

NIACOG NEWS

Vol. 29 No. 4 NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

July– Aug. 2018

NIACOG STAFF

641.423.0491

Email– first letter of first name followed
by last name @niacog.org (i.e.
jmyhre@niacog.org)

Joe Myhre — Ext. 11
Executive Director
Jodi Wyborny — Ext. 10
Administrative Assistant
Kris Urdahl — Ext. 12
Fiscal Officer

Chris Diggins — Ext. 15
Local Assistance Director
Myrtle Nelson — Ext. 16
Senior Planner
Matt O'Brien — Ext. 14
Regional Planner
Steve Wendt — Ext. 13
Community Dev. Planner

Kevin Kramer — Ext. 17
Transit Administrator
Teresa Collins — Ext. 22
Operations Manager
Todd Hull — Ext. 24
Maintenance Supervisor

NIACOG REGION HOME REPAIRS



NIACOG Housing Trust Fund has made application to the Federal Home Loan Bank to fund home repair projects of \$15,000 to \$20,000. If

approved for funding by the Federal Home Loan Bank for 2019, this program will fund: roofing, siding, handicapped accessibility, window/door replacement, wall repair, plumbing, electrical, furnace, hot water heater, water/sewer line, etc. Eligible households must include a person who is 62+ years of age and/or disabled, who owns and occupies a home in Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Kossuth, Mitchell, Winnebago, or Worth Counties. The income limit for participation is roughly \$30,000, and increases with household size. We will be able to complete only 10 projects and a waiting list is already accumulating. If you or someone you know would like to be added to the waiting list for this 2019 program, please send an email to mnelson@niacog.org with the following information: your name, address, county, phone number, type of repair(s) needed, your age, and whether you are disabled. More information, such as specific income limits, is available on line at www.niacog.org/trustfund. You can also contact Myrtle Nelson directly.

CONGRATS TO CITY OF FLOYD



The City of Floyd has been awarded \$300,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

funding for watermain removal and replacement, valves, hydrants, engineering and administration. CDBG awards total \$4.1 million statewide and include 10 other communities. The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) awarded the funds to support a variety of important water and sewer infrastructure projects across the state.

IEDA received 20 applications totaling \$7.8 million in funding requests. The grants are awarded based on benefit to low- and moderate-income persons, financial need, project impact, readiness and the commitment of local resources to the project.

CDBG funds enable communities to make essential improvements to water and sewer systems, improve housing conditions for low-income homeowners, provide facilities for disabled and at-risk individuals, and make transformative improvements to downtowns. IEDA allocated \$21 million in CDBG funds in 2017 and has awarded \$7.3 million to date in 2018.

For more information on CDBG funding, contact Chris Diggins at the NIACOG office.

CLOSED SESSION CHECKLIST



City council meetings are governed by Chapter 21 of the *Code of Iowa*, which provides the laws to ensure governmental bodies meet in an open, transparent fashion. While all regular and special meetings of the city council must follow the open meeting laws, Section 21.5 provides the ability to use a closed session for specific and limited purposes.

There are a number of items a city must do to properly use a closed session. This basic checklist can guide a city through that process. In addition, we strongly encourage cities to consult their attorney prior to holding a closed session.

Prior to the meeting

- Ensure item is an allowed purpose under Section 21.5 (consult city attorney)
- Place closed session item on the meeting agenda
 - ◆ Cite specific *Code of Iowa* subsection that permits the use and purpose of the closed session
 - ◆ If closed session is related to employee performance, hiring or discharge, ensure individual has requested closed session

At the meeting

- Ask attorney whether closed session is lawful OR have mayor (or city staff) note that an official

opinion was provided prior to the meeting

- Council votes by no less than two-thirds to approve use of closed session
- Close open meeting and go to closed session

During closed session

- Must take audio recording and detailed minutes (items must be sealed and retained for at least one year; may only be opened by court order or State Ombudsman)
- Council may only discuss matters relevant to the purpose of closed session
- No official action can be taken during a closed session
- Council can determine who attends a closed session and can only exclude a member if he member's attendance creates a conflict of interest

Following closed session

- Council returns to open session and takes any action, if necessary
- Meeting minutes must show the vote to use a closed session and should include city attorney's opinion (oral or written) that the session was lawful
- Those present at closed session must not discuss publicly or share what was discussed during closed session

City Councils occasionally need to make use of a closed session to discuss certain matters. Following the laws and best practices for closed sessions will help ensure a council conducts city business in a proper manner.

(Reprinted with permission from Iowa League of Cities)



Calendar of Events

July

4th	Office Closed	
11th	Hazmat	NIACOG Office @ 1:00 pm
11th	Transportation Policy Brd.	NIACOG Office @ 2:30 pm

August

13th	Exec. Cmte. Mtg.	NIACOG Office @ Noon
16th	CDBG Recipient Workshop	Ankeny



HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRESS IN THE NIACOG REGION

Before Rehab Photo



After Rehab Photo



Steady progress was made during the first one-half of 2018 regarding housing rehabilitation programs in the NIACOG region.

The Cities of Fenton and Lu Verne recently began their 6th and 7th (final) projects in their respective CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Programs. Both Cities have completed 5 projects to date. The performance target for both is the rehabilitation of 6 homes so they will each exceed their performance target by one home. Both were awarded CDBG grants through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Housing Fund Program in 2016. All rehabilitation activity is expected to be completed in both Cities later this Fall. For both Cities, the CDBG contract end date with the IEDA is July 31, 2019, meaning they are well ahead of schedule. NIACOG staff congratulates both the Cities of Fenton and Lu Verne in their efforts to move their rehabilitation programs forward in a very timely manner. This certainly shows that both have made it a priority to address the aging housing stock in their communities by making homes more safe, sound, and affordable.

Rehabilitation progress is also well underway in two other cities in the NIACOG region. These are the Cities of Grafton and Manly. Both were awarded Housing Fund grants by the IEDA last year (Program Year 2017). The first 2 projects in both Cities were recently put under contract, and the contractor procurement process will begin soon for the second phases of their respective rehabilitation programs. Both have a performance target of 6 rehabilitated homes. Therefore great progress is being made in these 2 Cities as well.

BUILD REPLACES TIGER GRANTS

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) recently announced a new funding program, Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD), which will replace the former TIGER grant program. \$1.5 billion in discretionary grant funding is available for surface transportation projects under BUILD and will be awarded on a competitive basis to projects that will have a significant local or regional impact. BUILD funding can support roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports or intermodal transportation.

Projects for BUILD will be evaluated based on merit criteria that include safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, environmental protection, state of good repair, innovation, partnership and additional non-Federal revenue for future transportation infrastructure investments. The DOT intends to award a greater share of BUILD grant funding to projects located in rural areas that align well with the selection criteria than to such projects in urban areas. The funding notice highlights rural needs in several of the evaluation criteria, including support for rural broadband deployment where it is part of an eligible transportation project.

Grant applications are due July 19 and more info is available at

<https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>

