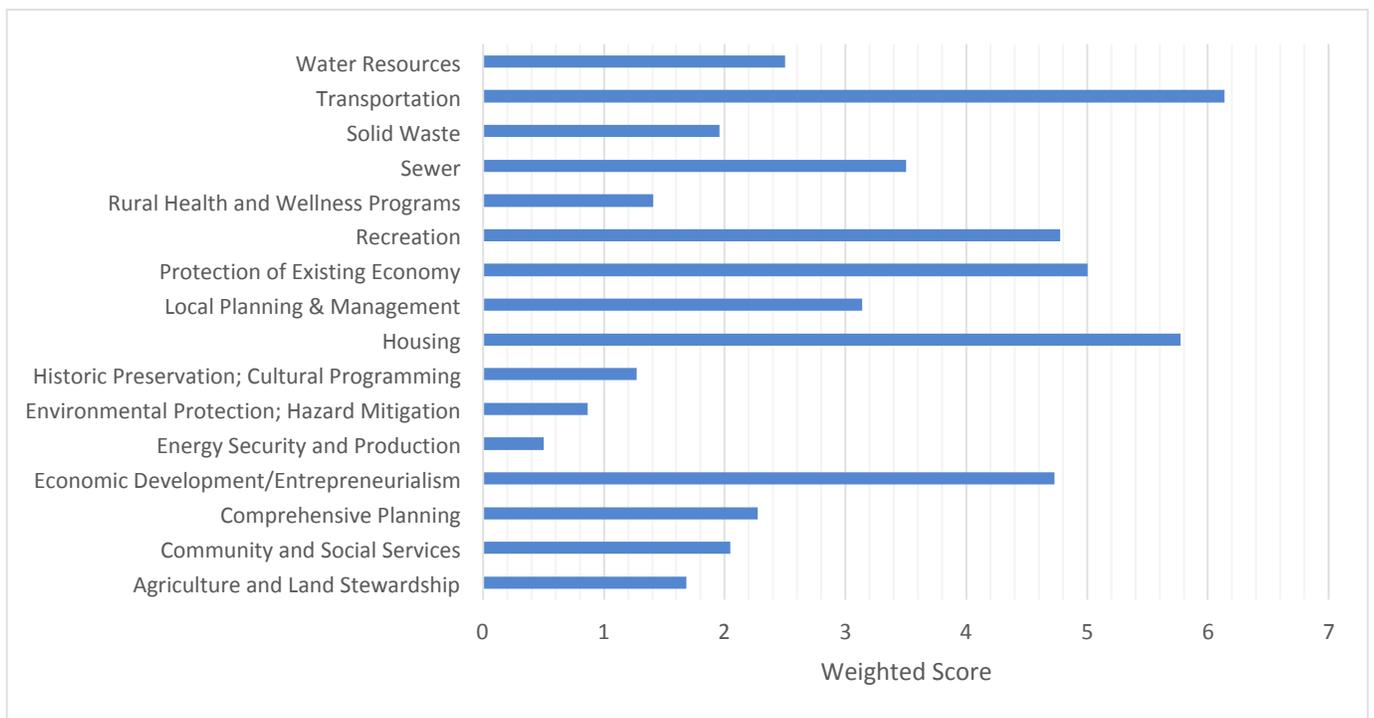


FIGURE 42: REGIONAL PRIORITIES | SOURCE: 2021 CEDS SURVEY

The graph above displays priorities of the 2021 SICOG CEDS survey respondents. The total number of respondents for this survey was 22 out of a total possible pool of approximately 66. The modest response was due to a late start to the survey process. The scores were calculated in the following way:

The first priority of a respondent was given a score of ten, the second priority was given a score of nine, the third priority was given a score of eight, the fourth priority was given a score of seven, and so on.

Transportation, housing, and protecting the existing economy finished first, second, and third respectively. They were followed by *recreation, economic development/entrepreneurism, and sewer* round out the top six. These results are loosely compared to previous years because the priority categories have changed. The breakup of economic development, which often dominated the list in the past, into two categories helps us focus the types of economic need. If these were combined into one priority of “economic development,” like in the past, this would likely become the top priority.

These same local governments were asked about projects to be implemented in the next few years in short, medium, and long-range timelines. While not outlined in this report, these projects will be a focus of SICOG’s staff time when assisting the cities and counties in implementing projects.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION/ACTION PLAN



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

VISION

The mission of SICOG is to provide and coordinate 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.

The goals of SICOG are to:

- Promote community and economic development;
- Serve as an advocate for the region;
- Provide a forum for common concerns and issues;
- Maximize resources;
- Promote and encourage leadership development;
- Use the best technologies and practices; and
- Provide skilled professional staff.

GOALS

Using the SICOG mission statement/goals, the 2021 CEDS survey, and various statistics, the following prioritized goals were established for the 2021 SICOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:

- Improve and maintain the quality of life for residents in the region
- Improve economic resilience
- Promote regional collaboration
- Improve environmental resilience

These are the same goals as 2020 and will not be updated until 2022, when the full five-year update is required. A summary of progress is added from the original 2020 list.

ACTION PLAN

KEY:

SCHEDULES

Ongoing: A continuing effort that occurs throughout the life of this strategy

Short: Start and finish within one or two years of adoption

Medium: Start and finish within five years of adoption

Long: Start within five years but finish after five years

ACRONYMS

ATURA: Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA 14) serving the counties of Adair, Taylor, Union, Ringgold, and Adams

CIRTPA: Central Iowa Regional Transportation Affiliate

CVTPA: Chariton Valley Transportation Planning Affiliation serving the counties of Appanoose, Clarke, Davis, Decatur, Lucas, Monroe, and Wayne

HUD: United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

IDOT: Iowa Department of Transportation

IDNR: Iowa Department of Natural Resources

IEDA: Iowa Economic Development Authority

IDALS: Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

IFA: Iowa Finance Authority

IWD: Iowa Workforce Development

MATURA: Designated Community Action Agency for the counties of Madison, Adams, Taylor, Union, Ringgold, and Adair

NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service

RC & D: Resource Conservation and Development

SCICAP: Designated Community Action Agency for the counties of Clarke, Decatur, Lucas, Monroe, and Wayne in South Central Iowa

SICOG: Southern Iowa Council of Governments

SIRHA: Southern Iowa Regional Housing Authority

SIRWA: Southern Iowa Regional Water Authority

SIT: Southern Iowa Trolley

SWCC: Southwestern Community College

US EDA: United State Economic Development Administration

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

GOAL 1: IMPROVE AND MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS IN THE REGION

Quality of life can have many different definitions and can include a variety of quantitative and qualitative factors. Lexico defines quality of life as *the standard of health, comfort, and happiness experience by an individual or group*. These three broad components (health, comfort, and happiness) can be heavily influenced by the actions of all levels of government (local, state, federal). Improving and maintaining these components can very positively impact the economic development potential of a region by creating desirable living conditions for residents. Therefore, the following are objectives in the goal of improving and maintaining the quality of life for residents in the region:

- Improve regional transportation assets;
- Improve and expand regional recreational assets; and
- Improve the regional housing stock.

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ASSETS

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Explore and implement transportation enhancement/improvement projects</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; ATURA; CIRTPA; CVTPA; IDOT; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce	Medium	In process
<i>Explore and implement multi-modal transportation projects</i>		Long	Not started
<i>Explore and implement streetscaping projects</i>		Long	Not started

OBJECTIVE 2: IMPROVE AND EXPAND REGIONAL RECREATIONAL ASSETS

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify and evaluate key recreational assets</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce	Medium	Not started
<i>Create and implement regional recreation plans</i>		Long	Not started
<i>Promote and assist the development of individual recreational asset plans</i>		Ongoing	Not started

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE THE REGIONAL HOUSING STOCK

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Evaluate housing conditions in cities and counties</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IEDA, IFA, USDA	Short	In process
<i>Apply for and administer housing grants</i>		Medium	In process
<i>Expand regional development capacity, including builders, financing, and investors</i>		Medium	Not started
<i>Market, evaluate, and expand the services of the Southern Iowa COG Housing Trust Fund</i>	SICOG	Ongoing	In process
<i>Market the services of the Southern Iowa Development Group</i>	SICOG	Ongoing	In process – with additional COVID funds

GOAL 2: IMPROVE REGIONAL ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Economic resilience in a system, such as a regional economy, can be defined in two ways. The first of which is *the ability of a system to withstand external shocks to and return to its equilibrium*. The second definition is *the ability of a system to suffer an external shock and adapt to a new equilibrium*. The first definition is more appropriate for static systems with fewer dynamic components. The second definition is more appropriate for a system with almost unlimited dynamic components, such as a regional economy. Therefore, the following are objectives in the goal of improving regional economic resilience:

- Support and strengthen existing businesses;
- Facilitate an environment that is inviting to new businesses;
- Encourage diversification of the regional industrial mix;
- Support projects that have potential to capitalize on competitive advantages of the region;
- Develop an educational/training system that supports the regional economy; and
- Take advantage of the Opportunity Zones in the region.

OBJECTIVE 1: SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN EXISTING BUSINESSES

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Develop an outreach program targeting regional industries to assess the current and future needs of businesses including ownership transition</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; Local Business Owners/Operators; IWD	Medium	Not started
<i>Conduct trade leakage studies</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IWD	Long	Ongoing by other entities
<i>Market, evaluate, and expand the services of Southern Iowa Development Group</i>	SICOG	Ongoing	In process – with additional COVID funds

OBJECTIVE 2: FACILITATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS INVITING TO NEW BUSINESSES

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Support institutions, programs, and initiatives that encourage new business development</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; Local Business Owners/Operators; IWD	Ongoing	In process
<i>Provide technical assistance to regarding tax and zoning codes that encourage new business development</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing	In process

Enhance quality of life factors in the region

Ongoing

In process

OBJECTIVE 3: ENCOURAGE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL MIX

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify resources to support industry clusters and research emerging industry trends</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IEDA; IWD	Short	Not started
<i>Improve access to small business development resources and incubators</i>		Medium	In process by partner entities
<i>Conduct market studies to identify business opportunities</i>		Long	In process by partner entities
<i>Identify and pursue grant funding to support entrepreneurial development</i>		Ongoing	In process by partner entities
<i>Encourage public-private partnerships to identify business opportunities</i>		Ongoing	In process by partner entities

OBJECTIVE 4: SUPPORT PROJECTS THAT HAVE POTENTIAL TO CAPITALIZE ON COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES OF THE REGION

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify and evaluate specific current advantages of the region economically, socially, and environmentally</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; Local Business Owners/Operators; IDNR	Short	In process
<i>Promote and support the formation of industry clusters within developed and emerging industries</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; Local Business Owners/Operators	Ongoing	Not started
<i>Promote and support projects which support resource-based industries in the region</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IDNR	Ongoing	Not started
<i>Promote and support a regional trail system</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IDNR	Ongoing	In process
<i>Promote and support natural resource protection</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IDNR	Ongoing	In process

OBJECTIVE 5: DEVELOP AN EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING SYSTEM THAT SUPPORTS THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Evaluate the regional economy to determine workforce needs</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IEDA; IWD; SWCC; Local School Districts	Short	In process by other entities
<i>Develop a curriculum that supports the regional economy</i>		Long	Not started
<i>Develop an internship/apprenticeship program for local students</i>		Long	In process by partner entities
<i>Research emerging industry trends and related workforce needs</i>		Ongoing	In process by partner entities
<i>Research and pursue grant opportunities to fund workforce development</i>		Ongoing	In process by partner entities

OBJECTIVE 6: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY ZONES IN THE REGION

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Develop a regional prospectus to market Opportunity Zones</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; Local Business Owners/Operators; US EDA; HUD; IEDA	Short	In process by partner entities
<i>Increase regional knowledge of the functionality of Opportunity Zones in the region</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Develop partnerships to utilize Opportunity Zones</i>		Ongoing	In process by partner entities
<i>Assist communities in management of their Opportunity Zone</i>		Ongoing	Not started

GOAL 3: PROMOTE AND IMPROVE REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Regional collaboration can be defined as *the coordination and collective work of people, public institutions, and private organizations of multiple disciplines and adjacent or surrounding geographic jurisdictions*. In this case, the counties and cities of the SICOG region are the adjacent geographic jurisdictions. The importance of collaboration within the region is best understood as an issue of limited resources. A naturally unequal distribution of resources occurs in economies due to various reasons, population loss and migration being two of them, resulting in shortages of all types of resources in small towns, which are the dominant urban form in the SICOG region. Regional collaboration is the way resource shortages can be mitigated and neutralized to allow for economic growth and development. Therefore, the following are objectives in the goal of promoting and improving regional collaboration.

- Improve communication between municipalities;
- Encourage a regional perspective through plans;
- Develop regional data and information resources;
- Effectively and efficiently connect local governments with outside resources; and
- Increase the public knowledge of SICOG services.

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify potential linkages between communities</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; School Districts; Colleges; SIRWA; SIRHA; other regional resource	Short	In process
<i>Maintain a regional directory of communities and resources</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Promote service sharing and equipment sharing between communities</i>		Ongoing	In process

OBJECTIVE 2: ENCOURAGE A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE THROUGH PLANS

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Write a regional trail plan</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce	Long	Seeking funding
<i>Write a regional housing strategy</i>		Long	Not started
<i>Research/pursue grants and funding mechanisms for regional plan writing</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Include regional perspectives in comprehensive plans</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG	Ongoing	In process

OBJECTIVE 3: EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY CONNECT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WITH OUTSIDE RESOURCES

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Market outside funding sources through various medias</i>	SICOG	Ongoing	In process
<i>Attend meetings and trainings regarding outside funding sources</i>	State and Federal funding agencies; State and Federal sources of public assistance; Regional special purpose agencies and entities; Institutions of higher education; Professional services providers	Ongoing	In process
<i>Include regional perspectives into funding proposals</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Utilize outside funding sources for projects in the region as needed</i>		Ongoing	In process

OBJECTIVE 4: DEVELOP REGIONAL DATA AND INFORMATION RESOURCES

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify and evaluate the most important data to maintain</i>	SICOG	Short	In process
<i>Identify and evaluate the most effective means of distribution</i>		Short	Not started
<i>Implement a data update cycle</i>		Ongoing	Not started

OBJECTIVE 5: INCREASE THE PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF SICOG SERVICES

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify the most valuable services available to the public through SICOG</i>	SICOG	Short	In process
<i>Identify and implement the most effective means of distribution</i>		Short	Not started

GOAL 4: IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

The environment, like an economy, is a system that is so vast that there are aspects that are still not understood. It can be defined in the same two ways as economic resilience: (1) *the ability of a system to withstand external shocks to and return to its equilibrium* and (2) *the ability of a system to suffer an external shock and adapt to a new equilibrium*. Different from an economic system, an ideal environmental system should not be forced to adapt drastically due to the impact of human society. When an environmental system is forced to do so, it is often to the detriment of human society. Preventing environmental degradation and improving environmental resilience is in the best interest of the region. Therefore, the following are objectives in the goal of improving environmental resilience

- Conduct and participate in hazard mitigation planning;
- Improve environmental sustainability of regional transportation systems;
- Improve environmental sustainability of the regional housing stock;
- Protect and improve regional water quality; and
- Encourage efficient and sustainable land use and development patterns.

OBJECTIVE 1: CONDUCT AND PARTICIPATE IN HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Identify environmental hazards</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; USDA	Short	In process
<i>Complete Hazard Mitigation Plans for counties and municipalities in the region</i>		Ongoing	In process (Decatur and Adams Counties)
<i>Promote hazard mitigation planning</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Include hazard mitigation sections in comprehensive plans</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Research and pursue grant funding</i>		Ongoing	In process

OBJECTIVE 2: IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Research and pursue funding opportunities for alternative modes of transportation</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce; IDOT; SIT; School Districts	Ongoing	In process
<i>Research and pursue funding opportunities for storm water system improvement projects</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; IDOT	Ongoing	In process
<i>Promote and implement sustainable transportation practices</i>		Ongoing	Not started

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE REGIONAL HOUSING STOCK

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Explore feasibility (and implement if feasible) of a regional sustainability grant program</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce	Short	Not started
<i>Apply for HUD funds for a regional healthy home grant to assist in removal of lead paint, asbestos, mold, and radon from homes</i>	SCOG, SIRWA, MATURA, SCICAP, HUD, County Public Health Departments	Short	Not started
<i>Encourage green construction standards in city codes</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG	Ongoing	In process
<i>Promote and support residential weatherization and energy efficiency programs in the region</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; MATURA; SCICAP	Ongoing	In process
<i>Promote, encourage, and support other sustainability initiatives and programs focused in residential areas</i>		Ongoing	Not started

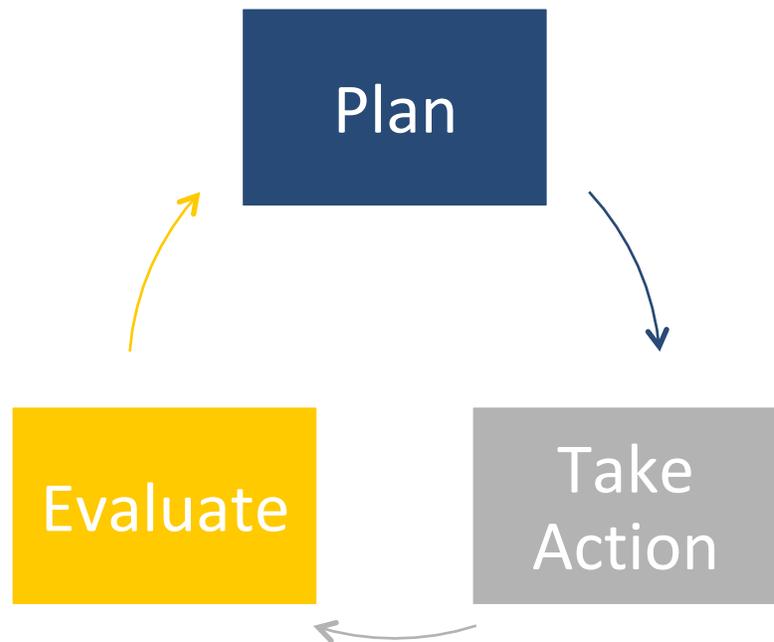
OBJECTIVE 4: PROTECT AND IMPROVE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Evaluate regional water quality and water resource needs</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Soil and Water Conservation	Medium	In process, mostly by partner entities
<i>Encourage and conduct regional water resources projects and programs</i>	Districts; USDA NRCS staff; USDA RC&D staff; SIRWA; IDALS; Iowa State Extension	Ongoing	In process, mostly by partner entities
<i>Include water resource and quality considerations in comprehensive plans</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG	Ongoing	In process

OBJECTIVE 5: ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

<i>Action Items</i>	<i>Partner(s)</i>	<i>Schedule</i>	<i>Progress in 2021</i>
<i>Provide education, training, and assistance to communities related to comprehensive plans and land use policy</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG	Ongoing	In process
<i>Work with communities as needed on the development of comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances</i>		Ongoing	In process
<i>Research and pursue funding opportunities to demolish and/or redevelop dilapidated structures</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; IDNR	Ongoing	In process
<i>Research and pursue funding opportunities for environmentally-friendly land use development</i>	Cities; Counties; SICOG; Development Corporations; Chambers of Commerce	Ongoing	Not started

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK



PURPOSE

The 2021 SICOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is meant to be an in-depth analysis of the regional strengths, weakness, opportunities, threats, and priorities using statistics, public perception, and local knowledge. Additionally, it is meant to offer goals, objectives, actions, and strategies to increase regional economic resilience. It is important to utilize measurable performance metrics to keep track of the progress made and the effectiveness of the goals and objectives of this plan. The purpose of this section is to establish and evaluation framework that will be used to measure effectiveness of and allow adjustment to the strategy.

As stated in previous sections, the major goals of this CEDS, in no particular order, are to:

- Improve and maintain the quality of life for residents in the region;
- Improve economic resilience;
- Promote regional collaboration; and
- Improve environmental resilience.

MEASURES

The following measures will be utilized to understand the effectiveness of these goals and are included in the annual update.

GENERAL STATISTICS

- Population
- Unemployment rate
- Total labor force
- Average commute time
- Educational attainment
- Real GDP
- Median household income
- Total wages
- Total regional farm earnings
- Housing values
- Agricultural land values

SICOG STATISTICS

- # of projects utilizing the benefits of the Opportunity Zone
- # of streetscaping projects planned and/or completed
- # of multi-modal transportation projects in progress or completed
- # of regional plans/projects in progress or completed
- # of recreation-related projects in progress or completed
- # of housing projects in progress or completed

- # of Housing Trust Fund projects completed
- # of hazard mitigation projects in progress or completed
- # of comprehensive plans in progress or completed
- # of strategic plans in progress or completed
- # of urban renewal or revitalization plans/projects in progress or completed
- # of zoning ordinance projects in progress or completed
- # of SIDG revolving loan fund projects in progress or completed
- # of storm water-related projects in progress or completed
- # of water quality or resource-related projects in progress or completed

TOOLS AND SOURCES TO BE UTILIZED

- US Census Bureau
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics
- US Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Iowa Workforce Development
- Iowa State University Center for Agricultural and Rural Development
- An annual SICOG survey