

NIACOG NEWS

Vol. 22 No. 4

NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

October-November 2010

COLLINS RECOGNIZED

The National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) announced the winners of its first annual rural and tribal transit photo contest, Photos Across Rural and Tribal America. The winners of the photo contest were selected based on their photographic representation of rural and tribal transit in America. Photos specifically encapsulated the selection criteria of creativity, composition, technical quality and overall impression.

Teresa Collins, NIACOG's Transit Operations Manager, was recognized by RTAP for her photo titled "Riding the Storm Out." Collins received the honorable mention award for her photo of Region 2 Transit Buses preparing to depart from the NIACOG transit facility during an unusually looking spring thunderstorm passing through Mason City. The photo was taken approximately at 10:00 am.

Congratulations Teresa for an excellent photo and for the recognition the agency received in a national publication.



IOWA HOUSING FUND UPDATE

A major change occurred in the Iowa Housing Fund this year. For many years, the Iowa Department of Economic Development's (IDED) Housing Fund consisted of the following eligible activities: owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, rental housing rehabilitation, rental housing new construction, and tenant-based rental assistance. The owner-occupied rehabilitation was funded with 25% of the State's CDBG allocation, and the remaining activities were funded with the states HOME partnership allocation.

However, in July the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) took over Iowa's HOME Partnership Program. The result was that IDED's Housing Fund now consists of only one activity, owner-occupied housing rehabilitation. On August 25, IDED held its CDBG Housing Fund Workshop for local governments (cities and counties) that are interested in submitting owner-occupied rehabilitation grant applications for the Program Year 2011. These applications will be due on December 8, with a tentative award date of March 23, 2011.

NIACOG was recently informed that IFA intends to hold a round of funding for the remaining activities under the old Iowa Housing Fund (rental housing rehabilitation, rental housing new construction, and tenant-based rental assistance); however, an application workshop date has not been announced. This workshop will probably be presented sometime in late November. Therefore, the due dates for these grants will be well beyond the December 8 due date for the CDBG owner-occupied rehabilitation grant applications. This means that for entities, such as NIACOG, that have in the past assisted applicants in submitting both CDBG and HOME funded grant applications, the "grant-writing season" will be staggered this year.

PUBLIC TRANSIT SAVES THOUSANDS ANNUALLY

According to the American Public Transportation Association (ATPA), latest publication, "Transit Savings Report" shows individuals save on average \$9,381 annually by parking the car and taking public transportation. The report reveals that the savings add up to nearly \$800 per month based on the current average national gas price of \$2.78 a gallon. The ATPA examines how an individual in a two-person household can save money by using one less vehicle. The report also shows that individuals can save on average about \$1,850 a year in parking costs. Ride the bus and save your bucks!

CDBG SUPPLEMENTAL DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING UPDATES

You may recall in previous newsletters, we provided information on several projects written by NIACOG that were awarded CDBG Supplemental Disaster Recovery funds as a result of the 2008 flooding disasters. It's now time to update you on the status of those projects.

City of Wesley, Storm Sewer Improvements – The City of Wesley was **AWARDED \$688,320** to construct a detention basin and storm sewer relief tile to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project is nearing completion of the environmental review process and will go to bid soon.

City of Manly, Storm Sewer Improvements – The City of Manly was **AWARDED \$1,058,100** to be matched with \$150,000 from the Worth County Board of Supervisors and \$150,000 in local funds to install a 48" storm sewer to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project is in the historic/environmental review process.

City of St. Ansgar, Storm Sewer Improvements – The City of St. Ansgar was **AWARDED \$375,000** for drainage improvements including ditch construction and cleaning, culver and storm sewer pipe installation to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project has gone to bid and is approximately 50% complete.

City of Sheffield, Sanitary Sewer Improvements – The City of Sheffield was **AWARDED \$693,000** to replace approximately 850 feet of sewer main, line approximately 9,500 feet of sanitary sewer main and rehabilitate 30 manholes to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project is in the historic/environmental review process.

City of Britt, Sanitary Sewer Improvements – The City of Britt was **AWARDED \$442,750** to install 1,700 feet of sanitary sewer main tile to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project has gone to bid and is approximately 90% complete.

City of Rockford, Storm Sewer Improvements – The City of Rockford was **AWARDED \$385,000** to replace 1,80 feet of deteriorated storm sewer and install 1,150 feet of new storm sewer to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project is in the publication phase and is expected to be going to bid soon.

City of Bancroft, Sanitary Sewer Improvements – The City of Bancroft is was **AWARDED \$566,000** to replace an undersized lift station, install 3,020 of undersized force main and replace the undersized lagoon inlet to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project is in the publication phase and is expected to be going to bid soon.

City of Lake Mills, Storm Sewer Improvements – The City of Lake Mills was **AWARDED \$956,000** to be matched with \$150,000 in local funds to install 7,600 feet of 48" HDPE

storm sewer pipe to eliminate flooding and sewage backup as experienced during the 2008 flooding event. This project is in the historic/environmental review process.

IOWANS HELPING IOWANS (IHI)



The North Iowa Area Council of Governments has received an allocation of more than \$500,000 in flood relief funding for homeowners affected by this summer's severe weather. The program funds home repairs needed as a result of the flood (such as replacing damaged sheet rock, replacing furnace/water heater, etc.), sump pumps, and cleaning supplies, but does NOT fund personal

property losses (such as furniture, clothes washer/dryer, etc.). These funds are available to disaster-affected homeowners who have received FEMA assistance for home repairs, but in an amount that was not sufficient to cover the full scope of their long term repair costs.

If someone you know sustained flood damage to their home, their first course of action is to apply for assistance through FEMA at 800-621-3362 or on-line at fema.gov. FEMA will schedule an inspection and provide funds usually within a few days. If a funding gap remains after FEMA has provided assistance, the homeowner can appeal to FEMA and/or apply to the IHI program at www.iowanshelpingiowans.com or by contacting the NIACOG office for an application. FEMA and IHI assistance are only available in Counties that have received Presidential Disaster Declarations. Within the NIACOG region, only Franklin and Kossuth Counties are currently designated.

Please note that losses not eligible under FEMA or IHI may be eligible for Unmet Needs assistance, the Unmet Needs assistance is administered by the Rebuild Iowa Office, which can be reached at contact@rio.iowa.gov or 1-866-849-0323.

The registration deadline for FEMA assistance is October 13, 2010. Once a homeowner has received an award letter from FEMA for housing assistance, an application to the Iowans Helping Iowans program can begin. The FEMA aid that homeowners received immediately after a disaster event is temporary assistance, and the Iowans Helping Iowans program is intended to bring homeowners back to "pre-disaster" condition. Even as residents receive FEMA aid, they may find they need more assistance to fix storm damage. This is the purpose of the Iowans Helping Iowans program.

For cities in Franklin and Kossuth County, a flyer will be sent to you for posting in convenience/grocery stores, inserting in church bulletins, etc.

If you have any questions about the Iowans Helping Iowans Program, contact Laurel Clement NIACOG's Disaster Recovery Coordinator at 641-423-0491 ext. 27, lclement@niacog.org.

TRANSPORTATION HAPPENINGS

The RPA 2 Transportation Policy Board met on July 14, 2010 to discuss and receive public comment on the FY 2011 Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) and the FY2011-FY2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Policy Board unanimously approved the following new projects for funding:

STP Project Funding					
Entity	Location		Request		Year
NIACOG Planning			\$54,000		2014
Mason City					
	19th St SE		\$397,880		2010
	6th St. SW		\$300,368		2011
Clear Lake					
	10th Ave. N		\$343,000		2010
Kossuth					
	P66		\$375,000		2012
	B63		\$1,000,000		2014
TOTAL			\$2,470,248		
Enhancement Project Funding					
Clear Lake					
	North Shore Drive Beautification		\$ 87,183		2011
Mitchell County					
	Wapsi Trail		\$100,410		2013
Mason City	Monroe Trail		\$200,000		2014
TOTAL			\$387,593		

Surface Transportation Program, better known as STP funding typically funds road projects, transportation planning, bridges and transit. For a project to be eligible, it must meet federal eligibility requirements. Enhancement funding is also STP funding, but is used to “enhance” the transportation system. This funding is typically used for trails, but in several instances in the RPA2/NIACOG, these funds have been used for historic street lighting and beautification projects. Some of you may be familiar with the street lighting and beautification projects in Hampton as well as Charles City.

PROPOSALS FROM BUILDERS BEING ACCEPTED NEW(SFNC)

Although the homes for the current round of New Construction projects have been selected, proposals are now being taken from builders/developers for a new round of sites. Builders/Developers are encouraged to submit multiple applications/sites. We will be able to select about 40 home construction proposals in this round. The guidelines for proposals include the following:

1. The Total Development Cost for new home construction, including up to a 15% developer fee (contingency/profit), must be no more than \$180,000 for each home with at least half of the homes having a Total Development Cost under \$150,000.
2. All assistance provided by the SFNC program is in the form of down payment assistance for the homebuyer; the amount of assistance is calculated as 25% of the Total Development Cost or appraised value.
3. The proposed site cannot be located in a 100-year flood plain.
4. Additional weight will be given to proposals that have identified homebuyers and proposals for homes in communities where flood buyouts occurred (Charles City, Mason City, and Rockford).
5. Construction must not begin until the environmental process is completed by NIACOG including archaeological and/or historical clearance by the State of Iowa.

6. The home must be under construction by December 31, 2012.
7. Homes must be sold to households with incomes under 100% of Area Median Income. Each builder must reserve at least half of their proposed homes for households under 80% of Area Median Income (AMI).
8. Green Criteria Requirements must be met in construction. A Green Criteria Checklist with explanations for each items used during construction and is available on the NIACOG website at www.niacog.org (choose the Resources tab) or by contacting the NIACOG office.

The application for builder/developer proposals is available on line at: http://www.niacog.org/niacog_resources.html. Proposal forms can also be obtained by contacting Myrtle Nelson or Steve Wendt at 641-423-0491 or mnelson@niacog.org. The deadline for submitting proposals is November 1st for new site proposals from builders/developers.





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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 11 – Executive Committee Meeting at NIACOG - 12:00 Noon
- October 13 – NCRERC Haz-Mat Meeting-NIACOG-1:30 pm
- October 13 – Region 2 Transportation Policy Board – 2:30pm NIACOG Office
- October 16 – National Boss’s Day
- November 2 – Election Day
- November 8 – NIACOG Board of Director’s Meeting Bannigans Grill Clear Lake – 6:00pm
- November 11 – Veterans Day – NIACOG Office Closed
- November 19 – North Iowa City Clerks Association – NIACOG office 9:30am
- November 25 & 26 – Thanksgiving Holidays – NIACOG Office Closed

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