



# ECIA Spotlight

July 2022

## Maquoketa - Destination Iowa Grant

The City of Maquoketa and Jackson County Conservation were awarded \$750,000 in Destination Iowa funds by Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) for improvements to the Prairie Creek Recreation Area, including a championship-caliber disc golf course and ADA-accessible hiking trails. Additional enhancements to Prairie Creek will include water quality and recreational improvements for fishing, whitewater viewing, bank protection and tent camping. An open-air shelter for picnicking along with restrooms and grass park setting are part of the plans for the Highway 64 North access point.

This project is designed to boost the footprint of the Prairie Creek Recreation Area into a regional, multi-state destination. Maquoketa Caves State Park serves as the main tourism attraction for the Maquoketa community and visitors are reached on a national scale. The objective is to enhance the Prairie Creek Recreation Area to become known as a supplemental visit for travelers, allowing the State of Iowa and local community partners to capitalize on visitors already coming to Maquoketa Caves.

City officials stated, "Maquoketa is in a fine position as a town undergoing a renaissance. Maquoketa's much improved Central Business District, developed in partnership with IEDA, is a suitable location for travelers to visit on a weekend or week in combination with Maquoketa Caves and Prairie Creek Recreation Area."



Conceptual image of new ADA compliant bridge across Prairie Creek

## Hopkinton Awarded Derelict Building Grant

Residents in rural areas often face difficulty accessing health care services due to the scarcity of primary care providers and services. In response, the City of Hopkinton (population 622) in Delaware County has partnered with Regional Medical Center, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and ECIA to relocate and expand an existing regional family health clinic to a new building. The City leveraged \$5,632 in local funds with an ECIA Brownfield Grant and with DNR's Brownfield Grant and Derelict Building Grant programs to clean up the project site for redevelopment.

In its current condition (right), the site has a vacant, abandoned, derelict building creating a blighting influence at a prominent corner of the downtown. Before and after donation of the property, the City of Hopkinton has



exercised due diligence to identify potentially hazardous conditions and how they should be mitigated. A Phase I environmental site assessment, asbestos inspection, and asbestos removal were completed in 2021 with a \$12,000 ECIA Brownfield Grant funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency at no cost to the city.

In June 2022, the DNR awarded the City of Hopkinton a \$1,557 Brownfield Grant and a \$22,225 Derelict Building Grant to deconstruct the building. With deconstruction, building materials will be diverted from the landfill, reused, or recycled to the greatest extent possible. The City's goal is 70% landfill diversion. The cleared site will be transferred to Regional Medical Center, which plans to invest \$800,000 for construction of the new regional family health clinic. This expanded clinic will retain jobs, increase provider coverage to better serve clinic patients, and improve the site's property tax base in Hopkinton.

## Homeless Program Receives \$1,138,159

Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) announced the award of more than \$1.1 million to Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa (CSEI) through its Emergency Rental Assistance Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Project Awards. The award to CSEI will cover the Eastern Iowa Region including Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson counties. CSEI will contract with the YWCA to administer nearly 50% of the funding for RRH in Clinton and Jackson counties. The program will be active for 42 months and will help to provide housing assistance for 12 – 18 months maximum per participant.

Eastern Iowa Region Total: \$1,138,159

Delaware & Dubuque counties: \$634,972

Clinton & Jackson counties: \$503,187

CSEI Special Programs Manager Jennifer Walker notes, "We are very pleased to have received the ERA funding at this critical time. The City of Dubuque's permanent supportive housing program is ending June 30, 2022, our United Way award and Emergency Solutions Funding has decreased significantly, our COVID funding is ending this year, and at the same time, the requests for housing assistance we receive daily are at an all-time high. Higher than when the pandemic began."

Walker adds, "We all agree that something needs to be done, and while we aren't going to end homelessness because the issue is so deep and the causes so wide, we need to do better for our community. The ERA RRH funding will help us do that. We estimate that we will be able to help approximately 12 participants (individuals or families) per month over the course of the three and a half years of the grant. But I want to be clear, this isn't seamless. For people to qualify for the new funding, they have to be homeless by HUD's definitions, so we will not be able to continuously help folks that are currently in programs that are ending. It's a complicated, and sometimes heart-breaking situation, but we are thrilled to know this funding will help reduce our long waiting list."

CSEI also received \$105,000 from Dubuque County ARPA funding to be used for the Housing Hotline. A 3-year commitment of \$35,000 per year will be used to help offset full time staffing costs for the hotline and virtual case management. In 2021, CSEI handled 3,276 housing and food instability calls. CSEI Special Programs Manager Jennifer Walker stated, "In previous years, we'd never taken more than 500 calls. As of June 2022, we've already taken 2,039 calls and believe that our numbers will well-exceed 2021 totals. This money will help fund staff who answer these phone calls, which include County General Assistance calls, and we are very pleased to have their assistance."

## EICC Receives Federal Grant

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) is awarding a \$787,620 grant to Eastern Iowa Community Colleges (EICC), Davenport, Iowa, to procure equipment needed to support Welding and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) career technologies programs.

This grant will expand and enhance the programs offered at EICC's Regional Career Academy campuses in Clinton and Maquoketa, to train students for in-demand jobs. The EDA investment will be matched with \$196,905 in local funds.

"The Biden Administration is committed to creating new opportunities for workforce development across the country," said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development Alejandra Y. Castillo. "This EDA investment will provide the equipment needed to expand training programs that regional high school students and current and potential members of the workforce need to compete for in-demand, skilled workforce positions."

This project was made possible by the regional planning efforts led by ECIA. EDA funds brings together the public and private sectors to create an economic development roadmap to strengthen the regional economy, support private capital investment and create jobs.

## ECIA is Growing

Scott Smith recently joined ECIA as a full-time dispatcher for the Regional Transit Authority.



Kristi Oberhoffer recently joined ECIA as a Housing Support Specialist.



Dan LoBianco recently joined ECIA's Economic/Community Development department as a Project Manager/Inspector.



Kyle Finke recently joined ECIA's Economic/Community Development department as a Project Manager/Inspector.



## CDBG-CV Award Update

Final announcements have been made by the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) regarding the Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) grant applications. Two additional projects were awarded to communities in ECIA's region, bringing the total number of funded projects to 14, and total awards to \$3,975,047!

- Erickson Community Center; City of Clinton; \$226,600
- Edgewood Microenterprise (2 businesses); City of Edgewood; \$100,000



Mini Town in the Ericksen parking lot; a summer school safety program for new students to learn about traffic and pedestrian safety



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