

january 2025

ecia spotlight



Hopkinton homeowner after lead and other safety issues
and hazards addressed

**HUD Awards ECIA
Over \$14.9 MM**



Keep ECIA Top of Mind

Don't forget, ECIA can update your city code.

ECIA has been working with an attorney and other COGs across the state for more than 30 years to provide an up-to-date model city code. Currently, Dorsey and Whitney LLP (Dorsey) is the law firm that maintains the model city code in collaboration with the Iowa Association of Councils of Governments (ICOG) who convenes all the COGs across the state and facilitates the process outlined in the chart below.

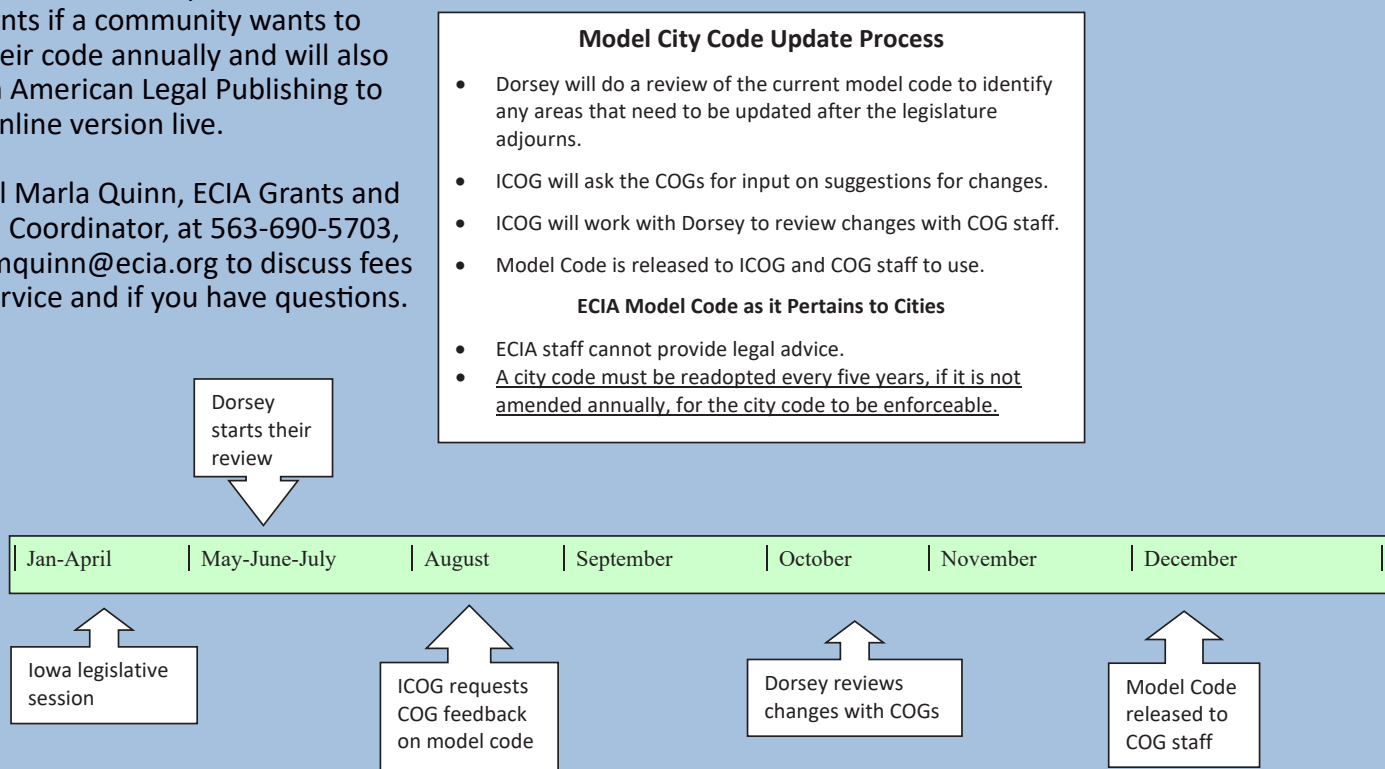
Each year in May, Dorsey reviews the current model code to identify any areas that need to be updated after the legislature adjourns. Then, in August ICOG obtains input from the COGs for feedback and input on suggestions for changes or clarifications. In December, an updated model city code is available for COG staff to use with their respective communities.

When ECIA works with communities, this is generally how the codification process looks for those that choose to update their code every five years (A City's code of ordinances must be updated every five years if they aren't doing annual amendments):

- A letter from ECIA is sent to mayors and city clerks the year before the city code will hit the five-year mark, briefly outlining the codification process.
- ECIA provides a codification cost estimate if requested by the City. This is based on the number of city ordinances adopted since the last update and pertinent model code changes.
- The clerk sends ECIA staff all adopted ordinances and resolutions that have been passed since the last city code update.
- ECIA staff incorporates the city ordinances and pertinent model code changes to the draft city code.
- ECIA meets with the Clerk and/or any other interested City staff and Council on the draft city code (this could take one or multiple meetings).
- ECIA staff makes any changes that came from those meetings and other conversations.
- A final draft is approved by City staff to move forward with adoption process.
- ECIA prepares a final draft with any changes highlighted in red and adoption materials which includes a resolution to pass the public hearing date, the public hearing notice, and the ordinance that adopts the new city code.
- After the adopting ordinance is certified and ECIA receives a copy, ECIA will prepare the final code for printing and posting on the city website.

ECIA also assists with city code supplements if a community wants to update their code annually and will also work with American Legal Publishing to keep an online version live.

Please call Marla Quinn, ECIA Grants and Municipal Coordinator, at 563-690-5703, or email mquinn@ecia.org to discuss fees for this service and if you have questions.



ECIA Anniversaries in December/January



Kim Glaser
6 years



Angela Koppes
5 years



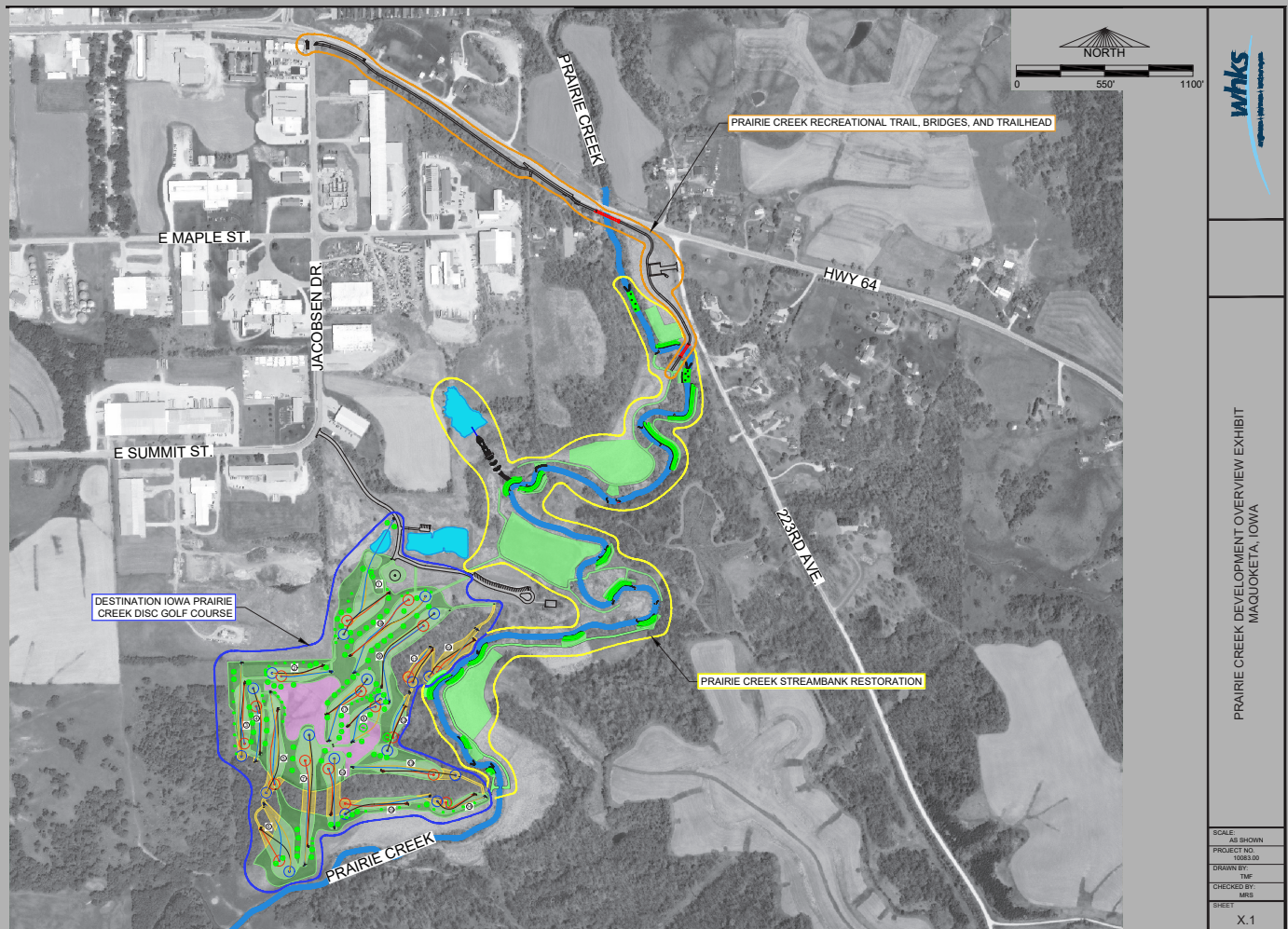
Katie Steffensmeier
4 years

Congratulations! Your dedication and hard work in and for the ECIA region are truly appreciated.

Maquoketa Receives \$400,000

The City of Maquoketa and Jackson County Conservation were awarded a \$400,000 Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant for the Prairie Creek Recreation Area Enhancements project. The project involves streambank restoration for fishing, viewing and camping; construction of shelters, restrooms, trailheads and bridges; a trail connection from the recreation area to Maquoketa city limits; and the addition of an 18-hole championship-caliber disc golf course. Total project cost is nearly \$2 million.

CAT is funded through the Iowa Economic Development Authority and this award is the third CAT grant the Maquoketa area has received. The first one was \$825,000 in 2004 for the Y building on the south end of town, and the second one was for \$350,000 for the new community kitchen, community room, fair association offices, and meeting rooms at the county fairgrounds. ECIA staff wrote all these applications.



HUD Awards ECIA Over \$14.9



ECIA's Community and Economic Development department secured several Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants to continue eliminating housing-related health and safety hazards in the region.

Lead Hazard Reduction & Healthy Home Grant – ECIA was awarded \$5,750,000 for a new 48-month grant focusing on privately-owned homes built prior to 1978. Funding will assist communities' efforts to protect vulnerable residents by making improvements to older housing to eliminate housing-related health and safety hazards. The focus area for this new four-year program will be the seven counties of Cedar, Clinton (excluding the City of Clinton), Delaware, Dubuque (excluding the City of Dubuque), Jackson, Jones, and Scott. ECIA staff is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the funds, conducting lead inspection/risk assessments, healthy homes assessments, preparing the scope of work, overseeing construction, and all fiscal management and disbursement of all funds. The goal is to improve 128 units by December 31, 2028.

Lead Hazard Reduction & Healthy Home Grant - The City of Clinton was awarded \$5,200,000 as the lead applicant, with Maquoketa included in the focus area of the project. This approach has been funded three times since 2017. ECIA is a sub-recipient and will be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the funds, conducting lead inspection/risk assessments, healthy homes assessments, preparing the scope of work, and overseeing construction. The goal is to improve 86 dwellings by November 2028.

Healthy Homes Production Grant – HUD awarded ECIA \$2,000,000 which will enable ECIA staff to address multiple housing-related health hazards in the homes of families simultaneously, instead of doing so one hazard at a time.

9 MM to Address Safety Issues



After



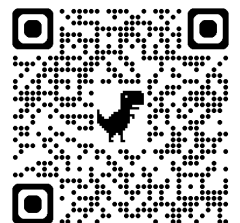
This additional funding will enhance the region's overall well-being and quality of life.



The goal is to improve 92 homes. Program objectives include: helping children and other vulnerable residents reach their full potential by preventing injuries and diseases, lowering healthcare costs, and improving their overall quality of life.

Older Adults Home Modification Grant – ECIA received \$2,000,000 to help seniors live independently and safely in their homes. The 3-year grant program will enable ECIA to work with contractors to modify senior rentals and homes through maintenance and repair projects based on findings in the homes by a certified occupational therapist. ECIA will administer the grant and address 150 homes throughout the ECIA five-county region, and MercyOne will provide the initial home safety and accessibility assessments, and occupational therapist services.

“With the additional funding, ECIA will continue to work with homeowners and landlords in our rural communities to improve housing stock, making homes a healthier and safer, enhancing the overall well-being of the communities we serve,” said Matt Specht, Director of Community and Economic Development. For more information and details, visit www.eciahomerepair.org or call 563-690-5776 or email homerepairs@ecia.org.



Tipton KIB/HP Community Improvements

Tipton was selected for a multi-year grant from the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count program. The Tipton Keep Iowa Beautiful (KIB) Hometown Pride (HP) committee is overseeing the implementation of the grant funding which helps increase physical activity and healthy eating.

In 2024 funds were used to purchase and install new play equipment and a permanent storybook walk at the city park. Additional grant funds were used to purchase several other items, including a mobile storybook walk that can be used at a variety of events.

This year, the Tipton KIB/HP committee vetted dozens of project suggestions and voted to use the funding to purchase soccer equipment and water stations at the public schools; improve pickleball courts and the community ice rink at the city park; and to purchase snowshoes, butterfly nets, and dipping nets to be used for free by citizens. The projects will all be completed by June 2025.



Worthington Mural Completed

A stunning new mural now graces Worthington capturing the town's rich agricultural heritage with a vibrant farming scene. In the background, the iconic light-blue Worthington water tower stands tall on the horizon, symbolizing the deep connection between the town and its rural landscape. Above this scene, the Worthington logo and slogan, "Little Town, Big Worth," designed by local sisters Michelle Jurgens and Jennie Jaeger, serve as a reminder of the town's heritage and pride. The logo, which includes the town's established year, celebrates Worthington's long-standing history as a tight-knit community where neighbors know and support one another.

In a nod to Worthington's deep baseball tradition, the mural also features the local baseball and softball teams' logo: two cardinals perched on a bat above the community name. Baseball has been central to Worthington's community spirit since 1896 when the first organized team was formed. Today, the town continues to draw fans for youth and semi-pro games, and many visitors praise the community's well-maintained "true dirt" infield.

The mural was created by local artist Kaitlyn Clemens, who completed it over several months. Sponsored by the Worthington Hometown Pride Committee, the project was supported by community volunteers and businesses.



The Hometown Pride program has helped Worthington carry out several community-driven projects. For instance, the first annual Fall Harvest Festival in 2023 raised funds for the mural. The committee also added a 20-foot waterfall Christmas light tree to Veterans Square Park during a St. Nicholas event, further fostering community pride. The total cost of the mural was \$2,850.

Cascade Works on Downtown Master Plan

The Cascade Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) and the City of Cascade have been busy working on their Downtown Master Plan. A key component of the plan is to make downtown Cascade more pedestrian-friendly and inviting. This includes creating shaded areas and ensuring the overall walkability of the district. By making the downtown more appealing, the CEDC hopes to attract not only local residents but also the many tourists who visit nearby attractions such as the Field of Dreams.

In 2022, the CEDC and City of Cascade invited the Iowa Economic Development Authority to complete a downtown assessment. The report highlighted the downtown area's potential for revitalization, noting its compact size, walkable layout, and recent positive developments. The CEDC is taking action on these recommendations by first developing the downtown Master Plan that incorporates the ideas and desires of the community.

MSA Professional Services was awarded the contract to complete the plan thanks to a \$28,000 Dubuque Racing Association (DRA) grant that ECIA secured for the project. The process began with a kickoff meeting in early January and the committee hosted the first citizen engagement event on January 29th.

In partnership with Cascade Communications, the CEDC is also working to enhance the downtown experience by providing free Wi-Fi throughout the downtown, City Park, and Legion Ballfield Park. By partnering with Cascade Communications, the CEDC believes that this amenity will further attract visitors and residents to the downtown area. The enhanced Wi-Fi system will offer flexibility for community events, allowing street vendors to enjoy secure connections for their point-of-sale operations while residents and visitors can stay connected throughout the entire downtown and park areas.



Another Thing to Keep in Mind

ECIA also writes and administers CDBG and HOME grants for local governments. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Programs involve compliance with complex state and federal regulations. All 11 of the ECIA Community and Economic Development staff are experienced in administering these programs.

Recent CDBG projects include:

- Maquoketa:
 - Wastewater plant improvements; \$600,000
 - Downtown Revitalization: Rehab of 8 building front and side facades; \$500,000
 - Community Facilities & Services: Sunshine Learning Center; \$600,000
 - Iowa Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG); Maquoketa Lighting for Modern Energy; \$90,455
- Lost Nation: Wells installation and improvements; \$250,000
- Clinton: Sewer separate and storm sewer repairs; \$500,000
- La Motte: Well project; \$500,000

If you are embarking on a project that fits these programs, email Matt Specht, Director of Community and Economic Development at mspecht@ecia.org.

BVM Sisters Help CSEI Care & Share

In 2022, Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa (CSEI), a nonprofit subsidiary of ECIA, created the Care & Share drive with the goal of spreading awareness on the topic of homelessness throughout Delaware and Dubuque counties while also collecting donations to support individuals and families living outside, and for those moving into their own apartments. This event takes place during the month of November, paying special observance to Homelessness Awareness Month. Each year, this event continues to grow, as does our reach. Thanks to our generous community and partner organizations, CSEI received numerous donations that will go directly into the hands of our clients.

The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and their friends, graciously donated thousands of dollars' worth of items to CSEI's 2024 Care & Share program. This included 22 backpacks, 29 insulated sleeping bags, 20 tarps, 31 boxes of cleaning supplies, 37 boxes of hygiene products, and more. Jennifer Walker, Director of Special Programs stated, "The women religious orders in Dubuque always step in where needed most and get things done. The BVM community does so many remarkable things for those most in need."



The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary & Friends with donations

Executive Director Search

The ECIA Council launched its search for a new Executive Director in mid-January. Interested candidates may apply by February 14, 2025. Please visit the link below for more information on the position and application instructions.

<https://tinyurl.com/ecia-director>



Empowering communities and their people through sustainable partnerships; promoting equity and inclusivity; and providing services to enhance the quality of life in the region.



2025

OPEN POSITION

Executive Director



East Central Intergovernmental Association

www.ecia.org • 7600 Commerce Park Dubuque, IA 52002 • 563-556-4166