

# Iowa Association of Regional Councils

Bringing leaders and communities together to promote economic growth,  
improve public sector services, and solve areawide issues for the future.



Regional Strategies. Partnerships. Solutions.

IARC

Collectively, Iowa's Councils of Governments (COGs) foster regional solutions, partnerships and strategies to strengthen the state's economies, communities and public services. While each COG has specific programs and services tailored to the unique needs of its region and communities, we also work statewide and across COG boundaries to advance state and regional priorities.

## results through partnerships

The Iowa Association of Regional Councils and our membership of 17 COGs are committed to preparing the state for the future by building new partnerships, managing public sector resources effectively and focusing on results-driven investments.



*"Iowa's Councils of Governments (COGs) are important partners and problem solvers in driving positive change across the state. They are trusted, accountable and proven stewards of public resources. Most importantly, Iowa's COGs are focused on creating high quality jobs and improving the lives of our state's people while also saving taxpayer money and improving government efficiency."*

*- Governor Terry E. Branstad*

Iowa's COGs are guided by three fundamental principles: preserve jobs and spur new economic growth, build vibrant communities, and foster regional collaboration among local governments, public accountability and citizen engagement.



**PRESERVING JOBS, SPURRING NEW GROWTH**  
Help communities and businesses compete globally by focusing on transportation and infrastructure upgrades, technology and broadband access, business start-up and expansion capital, and workforce readiness.



**BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES**  
Assist communities in developing, financing and maintaining the civic, cultural, health, physical and recreational assets associated with strong and competitive regional economies.



**PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENGAGEMENT**  
Ensure public resources are used effectively and efficiently, while also engaging local elected leaders and citizens of Iowa in shaping the future of our state and communities.



## results-driven investments and strategies

*“We would like to commend [our area’s COG] for their handling of the disaster relief following the floods which hammered Iowa in 2008. They helped make the challenge of the paperwork much easier, and communicated the status of the applications every step of the way. The personnel at [our COG] were knowledgeable and hard-working and have been a pleasure to work with. If not for their help, the recovery process would have been significantly more challenging. Thank you and congratulations on a job well done.”*

*- Scott Gasway, President J.P. Gasway Company, Hiawatha*

## regional approaches. local accountability.

*“Whether we are operating in good times or bad, it is important to have entities such as the COGs remain focused on quality job creation, improving public service delivery and ensuring our small towns and rural areas are not left behind.”*

*- Lt. Gov Kim Reynolds*

As public-based entities, the strength and achievements of our COGs result from our longstanding institutional knowledge and capacity, direct links to local governments and communities, emphasis on partnership building and commitment to translating strategies and plans into real world action. The priorities and programs of each COG are established and governed by a policy board of local elected and appointed officials. To carry out our activities, our COGs work with public, private and nonprofit sector partners to leverage resources, solve complex issues, and enhance the quality of life for all Iowans.



## snapshot of our statewide impact

- » Helped **private sector partners create and retain over 5,800 jobs** in the past five years through more than **250 business start-up and expansion loans totaling \$52 million** in COG investment, leveraging an additional \$181 million in private investment.
- » Collaborated with state and local officials to identify and program over \$915 million in federal funding for **over 1,200 transportation improvement projects since 2005**.
- » Offered transportation mobility options by providing **more than 1.6 million rides each year** through public transit systems, including for employees, elderly, and disabled.
- » Increased access to safe and affordable housing including **homeownership financing for 445 families and rehabilitation upgrades for over 2,300 homes**.
- » Secured \$93.8 million for 2008 disaster flood recovery and administered \$66.6 million in federal and state recovery funding, **impacting the livelihoods of 704 businesses and the well-being of 1,855 households directly impacted by the floods**.
- » Assisted communities in securing and **managing nearly \$215 million for water and sewer infrastructure projects** in the past five years. An additional \$28 million has been raised by our COGs for various cultural and recreational projects.

## public sector financial and performance accountability

One of the hallmarks of IARC and our network of COGs is our commitment to public accountability, transparency, and customer service. Recognizing our proven history in this arena, the Iowa Finance Authority selected IARC to provide monitoring services for the agency's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing program. Our goal is to ensure taxpayer resources are spent efficiently, cost-effectively, and with the intended goals and purposes of each individual grantee.

# translating strategies into action

Through IARC and individually, our COGs are constantly looking for opportunities to improve our state, regions and local communities.

- » To spur economic growth through regional purchasing, a COG created a Buyer Supplier program to connect companies with area products and services, keeping more money locally rather than flowing outside the state or country.
- » To assist with economic loss due to the closing of partner plants during the 2008 flood, AlphaGen Materials Technology, Inc. received a \$60,000 COG loan for equipment, inventory, and operating expenses, helping retain quality jobs within the region.
- » To help employees have affordable and reliable transportation connections to work, a COG launched a two-route van service, JobJet, which has provided nearly 11,000 rides since 2010—a majority of the riders are employees of Tyson Foods.
- » To enable redevelopment of a brownfield site, a COG administered a \$750,000 award to clear the site of contaminants. This resulted in new jobs and a \$6 million expansion investment by Crystal Distribution Services.
- » To reduce waste from landfills, three COGs partner on the Iowa Waste Exchange. By matching materials to businesses for reuse, the program has diverted 192,000 tons of waste and saved partners more than \$6 million in disposal costs in the past two years.

*IARC members are partnering with the Iowa Department of Public Health and selected pilot communities and schools to increase the health of the state's youth, adults, and communities through the Iowans Fit For Life initiative.*



*In partnership with the Iowa Department of Transportation, IARC's Statewide Mobility Manager coordinates with local mobility managers to improve transportation access and connections for the general public, with an emphasis on the elderly, low-income persons, and persons with disabilities.*



# Iowa Association of Regional Councils

## Area 15 Regional Planning Commission

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## Bi-State Regional Commission\*

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## Chariton Valley Planning and Development Commission

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## East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)

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## North Iowa Area Council of Governments (NIACOG)

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## Region XII Council of Governments

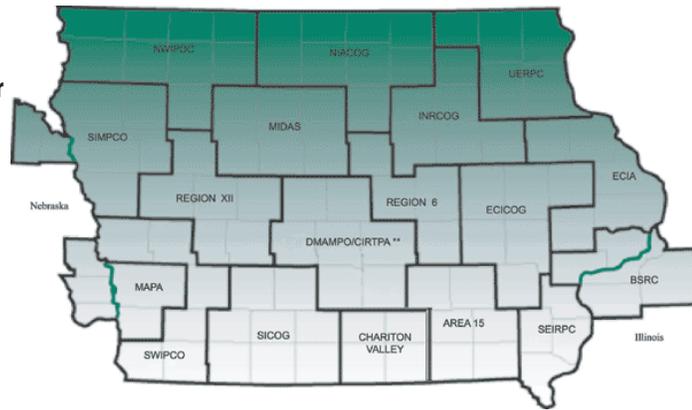
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*\*Bi-State Regional Commission covers areas in Illinois, and MAPA and SIMPCO cover areas in Nebraska, respectively.*

**IARC**

Incorporated as a 501(c)(9) nonprofit organization in 1998, the Iowa Association of Regional Councils promotes statewide accountability, service delivery, peer exchanges and professional development for the state's regional Councils of Governments.

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