



PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS

Developing Strong Local Government
Through Regional Cooperation

JULY - SEPTEMBER, 2018



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Welcome to our new look!

Notice anything different? We hope so!

With assistance from Capture Marketing, we are refreshing our look starting with an updated logo and this newsletter. We are also resuming activity on our Facebook page so be sure to "Like" us at facebook.com/inrcog!

We will also soon be redesigning our website and delivering monthly e-communications that contain timely information regarding funding opportunities, success stories, and other news important to your community.

In the meantime, please enjoy this updated issue of the COG Connection!

RURAL IOWA HOUSING PROJECT

Iowa Prison Industries (IPI) and the Iowa Assn. of Councils of Governments (ICOG) are supporting a program put forth this past Legislative session to create affordable housing in Iowa. This program would involve building two- and three-bedroom homes inside a correctional facility then trucking them to home sites. Recent Housing Needs Assessments conducted by INRCOG strongly support the need for affordable housing which, coupled with a shortage of labor in the skilled trades and the opportunity to reduce recidivism in Iowa, makes this a worthwhile endeavor.

Though legislation did not pass, great strides were made towards building awareness and support for this program and will be a focus of ICOG during the 2019 Legislative session.

We encourage you to contact your state representatives and ask them to support this important program. Questions about the specifics of the program can be directed to Kevin Blanshan.



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

INRCOG has been working with school districts to make walking and biking to school safer and more accessible for children through the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program. The program's goal is to increase the number of children who walk and/or bike to school. A variety of activities this Spring have helped to reach that goal!

BY THE NUMBERS

- 1,401** *students attending a Bike Rodeo*
- 165** *bike helmets given to students*
- 2** *Walking School Buses carrying 20 passengers*
- 11** *school districts hosting a SRTS event*
- 15** *volunteers assisting with SRTS events*

INRCOG HOSTS DIRECTOR'S RETREAT

The annual Iowa Assn. of Councils of Governments Director's Retreat was held in Waterloo in June at the Cedar Valley SportsPlex. Participants attended a variety of presentations and also presented Senator Lofgren from Muscatine with the Friend of the COG Award for his work on the Iowa Prison Industries Housing initiative.

Kevin Blanshan, INRCOG's Executive Director, also lead a tour of projects in the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metro area that INRCOG has been involved with including the TechWorks campus and River Renaissance project in Waterloo, University Avenue in Waterloo/Cedar Falls, and the Cedar Valley Lakes.

CALENDAR

JULY

- 04 Office Closed for Independence Day
- 12 MPO Policy Board & Tech. Committee
10:00 a.m.
- 19 RTA Policy Board & Tech. Committee
1:00 p.m.
- 25 City Clerks/County Auditors Assn.
12:00 Noon

AUGUST

- 09 MPO Policy Board & Tech. Committee
10:00 a.m.
- 16 INREDC Board
10:30 a.m.
- INRCOG Executive Committee
12:00 Noon
- RTA Policy Board & Tech. Committee
1:00 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

- 03 Office Closed for Labor Day
- 13 MPO Board & Technical Committee
10:00 a.m.
- 20 RTC Advisory Committee
10:30 a.m.
- INRCOG Executive Committee
11:30 a.m.
- INRCOG Board
12:00 Noon
- RTA Policy Board & Tech. Committee
1:00 p.m.
- Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council
3:00 p.m.
- 26 City Clerks/County Auditors Assn.
12:00 Noon

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



INRCOG has a great group of staff who collectively have been with our organization for over 165 years. In each newsletter, we will be using this area to highlight our staff members, their experience, and the work they do at INRCOG.

We look forward to helping you get to know us a little better!

UPPER STORY HOUSING PILOT PROJECT

INRCOG has been assisting the City of Grundy Center with a project that will create needed housing while improving a vacant structure in the City's Central Business District.

The City was awarded \$500,000 CDBG funds through the Iowa Economic Development Authority's Upper Story Housing pilot project. A private developer with local roots in the community was selected by the City to acquire the former Frederick Furniture building and renovate the second floor into four apartments, three of which will be for income-qualified tenants.

The architect and other administrative partners have been chosen and INRCOG is continuing to assist with the environmental review and release of funds process. It is expected that this project will be completed by the end of May 2021.

If your community would like to learn more about this project or IEDA's Upper Story Housing program, contact Brian Schoon.

REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

Did you know that the Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission, a service of INRCOG, gives, on average, over 3,000 bus rides each month? Or that our buses travel nearly 30,000 miles every month? Our buses run in each of our six counties to provide transportation that is open to the public and equipped to be safe for individuals with disabilities.

Interested in riding the RTC bus? Service is available Monday-Friday, 6:00 am - 6:30 pm. Reservations can be made by calling 319-233-5213 or 1-800-369-3022 at least 24 hours in advance.



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WHY CALL US

The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments is an association of local governments that is committed to identifying, securing, and coordinating local, regional, and federal government projects and programs for the enhancement of our region and member communities.

Services Offered:

- Community Development
- Community Planning
- Data Services
- Emergency Preparedness
- Environment
- Housing
- Recreation
- Regional Transit Commission
- Safe Routes to School
- Safety
- Transportation

INRCOG STAFF

Kevin Blanshan, Executive Director
Brian Schoon, Director of Development
Patrick Ross, Director of Transit
Sheri Alldredge, Director of Administrative Services
Kyle Durant, Transportation Planner
Cindy Knox, Housing Planner
Ben Kvigne, Environmental Planner
Codie Leseman, Transportation Planner
Ryan McKinley, Community Planner
Rose Phillips, Housing Planner
Brenda Ponto, Accountant
Jacki Schares, Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Dan Schlichtmann, Data Services Coordinator
Linda Sires, Transit Operations Assistant
Hayley Weiglein, Administrative Assistant

INRCOG BOARD

Duane Hildebrandt, Chair - Bremer County Supervisor
Steve Geerts, Vice-Chair - Chickasaw County Supervisor
Mark Schildroth, Secretary - Grundy County Supervisor
Gary Gissel, Treasurer - Buchanan County Supervisor

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Jim Brown, Mayor of Cedar Falls
Quentin Hart, Mayor of Waterloo
Debra Larsen, Mayor of New Hampton
Frank Magsamen, Black Hawk County Supervisor
Larry Young, Mayor of Shell Rock



INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

*Serving the counties of Black Hawk, Bremer,
Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy.*



229 E Park Avenue | Waterloo IA
P (319) 235-0311 | F (319)235-2891 | www.inrcog.org