



January 2022 - Happy New Year!

East Central Iowa Council of Governments

ecicog.org

More Flexibility Allowed in Treasury's Final Rules for ARPA Funds

ECICOG is currently reviewing recently updated final rules from the Department of Treasury for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to local governments. The new rules appear to be a game changer in terms of the use of these funds. Rather than calculating revenue loss, Treasury now gives a standard allowance of revenue loss of \$10 million or the full award amount, whichever is less, to replace lost public sector revenue. Recipients can then use these dollars to fund "government services", including road building/maintenance and other infrastructure. Our communities often expressed interest in using ARPA funding for new trails. While the rules don't specifically mention trails, we believe that trails would be considered "government service" and now an allowable use.



To view an overview of the final rules, click [here](#). Contact Economic Development Specialist Adam Bentley at 319-289-0062 or adam.bentley@ecicog.org for more information on the use of ARPA funds.

Webinar on Hometown Pride Program to be held January 24

Do you have energetic community members interested in advancing your town? Do you frequently hear ideas for community improvements, but people



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

don't know how to get started or what resources might be available? ECICOG is excited to partner with Keep Iowa Beautiful to bring their Hometown Pride program to our region. Hometown Pride provides community coaches and helps citizen groups work towards common goals. Best of all – this program can be provided at a very low cost to your community. Join ECICOG for a webinar on January 24 from 2-3:00pm to learn more about this exciting program. The webinar will cover Hometown Pride and Keep Iowa Beautiful, what a community coach is and does, and how a community can partner with ECICOG to bring this resource to their town or city.

[Register for the webinar here.](#) Contact Economic Development Specialist Adam Bentley at 319-289-0062 or adam.bentley@ecicog.org for additional information.

19+ Tons of Waste Reused Through IWE Program

ECICOG provides Iowa Waste Exchange (IWE) services in Benton, Iowa, Jones, Johnson, and Linn Counties. This no-cost, non-regulatory, and confidential program matches organizations' byproducts and waste with other groups that can use or recycle those materials. For example, ECICOG staff connected a company with a semi-load of unused face shields with an aid

organization. The face shields were then sent to earthquake-impacted areas in Haiti and Guatemala. ECICOG's annual goal for the IWE program is to divert 12,048 tons of waste from landfills. ECICOG exceeded that in fiscal year 2021, with 17,158 tons diverted. To date in fiscal year 2022, ECICOG has diverted 19,661 tons of waste through the IWE program.



Contact Environmental Specialist Alicia Presto at 319-289-0058 or alicia.presto@ecicog.org for information on the program or visit the [IWE website](#) to learn more.

Congratulations to the City of Wyoming on their Comprehensive Plan Adoption

ECICOG served as the consulting team to update Wyoming's comprehensive plan. Comprehensive plans present current community values and goals based on citizen input. Based on community input,



comprehensive plans express a community's vision for the future and provide a strategic map to reach that vision. A critical component is the land use map, which outlines how the community will grow in future years. Wyoming saw positive population growth in the 2020 census for the first time in decades. Their new

comprehensive plan captures the community's desire to revitalize their downtown, improve existing housing stock, and advance new housing opportunities.

Contact Community Development Specialist Tom Gruis at 319-289-0064 or tom.gruis@ecicog.org to learn more about how ECICOG assists with comprehensive planning.

Envision East Central Iowa Future Summit Scheduled for March 1

Save the date! On March 1, the Envision East Central Iowa Strategy Committee will host a future summit to share details about the draft economic development strategy for the region. This exciting event represents the culmination of months of work and input from hundreds of stakeholders. The planning process is just the beginning. At the summit, we begin to discuss the next steps to move our strategy from ideas to action. Stay tuned for more details!



To learn more about Envision East Central Iowa, visit talkto.ecicog.org/eeci.

Can ECICOG Help With Your 2022 Goals?



Our organization was created, in part, to assist our communities with technical planning expertise. Need some help with council goal setting for the new year? We can help. Are you looking at long-term land use planning? We love doing comprehensive planning in our region. The more we know about your community, the better prepared we are to identify which grant opportunities can

help you! Speaking of grants, are there grants you want to pursue but you aren't sure how to go about it? Our staff specializes in writing and administering grants. Is your city code out of date? We can help draft ordinances or codification. Are you simply short-staffed relative to what you want to accomplish? You may want to consider ECICOG for contract planning, building inspection, or code enforcement

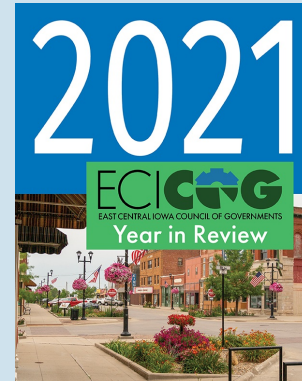
services.

Tell us how we can help! Contact Community Development and Housing Director Tracey Achenbach at 319-289-0072 or tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org for more information.

Check out ECICOG's work in 2021!

ECICOG's mission is to build vibrant, forward-thinking communities in a collaborative, resilient region. Founded in 1973 by Benton, Johnson Jones, Iowa, Linn, and Washington counties, we have been at our work for almost 50 years! Take a look at our annual report to learn more about the work we did in 2021.

[Click here](#) to download our annual report!



Funding Opportunities

ECICOG staff are available to help with a wide variety of grants. Visit [the Contact Us page](#) on our website to see our staff list or contact Communications Specialist Brittany Rempe at brittany.rempe@ecicog.org.

T-Mobile Hometown Grants

Opens in January, applications due in March (specific date TBA)

T-Mobile is committing up to \$25 million over the next 5 years to support small towns across America by funding community projects. The T-Mobile Hometown Grants program will help fund projects to build, rebuild, or refresh community spaces that help foster local connections in your town. For example, this might include the town square pavilion, a historic building, an outdoor park, a ball field, or a library-- every town has places where friends and neighbors connect. Visit the [T-Mobile website](#) to learn more.



Community Catalyst Building Remediation

Pre-application due January 28

The Community Catalyst Building Remediation Program assists communities with the redevelopment or rehabilitation of buildings to stimulate economic growth or reinvestment in the community. Cities that apply should document the project's potential of economic growth in the community, including items such as the creation of jobs, growth of businesses, or development of new housing units. The maximum award is \$100,000, and 40% of the funds will be awarded to cities with populations under 1,500. Visit [the Iowa](#)

[Economic Development Authority \(IEDA\) website](#) to learn more. Contact Community Development and Housing Director Tracey Achenbach at [319-289-0072](tel:319-289-0072) or tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org for additional assistance.

Downtown Housing Grant

Due January 31

The Downtown Housing Grant supports local downtown revitalization through new and renovated housing opportunities. The funding invests in building rehabilitation projects to increase local upper floor housing options. Communities under 30,000 are eligible for up to \$300,000 for under ten units and up to \$600,000 for more. Expenses must have an interior amenity component and can also include structural stabilization, exterior building improvements, and code and accessibility improvements. The City must be the applicant. Visit the [IEDA website](#) for more information. Contact Community Development and Housing Director Tracey Achenbach at [319-289-0072](tel:319-289-0072) or tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org for additional assistance.

Enhance Iowa Sports Tourism

Applications accepted February 1 through June 1

The new Enhance Iowa Sports Tourism program will provide financial assistance for projects that market or promote sporting events in Iowa. The sporting events can be at professional, collegiate, and amateur levels, and the promotional or marketing activities can occur for up to two years. Cities, counties, economic development organizations, and other not-for-profit organizations can apply. The program will cover up to 50% of eligible promotion costs, including advertising, payment to vendors, equipment rentals, and more. Visit [the IEDA website](#) for more details about the program and how to apply.

Iowa Foundation for Parks & Recreation Mini Grants

Due January 31

The Iowa Foundation for Parks & Recreation Mini Grants are to provide funding for leisure facilities, activities, events, or programs to promote and improve leisure opportunities and amenities for citizens in small Iowa communities. Park & Recreation Departments or local organized groups within an Iowa community with a population of 10,000 or less may apply. Visit the [Foundation's website](#) for more information.



AARP Community Challenge

Opens in February, application due date TBA

The AARP Community Challenge provides small grants to fund "quick-action" projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages. Many of last year's winning projects support revitalizing communities adversely impacted by the

pandemic and include a focus on diversity, inclusion and disparities. Other project focuses include creating vibrant public places, improving the built and social environment of a community, delivering a range of transportation and mobility options, and increasing civic engagement. Visit [the AARP website](#) for updates and to see projects funded last year.

Wellmark MATCH Grants

Due February 16

The Wellmark Foundation is currently accepting Matching Assets to Community Health (MATCH) Grant Applications for projects that make it easy to eat healthy and engage in everyday physical activity. The funding focuses on sustainable initiatives in either access to and the consumption of healthy foods, or built environments to be



physically active in. Examples of eligible projects include public playground structures, trails, community gardens, educational programming, and more. Applicants must be classes as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization within the State of Iowa or South Dakota. Visit [the Wellmark website](#) for details on project eligibility and application process.



Derelict Building Program

Due February 25

The Derelict Building Program works with small communities and rural counties to help improve the attractiveness and appearance of their towns by providing financial assistance to address derelict commercial and public buildings. The Program's main focus is landfill diversion through the recycling and reuse of building materials and the elimination of hazards both inside and out posed by these empty structures. Cities are eligible to apply and must own or be in the process of owning the building. Visit [the Iowa Department of Natural Resources website](#) for more information. Contact Planner Alicia Presto at alicia.presto@ecicog.org or 319-289-0058 for additional assistance.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Due March 15

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program provides match funds of 50% for outdoor recreation area development and acquisition. Popular projects in recent years have included skate parks, playgrounds, new and renovated swimming pools, sport complexes, campgrounds, and multipurpose trails. Iowa's cities and counties are eligible to participate. Visit the [Iowa DNR website](#) for more information. Contact Environmental Services Director Jennifer Fencil at jennifer.fencil@ecicog.org or 319-289-0065 for additional assistance.



Rural Business Development Program

Due February 28

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Business Development Grants are designed to support the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas. Rural public entities may apply for funds to go toward projects such as training and technical assistance, acquisition or development of land, community economic development, leadership and entrepreneur training, and more. Learn more about eligibility and application requirements [at the USDA website](#). Contact Economic Development Specialist Adam Bentley at adam.bentley@ecicog.org or 319-289-0062 for additional assistance.

Planning Further Ahead?

CDBG Water & Sewer

Typically due April 1

Iowa DNR Conservation Education Program

Due May 16

Want to hear more from us or sign up others for our newsletter?

Let us know by replying to this email.

We

