

NIACOG NEWS

Vol. 25 No. 1

NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Feb. 2014 – Mar. 2014

Introduction to Planning & Zoning

Registration for the 2014 Introduction to Planning and Zoning for Local Officials workshop is open. The workshop in our area will be at the Best Western Holiday Lodge in Clear Lake on April 8th.

The three-hour workshop is designed to introduce the basic principles of land use planning and development management to elected officials, planning and zoning officials, and board of adjustment members without formal training in the subjects. Using case scenarios in a highly interactive format, the workshop highlights issues frequently faced in the land use process.

The evening begins with a light supper at 5:30 p.m. The program begins at 6:00 p.m. and concludes by 8:45 p.m. Registration is \$65 per individual, or \$50 per person if a city or county registers five or more officials to attend. The fee covers the workshop instruction, workshop materials, and supper.

Further information can be found at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/content/registration-open-2014-introduction-planning-and-zoning-workshops>

Pictometry

NIACOG staff attended a training workshop in December for Pictometry in Cerro Gordo County. The workshop was spearheaded by Paula Lemke, the County's GIS Coordinator, and Jim Marchetti.

Jim is a technical trainer for Pictometry International Corporation. His department at the company is responsible for final quality assurance, customer delivery, installation, training, and support of all Pictometry products.

Pictometry is an image capture process that produces high resolution neighborhood and community aerial imagery that shows the fronts and sides of buildings and locations on the ground. Measurements that can be made directly on Pictometry imagery include area, distance, height, elevation, pitch, bearing, and others. These measurements can be used by emergency response/9-1-1, GIS, planning and development, assessment, insurance, construction, utilities, and real estate. Additionally, the imagery can be overlaid with various GIS shapefiles and information.

Questions and comments regarding Pictometry can be directed to Jim Marchetti at jim.marchetti@pictometry.com



Pictometry Image of Bird's Eye View of the NIACOG Office

Leadership North Iowa

NIACOG sponsored Matt O'Brien, a regional planner, in attending the latest Leadership North Iowa (LNI) classes facilitated by the Mason City Chamber of Commerce. The program is designed to identify and develop future leaders in our communities. Participants learn leadership skills and examine the economic and social issues of the region. The program benefits both participants raised and born in North Iowa and those who are new to the area.

The next round of LNI classes start on March 4, 2014.

Participants attend class sessions held every Tuesday at various locations in

the area. Classes run until May 13 with a graduation ceremony on May 20. Due to limited enrollment, applicants are encouraged to register soon to ensure acceptance into the program.

If you know of someone in your community who would benefit from this program or would like additional information, you can contact Kara Ruge at kruge@masoncityia.com.



NoRISC Safety Program In 18th Year

The North Iowa Safety Coalition (NoRISC) is in its 18th year of providing OSHA required safety training and written programs for cities and counties who participate in the NIACOG administered program. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) require safety training to prevent injuries and accidents associated with work environments. Safety training sessions cover a variety of OSHA required topics including: bloodborne pathogens; hazard communication; lockout/tagout; respiratory protection; confined space entry and hearing conservation.

Safety sessions are held at the NIACOG office and are offered on different days to allow part of a city or

county's workforce to attend one day and the others on other days. This insures local coverage and not having an entire workforce gone on any one particular day. In addition to the classroom training, participation in the program includes NIACOG's safety consultant assisting with the preparation of required OSHA written plans. He also performs on-site safety inspections, noise analysis and personal protective equipment analysis for participating members. Hearing testing is also integral component of the safety program provided by a third party mobility testing lab that will come directly to a member's facility.

If your city or county is interested in learning more about becoming a member of the NIACOG NoRISC program, please contact Kevin Kramer at the NIACOG office or by email at norisc@niacog.org.

Community Development Block Grants

The cities of Marble Rock, Stacyville and Thornton are all expecting to begin the bidding process for their respective projects in the next month or so. You may recall from a previous newsletter announcing the awards as follows:

The City of Marble Rock is undertaking a water system improvement project to replace approximately 4,500 feet of undersized deteriorating and dead-end water mains. The estimated total project cost is approximately \$586,000, with a CDBG award of \$300,000.

The City of Stacyville is undertaking a project to improve water quality by replacing over 5,000 linear feet of water main. This project will eliminate dead end mains, improve flow and pressure and eliminate the threat of back siphoning. The estimated total project cost is approximately \$652,000, with a CDBG award of \$300,000.

The City of Thornton is undertaking a project to install a new soil liner to repair the leaking sewage treatment lagoon. The estimated total project cost is approximately \$544,300, with a CDBG award of \$300,000.

This year, NIACOG assisted the City of Nora Springs with an application for a sewer main and manhole lining project. As this will rehab much of sanitary sewer

collection system, the project amounts to nearly 17,000 linear feet of main and manhole lining. The City requested \$500,000 to aid in completing the approximate \$1,495,750 project.

CDBG timelines are a little different this year. Last year, conditional awards were announced, but the formal awards did not happen until approximately June. Obviously this delayed contract approvals and potentially set projects back a few months. This year, award announcements will be later. While this won't speed anything up, it will help with scheduling various elements of the project, and not create unrealistic expectations.

Good luck Nora Springs!!

Transportation Happenings

The RPA 2 Policy Board, Technical Committee and Transportation Alternatives Committee will soon be soliciting applications for transportation projects in RPA 2. You may recall, last year the federal transportation bill MAP 21 was passed into law. It is a two (2) year program that had many changes.

Surface Transportation Program or STP funds as they are more commonly known are funds that are typically used for road and bridge projects, but can also be used for planning and transit projects. In RPA 2, STP funds have contributed over \$ 63,000,000 to the transportation system.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds are what most people would recognize as Enhancements. TAP funds can also be used for Safe Route to School type projects as well as Scenic Byways. There is yet another funding source, called TAP Flex, which is STP funds that can be used for any eligible project such as trails, roads, bridges, etc. The Iowa Transportation Commission has allowed the Regions such as NIACOG/RPA 2 the flexibility to best determine how to spend these Flex funds. The RPA 2 Policy Board has decided to keep those funds as TAP funds due to the TAP funding levels being cut. The TAP and TAP Flex combination, essentially keeps the "enhancement" funding level the same or a little better than prior to the passage of MAP -21.

New NIACOG Fiscal Officer



NIACOG welcomes Kris Urdahl as their new Fiscal Officer. Kris comes to NIACOG after first coming to Mason City as the Assistant District Auditor for Interstate Power Company. After a brief departure due to being transferred, she returned to the area as Cerro Gordo County Budget Director and then became owner of Urdahl Tax and Accounting. While running her own business, she also worked for her father-in-law selling Real Estate. She went on to hold various positions in the accounting field while raising her children and was ready to return to full-time employment when the NIACOG Fiscal Officer position became available. She graduated from the University of Dubuque with degrees in Accounting and Business Administration and an emphasis in computer science.

Kris is married to Jay Urdahl and they have four children. She grew up in the hills of Northeast Iowa outside of Colesburg, 10 miles from Guttenberg, if you are not familiar with the town. She is a Girl Scout Leader, volunteers at Newman and Holy Family and in her "spare time" enjoys playing golf.

Kris oversees the financial operations and reporting for the Agency, as well as, being responsible for payroll and employee benefits. Feel free to contact Kris should you have any questions in these areas at kurdahl@niacog.org or 641-423-0491, ext. 12.

Kris is excited to be a part of the NIACOG team and looks forward to working with the many communities and individuals the Agency comes in contact with.



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Calendar of Events

- Feb. 10** – Executive Committee
Noon – NIACOG Office
- Feb. 17** – President’s Day – Office Open
- Mar. 10** – NIACOG Board of Directors Mtg.
7:00pm – Bennigan’s Grill – Clear Lake
- Mar. 21** – North Iowa City Clerks Association Mtg.
9:00am – NIACOG Office



NIACOG STAFF

641-423-0491

Joe Myhre	Executive Director	Ext. 11
Kevin Kramer	Transit Administrator	Ext. 17
Jodi Wyborny	Administrative Assistant	Ext. 10
Chris Diggins	Local Assistance Director	Ext. 15
Steve Wendt	Community Dev. Planner	Ext. 13
Todd Hull	Maintenance Supervisor	Ext. 24
Teresa Collins	Operations Manager	Ext. 22
Kris Urdahl	Fiscal Officer	Ext. 12
Myrtle Nelson	Senior Planner	Ext. 16
Matt O’Brien	Planner	Ext. 14
Laurel Clement	Planner	Ext. 27
Jennifer Butler	Planner	Ext. 18
Dana Heimbuch	Comm. Dev. Planner	Ext. 28
Cindy Johnson	Regional Travel Navigator	Ext. 30

Email – first letter of first name followed by last name
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