

January - March 2012

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Winter Driving Tips

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GRANTS AWARDED

The following grants were written by INRCOG and awarded October - December 2011. If you would like more information, please contact [Sharon Juon](#).

Grant	Jurisdiction	Amount	Project
HMGP	City of Waverly	\$1,143,402	Safe Room-Waverly-Shell Rock High School
State Recreational Trails	Black Hawk County	\$396,516	McFarlane Park Trail Bridge
REAP	City of Waverly	\$65,000	AMVETS Reclamation
REAP	City of Waterloo	\$193,400	Sherwood Park
RISE	City of Parkersburg	\$201,969	Industrial Park Expansion
RISE	City of Waterloo	\$224,449	Geraldine Road Extension
FHLB-Affordable Housing Program	INRCOG Region	\$150,900	Housing Repairs
IFA Housing Trust Fund	INRHC	\$253,417	Various Housing Projects

Geof Grimes Chosen as INRCOG's Regional Citizen of the Year

Geof Grimes, former President of Structure Architects, was recognized as INRCOG's 2011 Regional Citizen of the Year at INRCOG's Annual Meeting on Thursday, December 15. Grimes has been an active volunteer in the Region for over 40 years, serving in leadership positions for the Cedar Valley United Way, Silos and Smokestacks, Northeast Iowa Food Bank, Hawkeye Community College and numerous other organizations.

In presenting the Award, Sharon Juon, INRCOG's Executive Director, noted that Grimes' commitment to improving the lives of the citizens in the INRCOG Region has greatly enhanced our communities and provided the ethical leadership necessary to successfully complete worthy projects.



Mark Schildroth, INRCOG Board Chair and Sharon Juon, INRCOG Executive Director, present Geof Grimes with the 2011 Regional Citizen of the Year Award.

INRCOG Elects Officers

At its December Annual Meeting, INRCOG members elected the following Officers and Executive Committee members for 2012:

Chairperson: Maurice Welsh, Mayor of Fairbank

Vice-Chairperson: Larry Young, Mayor of Shell Rock

Secretary: Mark Schildroth, Grundy County Supervisor

Treasurer: Jon Crews, Mayor of Cedar Falls

At-Large: Ralph Kremer, Buchanan County Supervisor; Steve Reuter, Bremer County Supervisor; Frank Magsamen, Black Hawk County Supervisor; Bob Martin, Mayor of New Hampton; Buck Clark, Mayor of Waterloo.

INRCOG Staff Awards

The following INRCOG Staff members were recently recognized for their years of service as of June 30, 2011:

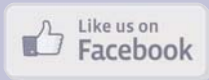
2 Year Award – Jill Yuska, Ben Kvigne

10 Year Award – Jim Rodemeyer, Brenda Ponto

15 Year Award – Kevin Blanshan

INRCOG FY'13 Dues

At their December meetings, the INRCOG Executive Committee and Board voted to keep INRCOG dues the same for Fiscal Year 2013. Thus, dues will stay at \$.45 cents per capita (with a \$100 minimum) for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2012.



INRCOG now has a Facebook page at:
www.facebook.com/inrcog.

We encourage you to "Like Us" and keep up-to-date on projects and activities of the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments!

INRCOG Helps Salvation Army & Northeast Iowa Food Bank



INRCOG Staff and Family members pose with blankets made and donated to the Salvation Army.

During the Annual INRCOG Christmas Party, staff and their family made thirteen fleece blankets which were donated to the Salvation Army to be given to its clients and used in Salvation Army shelters.

In addition, the staff also held a Food Drive during the month of December collecting 135 lbs. of food to benefit the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.

HOUSING

INRCOG Awarded Funds from FHLB Affordable Housing Program

INRCOG was recently awarded \$150,900 from the Federal Home Loan Bank's Affordable Housing Program to assist at least 12 very low- or low-income homeowners with up to \$12,000 in the form of a five-year forgivable loan. The Waterloo/Cedar Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area and communities with a population greater than 10,000 will not be eligible.

The assistance will act as a deferred maintenance program and enable homeowners to make repairs necessary to improve the safety, decency, sanitation, and/or energy efficiency of their residences. Examples of approved repairs include leaking roofs, general weatherization, plumbing or electrical deficiencies, and water heater installation. Eligible homes must be insured and located outside the 100-year floodplain. Applicants will receive funds on a first-come, first-served basis, however, priority may be given to those applicants with special or urgent needs. For more information regarding this program, please contact [Cindy Knox](#).

The IFA Awards State Housing Trust Fund Dollars to INRHC

The Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) recently announced that the grant application submitted by INRCOG on behalf of the Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council (INRHC) has been funded. The housing council was granted \$253,417 in state housing trust fund dollars that will be combined with \$70,654 in local match to fund the following activities that will assist low- to moderate-income individuals and families in the INRCOG region: a partnership with three local agencies to rehab existing housing for disabled adults; a partnership with Iowa Heartland Habitat for Humanity to build an affordable house in Butler or Bremer County; an activity in conjunction with the Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation to build a rent-to-own single family affordable home in the City of Fredericksburg; a partnership with USDA-RD to complete roof replacements on affordable USDA rental units in several Butler County communities; and a rural repair program for citizens requiring home repairs to be administered in-house and available throughout the INRCOG region. These programs will be available in late January of 2012.

Housing Rehabilitation Grants Submitted to the IEDA

INRCOG recently submitted grant applications for six communities from five counties to the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Housing Fund for owner occupied housing rehabilitation programs. The applications amounted to a request for over \$1.6 million in Housing Fund dollars, with a local match of \$91,000, to assist a minimum of 50 homes.

Two cities from Black Hawk County submitted grant applications. The City of Gilbertville submitted its first ever housing rehabilitation grant application asking for \$198,594 in Housing Funds with a local match of \$12,000 to rehab six homes. The City of Hudson submitted an application for a third owner occupied housing rehab program with a request for \$326,990 in CDBG funds and a local match of \$20,000 to rehabilitate ten homes.

In Bremer County, the City of Janesville submitted an application asking to have a third housing rehab program funded using \$331,990 in state funds and \$15,000 in local match to rehabilitate a minimum of ten homes. The City of Hazleton in Buchanan County requested \$201,594 in CDBG funds to be used along with \$9,000 in local match to fund six homes as part of the city's proposed third rehab program.

In Butler County, the City of Clarksville requested \$331,990 in Housing funds to be coupled with \$15,000 in local funds to rehab ten homes as part of a third rehab program; and the City of New Hampton in Chickasaw County has requested funding for a second housing rehab program asking for \$258,792 in Housing Funds, with a local match of \$20,000 to provide assistance to a minimum of eight low- to moderate-income homeowners.

The Iowa Economic Development Authority has tentatively scheduled the Housing Fund awards to be announced in March of 2012.

2012 Executive Board

Maurice Welsh Chair
Mayor of Fairbank
 Larry Young Vice-Chair
Mayor of Shell Rock
 Mark Schildroth Secretary
Grundy County Supervisor
 Jon Crews Treasurer
Mayor of Cedar Falls

At-Large Members

Buck Clark
Mayor of Waterloo
 Ralph Kremer
Buchanan County Supervisor
 Frank Magsamen
Black Hawk County Supervisor
 Bob Martin
Mayor of New Hampton
 Steve Reuter
Bremer County Supervisor

DEVELOPMENT

Waverly Featured in EPA Report

Congratulations to the City of Waverly who was recently featured in a Partnership for Sustainable Communities report that was generated by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), US Department of Transportation, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, and US Department of Agriculture. The Report focuses on several communities and the challenges they have overcome, while at the same time implementing smart growth or planning and sustainable principles. In the case of Waverly, the Report highlights the community as a Case Study for Disaster Resiliency.

The case study focuses on the City's efforts to recover from the floods of 2008 and the elaborate series of planning processes that have been completed. Following up on the Long Term Recovery process conducted by FEMA, an EPA-led team of professionals conducted a two-day smart growth, sustainability, and land use training session in May 2010, from which a working document was developed which was then used, along with the new Iowa Smart Planning Law, substantial public input, and the existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan, to generate an updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the City. The Feature also identified six Livability Principles which have also been adapted and integrated into the new Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Sustainable Communities Report can be found at: www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/2011_11_supporting-sustainable-rural-communities.pdf

Schoon Invited to Present at Conference

Brian Schoon was invited by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to speak at a Long Term Recovery Workshop held in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in early December. The purpose of the Conference was to provide technical assistance for Alabama communities recovering from the devastating tornados that occurred in April 2011. The focus of the presentation was how the INRCOG communities, most notably Waverly, have approached recovery from the disasters of 2008 and how our communities have made concerted efforts to ensure that planning, particularly "smart planning principles," is an important part of their recovery. In addition, the presentation addressed the litany of resources and funding sources that were available and how they were accessed by communities in our region. Finally, the presentation underscored the fact that many of the communities continue to work through the complicated task of recovering from catastrophic disasters.

Waverly Dam Dedication

On December 8th, approximately 85 people were in attendance as Waverly dedicated its new inflatable dam at a celebration held at City Hall. City staff prepared a number of visual displays showing the history of flooding in Waverly and the improved protection from the new structure. Attendees had the opportunity to view a piece of the lumber that had been removed during construction from the dam in its earlier phases as well as samples of the materials used to construct the inflatable structure. After a time to review the displayed materials, the formal dedication ceremony began with the opportunity to win prizes by offering answers to City Administrator Dick Crayne as he quizzed the audience on its knowledge of trivia related to the dam and the hydroelectric power generation. Crayne dedicated the dam to the citizens of Waverly and particularly those who experienced damage from the floods.

Mayor Brunkhorst reminded the audience of the steps already undertaken to protect the City and its residents and businesses following the recent floods, which, in addition to the dam, include the removal of approximately 90 flood-damaged homes, the flood-proofing of several sewer lift stations, and acquisition of larger portable sewer pumps. The Mayor also discussed the steps yet needed to be completed. City Engineer Mike Cherry gave a history of the dam from its original construction using rocks and lumber through its various changes to today's inflatable system.

Among the dignitaries present were a number of state and local elected officials as well as several prior Waverly mayors and council members. Also present was Laura Stein, our regional Economic Development Representative from the Economic Development Administration. EDA funded 75 percent of the cost of construction of the inflatable dam. A majority of the remaining funding was received from the State of Iowa through a CDBG Disaster Infrastructure grant.



A view of the Waverly inflatable dam from the west.



A replica of materials used to construct an earlier version of the Waverly dam is seen with a sample of the material used to construct the new inflatable dam.

DEVELOPMENT

Safety Program

Winter Driving

Severe winter weather often poses a dangerous risk to drivers. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, you are 36 percent more likely to be in a car accident in January than July. Since we are into the winter driving season, let's separate some safety myths from reality and review some facts stated by the American Automobile Association.

A popular belief is that drivers need to keep up with the flow of traffic. This is not the best advice. There are a lot of "cowboys" on the road during snowstorms, driving SUVs thinking they have power in snow and ice conditions who you want to stay away from. Let them pass you. SUVs have a high center of gravity, a relatively short and narrow wheel base and are prone to rolling over even when the weather is good. If you go sideways sliding around ice and snow and hit an imperfection in the snow, you're going to go over. Stay at a speed where you feel most comfortable. Speed limits are for ideal conditions. It can take a vehicle nine times longer to come to a stop in wintry conditions, so keep a safe distance between you and the cars in front of you—four-wheel drive gets you going, but it doesn't help you stop any better. A common perception is that lowering tire pressure will allow better vehicle traction; you might get better traction, but the negative effects of lower tire pressure are far worse and you're not guaranteed good traction with lower air pressure. There's significant flexing where the rubber meets the road and it can cause your tire to blow out. It's important to keep your tires properly inflated. Running radial snow tires on all four corners of the car is an even better idea. Snow tires are made from rubber compounds that are designed to stay flexible in the cold; normal year-round tires may be flexible in summer, but become like hardened plastic in the cold. Tire pressure is also critical and should be checked at least once a month but a weekly check is ideal. Frequent and wide temperature swings can make a huge difference in tire pressure. What should you do if you hit a patch of ice and begin to skid? Most skids are caused by excessive speed in a turn. If you've gone into a turn too hard, the car begins to skid because it loses traction. With many front-wheel drive cars, look and steer in the direction you want to go. When you lose control, keep focused on where you want to go—don't look at walls or other cars, to avoid crashing into them. Anti-lock brakes will enable wheels to keep turning and enable you to maintain control of steering—just keep your foot on the brake. If you don't have anti-lock brakes, use the threshold braking technique: step on the brakes, sort of like pumping: pump, look and steer. Even on sheer ice, there is still a measure of traction available and if you take advantage of that, you should be able to get around it.

If your car breaks down during a snowstorm, a common belief is to get out and seek help. Generally, it is recommended that you stay with your vehicle, but that depends on where you've broken down. If you're broken down in the middle of a traffic lane, get out of the vehicle in case another car hits you from behind. If you can get the car out of traffic and onto the side of the road safely, stay with your vehicle and prepare yourself ahead of time for this situation. A set of reflectorized triangles are an effective tool to have, preferably three of them arranged to form a channel away from the broken-down car. Other tools to have: flares, a blanket, and a cell phone. Turning on emergency flashers might not be best idea in blinding snow or fog as they act like a target to other drivers and they tend to go toward them, thinking they may be an exit sign, etc. If you find yourself stuck due to ice and snow, how should you try to get the wheels to stop spinning? You need an abrasive, non-clumping substance like kitty litter or sand. You should have a small supply in your trunk for these types of situations. It's also best to carry with you a small spade or shovel to help clear away some of that snow and ice. And make sure the tailpipe is clear of any snow before driving after a big storm. The fumes can back up and carbon monoxide is an insidious quick killer. How about the idea of keeping extra weight in your vehicle during the winter months? Most cars are either front-wheel drive or rear-wheel drive, so that advice wouldn't help you at all. Extra weight on the non-driving wheels might work against you, because it may make you more inclined to lose control of the vehicle.

Above all, drive responsibly and defensively!

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

<u>Grant</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
RISE - Local Development	February 1, 2012
LAWCON	March 15, 2012
CAT	April 15, 2012

RISE - Local Development

This Iowa DOT program was established to promote economic development in Iowa through construction or improvement of roads and streets. Funding may be in the form of a grant, loan or combination thereof and projects must involve construction or improvement of a public roadway. Local development projects support local economic development but do not require an immediate commitment of funds (i.e. industrial parks, tourist attractions). Projects are evaluated using the following factors: development potential, economic impact, local commitment and initiative, transportation need, and area economic need. Local match is normally 50 percent. For more information, contact [Kevin Blanshan](#).

LAWCON

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program is a federally funded grant program administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources that provides matching funds of 50 percent for outdoor recreation area development and acquisition. Iowa's cities and counties are eligible to participate. Competition for LWCF funds is intense, but this program provides an excellent opportunity to develop a wide range of outdoor recreational projects that are in high demand. Popular projects in recent years have included skate parks, playgrounds, new and renovated swimming pools, sport complexes, campgrounds and multipurpose trails. Contact [Kevin Blanshan](#) for more information.

Community Attraction & Tourism Program (CAT)

The Community Attraction & Tourism Program is an opportunity for cities, counties and non-profit organizations to ask for financial assistance for vertical infrastructure projects including museums, recreation centers, aquatic centers, sports arenas and other attractions. Applications are submitted to the Iowa Department of Economic Development and the Vision Iowa Board on a quarterly basis. Applicants are reminded that the Vision Iowa Board will require city, county and private funding for each project. Contact [Kevin Blanshan](#) for information.

TRANSPORTATION

Waterloo Receives RISE Funding

The Iowa Department of Transportation has awarded the City of Waterloo \$224,449 in Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) funding for the extension of Geraldine Road located in the South Port Industrial area. Once complete, the extension of Geraldine Road will provide access to six lots totaling more than 11 acres for industrial and manufacturing purposes.

Parkersburg Receives RISE Funding

The City of Parkersburg has received \$201,969 in RISE funding from the Iowa Department of Transportation for the extension of Commerce Avenue in the city's industrial park. The Parkersburg Industrial Park encompasses 68 acres, of which nearly 30 acres are developed or sold. The extension of Commerce Avenue will provide access to five additional lots totaling 10.91 acres for light industrial and professional office development. Questions relating to either project or the RISE program in general should be directed to [Kevin Blanshan](#).

REAP Grants Awarded

Waterloo and Waverly were recently awarded Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) funding, an Iowa Department of Natural Resources program that allocates money for the enhancement and protection of Iowa's natural and cultural resources.

Waterloo received \$193,400 for the Sherwood Park Recreation Area and Hartman Reserve Expansion. The grant provides funding for the acquisition of eight parcels and two structures, the reclamation of a 1.43 acre rubble site, and installation of gates for park management purposes. The area located west of Highway 218 will eventually become part of Black Hawk County's Hartman Reserve Nature Center. The portion to the east of Highway 218 will be part of the City's Sherwood Park Recreation Area.

The City of Waverly received a \$65,000 REAP grant to restore the former AMVETS site and associated riverbank to a natural setting. This involves approximately one acre and 625 feet of riverbank along the Cedar River. Concrete rubble has been dumped in the area over the years, making the riverbank unsightly and unusable. This project involves removing the concrete rubble, shaping and benching the embankment, protecting erodible soils with rip-rap and vegetative plantings, and restoring native plantings to the floodplain.

Contact [Andrea White](#) or [Kevin Blanshan](#) if you have questions regarding the REAP grants.

DEVELOPMENT

Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District Awarded Second Safe Room for High School

The Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District was recently notified that it was awarded Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funding for constructing a second safe room on district property which will be contained in an addition to the High School. The safe room will meet the standards of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and will be designed and engineered to safely accommodate 1,000 persons during high wind and tornado events. The District's award has two phases, design and construction, with the design phase beginning immediately. The total estimated cost of the safe room is \$1,344,827, of which 75 percent is federal funding; 10 percent is state funding; and 15 percent is local funding.

If you have questions about safe room grants or Hazard Mitigation Planning, please contact INRCOG.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Applications Submitted

INRCOG staff recently assisted four entities with Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) applications. The Cedar Falls Community School District and Independence Community School District submitted applications for development of tornado and high wind safe rooms, while the City of Brandon completed an application for a new warning siren system. Finally, Black Hawk County applied for funding to merge all of the single-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans into one multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan. If you have any questions regarding the HMGP program, please contact [Brian Schoon](#).

INRCC/CA and INREDC Host Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Session

The Iowa Northland Regional City Clerks/County Auditors Association and Iowa Northland Regional Economic Development Commission recently hosted a training session on the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The guest speaker was Mr. Bob Josten of the Dorsey and Whitney Law Firm. Mr. Josten is recognized as one of the leading experts on TIF and serves as bond counsel on this matter for many of the INRCOG communities. In his presentation, Mr. Josten focused on the use of TIF in Iowa, the requirement to create and manage a low- and moderate-income set-aside fund resulting from residential TIF projects, and his predictions regarding the future use of TIF and possible changes that the state legislature may make to it. Turnout for the session was terrific, as we hosted members of the INRCC/CA, INREDC, Mayors, Council Persons, and other city and county staff members, and the information provided was outstanding. The next meetings of the INRCC/CA and INREDC are scheduled for January 25th, 2012 and January 19th, 2012, respectively.

Calendar

January

- 2 Monday
Office Closed for Holiday
- 12 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical and Board
- 16 Monday
Office Closed for Holiday
- 18 Wednesday
12:00 Noon
INRCOG Executive Committee

1:30 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority
- 19 Thursday
12:00 Noon
INREDC Board
- 25 Wednesday
12:00 Noon
City Clerks/County Auditors Assn.

February

- 9 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical and Board
- 15 Wednesday
12:00 Noon
INRCOG Executive Committee

1:30 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority
- 20 Monday
Office Closed for Holiday

March

- 8 Thursday
10:00 a.m.
MPO Technical and Board
- 13 Tuesday
11:00 a.m.
Multi-Disciplinary Safety Team
- 21 Wednesday
1:30 p.m.
Regional Transportation Authority
- 22 Thursday
10:30 a.m.
RTC Advisory Committee

11:30 a.m.
INRCOG Executive Committee

12:00 Noon
INRCOG Board
- 28 Wednesday
12:00 Noon
City Clerks/County Auditors Assn.

3:00 p.m.
Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council

INRCOG Staff

Sharon JuonExecutive Director
Brian SchoonDirector of Development & Transit
Kevin BlanshanDirector of Transportation & Data Services
Jim RodemeyerDirector of Housing
Sheri AlldredgeDirector of Administrative Services
Lisa CrabbsHousing Planner
Kyle DurantTransportation Planner
Ed HolmRTC Operations Manager
Gary IversenEconomic Development Coordinator
Cindy KnoxHousing Planner
Ben KvigneEnvironmental Planner
Brenda PontoAccountant
Jeff SchleeSafety Coordinator
Dan SchlichtmannData Services Coordinator
Colleen SimmonsCommunity Planner
David SmesrudCommunity Planner
Hayley WeigleinSecretary/Receptionist
Andrea WhiteTransportation Planner
Jill YuskaDisaster Recovery Planner



INRCOG

2012 SCHEDULE OF INRCOG MEETINGS

The following list of INRCOG meeting dates for 2012 is provided to assist you with your scheduling needs. Required changes to this schedule will be made as far in advance as possible and, when feasible, will be listed in the "Cog Connection" Calendar.

	INRCOG Board 12:00 Noon <i>Thursday</i>	INRCOG Executive Comm. 12:00 Noon- <i>Wednesday</i> <i>*11:30 a.m.-Thursday</i>	INRCC/CA Noon <i>Wednesday</i>	RTA 1:30 p.m. <i>Wednesday</i>	MPO Tech & Policy 10:00 a.m. <i>Thursday</i>	INREDC 12:00 Noon <i>Thursday</i>	RTC 10:30 a.m. <i>Thursday</i>	INRHC 3:00 p.m. <i>Wednesday</i>	MDST 11:00 a.m. <i>Tuesday</i>
January	--	18	25	18	12	19	--	--	--
February	--	15	--	15	9	--	--	--	--
March	22	*22	28	21	8	--	22	28	13
April	--	18	--	18	12	19	--	--	10
May	--	16	30	16	10	--	--	--	8
June	28	*28	--	20	14	--	28	27	12
July	--	18	25	18	12	19	--	--	10
August	--	15	--	15	9	--	--	--	14
September	20	*20	19	19	13	--	20	19	11
October	--	17	--	17	11	18	--	--	9
November	--	21	28	21	8	--	--	--	13
December	20	*20	--	19	13	--	20	19	11