

# September 2021

## East Central Iowa Council of Governments

[ecicog.org](http://ecicog.org)

### Newsletter

#### [PATCH Program Receives Awards and \\$1 Million Donation](#)

On August 10, the anniversary of the derecho, the City of Cedar Rapids announced a \$1 million donation to the PATCH Program (Providing Assistance to Community Homeowners). PATCH assists homeowners with home repairs following the record-breaking wind storm. Later in August, PATCH was recognized with a 2021 Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). On September 8, PATCH also received the 2021 HousingIowa Innovation Award. ECICOG, the Housing Fund for Linn County, Matthew 25, Neighborhood Finance Corp, Waypoint Services, Linn County, and the many other PATCH partners are grateful for the increased awareness the donation and awards have brought to this important disaster response initiative. To date, PATCH has helped over 250 homeowners and administered over \$750,000 in funds. For more information about the PATCH program, visit our [website](#) or contact Housing Recovery Specialist Nicole Wise at [nicole.wise@ecicog.org](mailto:nicole.wise@ecicog.org).

#### [ARPA Roundtable for Small Cities](#)

Join us for a virtual ARPA roundtable for small cities on Friday, September 24 from 9am to 10:30am. ECICOG staff will provide a brief overview of uses of ARPA funds and related requirements. Following the presentation, the floor will be open to share information, ideas, and questions with others in the meeting. ECICOG staff are also available to work individually with communities unsure of how proceed with their ARPA funding or reporting. [Register here](#) for the webinar. Contact Community Development and Housing Director Tracey Achenbach at [tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org](mailto:tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org) with questions.

#### [Share Your Thoughts on Our Region's Economic Future](#)

As part of the Envision East Central Iowa planning process, ECICOG is seeking your input on short fifteen-question survey. This survey will help us to better understand our region's key economic drivers and help shape our collective vision for economic development following COVID-19. We strongly encourage you to both take the survey and share it with your community's local businesses, elected leaders, and key stakeholders. Contact Economic Development Specialist Adam Bentley at [adam.bentley@ecicog.org](mailto:adam.bentley@ecicog.org) with questions. [Follow this link](#) to the survey, and learn more about the Envision East Central Iowa planning process [here](#).

#### [State of Iowa Dedicates \\$100 Million to Housing](#)

Governor Reynolds announced last week that the State is using \$100 million of its ARPA funding to create or preserve housing in Iowa. A large amount will go toward already-received Low Income Housing Tax Credit and Workforce Housing Text Credit applications. \$20 million will support projects that support the creation of new housing units, helping revitalize downtowns, and \$4 million will help establish owner-occupied home preservation programs. The downtown housing and home preservation programs are only available to communities of 30,000 or less, and a 25% local match is required. Quick action is necessary, as applications are due in November. If your community is interested in applying, contact Community Development and Housing Director Tracey Achenbach at [tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org](mailto:tracey.achenbach@ecicog.org).

## [Transportation Funding Applications Open](#)

ECICOG is announcing the opportunity for local governments to apply for regional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds. Funding will be for eligible projects in federal fiscal years 2023-2026. The STBG aids with funding for any road or bridge projects on the federal-aid system, and the TAP is intended for non-road and off-road trail facilities. Additional eligibility information, application instructions, the pre-application form, and full applications can be found [on our website](#). Contact Transportation Director Mary Rump at [mary.rump@ecicog.org](mailto:mary.rump@ecicog.org) for more information.

## [Resiliency Toolkit for Small Business Available to Share](#)

ECICOG, in partnership with the Iowa Council of Governments (ICOG) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA), is excited to provide the [2021 Resiliency Toolkit for Small Businesses](#). The toolkit was designed to assist small businesses with planning and preparing for unforeseen emergencies. It helps address resiliency in the areas of business management, marketing, and finance. Also included are resources like case studies and worksheets to aid small businesses in developing strategies to mitigate the impact of local, state, and national emergencies. Help us to get the word out by including the resource link on your city or economic development website. Contact Economic Development Specialist Adam Bentley at [adam.bentley@ecicog.org](mailto:adam.bentley@ecicog.org) for addition information.

## **Funding Opportunities**

### [Brownfield Assessment Grant](#)

*Due October 1*

Assessment Grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, conduct a range of planning activities, develop site-specific cleanup plans, and conduct community involvement related to brownfield sites. The performance period for these grants is three years. Learn more at the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)'s website](#). With additional questions, contact Environmental Services Director Jennifer Fencl at [jennifer.fencl@ecicog.org](mailto:jennifer.fencl@ecicog.org).

### [CDBG Water & Sewer](#)

*Due October 1*

The goal of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is to provide economic opportunities for people, especially those of low- and moderate income. The annual Water & Sewer program assists cities and counties with projects such as improvements to sanitary sewer systems and water systems, water and wastewater treatment facility projects, storm sewer projects, and rural water connections. Visit [the Iowa Economic Development Authority \(IEDA\) website](#) for more details on fund amounts and qualifications, or contact Environmental Services Director Jennifer Fencl at [jennifer.fencl@ecicog.org](mailto:jennifer.fencl@ecicog.org).

### [Federal Recreational Trails Program](#)

*Due October 1*

The federal trail programs provide funds for recreational trails and trail-related projects. The funding can be used for the acquisition of property, new trail construction, or maintenance and improvement of existing trails. Visit [the Iowa Department of Transportation \(DOT\) website](#) for more details or contact Transportation Director Mary Rump at [mary.rump@ecicog.org](mailto:mary.rump@ecicog.org) with questions.

## Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Conservation Education Program

*Due November 1*

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) aims to inspire people to connect with their natural resources. The Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Conservation Education Program is the funding mechanism for the IDNR to support educational programs. Visit [the REAP website](#) for more information or contact Environmental Services Director Jennifer Fencil at [jennifer.fencil@ecicog.org](mailto:jennifer.fencil@ecicog.org).