



THE REVIEW

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CHANGES TO TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

For many years there has been discussion in the legislature about changes to Iowa’s urban renewal and tax increment financing (TIF) laws. This past spring the legislature approved HF2460 which included several changes, most notably in regards to reporting requirements for local governments who utilize TIF. Starting this year, local governments will be required to file comprehensive reports on their use of TIF with the Department of Management (DOM) by December 1st of each year. The DOM is offering webinars on October 4th on “TIF Certification and Reconciliation” and on October 11th & 25th on the new reporting requirements. Both webinars are free and recommended for cities and counties that use TIF. For more information or to register, go to www.iowaleague.org and click on the “Workshops and Events” link. Links for each individual webinar are located on this page.

Region XII has worked with local governments on urban renewal and TIF projects for many years, and we are closely following these new reporting requirements so that we may assist local officials in complying with the new regulations. If you have questions regarding the recent changes to the TIF law or the new reporting requirements, please contact Joe Behrens at (712)775-7810 or jbehrens@region12cog.org.

APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED FOR HOUSING PROGRAMS

Region XII has submitted several grant applications for funding to continue to offer low interest loans and grant-funded programs to assist homeowners with repairs to their home.

- FHLB grant - \$300,000 to provide 40 homeowners repair assistance as grants of up to \$7,000.
- USDA-RD - \$21,000 to provide 4 homeowners repair assistance as low interest loans.
- Housing Trust Fund - \$248,000 to provide 25 applicants with assistance for down payment, repairs or prevention of foreclosure with funds provided as grants, low interest loans or grant/loan combinations based on income eligibility.

Awards for each program are anticipated to be announced late November with projects starting in December. All programs would be available throughout the region.

MANNING RECEIVES FUNDING FOR FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Manning has been awarded \$500,000 in grant funding from the Iowa Economic Development Authority to complete a facade improvement program. The funding was available through the Downtown Revitalization program. Along with \$110,691 in local funds, the grant funding will be used to complete historic renovations of at least 15 buildings. Renovations will include window replacement, masonry repairs, painting, storefront rebuilds, and tuckpointing. Planning for the program is underway with design work to be completed in the new few months.

The Downtown Revitalization Program is a newer program from IEDA that has provided funding for facade improvement programs in 20 communities with \$9,800,000 in grant funds awarded to date to renovate approximately 350 buildings. This is a very competitive program and will be accepting applications early next year. If your community could benefit from a similar program, contact Karina Ward at (712)775-7814 or kward@region12cog.org for more information.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326 W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (Voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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REGION XII 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 investment made by 2012 Partners listed below. For more information on the Partnership Program, contact Rick Hunsaker at rhunsaker@region12cog.org.

SILVER MEMBERSHIP - \$500

Mid-Iowa Insurance & Real Estate, Carroll
Midland Power Cooperative, Jefferson
Scranton Manufacturing/New Way, Scranton
Snyder & Associates, Atlantic

BRONZE MEMBERSHIP - \$250

Agri-Drain Corporation, Adair
Audubon Ace Hardware, Audubon
Audubon State Bank, Audubon
Badding Construction, Carroll
Bank Iowa, Denison
Breda Savings Bank, Breda
Bruner Bruner & Reinhart, Carroll
Carroll Area Development Corporation, Carroll
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Commercial Savings Bank, Carroll
Coon Rapids Municipal Utilities, Coon Rapids
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Farmers State Bank, Yale
Farnier Bocken Company, Carroll
The Graphic Edge, Carroll
Guthrie County State Bank, Guthrie Center
HGM Associates, Council Bluffs
Home State Bank, Jefferson
Iowa Savings Bank, Carroll
Iowa State Bank, Sac City
Landmands National Bank, Audubon
Marne & Elk Horn Telephone Co., Elk Horn
Panora Telecommunications, Inc., Panora
POET Biorefining, Coon Rapids
Quality Machine, Audubon
Schaller Telephone Company, Schaller
Sundquist Engineering, Denison
Templeton Savings Bank, Templeton
Templeton Telephone Company, Templeton
Toyne, Inc., Breda
Western Iowa Networks, Breda
Westside State Bank, Westside

NEW TRANSIT SERVICES FOR FY13

Western Iowa Transit (WITS) is pleased to announce the addition of two new transit services for FY 2013. WITS has entered into an agreement with New Hope Village of Carroll to provide transit services to New Hope Village clients residing in Glidden. Rides are being provided to various work sites in the area as well as to the main campus in Carroll.

WITS has also begun service to *Iowa Cares* clients. *Iowa Cares* is a Department of Human Services program designed to assist low-income clients that are not eligible for Medicaid funding. Transportation is provided to selected hospitals and medical centers in Iowa. *Iowa Cares* clients pay a monthly premium for this service and a minimal fare to ride the bus. Transit providers receive reimbursement for the balance of the trip expense from a State Special Project Grant administered by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

For more information about these services, contact Tom Feldman, Transit Director, at (712)775-7830.

2013-2016 TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

In July, the Region XII COG Policy Council approved the 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). RPA XII is targeted to receive approximately \$2.0 million annually for regional Surface Transportation Projects (STP). RPA XII is also targeted to receive \$125,000 per year for regional transportation enhancements.

The 2013-2016 STP element is comprised of 14 projects, totaling \$39,000,000. These projects will be assisted with \$10,100,000 in RPA XII funds. New projects programmed to receive funding include Audubon County F58 and the City of Carroll for High Ridge Road. The National Highway System element is developed and proposed by the Iowa Department of Transportation and includes \$5,833,000 worth of projects that include erosion control, pavement rehabilitation, and wetland mitigation. The 2013-2016 Enhancement element includes 2 recreational trail projects totaling approximately 5 miles, with total projects costs totally over \$700,000 being assisted by \$450,000 in regional transportation funds; and an additional \$208,000 in Statewide enhancement funds. Thirty-five bridge projects are shown in the TIP and are those proposed by counties, cities and the Iowa Department of Transportation. These projects are estimated to cost \$22,317,000 and include \$17,708,000 in federal bridge funds.

A copy of the Region XII TIP may be downloaded at www.region12cog.org under the Downloads and Publications section. If you have any questions regarding the Region XII Transportation Improvement Program, please contact Chris Whitaker at (712)775-7811 or cwhitaker@region12cog.org.

JOBJET VAN POOL AVAILABLE

Is the rising cost of fuel making your commute to work unaffordable? Remember Region XII's JobJet program; a carpool taken to the next level. Contact Tom Feldman at 712-775-7830 or Chris Whitaker at 712-775-7811 for more information



MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY: MAP-21 FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION BILL

MAP-21 was signed into law on July 6, 2012 and reauthorizes the federal surface transportation program through September 30, 2014. Total funding authorization in MAP-21 is \$52.78 billion in FY 2013 and \$52.98 billion in FY 2014.

MAP-21 greatly reduces the number of major highway programs from over 100 to 8 major program categories: National Highway Performance Program, Surface Transportation Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program, Metropolitan Planning Program, and Transportation Alternatives. Highway program funding levels remain stable at FY 2012 levels with a small allowance for inflation in FY 2014.

Total funding for public transit remains fairly constant at \$10.6 billion in FY 2013 and \$10.7 billion in FY 2014. The public transit program is funded with 20% from general funds and 80% from the Mass Transit Account. The total number of transit programs also decreased to 7 key programs: New Starts, State of Good Repair, Bus and Bus Facilities, Urbanized Formula, Rural Area Formula, Enhanced Mobility, and Metro and Statewide Planning. Iowa will not receive funding under either the New Starts program or the State of Good Repair program. The Bus and Bus Facilities Program is downsized under MAP-21 and turned into a formula program. Due to this change, Iowa will receive significantly less funding for bus replacements and facilities.

One of the changes that will significantly affect cities and counties in the region is the creation of the Transportation Alternatives Program. Transportation Alternatives funding can be used for projects previously funded under Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to Schools, the National Scenic Byways program, and the National Recreation Trails program. Previously, these activities were funded under separate programs. Due to the changes to this program, the October 1 application deadline of these programs will be delayed until no sooner than January 2013. IDOT is currently considering how to implement this program and the level of funding availability.

Changes undoubtedly will occur as a result of MAP-21. These changes will affect programs and projects at the statewide, regional, and local levels. The Iowa Department of Transportation Commission will be considering the best method to implement these programs in the upcoming months.

Additional information regarding MAP-21 can be found at www.iowadot.gov, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21>, or <http://www.fta.dot.gov/map21>. Please look for future Region XII Funding Updates for additional information regarding the availability of transportation funding through regional and statewide program. If you have additional questions regarding MAP-21, please contact Chris Whitaker at (712)775-7811 or cwhitaker@region12cog.org.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

As mentioned above, a new Transportation Alternatives Program has been created as part of MAP-21. Certain projects that were previously funded under Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to Schools, the National Scenic Byways program, and the National Recreation Trails program are eligible for funding under this new program. Examples of projects that are eligible for funding through Transportation Alternatives include:

- On-road and off-road trail facilities (construction, planning, and design)
- Safe routes for non-drivers (bike/pedestrian infrastructure)
- Abandoned railroad corridors for trails (conversion for non-motorized users)
- Turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas (roadside facilities previously included by scenic byways)
- Community improvement activities (ROW improvements: billboards, historic/archaeological preservation, vegetation management, etc.)
- Environmental mitigation (storm water management, wildlife mortality, etc.)

Applications for this new program will be due no sooner than January 2013. Please look for continued updates from Region XII as more information becomes available. To ensure that you receive these important updates, you can join Region XII's email list. Send your name and email address to region12@region12cog.org and let us know that you would like to receive funding updates.

COG ADDS A CONTRACT AND AN EMPLOYEE

The board of directors of the Communities 4 Children (Audubon, Carroll, Greene, & Guthrie Counties) and Crawford & Sac Decategorization Projects have jointly selected Region XII COG to serve as fiscal agent for their program director in FY 2013. Alayna Clancy has been serving as Decategorization and Community Partnerships for Protecting Children Coordinator since November 2010. She is originally from Halbur, IA and holds a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology and Human Services from Buena Vista University. She will remain housed in the Carroll DHS office, where she will administer the various initiatives funded by the boards through Decategorization. The COG was the operator of Communities 4 Children when it first began in the 1990s, and welcomes the opportunity to again serve the region in this capacity.

UPCOMING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDING PROGRAM	PURPOSE	DEADLINE	ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS
CDBG Water & Sewer	Water and sewer systems	November 14th	Local governments
CDBG Housing Fund	Housing rehabilitation and home ownership assistance	December 12th	Local governments
CDBG Community Facilities and Services	Child care centers, senior centers, vocational workshops, stormwater projects	January 16th	Local governments
IDOT Transportation Alternatives	See article on page 3	TBD	Local governments and counties

Additional grants are available through private foundations and ongoing programs. If you are looking for funding for a specific project, please contact Joe Behrens at 712-775-7810 or jbehrens@region12cog.org for assistance in locating funding opportunities.

RECENTLY AWARDED FUNDING

FUNDING PROGRAM	RECIPIENT	AMOUNT	PROJECT
CDBG Housing	City of Guthrie Center	\$397,000	Housing Rehabilitation
CDBG Housing	City of Stuart	\$397,000	Housing Rehabilitation
CDBG Water	City of Minburn	\$223,000	Water Treatment Project
Iowa DNR	Region XII COG	\$400,000	Iowa Waste Exchange
Local Development RISE	City of Stuart	\$303,750	S. 8th Street Extension

IOWA WASTE EXCHANGE: EVENT RECYCLING

For the third consecutive year, Shelly Codner, Area Resource Specialist for the Iowa Waste Exchange and Region XII employee, served as sustainability coordinator for the Natural Living Exposition, held at Community Choice Convention Center in Des Moines. Shelly was onsite throughout the event to sort, collect, and transfer materials, answer questions, and assist exhibitors with their waste reduction and recycling needs. She also presented an educational program on vermicomposting and a working exhibit on crafting everyday waste materials into reusable items.

Materials collected included organics, cardboard, paper, and plastic. The two-day event yielded nearly 300 pounds of organic materials and 250 pounds of other recyclables that were diverted from the landfill. Event organizers noted that organics recycling had increased from previous years, in part due to a partnership formed by the Iowa Waste Exchange and Fresh Market Café (food vendor for the event) in collecting organic materials throughout the event.

Compared to previous years, more exhibitors are using reusable totes and containers, bringing reusable beverage containers, minimizing packaging materials and giving promotional items made from recyclable or reusable materials. The Iowa Events Center's single-stream recycling program made the process much more efficient than in previous years.

If you are interested in initiating recycling at your event and need assistance, please contact one of Region XII's Iowa Waste Exchange staff:

Shelly Codner serves our member communities in Dallas County and can be reached at (319)404-1942.

Fred Kesten serves Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, and Sac counties along with all of northwest Iowa. He can be reached at (712)775-7813.

STAFF CHANGES

Tom Feldman was promoted to fill the Transit Director position in March. Tom has been with Region XII for 22 years, previously serving as Transit Manager.



Jill Anthofer was promoted to Transit Assistant in April 2012 after serving as a transit driver for the Coon Rapids area for over seven years. She lives in Coon Rapids with her husband Mayor Jeff, serves on the local school board, and has 4 college-age children.

Jared Foss joined Region XII as a Housing Specialist in August 2012. He recently graduated from Iowa State University with a Bachelors Degree in Community and Regional Planning. Jared is originally from Riceville, in northeast Iowa, and previously worked with Region XII as an intern. He assists with the administration of funded housing programs.



NEW GRANT FOR ELECTROLUX NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANT STAFF

A Continuation Emergency Grant award was granted to the region on June 27, 2012. The \$158,000 grant will be used to retain three Electrolux Career Development Specialists through June 30, 2013. The staff will be housed at the Fort Dodge IWorks Center. The continuation of staffing will allow for continued services to approximately 600 people who will be completing Workforce Investment Act job seeking activities and training programs after the original grant closes.

The Grant allowed staff to facilitate activities for Electrolux participants that recently graduated from training. A job fair and workshop event was recently held at Iowa Central Community College. The event was a big success for participants and businesses in the area. NEG staff continues to organize Job Clubs for students still attending training. Electrolux Students are able to attend regular meetings that give information about available jobs as well as instruction on executing a successful job search and landing a great job after graduation. The students have appreciated the support and are eager to use their training and work in their chosen fields.

The importance of these services to individuals can be understood in a story about one participant named Paul. Paul had worked for Electrolux for 7 years prior to his layoff after the plant closed. He wanted to stay in the area but his skills were no longer marketable, so he took advantage of the training offered by the Trade Act. Paul enrolled in the Sustainable Energy program at Iowa Central Community College and used the National Emergency Grant to help with costs that related to his training. After several years of working and two years of training, Paul found that he was in need of some help in successfully carrying out his job search. Before graduation, NEG staff worked with Paul to write a cover letter, resume and thank you letters. They also taught him interviewing tips, helped him practice his interviewing skills with mock interviews, and helped in finding job openings in his training field. Paul was successful in his job search following graduation and is now employed on a wind farm near Fonda.

PROMISE JOBS REORGANIZATION

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) Director Teresa Wahlert has ordered a reorganization of the Promise Jobs delivery system. There were previously 15 contractors throughout the state as well as IWD staff providing PROMISE JOBS services. As of September 1, 2012, IWD reduced the number of contractors to six. Those six will have their areas increased and all areas of the state will be covered by one of these six contractors or by IWD staff.

After contracting with IWD to provide PROMISE JOBS services for 23 years, Region XII was notified that it will not receive one of the contracts and its current PROMISE JOBS contract would end on August 31. This decision impacted one full time staff and one temporary staff member.

According to IWD, the continuation of Region XII's partnership in providing PROMISE JOBS service was contingent on the outcome of union negotiations. Last year's layoffs violated a union contract which stipulates the State cannot replace union staff with contracted labor. The ending of Region XII's contract was a direct consequence of negotiations that caused IWD to recall employees.

WIA funding and service delivery provided by Region XII remains unchanged. PROMISE JOBS services will be provided for five counties at the Carroll Workforce Center through staff employed by IWD's partner in Creston. Sac County will receive PROMISE JOBS service from the workforce center in Fort Dodge.



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