



City Administrator & Staff Update

2025.08.15

- **Droppett:** More information on Droppett **and creating accounts** – Attached is their flier and residents can be directed to their website www.droppett.com which has an FAQ or their social media page <http://www.facebook.com/droppett>. They can also email us at info@droppett.com or the customer service number is 515-265-4275 ext.5.
- **Welcome Letter:** We have a draft welcome letter for SCC students and plan to discuss sending out to this year's students with Dr. Ash next week.
- **IISC:** The Arts & Culture Plan and the Transportation Plan from IISC Students have been submitted for the Iowa APA exemplary student project award, which requires a letter of support from the community partner. Elizabeth Pappas, Chad and I sent letters of support.
- **Annexation Info:** Here is a link for annexation in Iowa should you be interested in reading up on the issue as it may pertain to future housing developments.
<https://opportunityiowa.gov/community/community-infrastructure/annexation-discontinuance-land-planning>
- **Housing:** I continue to work with prospective developers on 4 new housing projects (small to large all single family at this point). Love to see some or all of these get done. Along with our two recent Multi-Res (market rate and senior living) projects – this would move us forward toward our goal.
- **Funding Request:** I have little info at this point but wanted to make you aware that we may be asked to contribute to a study for Roosevelt Street (\$5,000). I'll try to get more info.
- **Center for Rural Revitalization Grants:**
<https://opportunityiowa.gov/community/revitalization/center-rural-revitalization>
 - The Rural Innovation Grant program supports creative solutions to the challenges facing rural communities. This grant opportunity aims to expand the housing stock in rural Iowa by leveraging funding programs, encouraging private investment and rewarding innovative approaches.
 - The goal is to provide funding to communities that have shown significant progress on housing initiatives and that propose forward-thinking ideas with a measurable outcome. The grant supports innovative solutions to housing stock challenges and seeks models that can be replicated elsewhere in Iowa.
 - In talking with Mike Norris/SEIRPC, these awards are typically for projects. Looking to bring a plan or ideas forward for council discussion at a work session.

Determining if the grant is worth applying for now or later if we have a project – as well as if the assessment is needed.

- RHRA: Additionally...
 - ISU funds from the grant are eligible to be spent on any housing related items that come up during the Rural Housing Readiness Assessment (RHRA). If housing rehab or dilapidated housing acquisition are two potential items in which you plan to use the funds, we make sure that we discuss those items during program. The full plan or strategy does not have to be complete prior to applying for the grant, this will be a portion of what we work on during the RHRA process. LMI proceeds could be used as a potential match.
 - With the assessment, we could focus on some of the programs we have discussed - downpayment assistance, rehab or new, etc. If awarded \$20,000 plus the \$10,000 local match.
- **Article: *To build a center on a former mall*** - A mixed-use center is the best way to maximize value from a vacant mall site, but it requires proactive city leadership, as seen in Huntsville.: <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2025/08/14/build-center-former-mall>

Building (Crooks)

Building

1. 15 building permits have been issued in the month of August, 8 of them in the past week.
2. Multiple visits have been made to Alice Place working towards a Certificate of Occupancy. A Temporary CO on the building was issued on July 31st. Rental inspections are set to start on Friday with the hopes of being completed no later than by Tuesday.
3. A site visit was completed on the new building at 305 Dry Creek Ave.
4. I met with a property owner regarding constructing a new front porch.

Code Enforcement

1. 24 new nuisance notices have been mailed out in the month of August, 12 of them in the past week.
2. Follow up was completed on outstanding nuisances with most of them being closed.
3. Two properties were tagged with abatement notices.

Rental

1. Follow up inspections were completed on the Meadow Street apartments with much progress being made.
2. A rental inspection was completed at 322 Swan St.
3. A rental inspection was completed at 305 Winter St.
4. A re-inspection was completed at 105 ½ Ballard St.

Licenses

1. A license was reviewed and issued to move forward with the new RV Park on W. Mt. Pleasant St.
2. Several mobile food licenses were renewed

Finance (Moore)

- **EOY Numbers** – I've been working on the preliminary end-of-year numbers. Most of the work is done, and I'm just waiting on the final numbers from the auditors so I can wrap everything up.
- **Health Insurance Spreadsheet** – I had to recreate the Employee Health Insurance spreadsheet to add the new Partial Self-Funding fees. The new version should make it easier to track costs and employee costs going forward.
- **Job Description Update** – Updated the Public Works Equipment Maintenance Coordinator job description so it's current with the position's duties and requirements.
- **Professional Development** – Signed up for the Certified Public Finance Officers Program. It's a two-year program that will help me build even more expertise in municipal finance.

IT (Newberry)

- Worked on getting Kelly's computer set up.
- Planned to set up Rod's computer at the Streets Department next week.
- Tightened firewall rules and implemented additional security measures on the RD Gateway.
- Upgraded Troy's old computer to Windows 11 for continued use at the Streets Department by other staff for GIS and curb box access when Troy is unavailable.
- Need to place the order for two Police Department computers.
- On track to have all City PCs updated to Windows 11 before the October deadline.

Police/Fire (Logan)

- Cody was sworn in on Tuesday with the Task Force Officer for the Southern Iowa Fugitive Taskforce of the United States Marshall's Service. This is something we have been working on for approximately a year now, and it helps us by getting assistance from the United States Marshall's Service.
- Starting our rental inspection at Alice Place. It will take a couple days to go through all the apartments.
- Getting ready to send out applications for Police Officer once again.
- National Night Out was this past Tuesday. Had a good turnout, weather was nice.
- Getting an order together for Fire Prevention Week for the Fire Department. Local Businesses donate \$1,877.53 to our fund. What we have collected barely covers the bare minimum for what we need to order. I'll work Rick who is my contact for Fire Safety Coordinator and see if we can get an updated Businesses in West Burlington. Angie did help this year, and we got few of them that were sent back, the new addresses.

Public Works (Williams)

2025.08.15

Streets

- Water and sewer labs
- Paint (crosswalks and Broadway)

Utilities

- Lift station rounds
- Clean lift stations
- Locates (31)

Other Activities

- Parks and Broadway trash and recycling
- Service trucks and squad cars.
- Sign maintenance
- Building maintenance and cleaning up.
- Work on pool
- Haul brush/grass.
- Mow
- Water plants
- Replace sidewalks (306 Ramsey, 501 Ramsey, 302 Summer)
- Backfill sidewalks with dirt
- Rebuild 2 broken hydrants
- Started working on the counter in city hall as well as the council chambers

Projects

- ImOn has poured back all the sections of street they have had torn up
- Alice place driveway is poured but they need to redo curb
- Four seasons have started the dirt work for the Va clinic
- We are working on getting the new turn lane ready at Walmart
- We are going to be starting the sidewalk in front of Alice place this week starting from the west heading east

Additional Items/Upcoming Items of Interest

- Cole is signing up to take is grade 1 water treatment.
- Jacob signed up to take grade 3 wastewater test.
- MVP has come and put the new pump in our pit at the pool
- New Sidewalk: We have begun work on the mall ring road sidewalk. For around 60 feet where it connects to the trail, we are placing the sidewalk further down the hill and will need to relocate it once we have a parking lot and grading design for the back-in parking for the trailhead park. It wasn't prudent to go through and do grading just for the sidewalk given the time and staffing it would take. Minimal cost for this last section versus spending staff time on something that would have to be redone later. I have asked a local engineer if he could give us a cost for a grading and parking plan.

Referendum's

Here is that summary of referendums in Iowa. A good alternative that Councilmember Lees brought up was a *community survey* for the pool, and any other topics we wanted to get feedback on.

Referendum actions are closely tied to specific grant by legislative enactment. Iowa has no initiative and referendum, but there is authority for cities to enact it under their Home Rule Charters. The general rule of thumb is that if there is no statutory reference in a Home Rule Charter to initiative and referendum, no referendum is allowed. If there is such an enactment, the subject matter is strictly limited to the grant of authority and any expressed limitations.

In West Burlington's case, we have what is called a "Charter" at Chapter 2, and it is silent as to initiative and referendum. There is no reference to authority for initiative and referendum in the Code proper, either.

So, it is probably a moot point altogether in West Burlington.

Other than the treatise you provided, I do not have a summary analysis of when initiatives and referendums are allowed in Iowa, but it seems pretty clear that they must derive directly from a legislative enactment and only within the scope of that enactment.

I agree with your statement that when such initiatives and referendums are allowed, they are likely limited to legislative enactments – not policies, administrative matters, contracts, 28E agreements, and the like. Here is Clinton's language from its Charter, which strictly limits the scope and also provides limitations on what cannot be included:

SECTION 2.07 INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM.

1. *Initiative.* The qualified electors have the right to propose **ordinances** to the Council, and if the Council fails to adopt an ordinance so proposed without any change in substance, to have the ordinance submitted to the voters at an election.

2. *Referendum.* The qualified electors have the right to require reconsideration by the Council of an existing **ordinance**, and if the Council fails to repeal such ordinance, to have it submitted to the voters at an election.

3. *Definitions.* As used in this section, the following terms have these meanings:

A. "Eligible electors" mean persons who possess all of the qualifications necessary to entitle the person to be registered to vote, whether or not the person is in fact so registered.

B. "**Ordinance**" means all measures of a legislative nature, however designated, which are of permanent rather than temporary character and include a proposition enacting, amending or repealing a new or existing law, policy or plan, as opposed to one providing for the execution or administration of a law, policy or plan already enacted by the Council.

C. "Qualified electors" mean residents of the City who are registered voters of the City.

4. *Limitations as to Subject Matter.* The right of initiative and referendum **shall not** extend to any of the following:

- A. ***Any measure of an executive or administrative nature.***
- B. The City budget.
- C. The appropriation of money.
- D. The levy of taxes or special assessments.
- E. The issuance of General Obligation and Revenue Bonds.
- F. The letting of contracts.
- G. Salaries of City employees.
- H. Emergency ordinances.
- I. Any measure required to be enacted by State or Federal law.
- J. Amendments to this Charter, except as provided in Section [2.08\(1\)\(B\)](#) of this Charter.
- K. Amendments affecting the City Zoning ordinance.

5. *Limitation as to Resubmission.* No initiative or referendum petition shall be filed within two years after the same measure or a measure substantially the same has been submitted to the voters at an election.

6. *Council Repeal, Amendment and Reenactment.* No ordinance proposed by initiative petition and adopted by the vote of the Council without submission to the voters, or adopted by the voters pursuant to this section, may for two years thereafter be repealed or amended except by a vote of the people, unless provision is otherwise made in the original initiative ordinance. No ordinance referred by referendum petition and repealed by the vote of the Council without submission to the voters, or repealed by the voters pursuant to this section, may be reenacted for two years thereafter except by vote of the people, unless provision is otherwise made in the original referendum petition.

The Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Grant program helps rural communities use publicly available data to shape development codes, local ordinances and housing incentives tailored to their needs.

In partnership with Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach's Rural Housing Readiness Assessment workshops, funding from the program will empower communities to assess their current development environment and enact changes resulting in the creation of policies and procedures attractive to potential developers.

The program, defined in the Iowa Administrative Code, is administered by the Center for Rural Revitalization, a division of the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), in consultation with the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative task force and ISU Extension and Outreach.

TIMELINE

July 1, 2025

Application opens through iowaGrants.gov.

August 29, 2025

Application deadline is 4 p.m. CDT.

Fall 2025

Applicants will be notified of funding decisions.

Fall 2025 – June 30, 2027

All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within the eligible funding period. Funding is awarded on a reimbursement basis after expenses have been incurred for approved project activities.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Use of Funding

The Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Grant program provides funding for housing assessment data collection and the ISU Extension and Outreach Rural Housing Readiness Assessment workshop. Funds may be used to fulfill that process at the discretion of the grant recipient but must contribute to the completion of the housing assessment report, workshop or implementation of the workshop outcomes within the contract period.

Eligible Applicants

Local city and county governments, as well as federally recognized tribal governments physically located in Iowa, are eligible. The government must exist in and benefit a community in Iowa with a population of 20,000 or fewer that is not contiguous to a city with a population of 40,000 or more. Countywide projects must be located in one of the 88 least populous counties in Iowa.

Eligible Project Requirements

Requirements for Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Grant awards include, but are not limited to:

- Applicant must demonstrate the capacity for grants administration.
- Application must demonstrate the feasibility of completing the proposed activities with the funds requested and within the contract period.
- Application must identify and describe any other sources of funding for the proposed activities.
- Applicant must provide required 1:1/2 cash match.
- Applications must agree to contract with ISU Extension and Outreach for the facilitated Rural Housing Readiness Assessment workshop.
- Applications must identify any additional partner organizations that will be utilized in data collection or implementation processes.

FUNDING

Grant Request Amount

Grant recipients will be awarded \$20,000. A portion of the total project cost must be used to contract with ISU Extension and Outreach for the Rural Housing Readiness Assessment workshop. The workshop price is dependent upon the number of communities involved.



Match Requirement

Applicants are required to demonstrate investment in the project process by providing a minimum cash match of \$10,000. The cash match must be secured, dedicated to eligible expenses, an integral part of the project and expended within the eligible funding period. The \$10,000 match requirement may be raised through a combination of public and private sources but may not include in-kind donations of goods or services, unsecured funding or loans.

- Cash match constitutes actual cash contributed toward direct project expenses by the applicant or other funding sources.
- State government funding already being used as match for another program — including other funds from IEDA — cannot be used to meet the match requirement.

Funding Period

All project activities and incurred expenses must occur within the eligible contracted funding period of fall 2025 through June 30, 2027. Funding is awarded on a reimbursement basis after expenses have been incurred for approved project activities within this period. Expenses incurred before or after the eligible funding period are not eligible for reimbursement.

Disbursement of Funds

Disbursements will be made on a reimbursement basis. Each disbursement claim must be for an amount of at least \$1,000. All claims must be submitted through [IowaGrants.gov](https://lowagrants.gov). The following items are required when submitting a claim:

- An invoice and proof of payment.
- Additional documentation, if requested by IEDA.

ONLINE APPLICATION SUBMISSION

All applications must be submitted through [IowaGrants.gov](https://lowagrants.gov). Applications submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Applicants must create a user account to access and complete the full application. Late, incomplete or ineligible applications will not be considered.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed for completion, eligibility and adherence to published guidelines. Reviews are based solely on the information submitted by the deadline; new information or clarifications submitted after the deadline will not be considered. Eligible applications will be referred to a volunteer grant review committee for competitive evaluation. The committee includes members of the Governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative task force, ISU Extension and Outreach staff and expert professionals. The committee reserves the right to recommend conditional or partial funding. Funding recommendations will be submitted to the director of IEDA for consideration and approval. Each applicant's authorized official will receive award notification. All funding decisions are final.

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Applicants are asked to establish a housing committee to guide the process. It is recommended that the committee include seven to 10 individuals, such as elected officials, city staff, representatives from real estate and finance, nonprofits, major employers and concerned residents. Communities are also recommended to publicly advertise the opportunity to serve on the committee. Additional guidance can be provided by ISU Extension and Outreach.

SCORING RUBRIC

Eligibility Review

Applications must demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Applicant eligibility.
- Funding request meets eligible project and expense requirements.
- Proof of required cash match.
- Project duration does not exceed contract period.
- Application is complete and submitted through iowaGrants.gov.

Application Review

Applications will be evaluated using the Rural Housing Readiness Assessment Grant scoring rubric. Each section includes specific criteria and corresponding point values to ensure a fair and consistent review process. Additional consideration — an extra five points — is awarded to applications for projects located in communities with a population of 10,000 or fewer. The rubric is based on a 57-point scale.

1 — APPLICANT PROFILE: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Applicant clearly identifies strategic priorities and appropriateness in initiating the study and demonstrates a strong track record of progress through relevant achievements.	Applicant identifies relevant notable achievements or strategic priorities.	Applicant does not adequately identify relevant notable achievements or strategic priorities.

2 – TIMING AND NEED: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies recent momentum, demonstrates excellent timing and reflects a commitment to active participation and engagement in addressing housing needs.	Proposal identifies some recent momentum and commitment to participation and engagement in addressing housing needs.	Proposal does not clearly or adequately identify recent momentum or demonstrates inappropriate timing and commitment to participation and engagement in addressing housing needs.

3 – HOUSING COMMITTEE: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Proposal clearly identifies an active committee with multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are well-defined and will enhance the success of the process.	Proposal identifies a housing committee with multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are defined.	Proposal does not identify an active housing committee with multiple, diverse partners. Key partner roles and responsibilities are not well-defined.

4 – EXISTING DOCUMENTATION: 2 points each

2	2	2
Previous housing studies	Downtown upper-story inventory	Vacant lot survey or data
2	2	2
Comprehensive plan	Current housing-related city ordinances	Ordinances or resolutions enacting housing-related incentive programs

5 – IMPLEMENTATION: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Proposal has strong implementation objectives. Project will be successfully realized through a clear, detailed timeline of deliverables. Applicant and partner responsibilities are well-defined.	Proposal has identified achievable implementation objectives and timeline of tasks. Applicant and partner responsibilities are identified.	Proposal implementation objectives are unclear or not measurable. Multiple concerns about project achievability. Timeline of tasks is insufficient. Applicant and partner responsibilities are unclear or not identified.

6 – BUDGET: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Project budget and intended use of funds are clear and appropriate.	Project budget and intended use of requested funds are identified and adequate.	Project budget and intended use of requested funds are unclear or inadequate.

7 – BUDGET LOCAL SUPPORT: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Majority of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government, or private sources.	More than half of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government, or private sources.	Less than half of the applicant match is from local, including county and city government, or private sources.

8 – SUPPORT MATERIAL: 5 points possible

5	3	1
Support material is highly relevant to the project, is of high quality and clearly supports the project's need.	Support material relates to the project and is of average quality.	Support material is not relevant to the project, is of poor quality or does not support the project's need.

9 – GRANTSMANSHIP AND CASE FOR SUPPORT: 5 points possible

5	3	1
The application is clear, concise and well-composed. Case for support is exemplary and merits investment from the state.	The application is clear. Case for support is adequate.	Application is unclear or poorly composed. Case for support is inadequate or does not merit state investment.

CONTACT

Potential applicants are encouraged to review all published materials and contact Sacha Wise, director of Empower Rural Iowa, at 515.348.6156 or sacha.wise@iowaeda.com with questions well in advance of the application deadline.

Mayor's Welcome

We are delighted your student has chosen to study at Dordt University. On behalf of the City of Sioux Center, welcome! Our hope is that Dordt and Sioux Center will soon feel like their home away from home.

Whether you are familiar with Sioux Center or still anticipating your first visit, we hope you get to enjoy our year-round recreation, restaurants, amenities, and retail options. Sioux Center is a safe and friendly community, and I think you and your student will find great places to eat, shop, stay, and worship. While both Dordt and the City are in an exciting time of construction (which may bring a few temporary inconveniences) our welcome mat is out for you! We're excited to share the end results, too.

I am proud of Sioux Center's relationship with Dordt. Together, the City, Dordt, and our community's schools have built a number of shared facilities: the All Seasons Center with its waterpark and ice arena, theatre space, our athletic field complex, and the American State Bank Sports Complex. These partnerships are part of what has shaped Sioux Center's reputation as a thriving community.

We hope your student will find ways to plug in locally, like getting involved with a church or volunteering as a youth coach. Their investment of time and talents will definitely benefit Sioux Center, but we also believe they will gain from the experience and connections.

I know many community members who graduated from Dordt and have chosen to make Sioux Center their home. Dordt alumni are finding life and career opportunities in local engineering and technology firms, health care, agriculture, business, manufacturing, education, and churches, and we're grateful for their impact here.

If you'd like to get to know more about Sioux Center, we invite you to call or visit our Chamber of Commerce office (712-722-3457) or our City Office (712-722-0761).

Dordt and its students bring diversity and energy to our community. My hope is that you find Sioux Center a welcoming place for your student and that you enjoy every visit.

Sincerely,

Dale Vander Berg

Mayor, City of Sioux Center