
NIACOG

NEWS

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NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

April, 2005



IOWA HOUSING FUND AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The Iowa Department of Economic Development recently announced the Iowa Housing Fund Awards for Program Year 2005. The Iowa Housing Fund provides funding from the U.S.

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in order to expand or retain the supply of decent and affordable housing for low-income Iowans. Eligible Activities under the Iowa Housing Fund include owner-occupied housing rehabilitation, rental housing rehabilitation and rental new construction (including transitional housing), and tenant-based rental assistance.

Awards totaling \$1.65 million were announced for communities in the NIACOG Region. These awards were as follows:

- ▶ Buffalo Center - \$272,200 to rehabilitate eight single family owner-occupied homes
- ▶ Charles City - \$317,500 to rehabilitate ten single family homes
- ▶ Mason City - \$193,582 to provide homeownership assistance to five households
- ▶ Nora Springs - \$197,400 to rehabilitate six single family homes
- ▶ Rake - \$205,900 to rehabilitate six single family homes
- ▶ Stacyville - \$199,900 to rehabilitate six single family homes
- ▶ Swea City - \$271,200 to rehabilitate eight single family homes

NIACOG staff assisted the cities of Buffalo Center, Charles City, Rake, Stacyville, and Swea City in the preparation and submission of their Housing Fund grant applications and will be assisting these same cities in the administration of their programs. These five new programs join six other owner-occupied rehabilitation programs that are currently being administered by NIACOG. The six existing programs are in the cities of Britt, Floyd, Forest City, Kensett, Lake Mills, and Manly.

For other communities in the NIACOG region who are considering applying for Iowa Housing Fund assistance for Program Year 2006, please contact the NIACOG staff immediately. It's not too early to begin the grant application planning process.



ATTENTION CITY CLERKS!

2005 IIMC CONFERENCE MAY 22-26, 2005, SAINT PAUL, MN. "ROLLIN' ON THE RIVER!"

Please make plans now to represent Iowa at the International Institute of Municipal Clerks Conference. The conference will never be this close again for several years and first-time attendees are encouraged to attend! Attendance counts towards certification!

Iowa and Wisconsin are assisting Minnesota in hosting the 59th Annual Conference. They would like to see as many clerks as possible from Iowa attend.

Registration fee will be \$495, which includes 3 lunches and 2 evening meals. First timers receive a \$50 discount! Lodging is estimated at \$125/night plus tax. To save on costs, you could share a room and transportation.

Some area clerks are planning to attend for just one day. Cost per day range from \$150-\$180 depending on the day you attend.

For more information look on IIMC's website www.iimc.com or contact Donna Tyrrell, City of Northwood, 641-324-1075, citynwd@rconnect.com, with any questions.

SPRING IS HERE AND SUMMER IS ALMOST UPON US AND THAT MEANS TRAVEL AND VACATIONS!

May is Tourism Month, and throughout the month of May, communities in Iowa recognized tourism's enormous impact on Iowa's economy which is a \$4.3 billion dollar industry, employing more than 61,000 people and generating more than \$243 million in state taxes alone. This summer cities and counties will be promoting and celebrating the states many annual events, attractions, amenities and beautiful recreational areas. The Top of Iowa Tourism Committee is a network that consists of representatives from a ten county area in North Central Iowa. The purpose of the Top of Iowa Tourism Committee is to actively promote economic growth through tourism in our region. Please refer to their website for more information. They promise you a unique experience in every corner of our region!

www.topofiowatourism.com

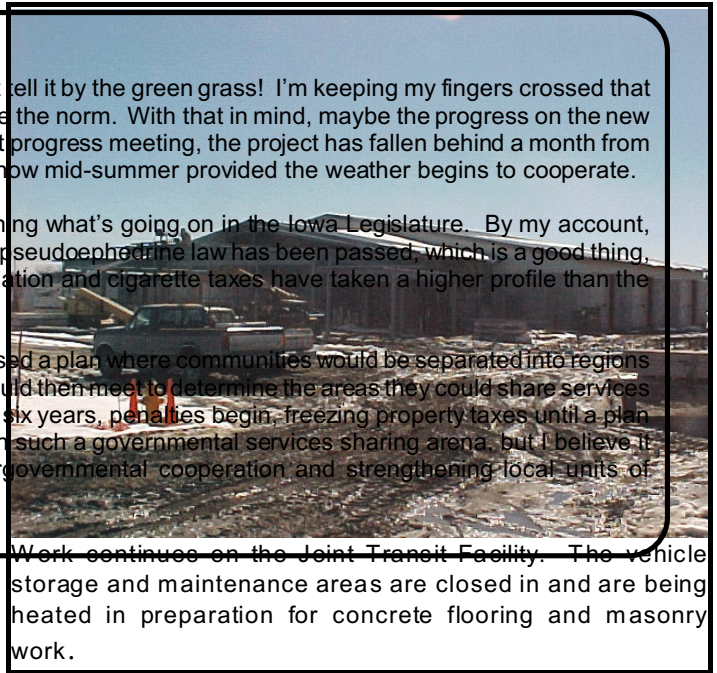


DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Based on my calendar, Spring is here, but you sure can't tell it by the green grass! I'm keeping my fingers crossed that the snow is over and blue skies and sunshine will soon be the norm. With that in mind, maybe the progress on the new joint transit facility will pick-up. Based on our most recent progress meeting, the project has fallen behind a month from our last newsletter. Our anticipated completion date is now mid-summer provided the weather begins to cooperate.

I can't hardly comment this time of year without mentioning what's going on in the Iowa Legislature. By my account, things have been pretty low key. Yes, the most stringent pseudoephedrine law has been passed, which is a good thing, but not much word on the State's Values Fund. It seems the deer population and cigarette taxes have taken a higher profile than the state's economic development plan.

Of interest is the work of the local governance committee which has endorsed a plan where communities would be separated into regions that match the state's 15 community college boundaries. Local leaders would then meet to determine the areas they could share services and then submit a plan to voters. If a region can't get a plan approved in six years, penalties begin, freezing property taxes until a plan passes. It is yet to be determined what role, if any, the COG's will play in such a governmental services sharing arena, but I believe it is one that mirrors what our organization is all about, promoting inter-governmental cooperation and strengthening local units of government. Stay tuned!



Work continues on the Joint Transit Facility. The vehicle storage and maintenance areas are closed in and are being heated in preparation for concrete flooring and masonry work.

20TH ANNUAL SMART ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

The 2005 SMART Economic Development Conference will be held on Wednesday, May 4th at the Polk County Conservation Complex in Des Moines. The state's largest annual economic development conference is co-sponsored by the Iowa Utility Association (IUA) and the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED).

The SMART Conference attracts all those who influence economic growth in their communities and within the state, including economic development directors, chamber of commerce executives, community volunteers and board members, officials from all levels of government, and business leaders. Famed high school basketball coach, Ken Carter will be speaking at the conference as well as: Governor Thomas J. Vilsack; government financing tool expert Bob Josten; industry marketing professional Eric Canada; and former correspondent and public policy expert Charles Wheelan.

Online registration available at: www.iowasmartconf.com. Questions may be directed to: 1-800-264-1084



REAP RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION PROGRAM (REAP)

Competitive applications for REAP's City Park and Open Spaces program and the County Conservation program will be due to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources no later than August 15th, 2005. Since its inception in 1989, the REAP program has provided millions of dollars towards the preservation of open space and the development of outdoor recreation projects throughout the state. Over the years, this portion of the REAP program has become a popular funding source for open space acquisition, preservation, park expansion, and recreational trail development. Funds are not available for single or multipurpose athletic fields, baseball or softball diamonds, tennis courts, golf courses, and other organized sport facilities. Swimming pools and playground



equipment are also ineligible. The amount of REAP grant money available to a city in the City Park and Open Spaces category in any one year depends on its population. The population categories and respective grant amount ceilings are shown below:

Population Maximum

0 - 1,000	\$50,000
1,001 - 5,000	\$75,000
5,001 - 10,000	\$100,000
10,001 - 25,000	\$125,000
25,001 - 50,000	\$150,000
50,001 - 75,000	\$200,000
Over 75,000	\$300,000

There is no maximum on the amount of funds a County Conservation Board can apply for, however, to be eligible counties must dedicate at least 22¢ per \$1,000 of the assessed value of taxable property in the county for conservation purposes. If you have a project that you would like to discuss, please contact NIACOG, or if you would like to learn more about the REAP program in general, go to: www.iowadnr.com/reap/cityopen.html.



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NIACOG Calendar of Events

April

- 11- NIACOG Board of Directors Meeting 6:00 p.m. @ Bennigan's, Clear Lake
- 12- SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) Consultation User's Manual Workshop, New Historical Building Auditorium, 600 East Locust Street, Des Moines
- 13- Haz-Mat Meeting 1:30 P.M. @ Mason City Fire Department
- 20-22- IMFOA Conference, Des Moines
- 27- IHOEP (Iowa Homeownership Education Project) Spring Conference, Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston

May

- 4- SMART Conference, Polk County Convention Complex, Des Moines
- 9- NIACOG Board of Directors Meeting 6:00 p.m. @TBD
- 20- City Clerks Association, 9:30 a.m. @ Mason City Room, Mason City Public Library
- 20- Top of Iowa Tourism, 11:30 a.m. @ NIACC, Mason City
- 22-26- IIMC Conference, St. Paul MN
- 30- Memorial Day, Monday - NIACOG Office Closed



NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

April 17-23, 2005

All of us at NIACOG would like to wish Mary Lee Roshleau our heartfelt gratitude for her gift of time and talent which have been greatly

appreciated over the years as a volunteer to NIACOG. A volunteer is a special kind of person, willing to give up a few hours a month to help others in need. Someone who is willing to help keep things running smoothly by performing a variety of important tasks. That is what Mary Lee has done for us, and has been a part of NIACOG longer than any staff person has been employed. Many thanks Mary Lee!

National Volunteer Week is about thanking one of America's most valuable assets - our volunteers - and calling the public's attention to all that they do to improve our communities.

The 2005 theme is "Inspire By Example" because it truly reflects the power volunteers have to inspire the people they help, as well as, to inspire others to serve!

NIACOG STAFF
Joe Myhre Executive Director
Chris Diggins Local Assistance Director
Kevin Kramer Transit Administrator
Joshua Kohlhaas Regional Planner
Steve Wendt Community Development Planner
Jodi Wyborny Administrative Assistant

"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another." - Erma Bombeck