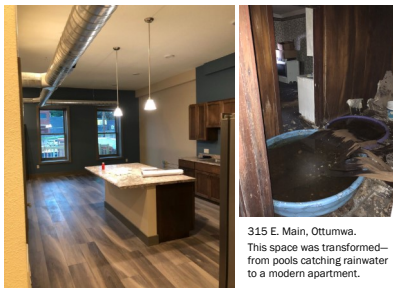




CDBG UPPER-STORY HOUSING PILOT PROJECT COMPLETE

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) infused hundreds of upper-story housing units into communities across the state through its 2008 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) disaster recovery housing program. This funding was triggered by Presidentially declared flooding disasters and was earmarked for allocation to counties that were included in the disaster declaration. *[Bloomfield and Ottumwa were among the communities to receive funding through this program.]* As that funding opportunity approached its sunset, demand for the program remained, so IEDA developed a pilot CDBG program to test upper-story gut rehab on a smaller scale.



315 E. Main, Ottumwa. This space was transformed—from pools catching rainwater to a modern apartment.

IEDA selected Ottumwa as one of three demonstration communities to receive a \$500,000 CDBG to convert unused upper-level downtown spaces into rental housing units *[Grundy Center and Maquoketa were the others]*. Construction activities for Ottumwa’s pilot project officially wrapped up in November. Five new rental housing units were completed in four previously vacant, derelict downtown properties. Three of those five units will be income-restricted for five years while the other two may be rented at market rate. The total project cost was approximately \$1.1 million, with the City providing \$25,000 toward the project and the property owner providing the remainder.

IEDA released its draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan in October, 2019 and RPC staff were pleased to see that it includes a dedicated pool of funding for upper-story housing. Details on that program are expected to be announced at IEDA’s CDBG application workshop in February. Please watch the Area 15 RPC Facebook page for more details as they come!

REDI, INC. ASSISTS C&C MACHINING EXPANSION

In December, REDI, Inc. completed a loan with C&C Machining (Centerville) to help purchase machinery and equipment as part of a business expansion of a new 65,000 square foot building at the Centerville Industrial Park.

The \$2.6 million project will create 6 new jobs and retain 34 existing manufacturing jobs in the region. C&C Machining specializes in computerized machining, assembly of farm equipment, and heavy weld fabrications. The company is experiencing growth in its painting assembly work and needs new technology equipment and additional floor space. To improve efficiency and reduce costs to stay competitive in the market the company is constructing the new industrial building adjacent to its 130,000 square foot facility. The new building will allow the company to move warehouse product to gain space in existing buildings already set up for manufacturing. The company will use REDI funds to purchase a new CNC high definition plasma metal cutting machine and a new paint system to spray coat products. Other equipment to purchase includes 2 new forklifts and a 15-ton overhead joist. \$250,000 in REDI funds were awarded to the project. Congratulations to C&C Machining and all partners involved on this important economic development project!



Opportunity2 and Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI) hosted their annual Legislative Roundtable on December 12th at the Oskaloosa Public Library. Economic Developers from the Op2 region highlighted their accomplishments for the year and PDI reviewed economic development matters for the upcoming legislative session. Thank you to all the local and state elected officials who were able to attend!

KEOSAUQUA 5-2-1-0 PROJECTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2018, the community of Keosauqua received funding from the Iowa Department of Public Health to support the **5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!** campaign.

5-2-1-0 is a health-focused movement for children in Iowa encouraging them to eat and play the right way by focusing on the importance of four habits:

- 5** or more servings of fruits and vegetables
- 2** hours or less of screen time (television, computer, video games, phones, etc.)
- 1** hour or more of physical activity
- 0** (or reduce) sugar-sweetened beverages - drink more water



After the successful application, Area 15 RPC staff worked with staff from the City of Keosauqua, Van Buren County Health Center Healthy Villages, and Wellmark Healthy Hometowns, as well as school, child care, and recreation representatives to develop a plan to promote 5-2-1-0 in the community.



Students working in the greenhouse

As a result, funds were given to Van Buren County High School to help their student-run greenhouse become operational. In addition to increasing access to healthy foods, the school district used the 5-2-1-0 funds to increase physical activity opportunities for elementary students by purchasing yard games for recess time.

Reusable water bottles were purchased for all children who attend child care programs in Keosauqua. New bottles with easy-to-use lids and fun colors were chosen to get the children excited about drinking water. The Van Buren County Hospital Child Care & Preschool implemented a water access policy to their student handbook to ensure sustainability. Water access was increased around the community as well.

New water bottle filling stations were installed at Riverfront Park and Ferguson Sports Complex.

As part of the project, the community also completed a Safe Routes to School assessment with assistance from Wellmark, which identified ways to make the community more pedestrian friendly. Keosauqua received funds for a second year to support their 5-2-1-0 strategies and planning has begun to utilize these funds—primarily around projects identified in the Safe Routes to School assessment.



Water bottle filling station

To learn more about how you can get your community, workplace, school, health care clinic or child care site involved in **5-2-1-0**, visit www.iowahealthieststate.com.

WELLMARK MATCH GRANTS



The Wellmark Foundation provides funding to encourage investment to improve health in communities. The organization's funding focuses in two areas: Increasing access to and consumption of nutritious foods, and creating safe and healthy environments to be active. To support healthier initiatives in communities, the Wellmark Foundation offers two matching opportunities: The Large MATCH Grant that provides funds up to \$100,000, and the Small MATCH Grant for requests up to \$25,000.

Information on the two opportunities can be found here: <https://www.wellmark.com/foundation/traditional-grants.html>

The Large MATCH Grant application is due February 22nd. The grant must be matched dollar for dollar with cash or in-kind contributions, at least half of the match must be cash. Successful applicants will have sixteen weeks to demonstrate they have the match for the grant and the project must be completed within two years.

Applications for the Small MATCH Grant are due June 7th. The grant must be matched 50 percent with cash or in-kind contributions, at least half of the match must be cash. Successful applicants will have twelve weeks to demonstrate they have the match for the grant and the project must be completed in one year.

Eligible activities for the Large and Small MATCH grants include: trails and trailheads, trail enhancements, accessible sidewalks, park improvements (playgrounds, exercise equipment, shade structures, shelters), splash pads, athletic courts. Examples of funded projects may be viewed at: <https://www.wellmark.com/foundation/projects-all.html>

If you would like help when applying for a Wellmark MATCH grant, contact Area 15 RPC at (641) 684-6551.

2020 CENSUS

Let the 2020 Census begin!! The start of a new decade is here and with it comes a new decennial Census! The US Constitution mandates new census counts every ten years and this is very important because the counts determine such things as legislative seats, and congressional and state legislative districts. Census 2020 marks the 24th time that our country has counted its population since 1790!

Participating in the Census is not only required by law, but it is very important to help determine how more than \$590 billion per year in federal funding is allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and much more! Also, state funds and sales tax are often allocated to cities and counties based on the decennial population counts.

The questionnaire for the 2020 Census is said to be the shortest in history with only 10 questions! New technology will make it easier than ever to respond to the census. For the first time you will be able to respond online, by phone, and mail. Please encourage your citizens to fill out the questionnaire and submit ASAP!

Here are some important Census dates -

April 1, 2020 – CENSUS DAY! Every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census by April 1.

May 2020 – Census Bureau begins visiting homes that haven't responded to the Census to make sure everyone is counted. The best way to avoid a follow-up visit from a census taker is to fill out the questionnaire as soon as you receive it!

December 2020 – apportionment counts are delivered to the President and Congress as required by law.

March 31, 2021 – the Census Bureau will send redistricting counts to states. This information is used to redraw legislative districts based on population changes.



For more information about how Census 2020 impacts your community visit: <https://2020census.gov/en/community-impact.html?#>


AHEAD REGIONAL HOUSING TRUST FUND GRANT AWARD!

The AHEAD Regional Housing Trust Fund is announcing new funds available for housing repair and new construction in 2020! The Iowa Finance Authority awarded the \$246,599 grant to be matched by \$61,650 in local funds for a total program of **\$308,249**. Funding award is made to AHEAD Inc., a local non-profit organization of 6 counties (Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Van Buren, and Wapello). Area 15 Regional Planning Commission is the administrator of the housing programs for AHEAD Inc. Local match for the program is provided by each county.



The program is commonly used by homeowners seeking repairs such as roofs, plumbing, electric, heating, and air conditioning. Other eligible uses are for new construction (and rehabilitation) of owner and rental units, and tenant-based rental assistance. This program benefits families at or below Iowa's low to moderate income limits. Applications, guidelines and brochures are available at www.area15rpc.com/rhtf. We encourage you to share this information with your citizens that need home repairs.

OEDC AWARDED PLANNING GRANT FROM IOWA DOT

 The Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) awarded the Ottumwa Economic Development Corporation (OEDC) an \$80,000 planning grant from the Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant (RRLG) program in November to study the relocation of an existing rail transload facility owned and operated by the Burlington Junction Railway (BJRY). Newly installed quiet zone infrastructure at the railroad crossings has restricted turning movements and made access to the existing site more difficult. Additionally, redevelopment plans for the downtown riverfront are in process that may further hinder access to the existing site. Relocating the spur would provide greater access and expansion potential for the railroad while also providing increased commercial and residential redevelopment capacity downtown along the riverfront.



The Burlington Junction Railway [BJRY] transload facility in relation to downtown Ottumwa. Riverfront improvement plans are in progress to develop the vacant land between the railroad tracks and the river in the upper-left side of the frame.

RPC staff worked with OEDC to prepare an application to the RRLG to help fund a feasibility study for relocating the facility to an area more congruent with industrial use and better access for tractor-trailers. Area 15 will assist OEDC with the procurement of a consultant engineering firm, mapping and photographic services, and other general grant administration activities. The OEDC project was one of six applications presented to IDOT in June, and one of only four to be approved during this round of funding.

HOMES FOR IOWA BUILDS NEW HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES



Area 15 RPC is partnering with Homes for Iowa, Inc. (HFI), a new nonprofit organization which aims to increase the supply of affordable housing in rural areas. In partnership with Iowa Prison Industries, houses are being constructed at a new Housing Production Center at the Newton Correctional Facility which allows inmates to learn trade skills such as plumbing, electrical work, and carpentry. Iowa Councils of Government are managing this program in coordination with HFI and other community partners.

The homes, with an estimated final sales price of \$130,000-\$175,000, will be purchased directly from HFI and delivered to the designated site and made available to households earning up to 100 percent of the state-wide median income (per household size). Area 15 RPC is working to coordinate partners and place homes within close range of a 50-mile radius from the Newton facility for the first year, and region-wide thereafter.

HFI is based on South Dakota’s successful “Governor’s House” program and plans to build 875 homes in the next 10 years. If you are interested in learning more about the Homes for Iowa initiative, please contact Matt Naumann at matt.naumann@area15rpc.com.

AREA 15 PROVIDES RECODIFICATION SERVICES TO CITIES

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission has over 20 years’ experience in providing codification services to cities within the region. In the past five years the RPC has helped 22 cities update their city codes.

To provide codification service, the RPC maintains a model code of ordinances. This code is updated annually by an attorney and includes the most recent changes to the Iowa code and legal opinions and precedents set in Iowa Courts. RPC staff use this model to create and update a Code of Ordinances for a city. Chapters from the model code may be added or removed from the city’s code depending on the individual city’s needs. Special ordinances specific to a city, such as franchise ordinances, water and sewer are added and updated based on the city’s latest ordinances and amendments.

Iowa Code section 380.8 requires cities to have and maintain a Code of Ordinances. To maintain their code, a city may: a) compile a supplement at least annually consisting of all ordinances and amendments from the previous year and adopt the supplement by resolution, b) add new ordinances and amendments at least annually to the code itself, c) if the city does not maintain its code as described in a) or b) then it shall compile a Code of Ordinances at least every five years.

Codification services provided by Area 15 RPC are on a contractual basis. To update a city’s code, RPC staff will work with the city clerk to prepare a draft code using the RPC’s model code and information from the city’s current code. This new draft code will be provided to the city for review, after the city has completed its review, RPC staff will discuss any additional revisions the city would like to make. The RPC will then prepare a final draft incorporating any revisions and help with adoption procedures.

If your city is interested in RPC codification services, contact Chris Kukla at chris.kukla@area15rpc.com or (641) 684-6551.

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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
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program	Highway safety and road improvements on federal aid system, park and ride, transportation planning, and public transit projects	April 1, 2020	Cities and Counties
Transportation Alternatives Program	Recreation trails, scenic byway improvements, and historic preservation of transportation related structures;	April 2, 2020	Cities and Counties
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
Small Town Sign Replacement Program	Up to \$5,000 of signs and posts per community on a first-come, first-served basis.	On-going	Cities
Mahaska County Community Foundation	Arts, culture, community betterment, education, health & human services, rec & environment, youth dev.	February 29, 2020	Government entity or non-profit
Keep Iowa Beautiful—Beautification Grant	Beautification—flowers, trees and shrub planting, painting, repair, landscaping; public nuisance abatement; litter prevention and recycling education, implementation, and public awareness	March 15, 2020	Cities and counties, and non-profit organizations in cities less than 5,000 residents
FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants	Purchase fire equipment, personal protection equipment, training, station modifications, wellness programs, and vehicles.	Spring 2020	Fire departments and non-affiliated fire and EMS agencies
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
IEDA Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)	Recreational, cultural, entertainment and educational attractions (vertical infrastructure only)	April or July 2020	Cities, counties, non-profits
Van Buren Community Foundation	Grants up to \$5,000 for projects that contribute to the quality of life in Van Buren County.	April 20, 2020	Cities and non-profits
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