



C A L E N D A R

March

- 11 - RDC Loan Review Comm.; 11:30 AM, COG Training Room
- 12 - Executive Board & COG Housing Meeting; 12:30 PM, COG Training Room

April

- 3 - Good Friday; COG Office Closed
- 8 - RDC Loan Review Comm.; 11:30 AM, COG Training Room
- 9 - Executive Policy Council; 5:00 PM, COG Training Room

May

- 6 - RPA TAC Meeting; 10:00 AM, COG Board Room
- 13 - RDC Loan Review Comm.; 11:30 AM, COG Training Rm.
- 21 - Executive Board Meeting (RWIB); 4:30 PM, COG Training Room
- 25 - Memorial Day; Region XII Office Closed

CDBG Application Competitiveness Changed

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) has recently made changes to the application process for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). All applications must now include completed environmental reviews, approved local match sources, cost estimates, and final engineering or architect plans in process to remain competitive.

If your community is looking to improve its water, sewer, storm sewer, housing, downtown facades, or community facilities through grants, it is never too early to start the process. For all grants other than housing programs, contact Chris Whitaker, (712) 775-7811 or cwhitaker@region12cog.org. For housing, contact Laurie Gilbert, (712) 775-7820 or lgilbert@region12cog.org. Region XII COG will have the details on what projects can be included and the necessary process.

Region XII COG RAD Loan Open

Limited funds are now available for the Region XII COG "Regional Acquisition/Demolition Program." The program provides for the removal of dilapidated and abandoned homes to cities that have a plan to replace the home with an affordable housing unit.

Applications are due soon. [Visit this link](#) for more details. This is the primary funding source available for the removal of problematic abandoned homes in the region.

E X E C U T I V E
B O A R D

Marty Danzer, Chair
Carroll Co. Supervisor

Eric Skoog, Vice Chair,
Crawford Co. Supervisor

Jerry Caraher, Secretary
Guthrie Co. Supervisor

Guy Richardson, Treasurer
Greene Co. Supervisor

Duane Deist
Audubon Co. Supervisor

Ranell Drake
Sac Co. Supervisor

Vail Selected to Participate in Community Visioning Program

The City of Vail was recently selected to participate in the Community Visioning program, an opportunity for local leaders and community members to work with professional landscape architects, Iowa State University landscape architect students, and Trees Forever to conceptualize ways the city can be improved.

Typically, the process consists of ten meetings between the community and technical assistance professionals, and the end product is a conceptual transportation enhancement plan and strategies for implementation. The plans often include streetscape concepts, themed community signage ideas, or community entrances. Projects vary

depending on what the community desires.

Region XII COG past participants in the program include: Schaller and Manning (2012); Kimballton (2011); Odebolt, Sac City, Grand Junction (2010); Lakeview (2007); Auburn (2006); and, Panora and Guthrie Center in 2005.

This program is a free service to communities under 10,000 and requires \$2,000 to begin implementing the created concepts. If your community is interested or has questions about the program, contact Ainsley Brungardt, abrungardt@region12cog.org or (712) 775-7814.

IowaWORKS Helps Audubon Hillphoenix Workers amid Plant Closure

With the closure of the Audubon Hillphoenix plant on January 9, IowaWORKS services were requested to help displaced workers quickly find new employment in the area.



A partnership was formed that provided workshops on resume writing, interviewing, and job-seeking activities through Iowa Workforce Development to be delivered to employees in the business before the closure. Employees reported that they found workshops helpful and as a result felt more secure in the face of uncertainty that often follows job loss.

Additionally, the employees were given the opportunity to test for National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC) during their workday to become more marketable to employers. IowaWORKS also worked with many large regional firms to schedule informal meetings to introduce the recently displaced employees to potential roles where their services could be needed.

Region XII COG is the area administrator of the Workforce Investment Act. The area includes the Region XII COG member counties of Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, and Sac. Any questions about IowaWORKS or regional workforce programs, can be directed to Beth Winqvist, Beth.Winqvist@iwd.iowa.gov, or (712) 792-2685.



WIT Installs First Security Cameras

Western Iowa Transit recently took delivery of a new Ford Eldorado light duty bus. This is the first public transit vehicle purchased by WIT that is equipped with surveillance cameras. This unit has four cameras located throughout the bus that will allow for passenger monitoring inside the bus as well as situations that may arise outside the bus. This unit is currently providing transit services in Guthrie County.

Welcome new WIT Drivers!

Western Iowa Transit System has added two new employees. **Mike Powers** and **Steve Page**, both of Manning, Iowa, have been hired to fulfill part time transit driver needs in Carroll and Crawford Counties. Both drivers are already on the road.

REGION XII COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS Partnership Program

The COG's Partnership Program is an opportunity for private, non-government businesses and organizations to become a part of the COG's mission to provide various needed services to the region's cities and counties. The Partnership Program philosophy is that all groups making up a community, including non-government entities like local businesses, are essential to promoting, advancing, and developing the community. The COG appreciates the investments made so far this year by the 2014 Partners listed below. For more information on the Partnership Program, contact Rick Hunsaker at rhunsaker@region12cog.org.

SILVER MEMBERSHIP - \$500

- Bank Iowa, Denison
- Iowa Corn Processors, Glidden
- Krajicek Pallet, Denison
- Mid-Iowa Insurance & Real Estate, Carroll
- Scranton Manufacturing, Scranton
- Toyne, Inc., Breda

BRONZE MEMBERSHIP - \$250

- Agri-Drain Corporation, Adair
- Audubon County Econ. Development, Audubon
- Audubon State Bank, Audubon
- Badding Construction, Carroll
- Bauer Built Manufacturing, Inc., Paton
- Bruner, Bruner & Reinhart, Carroll
- Carroll Area Development Corp., Carroll
- Carroll County State Bank, Carroll
- Commercial Savings Bank, Carroll
- Coon Rapids Municipal Utilities, Coon Rapids
- Denison Job Corps Center, Denison
- Denison Municipal Utilities, Denison
- Drees Company, Carroll
- Farmers State Bank, Yale
- Farner Bocken Company, Carroll
- The Graphic Edge, Carroll
- Guthrie County State Bank, Guthrie Center
- HGM Associates, Council Bluffs
- Holmes Murphy & Associates, West Des Moines
- Iowa Savings Bank, Carroll
- Iowa State Bank, Sac City
- Landmands Bank, Audubon
- Marne & Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn
- Panora Telecommunications, Inc., Panora
- Principal Fin. Group-Matt Ramaekers, Carroll
- Sundquist Engineering, Denison
- Templeton Savings Bank, Templeton
- Templeton Telephone Company, Templeton
- Toyne, Inc., Breda
- United Bank of Iowa, Glidden
- Western Iowa Networks, Breda
- Westside State Bank, Westside
- Wild Rose Entertainment, West Des Moines

TREES!

A program covering the evolving threats from pests and best management practices

Often overlooked, trees are of immense importance to quality of life, the environment, and local budgets. While the emerald ash borer (EAB) has been a much publicized threat to Iowa's ash tree population, there are numerous other threats from other invasive species, native pests, and weather that could impact other types of trees.

Region XII COG has teamed up with Dr. Mark Shour, an Iowa State Extension entomologist specializing in pest management of urban insect pests, DNR Foresters representing each area county, and Trees Forever. They will provide property owners and local governments an overview of tree health management, pest treatment options and costs (including the EAB), general tree maintenance overviews, and available funding programs.

The free, informative presentations will be especially beneficial to local government officials as trees are a unique form of living infrastructure that must be effectively managed. Meetings will be held in all Region XII COG member counties and is made possible with the support of the DNR REAP program.

If you can make any of the meetings, please contact Ainsley Brungardt at abrungardt@region12cog.org or (712) 775-7814 to ensure for proper accommodations.

Schedule

Guthrie County:

March 19, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
Panora City Hall, Panora

Greene County:

March 19, 1:30-4:00 p.m.
Greene County Community Center, Jefferson

Sac County:

April 28, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
Hagge Park Conservation Center, Sac City

Crawford County:

April 28, 1:30-4:00 p.m.
Yellow Smoke Park--Lookout Shelterhouse, Denison

Audubon County:

May 26, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
Audubon County Econ. Dev.
800 Market St., Audubon

Carroll County:

May 26 1:30-4:00 p.m.
Swan Lake Conservation Education Center, Carroll

Location maps and any additional information will be posted on the [Region XII COG Facebook](#) page prior to the meetings. Be sure to like us!



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach



Upcoming Grants

Funding Program	Purpose	Deadline	Eligible Applicants
HOME Downpayment Assistance Program	Down payment assistance for first time homebuyers	March	Cities and counties
Keep Iowa Beautiful Beautification Grant	Beautification programs – flower, tree and shrub planting, painting & fix-up and general landscaping; public nuisance abatement; litter prevention and recycling education, implementation, and public awareness	March 15	Local governments and non-profits in communities of less than 5,000 residents
Build with Bags	Up to \$2,000 for the purchase of benches, tables, or playground equipment made of recycled plastic	March 30	Local governments, non-profits, and service clubs
Solid Waste Alternatives Program (SWAP)	Emphasis for selected projects is placed on tonnage avoided or reduced, sustainability and ability to replicate.	April 1, June 1, October 1	Local governments, public, or private groups
Peter Kiewitt Foundation	Community development and recreation projects	April 15, July 15, October 15	Local governments and non-profit organizations within a 100 mile radius of Omaha Nebraska.
State Historical Society of Iowa-Country School Grant Program	Provides up to \$5,000 per applicant for the preservation and maintenance of Iowa's one and two-room country schools. The funds may also be used for interpreting the history of country schools or for educational activities taking place in a country school.	April 25	Local governments, non-profits
Iowa Community Cultural Grant	Funding to support the arts in communities, and schools,	May 1	Local government, non-profits, schools
Branching Out	Tree Planting	June 1 and November 1	Cities served by Alliant Energy
Iowa West Foundation	Community development, economic development, education and human needs projects	June 1, October 1	Local governments and non-profit organizations in Audubon, Carroll, and Crawford Counties.
State Recreational Trails Fund (IDOT)	Acquisition, construction or improvement of recreational trails	July 1	Local governments, non-profits
RISE Local Development Grant Program	Funding to provide road/street access to expand business parks and development areas	September 1	Local governments
All Town Sign Replacement Program (IDOT)	The program will provide up to \$5,000 of signs and signposts per applying community on a first-come, first-served basis	Ongoing	Cities
Alliant Hometown Challenge Grants	Dollar-for-dollar match to local fundraising for one-time safety related projects for local response teams	Rolling Cycle	Local governments, private non-profits

Recently Awarded Grants

Funding Program	Recipient	Amount	Project
Vision Iowa CAT	Grand Junction	\$220,000	New Community Center
IEDA Regional Marketing	Region XII COG	\$49,100	Western Iowa Advantage regional marketing
Union Pacific Foundation	City of Carroll	\$10,000	Merchants Park Redevelopment
FHLB	Region XII COG	\$190,000	Audubon, Guthrie, and Dallas associate members homeowner repair grant
Community Visioning	City of Vail	Services	Landscape and transportation visioning plan

Additional grants are available through private foundations and ongoing programs. If you are looking for funding for a specific project, please contact Chris Whitaker by e-mail or at 712-775-7811 for assistance in locating funding opportunities.



CODE UPDATES

Region XII COG updates numerous codes of ordinances and zoning ordinances for cities across the region every year. Planners from Region XII work with city councils to bring ordinances up to existing state code and address the numerous issues that city governments face, from animal ordinances to golf cart regulations. Any ordinances the city has passed since the last publication of the code

will also be filed in a cohesive manner. Most city councils decide to add or remove language depending on the variety of unique issues that each community faces, which often depend on the existing language as well as law enforcement application.

By state law, cities must compile their ordinances at least every five years. If your city needs some updated books, contact Chris Whitaker at Region XII, cwhitaker@region12cog.org or (712) 775-7811, to discuss the project in further detail.

2015 HOME Application Round

The annual HOME Application Round continues with an anticipated deadline of March or April 2015. Region XII COG will be submitting a region-wide application, with all member cities eligible to participate.

Cities interested in participating need to commit \$2,500 for each project that is completed in the community. The city can designate the maximum number of projects to be allowed during the program, which will offer assistance to first time homebuyers on a first-come first-serve basis. The city will not have to pay any match if there are no projects completed in the community.

This proposed grant will provide awarded homebuyers up to \$35,000 in down-payment and repair assistance as a grant. The grant term will be five to ten years, depending on the amount of assistance granted to the homeowner.

Applications may also be submitted by an individual city or county should they not want to participate in the regional application.

If your city or county is interested, please contact Laurie Gilbert by email, lgilbert@region12cog.org, or by phone, (712) 775-7820.

Region XII COG Fiscal Year 2014 Audit Released

John D. Morrow, Certified Public Accountant, Wall Lake, Iowa released an audit report for the previous fiscal year in December on Region XII Council of Governments, Inc., and its affiliated organizations.

Morrow reported the organizations had revenues of \$5,143,802 for the year ended June 30, 2014, which was an 11% decrease from the prior year. Support included \$2,860,919 from Federal and state agencies; \$1,814,721 from public support, fees, contributions, matching funds, etc; \$350,746 from loan repayments; and \$117,416 from interest from invested funds and loans.

Expenditures for the organizations totaled \$4,874,299, an 18.2% decrease from the prior year. Program expenditures administered by the organizations included \$2,030,549 for Rural Transit programs and planning, \$222,018 for Workforce Development and workforce related programs, \$922,074 for affordable housing and housing assistance programs, \$68,169 for Western Iowa Advantage Partners, and \$1,631,489 for other state and local programs.

A copy of the audit report is available for review on the Office of the Auditor of State’s website or the Region XII Council of Governments’ administrative office.

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