

# NIACOG NEWS

Vol. 26 No. 3

NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Apr. - May 2015

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## ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

The NIACOG newsletter will now be distributed electronically by email. It is also still available on NIACOG's website. If you know of anyone having issues obtaining the newsletter, contact **Matt O'Brien** at 641-423-1637 Ext 14 or [mobrien@niacog.org](mailto:mobrien@niacog.org). A hard copy can be mailed by request.

## ADVERTISING NOW AVAILABLE ON REGION 2 TRANSIT SYSTEM BUSES



Last year the Region 2 Transit System entered into an agreement with Houck Advertising of St. Paul, Minnesota. The project was developed through the Region 2 Transit Advisory Group as a way to increase revenue for the transit system and provide an avenue for a number of agencies and businesses to promote their projects and services.

Advertising on Region 2 Transit System buses is an effective and cost-efficient form of outdoor advertising. Bus ads generate valuable impressions quickly leading to behavior-changing frequency levels. Bus ads will place an advertiser's message at the busiest intersections, malls, schools, and other high traffic commercial areas

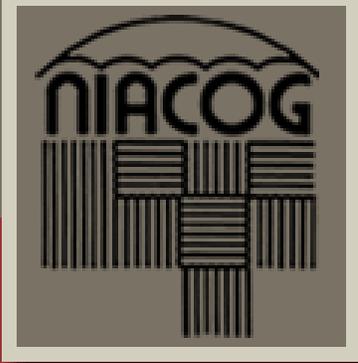
of the region, multiple times each day. Bus ads also will be able to cover residential and commercial areas of the region not reached by outdoor billboards. No other out of home option gives advertisers the flexibility and staying power at such an affordable price as advertising on the Region 2 Transit System.

Bus Ads are high impact moving billboards that grab the audience's attention directly at eye level! Region 2 Transit System buses travel hundreds of miles each day projecting a message throughout a community and giving advertisers the opportunity to keep a company or organization's name and message top-of-mind all month long.

For information about advertising on Region 2 Transit buses please contact Houck Transit Advertising by calling **800-777-7290**, email to [quotes@houckads.net](mailto:quotes@houckads.net), or visit their website at [www.houckads.com](http://www.houckads.com).

## IOWANS FIT FOR LIFE GRANT

Recently Charles City was chosen to participate in an Iowans Fit for Life initiative through the Iowa Department of Public Health to increase Physical Activity and improve Nutrition in their community. A Steering Committee and community meetings resulted in Asset Mapping of healthy initiatives in the community followed by the development of an Action Plan to improve physical activity and nutrition in Charles City. The Action Plan proposes increasing opportunities and access to extracurricular physical activity and increasing availability of community garden space and gardening accessibility and knowledge to all age groups. Specific activities will be detailed as the initiative develops.



## HOUSING ACTIVITY: CDBG HOUSING SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM



The IEDA Community Development (CDBG) Housing Sustainability Program provides Funding

from the U.S. Department of HUD in order to expand and retain the supply of decent and affordable housing for low-income Iowans. This is accomplished through owner-occupied housing rehabilitation programs that are implemented in Iowa's communities. There has been much CDBG Rehabilitation Activity across the NIACOG region over the past several months.

NIACOG is currently providing general administrative assistance and technical assistance for five cities in the region that are currently undergoing CDBG owner-occupied rehabilitation programs. All five of these programs provide a maximum of \$24,999 in rehabilitation work for each home. Also included in their program budgets is \$6,000 in lead hazard reduction activity for each home.

Two of these five cities were 2012 CDBG grant recipients. These are the Cities of Thompson



and Whittemore. The Program in Whittemore, which assisted in the rehabilitation of nine homes, has now been completed and the IEDA close-out process is underway. The City of Thompson will be assisting in the rehabilitation of ten homes. Eight of these have been completed and the final two projects will be completed within the next month.

The Cities of Garner and Grafton were 2013 CDBG grant recipients. In Garner, the rehabilitation of seven homes has been completed or is underway. The contractor

procurement process will begin soon for the final phase of the Garner Program. This final phase will include the rehabilitation of at least four homes. In Grafton the rehabilitation of four homes has been completed or is underway. The contractor procurement process for the final phase in Grafton will also be underway soon. The final Grafton phase will consist of the rehabilitation of two homes.

The City of Britt was a 2014 CDBG grant recipient. At least ten homes will be rehabilitated in the Britt program. Contractor bids have been opened on the first two projects in Britt, and they will be underway soon. The contractor procurement process will begin shortly for the next two homes in the Program, one of which will be a Deep Energy Retrofit (DER) project. It was mentioned in the previous NIACOG newsletter that the IEDA selected the Britt Program as a pilot project for DER, in which several of the homes to be given rehabilitation assistance will undergo DER rehabilitation. The intent of DER rehabilitation is to rehabilitate homes that will result in very low post-retrofit energy use and also provide benefits to durability, comfort, and indoor air quality beyond what is normally accomplished in normal IEDA rehabilitation projects.

The City of Charles City is also currently implementing a housing rehabilitation program. It was awarded CDBG funds in 2012 to assist in the rehabilitation of ten homes in the community. To date, six homes have been rehabilitated in the Charles City Program; three are now underway, and contractor procurement for the final project will be underway soon. The City of Charles City is conducting its own technical services for its rehabilitation projects (processing of individual applications for assistance and overseeing of all onsite activity). However, NIACOG is providing general administrative assistance to the City.

The above-named six communities have or will contribute a combined total of \$119,000 in local match funds, which is leveraging \$1,875,730 in CDBG rehabilitation dollars. The end result will be the rehabilitation of at least 56 homes combined in the communities.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### April

Haz-Mat Meeting

8th @ 1:00 pm

NIACOG Office

Transportation Policy Board Mtg.

8th @ 2:30 pm

NIACOG Office

TAG Mtg.

9th @ 8:30 am

NIACOG Office

NIACOG Executive Board Mtg.

13th @ 12:00 pm

NIACOG Office

### May

NIACOG Board Mtg.

11th @ 7:00 pm

Bennigan's, Clear Lake, IA

TAG Mtg.

14th @ 8:30 am

NIACOG Office

City Clerks Mtg.

15th @ 9:30 am

NIACOG Office

Memorial Day

25th

NIACOG Office Closed



## NEW MANUFACTURING-TECHNOLOGIES & THEIR IMPACT

Although we have certainly not reached the technological advances of 'The Jetson's', technology continues to morph the manufacturing process. How-



ard Wial of the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Brookings Institution presented information about recent and potentially forthcoming advances in industry for the American Planning Association. Seven (7) new manufacturing technologies are described below along with their individual impacts followed by a general overall impact and suggestions for economic development policy.

### Modular Pharmaceutical Manufacturing –

These are small, programmable factories that are reusable for different drugs and make small batch production less expensive by using "shipping containers" that can be transported. IMPACT - More intense competition for pharmaceutical manufacturing among regions with pharmaceutical research and development companies.

### Cloud Computing –

This involves software on remote servers, which is already in use. IMPACTS – Cloud computing reduces the need to have IT specialists on site. Also, virtual collaboration could potentially serve as substitute or complement for in-person collaboration.

### Industrial Robotics –

Industrial robots are becoming more affordable, mobile, and flexible. They work alongside humans, and learn from them, but they are limited to simple, repetitive tasks. IMPACTS – Robotics come with a high demand for engineers & technicians, which could be a location factor for user firms, possibly favoring Midwest manufacturing centers.

### Advanced Materials –

This involves 'smart materials' with superior features like being lightweight, self-repairing, and nanomaterials. Some of these are already in use. IMPACT - Lightweight materials reduce transportation costs, reducing the advantages of co-locating with suppliers. Health impacts could lead to households relocating away from manufacturing areas, so that traditional separation of zoned uses is reinforced. These materials could also result in raised manufacturing wages.

### Advanced Sensing –

This involves sensors on pallets & parts that track every stage of production. The cost for the sensors is declining rapidly and is already in use. IMPACT – Advanced sensing would come with a higher demand for logistics specialists & technicians, which could be a location factor for user firms. The sensors also remove inefficiencies in production process.

### Digital Manufacturing –

This concept uses IT (Information Technology) to cut manufacturing process costs by increasing machine efficiency/capacity and integrating or removing steps in the manufacturing process. For example, product orders could be taken, handled, and shipped entirely by machine, potentially connecting directly to customer firms. Some parts of this are already in use. IMPACT – Shifts in outsourcing material supplies, and higher demand for skilled production technicians, which could be a location factor for user firms. Digital manufacturing is also intended to remove inefficiencies in production process.

### Additive Manufacturing (3-D Printing) –

3-D manufacturing, may look like creating a molded figure, but it actually involves creating items by building them up in layers of material. It's kind of like printing a picture from your computer, but instead of a picture, the result is a 3-D figure. The process involves digital files that are created by computer scanning, which is then fed into the layering equipment. The process creates no scrap material, requires few materials, and involves no joining requirements. This process is used in rapid prototyping. IMPACTS – This technology could reduce the amount of labor required for manufacturing (machinists and welders), but would place higher demand on industrial designers, which could be a location factor for user firms.

### Conclusions

**Overall Impacts** - These technological advances make it possible to accomplish more manufacturing in less space, so smaller sites may be more feasible. And, very important location factors for user firms with advanced technologies include skilled production workers and good freight transportation.

### Recommended Manufacturing Development Policy

- Build the 'High Road' by focusing economic development efforts and funds on: research and development centers, workforce development, improved freight transportation, and technical assistance. And, on the flip side, focus assistance on firms with potential for high wages, productivity, and productivity growth. Also, compete for manufacturing by offering innovation resources, skilled labor resources, and good freight transportation, instead of focusing on low wages and relocation subsidies.

## QUICK FACTS

- 350 work zone crashes occur per year in Iowa.
- 5.0 work zone fatalities per year (10 -year average, 2004 -2013).
- 230 work zone crashes result in property damage.
- 75% of Iowa work zone crashes are rear-end crashes

Annual traffic on Iowa highways has increased more than 35 percent during the past 10 years - increased traffic wears out roads faster and makes repairs necessary... and thus, more work zones. (Source: Iowa DOT)

## ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST



Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC) and the state's 17 executive directors hosted their annual legislative breakfast at the State Capitol Rotunda on March 12th to discuss legislative issues impacting COG's and local units of government. Several north Iowa legislators participated in the gathering offering insight into the legislative process and issues impacting north Iowa.