

MIPA Newsletter Summer 2023

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MID-IOWA Planning Brief

Summer 2023

mid-iowaplanningalliance.org

Update from MIPA Staff:

I was fortune to attend the 2023 Story County Economic Development Summit in Huxley, in June. The focus of the meeting was on broadband, and we heard comments from the local, state, and national perspective. Access to broadband is an issue many are facing. Thankfully, the State and Federal Government are both investing in Iowa's broadband future. Currently the [8th Notice of Funding](#) is open for the Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program. If you have questions about this opportunity, please reach out.

Thank you for those who attended the annual meeting. We were able to hear from both the State and Federal economic development agencies on how they can assist communities within the MIPA region. Thank you to those who attended; it is our intent to make these meetings useful and informational. It was fantastic to be able to see so many of you in person, thank you.

Regarding the meeting, I want to touch on two items the board of directors passed. The first is a change in quorum. MIPA has about 70 voting members and the bylaws require a simple majority. Finding a meeting time that worked for 35 or more members has proved to be difficult. For this reason, the board has voted to change quorum to 30% of voting members. This change will allow the MIPA Board of Directors the flexibility to conduct business in a timely manner.

The second action item I would like to touch on from the meeting is the vote to add staff. I have had the honor of being the only MIPA employee for the last 15 months. Fortunately, I have had some great support through this journey, including from the staff at the MPO. One MPO employee, Lucas Young, has been working for the last 12 months almost exclusively on MIPA projects. Lucas has taken the reigns of the Central Iowa Housing Trust Fund and the Story County Housing Trust along with other MIPA contracts. I'd like to take this opportunity to officially welcome Lucas to the MIPA team, welcome.

PS: If you find a grant opportunity outside of the list below and want to apply, please let me know. I am happy to help, no matter the source of funds.

FUNDING: Multiple Opportunities

Several funding opportunities are outlined below that MIPA members and associated organizations may want to consider. MIPA has the staff and experience to help communities submit the best possible applications for these funds. As always, please feel free to contact us to explore other potential funding sources for your projects. ***REMINDER*** MIPA dues pay for grant writing services.

Source/Program	Funding Uses	Grant Application Due Date
USDA Rural Microentrepreneur	Helps a Microenterprise Development Organization to establish RLFs with capital funds so they can lend money to small businesses of fewer than 10	Open window – no date

Assistance Program	employees. (Eligible: non-profit organizations and higher education)	established
IDNR Food Storage Capacity Grant	Grants up to \$8,000 to purchase food storage facilities (shelving, refrigerators, freezers, etc.) for food handling facilities (Eligible: food pantries, food banks, and other entities that provide food to food-insecure Iowans)	Until funds are expended
REAP (Various)	State funding for recreation, conservation, and outdoor resources projects, including land acquisition and development. Funding is available up to 100% of the costs. (Eligible: local governments)	September 29, November 1, November 30
Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant Program NOFA #8	This is the latest round of funding for ISPs for broadband deployment. These funds will be targeted at the previously identified Broadband Intervention Zones. Available to those that have applied in previous rounds. Total funds available are \$148,960,000. This is one of the largest allocations yet and the first targeted to specific areas that ISPs may not target otherwise. (Eligible: Any internet services provider or communications services provider, including local governments and private entities)	August 25
IEDA Rural Innovation Grant	Grant up to \$50,000 to implement innovative ideas to improve rural Iowa and enhance your community (Eligible: Local governments, civic and regional entities, and certain nonprofits)	August 30
Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Grant	In partnership with Iowa State University Extension & Outreach's Rural Housing Readiness Assessment workshops, funding from the program will empower communities to assess their current development environment and enact changes resulting in the creation of policies and procedures that are attractive to potential developers (Eligible: Local governments)	August 30
Leadership Bootcamp Grant	Grants up to \$1,000 to help local entities establish leadership programs, which will advance the community through greater leadership capacity at the local level (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits)	August 30
Rural Child Care Planning Grant	The Rural Child Care Planning Grant Program provides funding for planning initiatives addressing childcare through a professional third-party partner (Eligible: local governments, nonprofit 501c3 and c6 organizations, school districts, and higher education)	August 30
Rural Enrichment Grant	The Rural Enrichment Grant program aims to support small quality of life projects that will create meaningful results in rural communities. Developing quality spaces for people to want to live, work, play, and engage will support the vibrancy of Iowa's rural places. Eligible projects must be open to the public and contribute to the vitality and engagement of the community (Eligible: local governments, nonprofit 501c3 and c6 organizations, school districts, higher education, for-profit organizations)	August 30
Rural Scale Up Grant	The Rural Scale-Up Grant program aims to support the replication and spread of creative solutions that are addressing current issues and challenges faced by rural communities (Eligible: local governments, nonprofit 501c3 organizations, higher education, for-profit organizations)	August 30
BOOST Pilot Program	The BOOST program aims to provide teams of experts to assist passionate community and business leaders in developing intentional plans for next step growth. This pilot program is designed for rural communities, nonprofits, or employers to receive personalized technical assistance for identifying and implementing action steps to launch into the next stage of success (Eligible: local governments, nonprofit 501c3 and c6 organizations)	August 30
Main Street Challenge Grant	Grant funding for projects that enhance the downtown area, such as brick-and-mortar building projects in designated Main Street districts (Eligible: Ames, Colfax, Newton, Nevada, Story City, and West Des Moines)	September 8
DOT Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program	New programs created in the past year or 18 months. The Reconnecting Communities program addresses transportation barriers the divide communities, such as railroads, busy highways, and other barriers. The Neighborhood Access and Equity program provides up to \$3.155 billion to reconnect communities by supporting neighborhood equity, safety, and affordable transportation access as well as mitigating negative environmental impacts. It will emphasize assisting economically disadvantaged or underserved	September 28

	communities with planning and capacity building. (Eligible: local governments and regional entities)	
IDNR Water Recreation Access Cost-share Program	Provides funds for constructing and improving boat access facilities to Iowa's lakes and streams. Projects can include boat launching ramps, docks, and related infrastructure (Eligible: local governments)	September 29
USDA Power Affordable Clean Energy (PACE)	A loan or financing program for rural communities to develop clean energy infrastructure. (Eligible: state and local governments; tribes; for-profits; non-profits; RECs, etc.)	September 29
Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program (HBIIP)	A USDA program that helps gas stations, convenience stores, and other fuel dispensing stations to add infrastructure for higher blends of renewable fuels, such as ethanol (Eligible: Owners of transportation fueling facilities and fuel distribution facilities)	Quarterly beginning September 30
Iowa DOT Federal Recreational Trails Grant	Establish recreational trails throughout Iowa. The program is restricted to the acquisition, construction or improvement of recreational trails open for public use or trails which will be dedicated public use upon completion. This grant is very competitive, so MIPA is interested in major projects, especially those that connect one trail to another or connect two communities or destinations (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits).	October 1
CDBG Water and Sewer Program	Water and wastewater capital improvements: plants, mains, lagoons, pumps, towers, etc. (Eligible: local governments)	November 1 (next quarterly round)
IEDA Enhance Iowa Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grant	Funds for capital projects, such as trails, libraries, community centers, pavilions, entertainment venues, museums, recreational facilities, and more. (Eligible: local governments and certain nonprofits).	November 15
Iowa Historic Preservation Tax Credits – small projects	Up to 25% of project cost in the form of a State tax credit to offset the costs of the building rehabilitation or restoration. Project must affect a designated historic building on the National Register of Historic Places. Projects can have eligible costs up to \$750,000. (Eligible: property owners – governments can partner to mobilize the project)	September 15
CDBG Community Facilities and Services	This annual competitive program offers grants to assist communities for a variety of projects including day care facilities, senior centers, vocational workshops and other community services such as storm water projects. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing, until funds run out
Alliant Energy Foundation Community Grants Program	Grants for playgrounds, health and wellness projects, public safety, education, culture and arts, and other local needs. (Eligible: local governments and non-profits in communities served by Alliant Energy)	Ongoing
ITC/ IRDC "Power of Connection" Community Grant Program	Grants up to \$5,000 for capacity building, strategic planning, studies or assessments for a variety of community programs and issues. (Eligibility: rural communities)	Ongoing
Highway Safety Improvement	Provides grants for low-cost, systematic safety improvements in the \$10,000/mile range, focusing on lane departure crashes. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing
Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP)	Provides 100 hours of engineering assistance for operations and traffic safety issues. (Eligible: local governments)	Ongoing

FUNDING: Mid-America Trade Adjustment Assistance Center (TAAC) – Cost Share Grant Funding for Manufacturers

The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAAF) is a federal grant program funded through the Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce. The program assists U.S. manufacturers by paying a portion of professional consultant expenses and industry-specific expert services to improve their business competitiveness.

TAAF partners with manufacturers by offering grant funding from \$30,000 (75/25 cost share) up to \$150,000 (50/50 cost share) to implement strategic projects that are focused on improving a firm's international operations and competitive abilities.

Eligible firms are U.S. manufacturers who have been in business for two years and have experienced a 5% decline in employment and sales in at least 25% of a product line.

[Click here](#) for additional information. If you have any questions or are interested in applying please reach out and we will be happy to assist you through the process.

INFORMATION: Upcoming Conferences and Summits

1. **Housing Iowa Conference, September 6-8, at the Cedar Rapids DoubleTree in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.** This event welcomes housing developers, property managers, financiers, lenders, Realtors, homeless and supportive services professionals, housing advocates, policy makers, community development professionals, community leaders and anyone interested in learning more about housing in Iowa. Click [here](#) to register!
 2. **Des Moines Cybersecurity Conference, September 21, at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown in Des Moines, Iowa.** Discover cutting edge security approaches, and how to manage risk in the workforce. Click [here](#) to register!
 3. **Iowa American Planning Association Upper Midwest Annual Conference, October 11-13, at the Bien Venu Event Center in Cedar Falls, Iowa.** This event is the annual conference for planners in Iowa and this year is the regional conference for planners in the states of Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. A variety of topics will be covered, with this year's theme centered around building communities that are livable, attainable, and inclusive. Click [here](#) to register!
 4. **Iowa Ideas 2023, October 12-13, and is a Virtual Conference.** Iowa Ideas is an annual virtual conference designed to gather Iowans from all perspectives to explore, discuss and offer solutions on issues impacting the state. Click [here](#) to register!
 5. **2023 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! Summit, October 26, at the FFA Enrichment Center in Ankeny, Iowa.** Learn from experts from across the state implementing 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count! in schools, early care, out-of-school programs, health care clinics and communities. Sessions focus on how to adopt strategies that support the healthy choice as the easy choice and create policy, system and environmental changes within all sectors. Click [here](#) to register!
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