



CDBG PROJECT UPDATES

The RPC has had another active summer seeing construction progress for ongoing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects and developing applications for the CDBG program.

Construction is nearly complete on the **Ottumwa** upper-story housing pilot project. Punch-list items are being worked through and all five units are expected to be available for lease in October!



2018

305 E. Main September 2019



2018

315 E. Main September 2019

Construction has begun on the **Oskaloosa** phase 2 façade improvement project. The project, renovation of eleven façades on six buildings in the Oskaloosa Square, is expected to be complete by July 2020.



Good weather has helped keep the **Ottumwa** streetscape project on schedule. Nearly all the underground utility work is complete in the 300-Block of E. Main Street. Contractors expect that block to be paved by the end of October! The entire three-block streetscape project will be complete by the end of 2020.



RPC staff submitted water/sewer CDBG applications on behalf of the Cities of Bloomfield, Eldon, and Lockridge. Staff are also working with the Cities of Sigourney and Oskaloosa for downtown revitalization [façade improvement] project applications for 2020. If your community has water, sewer, and/or treatment facility improvement needs or interest in the downtown revitalization program, please contact us to see how we may be able to help!

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Every five years, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) must submit a 5-year Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development which outlines how IEDA will disburse its CDBG allocation and what projects will be funded. The planning process for the 2020-2024 Plan is ongoing, but initial considerations for changes to IEDA's CDBG program appear to be encouraging for the Area 15 Region. While the quarterly water/sewer application cycle appears to be unchanged, proposed changes to the downtown revitalization and housing funds may provide additional opportunities for Area 15 communities. IEDA expects a draft plan to be released in October along with an opportunity for comments. RPC staff will notify all member communities and post links to the draft plan and comment form on the Area 15 RPC Facebook page once this information is released. Final project changes are expected to be announced in mid-January at the annual CDBG Application Workshop.

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR ROAD & BIKE/PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Regional Planning Affiliation 15 is now accepting applications for Road and Bicycle/Pedestrian improvement projects within the five county RPA region. This region includes Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Van Buren and Wapello counties. Funding is available to cities and counties within this region for road reconstruction and bicycle/pedestrian improvements. Applications due **April 1st, 2020**.

Road funding may be used for reconstruction on any road with a federal functional classification of a minor collector or higher. This information is available online at: <https://iowadot.gov/maps/digital-maps/city-and-county-maps>. Up to 100% funding is available for eligible activities on eligible routes. Applications are available online at: <https://www.area15rpc.com/surface-transportation-program>.

Bicycle and Pedestrian funding may be used for the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety improvements, safe routes to school projects, scenic highway turnouts and overlooks and historic preservation of transportation related structures. Projects must have a minimum cost of at least \$20,000 to be eligible and there is a minimum 20% match requirement. Applications are available online at: <https://www.area15rpc.com/transportation-alternatives-program-1>.

Potential applicants for road or bicycle/pedestrian funding are **strongly encouraged** to contact the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission prior to submitting an application to discuss their project and the amount of funding available. Projects should be generally ready to proceed prior to application: a concept statement should be developed, property or easements acquired, and other funding sources identified. Potential projects should not start before receiving approval from the Iowa DOT, any activities undertaken before receiving this will not be eligible for reimbursement. Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis, costs must be incurred and documentation provided to the Iowa DOT before the applicant can receive the grant funds.

If you have questions, please contact Chris Kukla at Chris.Kukla@area15rpc.com or (641) 684-6551.

FEMA ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTER GRANT AWARDS

FEMA has started making award announcements for the Assistance to Firefighter Grant program for the application cycle that closed in 2018. If your department applied for an AFG grant in 2018, make sure that it keeps its SAM.gov registration up to date and that it monitors the e-mail it used to apply for the grant. The list of awardees can also be viewed online at: <https://www.fema.gov/assistance-firefighters-grants-grantee-award-year-2018>. FEMA will make award announcements every 2-4 weeks. This means if your department has not received any notification yet, for or against, it is still in the running!



FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR SIGN REPLACEMENT

Funding is available to cities and counties for the replacement of existing signs that are damaged, worn out, obsolete or substandard. Cities may apply for up to \$5,000 and counties up to \$10,000 each year in signs and posts. Applications are accepted year-round.

Cities and counties are responsible for performing a day and nighttime sign inspection of their signs to determine which signs need replacement. Guidelines for performing an inspection are available on the sign replacement program website. Only regulatory, warning and school area signs are eligible for replacement through the program. Each City or County is responsible for installing the signs. A completed application and a resolution from the city or county must be submitted and approved by the Iowa Department of Transportation prior to ordering the signs. Reimbursement for the approved signs will be made by the Iowa DOT upon notification that the signs have been installed along with a copy of the invoice and a cancelled sign-order payment check.

Application information and guidance is available on the Iowa DOT website at: <https://iowadot.gov/traffic/traffic-and-safety-programs/sign-replacement-program>. For additional information, contact the Iowa DOT Sign Replacement Program Coordinator Ron McDaniel at ron.mcdaniel@iowadot.us or (515) 239-1537.

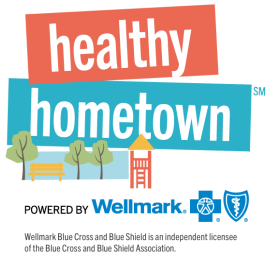


STAFF TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This summer has provided a number of trainings, workshops, and conferences for Area 15 RPC staff to learn about program and policy changes and explore new opportunities and trends in planning and community development. These sessions prepare staff to administer grants with up-to-date information and help us find new funding opportunities and project ideas to bring to our communities.

In August and September, RPC staff attended IEDA-hosted CDBG trainings on labor standards, environmental review, and grant recipient responsibilities. Chris Kukla and Holly Berg joined staff from other Iowa COGs for a comprehensive workshop to make updates and improvements to the model code used for codification. Bradley Grefe attended the Iowa Downtown Conference in Dubuque, assisting IEDA with a presentation on CDBG programs. Holly also traveled to Dubuque, to attend the Iowa League of Cities Conference where she was recognized as a Certified Elected Municipal Official (CEMO).

HEALTHY HOMETOWNSM - POWERED BY WELLMARK



Hometowns, no matter where they are, they're all special. It's where community is created and nurtured. And, as someone who's been called to serve it, you want to see your hometown thrive. But, what does that look like? Is it a vibrant, thriving downtown with restaurants serving healthy, local food and residents enticed into local businesses because they were out for a walk or bike ride? Maybe it's attracting new people to visit — or live — because they heard about a community that is putting health and wellness first.

Healthy HometownSM Powered by Wellmark wants to help make those dreams a reality. Using proven strategies and techniques, Healthy Hometown assists communities just like yours in making the healthy choice the easy choice — improving the overall well-being of your residents. We will work, at no cost, to identify ways to make positive and lasting changes to 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 want to visit. It means creating a sense of community and belonging.

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.

Improving quality of life 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 not only lead to healthier eating, but they also lead to greater physical activity and social connectivity. Increased social connectivity is a cornerstone of a thriving, attractive city — one that people are drawn to. Communities can't change habits, but they can guide residents to create better habits.

Join the more than 50 communities across Iowa and South Dakota that are working with Healthy Hometown to create meaningful and lasting changes. Check out Healthy Hometown online at Wellmark.com/HealthyHometown or email:

HealthyHometown@Wellmark.com to connect with a community health manager who can help you get started.

HOUSING REPAIR AND CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The AHEAD Regional Housing Trust Fund board met on September 19 to approve application to the State Housing Trust Fund for \$246,599. All six (6) counties in the housing region agreed to provide local cash match, including Davis (\$1,751), Jefferson (\$3,369), Keokuk (\$2,102), Mahaska (\$4,476), Van Buren (\$1,514), and Wapello (\$7,125). The AHEAD RHTF Board agreed to provide its own matching contribution of \$41,313. The total project is \$308,249. Awards will be announced in December 2019. If funded, the program will be available to the region for owner and rental housing construction and improvements in 2020. Most common use of the program is homeowners seeking repairs such as roofs, plumbing, electric, heating, and air conditioning. The program benefits families with incomes that meet Iowa's low to moderate income limits set by HUD. Applications are available online at www.area15rpc.com/rhtf. The AHEAD RHTF has been in operation since 2011 and helped rehabilitate over 200 homes, build 10 new homes and prevent over 660 households from homelessness. Contact Matt Naumann for more information at (641) 684-6551 or mnaumann@area15rpc.com.

DERELICT BUILDING FUNDING AVAILABLE

Funding is available for Cities and Counties with populations of 5,000 or less to address derelict buildings within their jurisdictions. The purpose of the program is to reuse or recycle building materials and prevent them from ending up in the landfill. To be eligible: must be commercial or public buildings that are owned by the city or county, or that the government is in the process of taking ownership of, the building must not reside on the National Register of Historic Places and be vacant for six months or longer.

Cities and counties may use the funding to improve the attractiveness of their jurisdictions by renovating or deconstructing derelict buildings that meet the program's criteria. Funding may also be available for assistance with the following activities related to the property: asbestos inspection, asbestos removal, structural engineering analysis, and phase I and II environmental assessments. In order to have a successful application: cities and counties should have a plan for reusing the site or building and identified reuse opportunities of the building materials of the derelict structure.

The next application deadline is **February 20th, 2020** and application materials can be found on the DNR website at: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Land-Quality/Waste-Planning-Recycling/Derelict-Building-Program>.

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission has assisted several communities prepare successful applications. If your city or county is interested in the DNR Derelict Building Program and has questions or is interested in assistance preparing an application, please contact Chris Kukla at Chris.Kukla@area15rpc.com or (641) 684-6551.

UPCOMING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Please note on DEADLINES to allow several weeks/months for planning to submit a quality/fundable application			
Program	Purpose	Deadline	Eligible Applicants
IDNR Water Trail Enhancement	Infrastructure improvements along state designated water trails or water trails on track for state designation.	November 29, 2019	Local governments
IDNR Water Trail Planning	Planning for water trail development as navigable waters used by lowans for boating, fishing, inner-tubing, paddling, wildlife viewing, etc.	September 30, 2019	Local governments
IEDA Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)	Tourism, recreation, and entertainment capital projects, such as museums, libraries, swimming pools, trails, large recreational areas, amphitheaters, etc.	Jan/April/July/Oct 15 th	Local governments, nonprofits
IDOT RISE Local Development	Funding to provide road/street access to expand business parks and development areas.	February 1, 2020 September 1, 2020	Local governments
IDNR Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants	Small grants for the purchase of wildland fire related equipment.	October 15, 2019	Fire Departments under 10,000 population
FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants	Purchase fire equipment, personal protection equipment, training, station modifications, wellness programs, and vehicles.	To be announced	Fire departments and non-affiliated fire and EMS agencies
Branching Out Program	Tree planting projects.	November 1, 2019	Cities and areas served by Alliant Energy
IDNR Fish Habitat Program and Wildlife Habitat Promotion	Programs and projects to improve fishing and wildlife habitat.	Last working day in November	County conservation boards
Alliant Energy Hometown Safety Grants	Grants up to \$2,000 to purchase emergency equipment, such as Jaws of Life, AED's in public buildings, thermal imaging cameras, etc.	March 1 and September 1	Communities served by Alliant Energy
IEDA Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program	Grants up to \$100,000 for full building restoration of commercial or similar buildings, located in downtown areas.	By invitation	Local governments
IEDA CDBG Water and Sewer Program	Water and wastewater improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc.	Jan/Apr/Jul/Oct 1 st	Local governments
IDNR Solid Waste Alternatives Program	Programs to encourage landfill alternatives - recycling, diversion, new technologies, new manufacturing processes, etc.	January 1 and July 1	Local governments and solid waste agencies
IEDA CDBG Sustainable Community Demonstration	Innovative and creative projects to support community sustainability. Projects may include green energy and streetscape.	Open	Local governments
USDA Solid Waste Management	Assist various solid waste projects including studies and implementation.	December 31, 2019	Local governments
IDOT Highway Safety Improvement	Grants for low-cost systematic safety improvements in the \$10,000/mile range focusing on lane departure crashes	November 15, 2019	Local governments
IDNR Derelict Building Grant	To address neglected commercial or public structures that have been vacant for at least six months.	February 20, 2020	Cities under 5,000 population

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