



# IARC: STRENGTHENING IOWA'S COGS THROUGH OUR STATE ASSOCIATION

**NADO Annual Training Conference**

October 15, 2012

Nichole Warren

Iowa Association of Regional Councils

# History of IARC

- Iowa's COGs met informally on a monthly basis in the late 1970's/ 1980's. (Originally 16 now 17 regions)
- IARC made the decision to formalize and was incorporated in 1988.
- The desire to lobby and work collaboratively on statewide issues were the main reasons for IARC's formation. A goal was to secure state funding for COGs.

# History of IARC

- 1991 to 2009: IARC contracted with several different entities for administrative assistance. IARC has contracted with a lobbyist since the 1990's
- Secured state funding in 1991
- Received EDA funding in 2009 to create an executive director position
- Focus of position was to identify new partnerships and service opportunities and increase statewide visibility of the COGs

# Benefits of our state association

- **We are better together.** COGs can advocate more effectively when working collectively.
- Statewide service opportunities that individual regions would not have
- Ability to tap into the strengths and resources of all of our members

# Benefits of our state association

---

- Venue to problem solve, brainstorm and collaborate on issues of common interest
- Collaborative promotion/marketing efforts
- Lobbying services
- Single point of contact for agencies

# IARC Today

Over the past three years, IARC has:

- Secured 9 new contracts with state/federal agencies
- Secured \$525,000 for IARC and member COGs through new contracts/ services
- Implemented a new dues structure to help ensure financial sustainability
- Strengthened our relationships with agencies while looking at new statewide initiatives (CDBG review)

# Creating a successful association

- As a state association grows and develops, the amount of time and resources each agency must commit will increase.
- Member agencies must see value to invest time and funding into an association.
- Peer accountability is critical!
- Must think about on-going sustainability

# Questions?

---

Nichole Warren, Executive Director  
IARC

515.554.3210

[iarcdirector@live.com](mailto:iarcdirector@live.com)

[www.iarcog.com](http://www.iarcog.com)