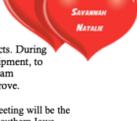




A View From The First Tee



February is full with special occasion days – Chinese New Year (this year is the year of the Tiger), – The first of Muharram – Abraham Lincoln Birthday – Valentine’s Day – Washington’s Birthday and Presidents Day.

The SICOG members continue to be awarded funds for very excellent projects. During January, \$1,184,850 was awarded for projects ranging from playground equipment, to daycare construction, façade improvements, and water main replacement. I am confident that SICOG will continue to help our communities grow and improve.

On March 1st the Board of Directors will hold SICOG’s annual meeting. The meeting will be the start of our 49th year. Yes, it was 49 years ago on September 12, 1973 that the Southern Iowa Planning Agency incorporated. It has been a rewarding history with over \$184,000,000 dollars being brought into the area through the grantsmanship and technical assistance SICOG has provided to our members.

As you have been reading the Windmill over the past years, you have read about several persons who have retired and advanced their careers by taking other positions. This month I say something about our “new” person (not really new just advancing). The Staff and Board of Directors would like to give a BIG welcome to Ms. Jessica Hagen. She previously was SICOG’s Planning Technician handling many projects from the S210 program, CDBG activities, and transportation projects. We put up a billboard but the cold weather caused problems and was only up a short period.



Spending of available money! The SICOG Industrial Revolving Loan Program also has funds available. We have money to assist business expand and/or locate. If you are aware of a project please contact your SICOG Board Member or myself.

As always if there is anything we can do for you please do not hesitate to call us at 641-782-8491. REMEMBER we are working for you. Timothy Ostroski



Iowa Finance Authority Launches Water Infrastructure Fund

The Iowa Finance Authority recently launched the Water Infrastructure Fund (WIF), a one-time grant program funded with ARPA funds awarded to the State. The goal of the WIF is to “make investments to support innovative projects across the state with the goal of protecting, preserving and restoring Iowa’s water resources.” Eligible projects will be primarily water quality improvement, but may provide a number of other benefits such as reduce excess nutrients, increase drought resiliency, reduce flood risk, improve public health, promote water and wastewater reuse, and provide significant economic benefits.

Project categories include economically significant projects, watershed protection projects, industrial reuse projects (pilot), and wastewater infrastructure for underserved communities. Eligible applicants and projects must align with Iowa’s State Revolving Fund (SRF) program project types but generally this grant cannot be paired with an SRF loan.

The end date may vary by program, so it is vital to begin the process soon if you might have a project. The program appears flexible to address a myriad of concerns. If your community has a water, sewer, or storm water and flooding issue that infrastructure may be able to address, please contact SICOG. More info can be obtained at https://www.iowafinance.com/WaterInfrastructure/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

IDNR to Host Conservation and Recreation Grants Webinar

While SICOG plans to participate, members and partners may benefit from also learning more about the myriad of funding programs from the Iowa DNR. The First session will start at 9 AM on February 18 and will describe the application process in general. After that, there will be half-hour to 45-minute sessions about each grant program. You can join for any or all of the sessions, as each is its own zoom meeting. A total of 11 grant programs will be discussed. Contact Jeremy at SICOG at rounds@sicog.com and we will share the zoom link email for the webinar sessions. Questions can also be directed to the IDNR Michelle.Wilson@dnr.iowa.gov.



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal RAISE Discretionary Grants for Transportation Related Projects

The U.S. Department of Transportation has published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$1.5 billion in grant funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The popular program helps communities around the country carry out projects with significant local or regional impact.

Projects will be evaluated on statutory criteria of safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness and opportunity, state of good repair, partnership and innovation. New this year, under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, 2022 RAISE applications will also be evaluated on the criteria of mobility and community connectivity. The Department will assess projects for universal design and accessibility for travelers, as well as consider how proposals increase mobility for freight and supply chain efficiency. The Department also encourages applicants to consider how their projects can create workforce development opportunities.

At least \$15 million in funding is guaranteed to go towards projects located in Areas of Persistent Poverty or Historically Disadvantaged Communities. RAISE expands the number of communities eligible for 100 percent federal share of funding, specifically those in rural communities, Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities.

The deadline for applications is 5 p.m. EST on April 14, 2022, and selections will be announced no later than August 12, 2022. More information about the grant and a listing of past funded projects is found at <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants>. SICOG is here to help with your application.

Keep Iowa Beautiful is Seeking New Hometown Pride County/Community Partners

Keep Iowa Beautiful is accepting applications for communities of any size of groups of communities to become Hometown Pride partners. Through the Hometown Pride program, Keep Iowa Beautiful provides dedicated community coaches to assist local residents, city councils, city clerks, city managers, and other community leaders in navigating resources and overcoming obstacles to completing beautification and community improvement projects. This kind of effort can help facilitate additional investments in the community and bring about more pride and beautification. SICOG believes that the program can help a community focus its efforts so that grantsmanship provided by SICOG may be more successful. More information can be obtained at <https://keepiowabeautiful.org/become-a-hometown-pride-community/>.



Regional Transportation Funding Applications – ATURA

Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) applications to the ATURA Transportation Planning Affiliation including Adair, Taylor, Union, Ringgold and Adams counties will be suspended until the next application date (November-2022).

Questions or need additional information? Please contact Jessica at hagen@sicog.com or call 641-782-8491.



AARP Community Challenge Grants

The 2022 cycle of the AARP Community Challenge grant program has opened. They invite organizations to apply online now through March 22 at 4 PM our time. This year’s funding categories include improving public places; transportation; housing; civic engagement; federal funding implementation; diversity, equity and inclusion; and other innovative ideas. The grant funds a range of unique projects. Our office helped Atton build a parklet in 2020 with this grant. Projects that promote outdoor recreation and a sense of place are popular. Details can be found at www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge. Contact Jeremy at rounds@sicog.com for assistance with these relatively small but flexible grants.

Approaching Grant Opportunities

The following are deadlines for popular grants our members and associated organizations should consider. The SICOG due date is a date when the applicant should have all relevant information to SICOG to finish the application on time. SICOG has the staff and experience to assist our communities submitting the best possible applications for these funds. There are many other sources, so if you have project, please contact us.

Source/Program	Funding Uses	SICOG Due Date
Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors	Mini-grants for planning and actual improvements to historic building interiors, including design work, and host of other activities (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	February 20
Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation	Mini-grants for planning and actual improvements to historic buildings, including design work, and host of other activities (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	February 20
Keep Iowa Beautiful Build With Bags program	Grants that award up to \$2,000 toward the purchase and installation of recycled material benches, containers, and the like for parks, open spaces and school playgrounds. (Eligible: local governments, nonprofits)	March 1
RAISE Discretionary Grants	Federal transportation grants for all manner of transportation projects (Eligible: local governments)	March 1 (see article)
National Fund for Sacred Places	Grants for the planning, design, and capital improvements to historic churches and other religious buildings, not necessarily listed on a registry. Congregation must be active and the best applications are from churches that serve the community in a broad way, such as shelter, childcare, meeting place, feeding place, etc. (Eligible: congregations)	March 1 (letter of interest)
RISE Local Development Grant	Funding to provide road/street access to expand business opportunities (Eligible: local governments)	March 1
AARP Community Challenge Grants	Funding for a wide range of projects that impact the community and make life better for retirement aged residents, including placemaking, housing, and transportation projects (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	March 1 (see article)
IFA Water Infrastructure Grant	Investments to support innovative projects across the state with the goal of protecting, preserving and restoring Iowa’s water resources. Eligible projects will be primarily water quality improvements, but may provide a number of other benefits such as reduce excess nutrients and increase drought resiliency (Eligible: local governments, related partners depending on project type)	March 1 (see article)
NEA Challenge America Grants	Offer support primarily to small organizations for projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations. Grants are \$10,000 for projects that begin in 2023. (Eligible: arts organizations, local governments)	March 15
Alliant Energy Foundation Community Grants Program	Grants for playgrounds, health and wellness projects, public safety, education, culture and arts, and other local needs (Eligible: local governments and non-profits in communities served by Alliant Energy)	March 15
IFA HOME Program	Housing grants for homeownership programs, rental development, and tenant-based rental assistance. Funds will build and repair low and moderate income development projects impacting low and moderate income persons (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	March 20
CDBG Water and Sewer Program	Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc. (Eligible: local governments)	April 15 (next quarterly round)
IEDA Enhance Iowa Sports Tourism Grant	Financial assistance for projects that market or promote professional, collegiate and amateur level sporting events that occur in Iowa; can fund many aspects of developing sports programming, but not including actual infrastructure and facilities (Eligible: local governments, non-profits, development corporations, including those that sponsor sporting events)	May 1
IEDA Enhance Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grant	Funds for capital projects, such as trails, libraries, community centers, pavilions, entertainment venues, museums, recreational facilities, and more (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	Anticipated May 1
CDBG Community Facilities and Services	This annual competitive program offers grants to assist communities for a variety of projects including day care facilities, senior centers, vocational workshops and other community services such as storm water projects. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing, until funds run out
Iowa Historic Preservation Tax Credits – small projects	Up to 25% of project cost in the form of a State tax credit to offset the costs of the building rehabilitation or restoration. Project must affect a designated historic building on the National Register of Historic Places. Projects can have eligible costs up to \$750,000. (Eligible: property owners – governments can partner to mobilize the project)	Ongoing
ITC/ IRDC “Power of Connection” Community Grant Program	Grants up to \$5,000 for capacity building, strategic planning, studies or assessments for a variety of community programs and issues (Eligibility: rural communities)	Ongoing
Highway Safety Improvement	Provides grants for low-cost, systematic safety improvements in the \$10,000/mile range, focusing on lane departure crashes. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing
Small Town Sign Replacement Program	The program will provide up to \$5,000 for signs and signposts per applying community on a first-come, first-served basis. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing
Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP)	Provides 100 hours of engineering assistance for operations and traffic safety issues. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing

As always, SICOG provides this un-exhaustive list of grants to generate ideas about possible projects and provide funding guidance. Grant funding sources are increasingly interested in creative solutions to problems and many are willing to support not just construction but also operations. If your community has a problem that outside funding might address, then please contact your SICOG office. We would be glad to help and can attend a local meeting at no cost to discuss the project or idea.

SICOG Executive Board

Jerry Walker, Chairman Adair County	Doug Birt Adams County	David Taylor Clarke County	Dan Christensen DeCATur County
Diane Fitch, Vice-Chairperson Madison County	Colby Holmes Ringgold County	Ron Riley, Treasurer Union County	Karen Zabel Taylor County
Beth Waddle Private Sector	Doug Davidson Private Sector	Tom Leners Private Sector	Bill Trickey Private Sector

SICOG Staff

Timothy Ostroski Executive Director	Judy Brimm Finance Director	Jeremy Rounds Regional Planner	Jessica Hagen Transportation Planner
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February 14th - Valentine’s Day

February 21st - President’s Day

March 1st - SICOG Annual Meetings

March 13th - Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 20th - First Day of Spring

SICOG Executive Board Meeting of January 4, 2022

Chairperson Jerry Walker called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. at the SICOG office. The following members were present: Christensen, Holmes, Leners, Leners, Riley, Taylor, Trickey, Waddle, Walker and Zabel.

Staff present: Ostroski and Brimm.

Waddle made a motion to approve the agenda. Christensen seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried.

Lenan made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2021 meeting. Holmes seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried.

Zabel made a motion to approve the financial reports for the month of December. Riley seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried.

Other items discussed included: State legislature, personnel, census, building renovations, Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC), audit, CDBG, county project board meetings, annual meeting, grant report, budget/new contracts, election results, EDA Covid funds, staff retention, Legacy RLF funds, information request.

Leners made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:36 p.m. Holmes seconded the motion, all ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes Submitted by Brimm



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