

Background Information in Support of Increasing COG Assistance Funding

For more than 40 years, Iowa councils of government (COGs) have served the state of Iowa by providing efficient services to local governments and businesses.

COGs provide significant impact for their respective regions and the state. In the last *five years* COGs have:

- Created and retained **5,800 jobs** through startup and expansion loans
- Programmed **\$915 million** in federal transportation funding for 1,200 projects
- Provided **1.6 million public** transportation rides annually
- Rehabilitated **2,300 homes**
- Financed **445 homes**
- Managed **\$215 million** in water and sewer infrastructure projects
- **Hundreds** of community plans and local technical assistance projects

Historic performance shows the valuable services COGs provide to local governments, private partners and state and federal agencies. Otherwise, millions of dollars, thousands of jobs, and hundreds of home purchases and public improvements would not have occurred.

Current economic conditions impact Iowa COGs. COGs are providing more services with less resources than before 2008, but the demand for services is at an all-time high and the need for funding partners grows. Additional resources will help meet service demand and maintain capacity for Iowa.

COGs are uniquely funded with a blend of revenue streams. State, federal, local, and private funds are all part of the model. Diverse funding sources are what make COGs efficient in providing services and stewardship, while partnerships make the services effective.

Strengthening funding and project partnerships are key to delivering effective services. Federal and state departments as well as local industries, banks, chambers of commerce, economic developers and Regent universities are all COG partners. Iowa COGs need to specifically strengthen their partnership with the State of Iowa.

Iowa COGs, through the Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC), ***proposes an increase in COG Assistance in Fiscal Year 2015 to \$500,000, an increase from this year's funding level of \$175,000 (a level appropriation since 1993).***

IARC looks forward to its continued partnership with the State of Iowa, its member governments and private partners that rely on COG services.

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