

ECICOG EXPRESS

SERVING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN BENTON, IOWA, JONES, JOHNSON, LINN AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS

EDA officials visit ECICOG region

On July 26, Sandy Baruah, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, and Ben Erulkar, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, visited the ECICOG region to get a firsthand look at the devastation left by the floods of 2008. Baruah and Erulkar were accompanied by officials from the City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County, ECICOG, and Congressman Loeb sack on a tour of residential and commercial areas of Cedar Rapids.

Later in the day, ECICOG executive director, Doug Elliott, and representatives of the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments and the Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission met with Baruah and Erulkar to give a statewide perspective on the impact of the floods. They also discussed the roles that councils of governments played in assisting with recovery efforts in 1993.

During their visit, Baruah announced that the Economic Development Administration (EDA), a division of the Department of Commerce, will be providing funds to Iowa's councils of governments, which are also EDA-designated economic development districts, to support regional coordination of long-term flood recovery efforts. EDA funded similar activities in 1993. In most regions, funds will be available to hire a flood recovery coordinator, who will assist cities, counties, homeowners, and businesses in accessing a variety of state and federal funding programs for long-term recovery activities.

Baruah anticipated that funding for flood recovery coordinators would be in place by October 2008. ECICOG will provide updates on implementation of the program, as they are available.



(l to r) Doug Elliott, ECICOG executive director, meets with Assistant Secretary of Commerce Sandy Baruah and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Ben Erulkar during a recent visit to the ECICOG region.

Recent funding awards

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines (FHLB) recently announced funding awards in the Affordable Housing Program (AHP). ECICOG prepared four successful applications for countywide programs in Linn, Johnson, Washington, and Jones Counties. The programs will provide forgivable loans to income-qualifying homeowners for emergency repair and/or limited rehabilitation. The programs in Linn and Johnson Counties are being administered collaboratively with the Housing Fund for Linn County (HFfLC) and Housing Trust Fund of Johnson County (HTFJC), respectively. Each program is also sponsored by a local, FHLB member bank. For additional information on any of the programs, contact **Cary Stowe** (ext 24) at ECICOG.

ECICOG also recently assisted the City of Williamsburg in securing an additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award of \$100,000. The additional funding was necessary due to increased construction costs for the community's new day care facility.

Grantee	Member Bank/ Program	Award	Funding Agency
ECICOG	Federation Bank	\$53,000	FHLB
ECICOG	Citizens Bank	\$53,000	FHLB
HFfLC	Guaranty Bank & Trust	\$106,000	FHLB
JCHTF	Hills Bank & Trust	\$127,000	FHLB
City of Williamsburg	CDBG	\$100,000	IDED
TOTAL		\$439,000	

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Update on city clerks survey

Earlier this summer, ECICOG asked city clerks to complete a survey regarding a regional City Clerk's Association. We received responses from a significant number of city clerks in the six counties ECICOG serves.

Those who responded showed a strong interest in attending regional meetings to discuss local issues. Approximately half of the clerks that responded already participate in a similar organization. Many travel outside of our region to attend these meetings. Also, 70% of those who responded felt such an organization would be beneficial. One clerk said, "An association is needed in this area."

We are pleased to see support for regular clerk meetings in our region! It is important to meet and discuss critical issues, especially given the hardships many communities are currently facing with the recent flooding. We are in the process of determining the next step towards holding these meetings. You can look forward to more information from ECICOG in the near future.

STAFF NOTES

ECICOG executive director, **Doug Elliott**, has been named to the Rebuild Iowa Cultural Heritage Task Force. The task force is one of nine assisting the Rebuild Iowa Commission, a special body appointed by Governor Culver in July. As a member of the task force, Elliott is assisting in assessing damage to Iowa's cultural institutions as a result of the floods of 2008, and in making recommendations to the commission for cultural recovery efforts.

Gary Hughes, ECICOG planner, recently completed the first level of certification in the National Development Council's four-week Housing Development Finance Professional (HDFP) certification program. Hughes is participating in the program through a partnership between ECICOG, the Housing Fund for Linn County and the Iowa Finance Authority.

Calendar

August 7	HFfLC Board of Directors Meeting, ECICOG offices, 700 16th Street NE, Cedar Rapids, 4:00 p.m.
August 14	ECICOG SWTAC Meeting, Iowa City Water Purification Facility, 2251 N. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 1:00 p.m.
August 28	ECICOG Board of Directors Meeting, ECICOG offices, 700 16th Street NE, Cedar Rapids, 1:00 p.m.
	HFfLC Board of Directors Meeting, ECICOG offices, 700 16th Street NE, Cedar Rapids, 4:30 p.m.
September 1	ECICOG offices closed in observance of Labor Day holiday
September 11	ECICOG SWTAC Meeting, location TBA
September 25	ECICOG Board of Directors Meeting, ECICOG

ECICOG was established in 1973 to promote regional cooperation and provide professional planning services to local governments in Benton, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn and Washington Counties. ECICOG also provides solid waste planning services to Tama County and transportation planning services to Cedar County.

Members of the ECICOG

Board of Directors:

Lu Barron	James Houser
Leo Cook	Don Magdefrau
Amy Correia	Charles Montross
Bill Daily	Randy Payne
Gary Edwards	David Plyman
Don Gray	Ed Raber
Dennis Hansen	Justin Shields
Pat Harney	David Vermedahl
Ann Hearn	Larry Wilson
Henry Herwig (Chair)	Linda Yoder

ECICOG Staff

EXT

Doug Elliott, <i>Executive Director</i>	22
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EAST CENTRAL IOWA
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
YOUR REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY

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