

Photo taken during RAGBRAI 2022

NIACOG NEWS

VOLUME 35 ISSUE 4

Aug—Sept 2022



Mortgage Assistance Now Available for Eligible Past Due Homeowners

Home Owners could receive up to \$25,000, one time assistance, due to the financial hardship that COVID-19 has placed on Iowa Homeowners.

Eligible criteria for the program include:

- Be income qualified
- Be at least one payment behind on mortgage, contract sale, manufactured home or property taxes.
- Have had someone in the household experience a financial hardship after January 21, 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This could be the result of a reduction in income or increase in living expenses due to job loss, fewer work hours, paying more for childcare, illness, or being unable to work because you had to take care of a family member.
- Own the property located in Iowa and occupy the home as their primary residence

Visit www.iowafinance.com/ihaf to learn more and apply.

CALENDAR

AUG

17– NIACOG Exec Board Meeting 12:00 PM



SEPT

5– Closed in observation of Labor Day

12– NIACOG full Board Meeting 5:15 PM

16– City Clerk Meeting 9:30 AM

The **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CED\$)** for the NIACOG Economic Development District is available for public review and comment by using the QR code below. The public comment period is from July 28, 2022 thru August 28, 2022. Information about submitting comments is provided on the last page of the Strategy.

Please submit comments to Myrtle Nelson at mnelson@niacog.org or at 641-423-0491 ex 211 by Aug 28, 2022.



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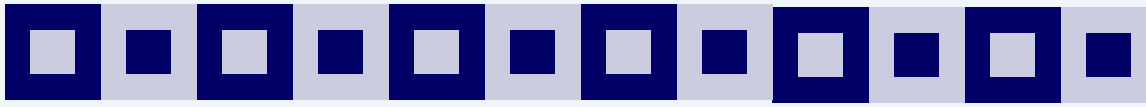
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The NIACOG Housing Trust Fund has been awarded \$5,000 from First Citizens Bank Charitable Foundation for the operation of the Housing Trust Fund Repair Program. For information on the Housing Trust Fund, contact Heidi Nielsen at hnielsen@niacog.org or 641-423-0491 ex 216.



Healthiest State of Iowa

The 12th Annual Walk for the Healthiest State will be held October 5th. Register today and vow to walk 30 minutes with your friends, family, colleagues, and others!

Register at:

<http://www.iowahealthieststate.com/>



PEACH SALSA

4 ripe peaches

1/2 medium red onion

1/2 jalapeno pepper

1 handful fresh cilantro

1 lime

Kosher Salt



Peel and dice the peaches. Finely chop the red onion. Remove the stem, seeds, and ribs of the jalapeno pepper and mice half of the pepper (or add more to taste). Chop the cilantro.

Mix all ingredients together, then add the lime juice and a few pinches kosher salt. Allow to sit for 5 minutes for flavors to meld. Eat immediately.



United Way
of North Central Iowa

August 18 is National Day of Caring.
Join NIACOG in signing up to
Volunteer to help a local
organization in your community.

Grant Funding for Manufacturing Consultants

The Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce, offers a federal grant program to assist U.S. Manufacturers by paying a portion of professional consultant expenses and services to improve their competitiveness. Example opportunities:

- **Manufacturing, Engineering and Production:** Inventory Management, Operation Analysis, Process Engineering, Product Development/Prototyping/Certification
- **Marketing and Sales:** Advertising and Sales Promotion, eCommerce, Social Media
- **Financial and General Management:** Compensation and Incentive Programs, Succession Planning, Workforce Development & Training, Organizational Analysis
- **IT Support Systems:** Custom Programming, Software Upgrades, System Conversion

The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF) program partners with manufacturers by offering grant funding from \$30,000 (75/25 cost share) up to \$150,000 (50/50 cost share) to implement projects to improve the firm's competitive abilities.



For more information contact the agency at 800-336-8205 or www.taacentre.org.

HAMPTON 5-2-1-0

The Hampton community (in its 3rd and final year) received funding from the State of Iowa to market the 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count message and help implement projects compatible with the message. The long-term goal of 5-2-1-0 is to help reduce the significant rates of heart disease, stroke, obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, and cancers within Iowa's communities. The message is foremost being marketed towards Iowa's children 2-18 years of age; however, the message also applies to adults.

What does 5-2-1-0 stand for?

- 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- No more than 2 hours of unproductive screen time per day.
- 1 or more hours of vigorous physical activity per day.
- 0 sugary drinks - more water!

5-2-1-0 funds in Hampton for FY21 were used towards the following:

Outdoor Activity Equipment - Greater Iowa Youth for Christ Hampton Campus Life

- 3-in-1 giant checkers and tic tac toe game
- Giant wooden yard dice
- Flying disc game
- Franklin sports junior football
- Tachikara volleyball
- Wilson soccer ball
- Volleyball and badminton set
- Illuminated kan jam disc toss game
- Gaga playground ball (2 pack)
- Wilson basketball
- Giant tumbling timber toy
- Spikeball
- Giant connect-4
- 2 corn hole board sets
- Bags for cornhole

Event booth and fruit and veggie tracking bracelets - Franklin County Extension and Franklin County General Hospital

- 3,456 jelly bracelets (12 different colors)
- ISU portable folding tailgate table
- ISU canopy tent
- ISU giant connect-four
- ISU chip shot golf game set
- ISU giant jenja
- 4 ISU quad chairs



Smoothie/Juice Bar - Franklin County Wellness Center

- Narrow bar table
- Toddler play area toys
- Sale sign for food and drinks
- 16 bar stools
- See-thru glass door refrigerator
- 4 square bar tables
- Thick mats for toddler play area
- L-shape, modern sofa
- Baby fence kid playpen

If you want tips on marketing the 5-2-1-0 message within your community, contact Matt O'Brien at the NIACOG office. Communities receiving funding are selected by the Iowa Department of Public Health on a yearly basis based on certain health statistics.



Healthy Choices Count!

How do Iowa kids stay healthy? They Live 5-2-1-0!
It's a fun way to make being healthy easy.
iowahealthieststate.com/5210



CONTRACTORS NEEDED FOR HOUSING PROJECTS!

Over the past twenty years, NIACOG has been the conduit for repairing roughly 400 CDBG housing projects in addition to 350 Housing Trust Fund homes.



The success of our housing rehabilitation programs in your communities is dependent upon being able to hire qualified and experienced contractors. We have been fortunate to work with many talented local contractors over the years; however, with the large growth in the number of houses that we are repairing each year, we are in considerable need of more construction contractors to continue to improve the housing stock in north Iowa communities.

Our program offers some pretty significant benefits to contractors including a large supply of work, reliable payment, and a predefined scope of work. We are asking for your help to spread the word.

If you know of any contractors, please reach out to them and put in a good word for us so that we can improve the housing in your community.

Please contact Heidi Nielsen at hnielsen@niacog.org, or 641-423-0491 ext. 216 with leads or for more information.

IOWA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION APPROVES PUBLIC TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING

AMES, Iowa – July 12, 2022 (copied from IDOT Notice) – At its meeting in Ames today, the Iowa Transportation Commission approved \$1.5 million in funding to support four public transit projects. The projects are funded under the state Public Transit Infrastructure Grant Program for new or improved facilities to support public transit services.

Made available each year by the Iowa General Assembly, a transit system can apply to have up to 80-percent of their project funded through this program. To qualify, a transit system must secure local funding for a minimum of 20-percent of the project costs.

These four projects were approved by the Commission:

- New automated bus wash (Siouxland Regional Transit System - Sioux City) \$238,434
- Rehabilitate shop area in the maintenance facility (CyRide-Ames) \$581,566
- **Replacement of insulation and vapor barrier for transit facility storage and maintenance area (North Iowa Area Council of Governments - Mason City) \$200,000**
- Renovation of existing facility – Phase I (Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission – Mount Pleasant) \$480,000

“The Public Transit Infrastructure Grant is an impactful source of funding for public transit systems. This program enables transit systems to construct and maintain facilities that are critical to the operation of their system and maintenance of the vehicles. This year, we received seven project applications requesting \$5,653,600.” said Rebecca Law, Transit Programs Administrator, Public Transit Section, Modal Transportation Bureau for the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Public transit service is available in all 99 counties. It provided over 10 million rides last year, getting the public where they need to go. Visit www.iowadot.gov/transit for more information on Iowa’s public transit systems.



GREAT THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN HOME REPAIR!!!

NIACOG Housing Trust fund is celebrating 10 years since the first loan was made back in 2012.

When NIACOG's Housing Trust Fund Program and United Way of North Central Iowa (United Way of NCI) join forces, the results are nothing short of amazing! Since 2017, United Way of NCI has funded NIACOG's Emergency Repair Program. During that time, the program has funded emergency repairs for approximately 45 low-to-moderate income elderly/disabled households.

Many of these repairs are life-changing to the recipients. One household received a new water heater after going 15 years without hot water. Also, furnaces have been replaced, dangerous electrical situations have been rectified, accessible ramps have been installed, and inoperable plumbing has been repaired. The funding allows the individuals the peace-of-mind knowing that they can be safe and stay in their homes.

This year, the United Way of NCI granted \$17,000 of its Community Impact funding (2022-2023) to NIACOG's Emergency Repair Program, which will make it possible to continue this good work. We are grateful for the United Way of NCI's involvement and for the impact that the funds will have on the elderly and disabled population in our region.



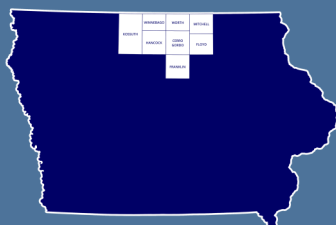
Farewell to Jessy

NIACOG staff and developers are saying a fond 'Good-bye' to Jessy Willadsen, who recently accepted a position with another company. We appreciated his good work and dedication and will strive to build on his success.

Questions regarding the Upper Story Housing program and other housing development grants can be addressed to Caraline Eggena ceggena@niacog.org or 641-423-0491 x227.

Congratulations and best wishes on your next adventure!

RAGBRAI came through many of the small towns in the NIACOG region this year. The 18,000 plus bikers and their support crews were a pleasure to host and a boon to the local economy. Both Mason City and Charles City had the pleasures of hosting over night stops for the riders this year.



North Iowa Area Council of Governments

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