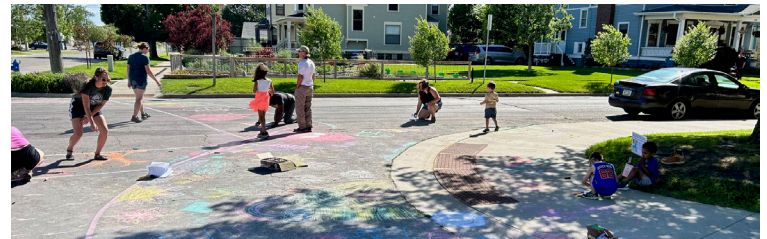
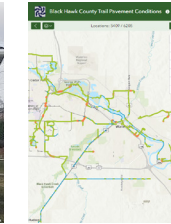
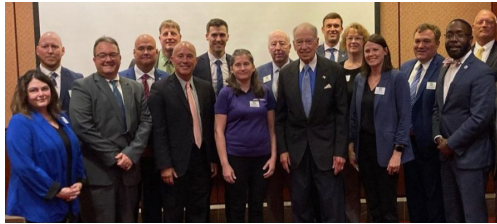




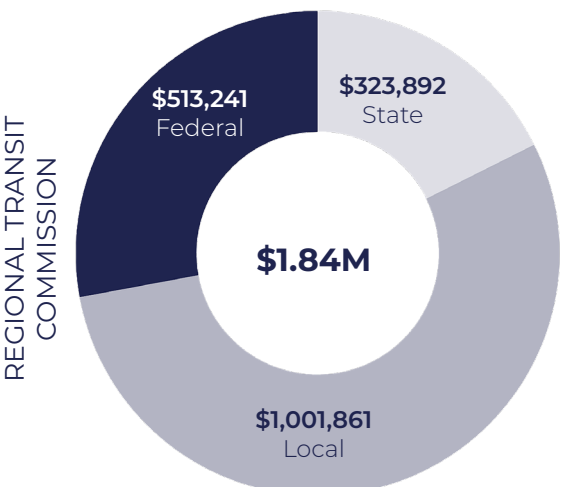
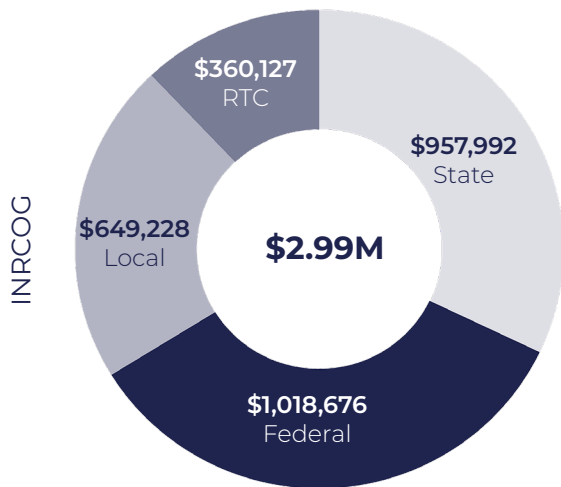
# Annual Report

**PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS**

Developing Strong Local Government Through Regional Cooperation



## FY 2024 INCOME



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Let me begin by thanking each of our member local governments for their membership, support, and faith in the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments. With that said, it's hard to believe another year has passed by so quickly. I guess what they say is true, "days go slowly, but years go by quickly." This seems even more obvious the older we get.

Turning to our service to you, certainly, this is a challenging time to be a local elected or appointed government official, especially when allocating scarce resources for services the cost for which continues to rise. Know that the dues you pay to INRCOG are used as matching funds for other federal and state programs, which are then offered to our members. Putting it a bit differently, for each dollar INRCOG receives in dues, we leverage nearly \$28 of the agency's budget. In short, the return to the region is tremendous; one that any investor would be hard to identify elsewhere. And as a result, we are very thoughtful with your investment in the agency and make every effort to expend funds wisely on your behalf.

Please continue to contact INRCOG with both your project needs and your local government questions. We are here to serve you!

Looking forward to safe, productive, and prosperous 2025!

The Iowa Finance Authority's (IFA) **Iowa Home Repair Pilot Program** assisted households that experienced financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic with critical home repairs. INRCOG staff oversaw the home repairs on behalf of IFA.

The Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adopted the **2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan** which reflects our communities' input and aspirations and lays the groundwork for solutions to meet the needs of our diverse population by building a safe and efficient transportation network that enhances the overall quality of life for residents.

The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority and the Black Hawk County MPO adopted their respective FY 2024-2027 **Transportation Improvement Programs** which identify transportation projects scheduled to receive federal funding in the next four federal fiscal years.

The Black Hawk County MPO selected a consultant to begin the development of a **Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan**. The Plan will analyze and recommend roadway safety activities in the downtown Waterloo area where a disproportionate percentage of serious injuries and fatal crashes occur. SS4A is part of the DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy.

INRCOG staff and the Black Hawk County MPO Policy Board began efforts to support the expansion of **passenger rail efforts** in Iowa by attending the Iowa DOT's Passenger Rail Advisory Committee, meeting with the Greater Northwest Passenger Rail Working Group All Aboard Northwest, submitting an Expression of Interest to the Federal Rail Administration, and sending a Letter of Support to State legislators to urge Iowa to rejoin the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission which advocates for a multi-state passenger rail improvements.

The Black Hawk County MPO solicited proposals from consulting firms for the **Northeast Industrial Access National Environmental Policy Act Study**. The objective of the study is to determine a preferred alternative from options outlined in a 2019 Planning Study that identified capacity, traffic access, and safety concerns associated with truck traffic in Waterloo's Northeast Industrial Area.

INRCOG assisted with planning the **Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association's Annual Conference** held in Cedar Falls in October 2023. INRCOG also presented on conference topics including Water Trail Development and Transportation Infrastructure Projects.

The City of Waterloo was among 11 communities nationwide named an **American World War II Heritage City** by the National Park Service. INRCOG assisted with this effort by reviewing the program application guidance, organizing and editing the information provided by the application authors, and preparing the final application for submittal.

Nashua was one of four communities in the State selected to join the **5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!** program. INRCOG met with community members to form a committee, develop surveys, and hold small group input sessions to aid the committee in selecting projects that support the goals of the three-year program.

Data previously collected on recreational trails in Black Hawk County was combined into an **online interactive map**, offering a look at the trails' pavement conditions and empowering jurisdictions to develop sustainable maintenance plans.

INRCOG continued to host the Area 3 Representative for the Iowa DNR's **Iowa Waste Exchange**, one of the nation's premier materials exchange programs.

**Safe Routes to School** continued to encourage safe walking and biking to school. 3,400 K-6th grade students participated in bike rodeos and safety lessons in 12 schools and 17 community event. Seven schools participated in 11 Walk, Bike, and Roll to School Day events, and 541 helmets were given out. These efforts received help from 548 adult "roll" models.

For the 7th year, INRCOG assisted the City of Cedar Falls with administration of their **CDBG and HOME Programs**.

Sixteen members of the **Cedar Valley Coalition** traveled to Washington DC to highlight past and present projects in our region. Overview papers were provided to each northeast Iowa Congressional Office and presentations were made to Congressional Staff members. Individual meetings with Senators Grassley, Ernst, and Congresswoman Hinson allowed for more in-depth conversations to occur.

The Black Hawk County MPO adopted a **Complete Streets Policy** that outlines a vision for streets that prioritizes safety, accessibility, and mobility for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This approach seeks to enhance the overall quality of life by promoting sustainable transportation options and ensuring that our public spaces contribute positively to the health and well-being of the community.

INRCOG partnered with Black Hawk County Public Health's **Community Health Program** to hold Chalk the Block, a traffic calming demonstration to bring awareness to a busy intersection in Waterloo's Walnut Neighborhood. Safety improvements aim to make walking and biking easier and safer for residents to get to everyday destinations.

Work with representatives of the county, municipalities, and school districts to update the **Chickasaw County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan** culminated with submission of the Plan to FEMA. The Plan identifies mitigation goals and actions to reduce or eliminate risk to people and property from the impact of future hazards and disasters and ensures the County remains eligible for hazard mitigation grant programs.

INRCOG created a **Fringe Area Agreement** for the **City of Parkersburg**, including a map, for the two-mile area around the community. Staff also began work to update the City's **Comprehensive Plan** through assessment of the community's attributes, needs, and values as they affect the future physical development of the City.

INRCOG assisted the City of Grundy Center with administering a **Community Catalyst and Building Remediation** Grant awarded by the Iowa Economic Development Authority to help to revitalize a vacant and underutilized building located in the downtown area of the community.



# GRANT AWARDS FY 2024



The City of New Hampton received a \$60,975 grant from the **Housing Preservation Grant Program**, offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Rural Development (USDA-RD), to provide up to \$20,000 to low-income homeowners for rehabilitation projects such as roof replacement, new siding and windows, energy efficiency improvements, and accessibility modifications. Low- and moderate-income set-aside funds of \$52,000 from local Tax Increment Financing projects are matching the grant award.

INRCOG was one of four national recipients of the **Mobility Design Challenge** grant through the National Center for Mobility Management; \$120,000 was awarded to fund three phases of an effort that focuses on transportation barriers to education or associated functions, employment, health care, and other quality of life amenities for disadvantaged youth, aged 8 to 18, in the Waterloo metropolitan area. A local public/private partnership including representatives from the Waterloo City Council, Black Hawk County Public Health Department, MET Transit, University of Northern Iowa, McElroy Trust, B5 International, and the youth who encounter these barriers, are guiding this project.

The Iowa Transportation Commission approved an application submitted to the **Statewide Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program** by the Iowa Safe Routes to School Partnership. The approved funding of \$258,108 will allow INRCOG to continue to partner with Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission and the Iowa Bicycle Coalition to implement Safe Routes to School initiatives that aim to increase physical activity and create safer walking and bicycling opportunities for youth.

The Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources awarded a \$50,000 **Resource Enhancement and Protection** application for the City of Winthrop. Funds are being used to complete the last major phase of their City Park enhancement effort consisting of construction of a concrete pad, an updated shelter with ADA-accessible restrooms, picnic tables, and planting additional trees to diversify the park's tree inventory.

The City of Waterloo, in collaboration with INRCOG, AECOM, and Canadian National Railway, submitted a successful application for federal funding through the **Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program**. The \$750,000 award will be used to analyze the location and impacts of the CN Railyard located between East 4th Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in downtown Waterloo. The study will specifically look at safety, equity, community connection, potential relocation, and economic development.

The Waterloo Housing Trust Fund was awarded \$244,500 and Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council received \$441,354 from the **State Housing Trust Fund** for CY 2024-2025. The awards will be matched with local fund for projects that benefit low- to moderate-income households.

The Enhance Iowa Board awarded a \$400,000 **Community Attraction and Tourism** grant to help complete the Cedar Falls Community Natatorium, an indoor pool complex being constructed at the new Cedar Falls High School. This collaborative project between the City of Cedar Falls, Cedar Falls School District, Black Hawk County, and the public, continues a 45-year partnership providing indoor pools for area students and the entire community.

The Iowa DOT awarded \$279,786 in **State Recreational Trails** funds to the Grundy County Conservation Board to help close the 1.3-mile gap in the Pioneer Trail between the City of Reinbeck and the existing six-mile segment to the northwest. Completing this gap will create a continuous trail experience eliminating the need to traverse a hazardous section of the highway.

## REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

### FY'24 Service Statistics



# INRCOG | PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS

The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments is an association of local governments that is committed to identifying, securing, and coordinating local, regional, and federal government projects and programs for the enhancement of our region and member communities.

## Services Offered:

- Community Development
- Community Planning
- Data Services
- Emergency Preparedness
- Environment
- Housing
- Recreation
- Safe Routes to School
- Transportation
- OnBoard Public Transit

## INRCOG STAFF

BRIAN SCHOON, Executive Director  
ISAIAH CORBIN, Director of Development  
NICK FRATZKE, Director of Transportation  
SHERI ALLDREDGE, Director of Administrative Services  
KYLE DURANT, Transportation Planner  
SYDNEY EISELT, Environmental Resource Specialist  
CINDY KNOX, Housing Planner  
BRENDON PONTO, Accountant  
DAN SCHLICHTMANN, Data Services Coordinator  
LINDA SIRES, Transit Operations Manager  
BRENDA VAVROCH, Safe Routes to School Coordinator  
HAYLEY WEIGLEIN, Administrative Assistant

## OnBoard Public Transit DRIVERS

JOHN CREW  
ALAN DEBEER  
KEN DEPUEW  
KARLA FRAZIER  
STEVE GOEBEL  
MARY KARR  
GEORGE LAURIE  
ANDREW MEANY  
SAM NISSEN  
JASON PROFFITT  
TODD SCOTT  
JACKLYN VEASLEY  
ROGER WILSON

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DUANE HILDEBRANDT, Chair; Bremer County Supervisor  
LINDA LAYLIN, Vice-Chair; Black Hawk County Supervisor  
MARK SCHILDROTH, Secretary; Grundy County Supervisor  
MATT KUHN, Treasurer; Chickasaw County Supervisor

## AT-LARGE MEMBERS

GREG BARNETT, Butler County Supervisor  
QUENTIN HART, Mayor of Waterloo  
DANIEL LAUDICK, Mayor of Cedar Falls  
CLAYTON OHRT, Buchanan County Supervisor  
LISA SMOCK, Mayor of Elk Run Heights

## BOARD & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Black Hawk Co. Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board  
DEANNE KOBLISKA, Mayor of Evansdale  
Iowa Northland Regional Economic Development Comm.  
TAMMY ROBINSON, City of New Hampton  
Iowa Northland Regional Housing Council  
KEN KAMMEYER, Bremer County Supervisor  
Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission  
DUANE HILDEBRANDT, Bremer County Supervisor  
Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority  
GREG BARNETT, Butler County Supervisor



# INRCOG

Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

*Serving the counties of Black Hawk, Bremer,  
Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy.*

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