

# NIACOG NEWS

Vol. 30 No. 3 NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

May - June 2019

## 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**  
Housing Planner  
**Caraline Eggena—Ext. 27**  
Comm. Dev. Planner

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

## NOW ACCEPTING NAMES FOR HOME REPAIR



Does your community have homes that could really use some TLC? If so, we may be able to help. NIACOG's Home Repair Program is now taking names for home repair projects to be completed in 2020. The homes can be located anywhere within NIACOG's 8-county region. This program is for households with a resident who is over 62 years of age and/or disabled. Repair projects require a minimum cost of \$15,000 and include items such as: roofing, siding, windows, doors, furnace, water heater, electrical, accessibility (ramps and bathrooms), and plumbing work. The home must be owner-occupied, not a rental.

To be added to our program list for 2020, homeowners are to provide the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- Type of Repairs Needed
- Over 62?
- Disabled?
- 1st time applicant to the NIACOG Home Repair Program?
- Is household income below the following limit?
  - ◇ 1-person household \$28,500
  - ◇ 2-person household \$32,580
  - ◇ 3-person household \$36,660

- ◇ 4-person household \$40,680
- ◇ 5-person household \$43,980
- ◇ 6-person household \$47,220

The funding for this program is being requested from the Federal Home Loan Bank and is expected to be available in January 2020. More information is available on our website at <http://www.niacog.org/trustfund>, via email ([ceggena@niacog.org](mailto:ceggena@niacog.org)), and by calling the NIACOG office at 641-423-0491 (Myrtle x16 or Caraline x27).

## ITAP FUNDING

The RPA 2 TAP Committee received four (4) applications requesting funds this year. The applications are Cerro Gordo County for an extension of the Prairie Land Trail west of Swaledale that stretches from Mason City southwest to Belmond in Wright County eventually; City of Charles City requested funds for the construction of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the Cedar River for the Charley Western Trail; City of Ventura requested funds to add a 10 foot wide bike trail along Lake Street from Macintosh Woods State Park to the existing Venetian Village trail system; and finally the City of Mason City requested funds to develop an approximate .7 mile trail segment along the former Union Pacific Railroad property from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE to just south of 13<sup>th</sup> Street NE.

The projects were determined to all be quality projects, but due to the limited amount of funds of \$291,000, projects receiving funds are the Cerro Gordo Prairie Land Trail (awarded \$211,000) and Charles City Bridge Project (awarded the remaining \$80,000).



The following letter is reproduced from Iowa Economic Development/Iowa Finance Authority Director, Debi Durham, introducing Iowa's newest marketing initiative aimed to educate and excite people across the country about the great State of Iowa:



April 18, 2019

Dear Partners,

From our strong economy to our beautiful rolling hills, Iowa has an amazing story to tell. That's why I'm thrilled to share specifics with you regarding the rollout of our new marketing and communications initiative that is aimed to educate and excite people across the country about our great state.

We will inspire our target audiences of travelers, business owners and workers to choose Iowa by revealing the real, unexpected characteristics of our state. When people see new messaging – highlighting our state's affordability, economic viability, natural beauty, culture and lifestyle – we know they'll be intrigued to learn more about what it's like to visit, live and work here.

We're bringing this effort to life in a variety of ways, including social and digital media and partnerships with influencers. You'll see advertisements in places like Midwest Living, BuzzFeed, Star-Tribune, Pandora and many more. I'm also pleased to introduce a new website, [thisisiowa.com](http://thisisiowa.com), which will feature success stories and serve as a portal to access more detailed information found within our existing sites, [traveliowa.com](http://traveliowa.com) and [iowaeconomicdevelopment.com](http://iowaeconomicdevelopment.com).

As a valued partner, we invite you to join us in promoting Iowa's benefits

in your own communities. Here's how you can help:

- Visit [thisisiowa.com](http://thisisiowa.com) to read and share featured stories on your social media properties.
- Have success stories we could highlight? We would love to hear about relocations, unique attractions, community revitalization, business expansions or innovative happenings in your communities. Email [communications@iowaeda.com](mailto:communications@iowaeda.com).
- When you share stories on social media about what makes your community, quality of life or business pursuit in Iowa great, be sure to use #ThisIsIowa.

We look forward to providing additional information to you and your organization as this effort continues. Please reach out to **Jacque Matsen**, [jacque.matsen@iowaeda.com](mailto:jacque.matsen@iowaeda.com) or 515.348.6245, if you have questions.

I appreciate your ongoing support as we look to make IOWA the choice for people and businesses.

Best Regards,

Debi Durham, Director  
Iowa Econ. Dev. Authority  
Iowa Finance Authority

## Calendar of Events

### May

13th	NIACOG Brd. Mtg.	Bennigan's Grill, Clear Lake @ 7
17th	Clerks' Mtg.	NIACOG Office @ 9:30 am
27th	Memorial Day	Office Closed

### June

10th	NIACOG Exec. Cmte. Mtg.	NIACOG Office @ 12 pm
14th	Flag Day	
21	Summer Begins	



## TRANSPORTATION SUMMIT

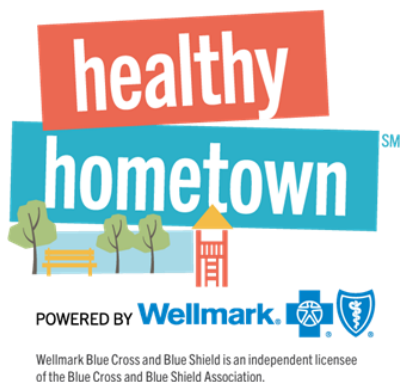
The 2019 Iowa Passenger Transportation Summit will be held on Thursday, May 23 at the FFA Enrichment Center, DMACC Campus, 1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway, Ankeny, Iowa 50023. The event will begin at 9:30 a.m. (registration opens at 9:00 a.m.) and will end at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Speaking on the topic of Measuring the Benefits of Transit Services, Jeremy Mattson, PhD of North Dakota State University will serve as this year's keynote speaker. Participants also will hear about the Iowa DOT's effort to update the Iowa Public Transit Long-Range Plan. More topics and panels will be announced soon.

Register at <https://app.tikly.co/events/3426>. Lunch is included. Registration is free and closes May 3.



## HEALTHY HOMETOWN<sup>SM</sup> POWERED BY WELLMARK



No matter where it is, your hometown is special. It's where your heart is. It's where your friends and family are. It's the community you connect with and want to see succeed and flourish.

As much as you love your hometown, you'd probably like to make it even better. Have you ever considered getting your friends, neighbors and community leaders on board to do exactly that?

Healthy Hometown<sup>SM</sup> Powered by Wellmark works with communities, at no cost, to identify ways to make positive and lasting changes that

enhance well-being in your community. So, what does that mean? It means making healthy food readily and easily available. It means making it easier to walk or bike to the places you usually visit. It means creating a sense of community and belonging.

Healthy Hometown wants to help make that vision a reality. Using proven strategies and techniques, Healthy Hometown assists communities just like yours in making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Communities can't change habits, but they can guide residents to create better habits.

### Why is this important?

In nearly 30 years, obesity among adults has increased [to nearly 35 percent](#). As a result, citizens are experiencing more and more chronic health issues. This results in a diminished quality of life.

Healthy choices need to be made easier and that starts with creating an environment that encourages and promotes a healthy lifestyle. Policy and built environment changes — whether changing vending options, creating a complete streets policy or implementing a nicotine-free initiative — have a big impact on creating sustainable changes in the community. And, these changes lead to healthier eating, greater physical activity and social connectivity. Making your community an even more attractive place to live, work and play.

Healthy Hometown is currently being utilized in Forest City. The Forest City Wellness Coalition is partnering with city leaders, private organizations and others in Forest City to encourage residents to engage in healthy movement as part of their daily life. The Forest City Wellness Coalition is providing more access to fresh fruits and vegetables, improving the walkability and bikability of the community and increase the number of community places for social interactions. Healthy Hometown is working alongside this existing group to further enhance the work they are doing to improve the health and well-being of their residents.

Imagine the possibilities. Healthy Hometown can help make them happen.

### Get started in your own community today!

Ready to start your own journey? Check out Healthy Hometown [online](#) at [Wellmark.com/HealthyHometown](http://Wellmark.com/HealthyHometown) or email [HealthyHometown@Wellmark.com](mailto:HealthyHometown@Wellmark.com) to connect with a community health manager who can help make the healthy choice the easy choice.



## DOWN PAYMENT AND CLOSING COST ASSISTANCE

The Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) recently announced a new down payment and closing cost assistance program for Iowa home buyers. The new Home for Iowans program includes a grant of \$2,500 or 0% loan up to 5% of the sale price of the home or \$5,000, (whichever is less) and is repayable at the time of sale or refinance.

To see if you are eligible, contact an IFA participating lender at <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Home/sfcontactlisting>. You may also check your eligibility at <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/home/quickcheck>

HAPPY

MEMORIAL  
DAY



## TRANSPORTATION HAPPENINGS

The RPA 2 Technical Committee recently accepted applications for STBG/SWAP funded transportation projects in Federal Fiscal Years 2020-2023. Below is a table showing the funded projects.

### STBG/SWAP Project Funding and Applications

<u>NIACOG Planning</u>	\$56,000	<u>2023</u>	<u>New</u>
<u>City of Charles City</u> Brantingham and Fourth Ave	\$278,000	<u>2021</u>	<u>New</u>
<u>City of Mason City</u> Winnebago Way 12th St. NE Pennsylvania Ave	\$1,250,000	<u>2023</u>	<u>New</u>
<u>Mitchell County</u> T26	\$1,000,000	2023	New
<u>Worth County</u> S56	\$500,000	2023	New
<u>IDOT</u> HWY 3	\$600,000	2023	New
<b>Total New Money Requested</b>	<b>\$3,684,000</b>		

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Congratulations to the cities of Stacyville, Thompson and Grafton for the recent awards of CDBG Water and Sewer (W/S) funds for their respective applications. The City of Grafton was awarded \$252,000 for a new water treatment plant construction project with a total estimated project cost of \$591,500. The City of Stacyville was awarded \$300,000 for a water main replacement project with a total estimated project cost of \$777,555. And, the City of Thompson was awarded \$300,000 for a new water treatment plant construction project with a total estimated project cost of \$725,400.

NIACOG has been very successful in its CDBG assistance with cities and counties this year. Since the State of Iowa went to a quarterly application system, there have been eight funded W/S applications totalling \$2,752,000 in grant awards.

The CDBG application process is very competitive, but NIACOG staff is very ready, willing and more importantly, ABLE, to help your community better prepare and package your proposed project and increase your chances of receiving funding. The sooner you get NIACOG staff involved the sooner we can guide your city and your project to be in the best position for funding. There are many steps involved including procurement, preliminary engineering and local financing in place.

Feel free to contact Chris Diggins at the NIACOG office if you would like to discuss a potential CDBG Water/Sewer Infrastructure or CDBG Community Facilities & Services project application.