

MARCH 2024

# CITYSCAPE

A PUBLICATION OF THE IOWA LEAGUE OF CITIES



## SURVEYING: A HIGH-TECH CAREER

Page 16

10

Artificial Intelligence and Your City

12

Class "E" Liquor License and Code Book Updates

22

Comprehensive Planning in Iowa: Forward Thinking Policymaking in Practice



**IPA IT**

IOWA PUBLIC AGENCY INVESTMENT TRUST

# The IPA IT Advantage

Serving Iowa Cities with  
Financial Strategies for Stronger Communities

## IPA IT Board Representatives:

**Brent Hinson**  
City of Mason City

**Jeff Nemmers**  
City of Fort Dodge

**Tim Stiles**  
City of West Des Moines

## Contact us:



**Paul Kruse**  
Senior Vice President,  
Managing Director  
pkruise@pmanetwork.com



**Caleb Walter**  
Vice President,  
Investment Services  
cwalter@pmanetwork.com



**Anita Tracy**  
Associate Vice President,  
Investment Services  
atracy@pmanetwork.com

Visit: [www.ipait.org](http://www.ipait.org) | (800) 872-4024

Sponsors:



IOWA  
ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL  
UTILITIES



**ISAC**  
Iowa State Association of Counties

Investment Advisor/  
Administrator/Marketer:



## FEATURES

**16** — Surveying is a rapidly evolving field with new tools and skills available. From chains and compasses to drones and lasers, surveying is always adapting and improving.

**20** — City growth can benefit the public with higher levels of municipal services and providing critical infrastructure to new areas. Here's what you need to know before you grow.

**IN EVERY ISSUE:**

- » **4 League Column**
- » **6 City FYI**
- » **10 Questions Answered**
- » **22 In Depth**

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...

**12** — The landscape of alcohol licensing in Iowa underwent some changes in 2022, with notable changes to the Class "E" license. What could this mean for city code books?

**14** — An overview of financing options for cities including bond options, loan agreements, and lease-purchase agreements.

**18** — We interviewed member cities across Iowa and while conditions are unique, there are common threads for all cities in their need for local control, funding flexibility, and upgrading aging infrastructure.

**Executive Board**

- President, Ashley Vanorny, Council Member, Cedar Rapids
- President-elect, Brad Cavanagh, Mayor, Dubuque
- Immediate Past President, John Haila, Mayor, Ames
- Past President, Quentin Hart, Mayor, Waterloo
- Past President, Donny Hobbs, Mayor, Lohrville

**Directors**

- Robert Andeweg, Mayor, Urbandale
- Barb Barrick, City Clerk, Atlantic
- Aaron Burnett, City Administrator/Clerk, Mason City
- Courtney Clarke, Mayor, Waukee
- Christina Eicher, Council Member, Bennett
- Laurie Goodrich, Council Member, Coralville
- Michael Holton, City Administrator/Clerk, Treynor
- Dylan Mulfinger, City Administrator, Oelwein
- Cami Rasmussen, City Administrator, Solon
- Steve Richardson, Council Member, Indianola
- Susan Sembach, City Manager/Clerk, Sibley
- Shawanna Silvius, Mayor, Red Oak
- Brian Wagner, City Manager, Tipton
- Scott Wynja, City Manager, Sioux Center

**Cityscape Contributors**

- PUBLISHER**  
Alan Kemp
- EDITOR**  
Mike Armstrong

**STAFF CONTRIBUTORS**

- Alan Kemp, Mickey Shields, Daniel Stalder, Erin Mullenix, Mike Armstrong
- Heather Roberts, Lisa England, Robert Palmer, Amanda Trebon Boyd

**GRAPHICS & PHOTOGRAPHY**

- Larissa Weyer, BigStock Photo, McClure

*Cityscape* (ISSN 1088-5951) is published monthly by the Iowa League of Cities, 500 SW 7th Street, Suite 101, Des Moines, IA 50309, (515) 244-7282, FAX (978) 367-9733. A subscription to *Cityscape* is \$25/year for members and \$60/year for non-members. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines, IA. U.S.P.S. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Iowa League of Cities, 500 SW 7th Street, Suite 101, Des Moines, IA 50309.

## Legislative Purpose

During every legislative session it becomes clear that one of the primary reasons the League was formed was to broadly represent city expectations before the Iowa legislature.

Early in the session, League staff read and assess every bill – literally hundreds – to determine if there may be a city issue involved. If there is, they assess its likely impact so they can determine the initial registration on the bill. At the end of the week, or sooner, they share that information with our member cities so they can assess its impact on their city. We want the membership to be informed when they talk to their legislators.

We have 940 cities in the state. Every one of them has unique challenges, a unique mix of property, unique community values and unique goals. The League membership utilizes its shared Legislative Values to help determine how we proceed during the session. These values of Local Control, Financial Stability, Public Safety, Infrastructure, and Economic Development are consistent year to year, by the Legislative Policy Committee, the League Executive Board and finally the League membership attending the Annual Business Meeting review and approve them annually.

Cities represent the fabric of the state with more than 80% of Iowans living in a city. It is where we work, get medical treatment, enjoy parks

and share amenities. With such a broad spectrum of communities, this is the very reason that League members place local control so high on their list of priorities. State-wide approaches to issues hinder our ability to meet the unique needs and desires of our residents.

On March 6, 2024 the Iowa League of Cities membership gather for a Local Leaders Day. It's an opportunity to meet with legislative representatives for coffee. We host a panel of local leaders expressing why they serve their communities and highlight thought leaders like Monte Wyatt talking about how leaders can establish the mentality for growth in themselves and their community and Scott Raecker, a former legislator and now Executive Director for the Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University, on how civility is required for effective leadership.

Cities in Iowa need to show our unity of purpose in making our state great by reminding everyone that our unique communities weave a fabric of variety and strength. It is events like this that tie our messages together and amplify city voices in Iowa. The League is a platform for its members and it is your voice that gets heard. «



*Alan Kemp is the Executive Director for the Iowa League of Cities.*

---

*The League is a platform for its members and it is your voice that gets heard.*

---

# IMWCA

Iowa Municipalities Workers'  
Compensation Association

(800) 257-2708

[www.imwca.org](http://www.imwca.org)



Focusing on work,  
risk, and community  
since 1981



## INVIGORATING communities

ENGINEERING ▪ SURVEYING ▪ PLANNING ▪ DESIGN

 **SNYDER**  
& ASSOCIATES  
[SNYDER-ASSOCIATES.COM](http://SNYDER-ASSOCIATES.COM)



## Engineering a world where everyone **thrives**

Since 1937, JEO Consulting Group, Inc. has provided engineering consulting services, unsurpassed in skill, creativity, and cost-efficiency.

[jeo.com](http://jeo.com)

Engineering | Architecture | Surveying | Planning



**Upcoming Events & Important Dates**

**MLA Part 3**

April 4 - Ottumwa

April 6 - Cedar Rapids

April 11 - Algona

April 13 - Harlan

April 18 - Virtual

April 20 - Ankeny

**IMFOA Conference**

April 17-19

Des Moines

**Nuisance Abatement Conference**

May 23



Learn more and register at [www.iowaleague.org](http://www.iowaleague.org)

Listen to the League's podcast online



the **square**

Find past episodes online

SIoux CITY | SEPTEMBER 18-20 | 2024

**STRONGER TOGETHER**  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBIT

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Save the date for the Annual Conference and Exhibit this fall in Sioux City. September 18-20 city officials will gather to share knowledge, stories and tools for Iowa cities to be stronger together.

More details at [www.iowaleague.org](http://www.iowaleague.org).



**MLA**  
MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Part 3 of the Municipal Leadership Academy kicks off in April with in-person and virtual trainings. Part 3 covers economic development, community betterment and strategic planning for city officials.

Register today at [www.iowaleague.org](http://www.iowaleague.org).

**IMFOA Conference**

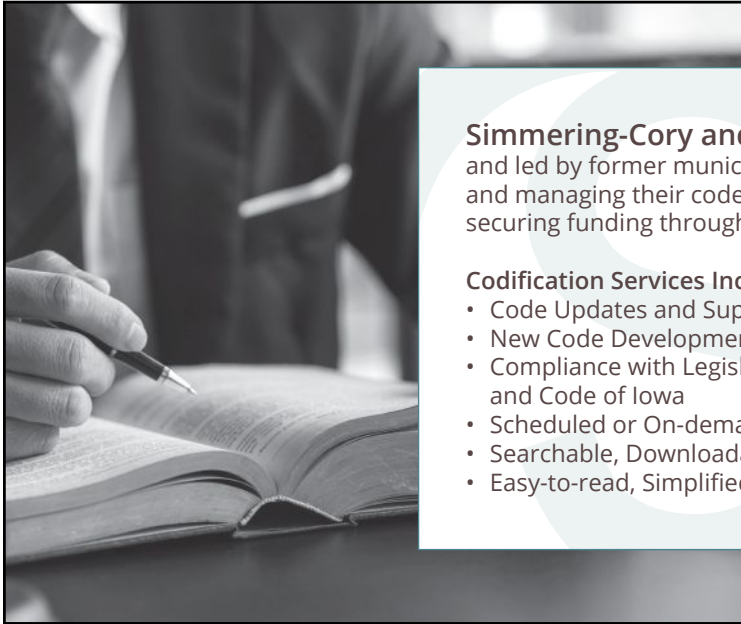
The 2024 IMFOA Spring Conference is right around the corner on April 17-19 at the Holiday Inn Airport in Des Moines. From HR practices to Generative AI, this conference dives deep on many topics new and evergreen facing municipal finance officers in Iowa.

**All-Star Community Applications**

The All-star Community Awards program is open for applications! This program recognizes excellence in local government for innovative efforts in 2023. Applications are due by April 8 with the population-based winners announced in the fall and the People's Choice announced at the League's Annual Conference and Exhibit in September.

Applications available on the League's website.





**Simmering-Cory and Iowa Codification** are Iowa-based and -owned and led by former municipal officials. We assist cities and counties in updating and managing their code, ensuring compliance with state regulations and securing funding through grant writing.

**Codification Services Include:**

- Code Updates and Supplements
- New Code Development
- Compliance with Legislative Changes and Code of Iowa
- Scheduled or On-demand Updates
- Searchable, Downloadable Online Code
- Easy-to-read, Simplified Organization



**SIMMERING-CORY & IOWA CODIFICATION**

*Providing codification and grant solutions to over 500 clients with integrity, accuracy and exceptional service.*

sc-ic.com | (641) 355-4072 | Storm Lake | Clear Lake

# ENHANCING YOUR COMMUNITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE

**ISG**

Architecture  
Engineering  
Environmental  
Planning

ISGInc.com



Learn more about how green infrastructure can benefit your community!

[bit.ly/Green-Infrastructure\\_ISG](https://bit.ly/Green-Infrastructure_ISG)



# BET

Civil Engineering · Land Surveying  
Landscape Architecture · Architecture

CHEROKEE | CLIVE | ORANGE CITY |  
SHELDON | SPIRIT LAKE

**BUILD RELATIONSHIPS  
CREATE OPPORTUNITIES  
BETTER COMMUNITIES**



THE DIFFERENCE IS  
**OUR PEOPLE**

[beck-engineering.net](http://beck-engineering.net)



FINANCING SOLUTIONS  
FOR MUNICIPAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE

## Project Finance:

Planning Through Maturity

Capital  
Planning

Bond  
Issuance

Post-Sale  
Compliance

## Full Service Platform:

- Placement Agent
- Underwriter
- Municipal Advisory

### Scott Stevenson

Managing Director

(515) 471-2721

SStevenson@dadco.com

### Michael Maloney

Managing Director

(515) 471-2723

MMaloney@dadco.com



**D | A | DAVIDSON**

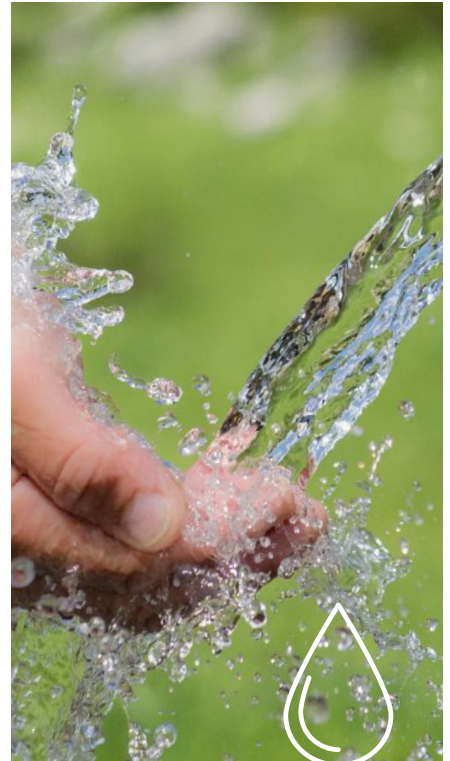
FIXED INCOME CAPITAL MARKETS

D.A. Davidson & Co., member SIPC and FINRA

515 East Locust St., Suite 200  
Des Moines, IA

(515) 471-2700 | (800) 642-5082

[dadavidson.com](http://dadavidson.com)



DRINKING WATER.  
WASTEWATER TREATMENT.  
WATER RESOURCES.

## SOLVING YOUR MOST COMPLEX CHALLENGES

with SEH's Engineers, Architects,  
Planners, and Scientists.



Building a Better World for All of Us®

800.325.2055 | [sehinc.com](http://sehinc.com)





## Legislative Funnels and the 2024 Session So Far

*Daniel Stalder, Government Affairs Manager for the Iowa League of Cities. He can be reached at (515) 244-7282 or [danielstalder@iowaleague.org](mailto:danielstalder@iowaleague.org).*

Iowa’s legislative process has several important hurdles that a bill must clear in order to keep moving through the process. We call these deadlines “funnels” and there are two established by the Legislature’s Joint Rules. It’s important to remember that these rules can be circumvented under certain circumstances, and there are clear exemptions to these rules as well so read the League’s weekly legislative newsletter: *Legislative Link* every Friday to stay up-to-date.

The first funnel occurred on February 16, which marked the end of the 6th week of session. For a bill to “pass funnel” it must have been passed out of a committee in the chamber it started in. So for House Files (HF) or House Study Bills (HSB), it must have been voted out of a House Committee, and same for Senate Files (SF) or Senate Study Bills (SSB). The second funnel is March 15, the end of the 10th week.

The funnel can be a bit of a nuanced process. The funnel applies to specific number bills or files rather than the content of them. This means that later in session, once a concept or bill has been funneled, it can be amended into another bill. Additionally, anything that deals with taxes, appropriations, or oversight of government is not subject to the funnel deadlines and so bills which are referred to Ways & Means, Appropriations or Government Oversight Committees can be considered and passed at any time.

Topics during the Legislative Session can evolve or pivot quickly, so this list may not be exhaustive or the most up-to-date. As always, please check out *Legislative Link* or reach out to the League’s Government Affairs team for current information. So far this session we are looking at bills which impact:

- Public safety pensions such as DROP in IPERS and MFPRSI cancer definition
- Civil service procedures, both added and reduced burden
- Public notices
- Nuisance abatement
- Open meetings, records, and theft of fund penalties
- And much, much, more!

As always, the above topics are always one deadline away from failing to pass funnel, or one news cycle away from being the most important topic in the Iowa Capitol.

And finally, your input as a local government official is crucial to the development of good public policy. The hope is that the above information will equip you to be advocates and information conduits to the Legislators in Des Moines. It’s good to keep in mind that very few legislators have a background in city government and so your encouragement, expertise, and direction could mean the difference between a bill passing or being funneled. «

# Artificial Intelligence and Your City

*Robert Palmer, General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs for the Iowa League of Cities. He can be reached at (515) 244-7282 or robertpalmer@iowaleague.org.*

In 2023, Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerged not just as a hot topic but as a transformative force on the brink of redefining our daily lives and the communities in which we live, work, and play. Unlike a fleeting trend, AI's impact is expected to bring profound and continuous change. This article tries to answer the most common questions we've received from members on the issue of AI.

## Q: What is AI?

AI, short for "Artificial Intelligence," encompasses many different technologies and processes. Today, everything from Language Learning Models to advanced Machine Learning is referred to generally as "AI." These tools enable computational devices to perform tasks that have typically been thought to require human intelligence, such as understanding language, recognizing patterns, and making decisions. Recently, we've seen them create photorealistic images and videos, highlighting the rapidly growing capabilities.

For 75 years, we've made a difference in communities that trusted us to tackle their challenges and **exceed their expectations.**



Learn more about the Real Impact we've had in communities like yours.

Bolton-Menk.com



**BOLTON & MENK**

Real People. Real Solutions.



## Q: How will AI impact cities?

Some of the impacts will be visible and tangible, while others may be subtle or below the surface, like an app or service you've used for a while improving or expanding its abilities. The possibilities for AI adaptation in city usage are limitless. From better streamlining transportation and sanitation services to having a virtual clerk, AI will likely impact all aspects of our lives and city operations. The potential to improve efficiency and reduce costs across city services and functions is transformative.

## Q: What is the goal?

Cities want to provide the highest quality services at the lowest cost to residents and businesses in their communities. We've already seen how technology can do that: telephone, email, and virtual meetings have changed how we interact and lowered the cost of communications. AI has the potential to build upon previous technological advancements through operational improvements and cost savings. Predictive analytics, forecasting, and real-time monitoring can help improve the quality of a project on the front end and streamline the cost of operations on the back end.

## Q: What are the challenges?

As cities adopt AI, they will serve the dual role of consumer and provider. The services your city is already utilizing may improve, or new services may become available. In other areas, a city will use AI within its infrastructure to enhance its services to residents. No matter the usage, cities will need to be aware of the data they have and how it is being used and protected. AI is exciting, but it should come with even more security awareness and preparedness than computer and internet usage is today.

## Ok, give me some real examples.

AI's potential has already been recognized in a wide variety of areas:

- **Infrastructure**, such as roads, piping for water and wastewater, and allocation of resources can be streamlined, improved, and enhanced. Traffic can be optimized to reduce travel times and promote safety. Water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure can better handle everyday usage as well as peak flows.
- **Public Safety** has and will adopt these tools to keep our communities safe by putting officers where they need to be and reducing response times. AI is also an essential tool in the cybersecurity of our facilities and utilities.
- **Staffing** is a struggle nearly every community faces. It is challenging to find employees, with human resources increasingly representing a more significant portion of city expenses. AI can be a force multiplier for public safety but can also help in other areas. Imagine a virtual city clerk who could help residents by answering questions, helping them pay a bill, or even getting them a pool pass. The public's expectations will increase as the private sector utilizes these new tools, so it will be necessary for the public sector to use them as well.

In conclusion, artificial intelligence will alter and expand cities' range and quality of services. Residents' daily experiences and lives will benefit from the innovation and improvement. Cities will change and adapt to evolving lifestyles, and there will be many opportunities to utilize AI to build safer, more resilient, and efficient communities. Security concerns will be significant but essential to overcome. There will also be a lot of learning, but it will be necessary for cities to embrace this emerging technology. «





## Class “E” Liquor License and Code Book Updates

*Amanda Trebon Boyd, Membership Services Coordinator for the Iowa League of Cities. She can be reached at (515) 974-5321 or [amandatrebonyd@iowaleague.org](mailto:amandatrebonyd@iowaleague.org).*

*Tyler Ackerson, Legislative Liaison with the Iowa Department of Revenue Research & Policy Division. He can be reached at [tyler.ackerson@iowa.gov](mailto:tyler.ackerson@iowa.gov).*

### Navigating Changes to Iowa’s Class “E” Retail Alcohol License

The landscape of alcohol licensing in Iowa underwent some changes with the enactment of 2022 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2374 (SF2374). One notable transformation was the renaming of the Class “E” liquor control license to the Class “E” retail alcohol license, accompanied by expanded privileges. This article aims to shed light on these changes and delve into the newly introduced Automatic Renewal Program for Class “E” Retail Alcohol Licenses, providing insights for both licensees and local authorities.

### The Evolution of Class “E” Retail Alcohol License

Before the legislative update, the Class “E” liquor control license restricted licensees to selling alcoholic liquor solely to on-premises liquor retailers and for off-premises consumption, requiring separate permits for beer and wine sales. Post SF2374, the license underwent a nomenclature shift to the Class “E” retail alcohol license, opening doors for the sale of beer and wine to customers for off-premises consumption without necessitating additional permits.

### Introduction of Automatic Renewal Program

One of the key features introduced is the Automatic Renewal Program, streamlining the license renewal process for Class “E” retail alcohol licensees. This program allows eligible license holders to renew their licenses automatically, provided certain conditions are met. Iowa Code Section 123.35(2) allows Class “E” retail alcohol licensees to automatically renew their license without approval by the local authority or the Iowa Department of Revenue (IDR) upon payment of the renewal fee, provided certain conditions are met:

- Applicants must give written consent to participate in the program.
- No suspensions, revocations, or civil penalties were issued during the preceding license term.
- No pending administrative proceedings.
- No other violations of Iowa Code Chapter 123.
- No dishonored payments to IDR for liquor orders.
- No unenrollment by local authority.
- Premises is a safe and proper place conforming to all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

### How the Program Works for Licensees

Licensees can enroll in the program by completing a new or renewal application and giving consent to participate in the program. Each license must be separately enrolled, and payment methods are stored for easy renewal fee processing in subsequent terms. Licensees receive email notifications 70 days before the license expiration date, offering an opportunity to update payment methods and any information that has changed since the preceding license term (such as disclosing any new criminal history violations). Payments for automatic renewal are withdrawn 50 days before the license’s expiration date. The license is unenrolled in case of payment failure, requiring a manual renewal application submission.

### How the Program Works for Local Authorities

Local authorities play a crucial role in determining licensee eligibility for the Automatic Renewal Program, designating licenses as “eligible” or “ineligible” during the review process. Even if marked as “ineligible,” licenses can still receive approval for issuance. An email notification is sent to the local authority 70 days before the license expiration date as a reminder of upcoming automatic renewal. Local authorities must unenroll the licensee at

least 51 days before expiration to cease automatic renewal. If unenrollment occurs on or after the 50-day mark, automatic renewal is disabled for the term following the immediate next one. For instance, if a licensee enrolls in 2023 and unenrolls after the 50-day mark in 2024, it affects the renewal in 2025. Upon unenrollment, licensees receive an email notification, and the renewal process shifts to manual submission, subject to local authority and IDR examination and approval or denial.

### Code Book Considerations for Cities

With these legislative changes, cities are encouraged to review and potentially update their code books to reflect the current state of alcohol licensing. Many city codes may now be outdated due to these legislative changes as many mirrored the state code for alcohol licensing. Many cities' codes do not call for Class E licensing or do not include the ability to enroll in an auto-renewal process as it may require formal approval from the council. Adding the option for automatic renewal may help to streamline the renewal processes for many cities.

The city's code of ordinances, acting as a governing document, needs to be clear, enforceable, and accessible. Codification services, often provided by private companies or local Councils of Government, can assist cities in ensuring their code books are up-to-date and comply with legal requirements.

The changes in Iowa's alcohol licensing landscape, particularly the evolution of the Class "E" retail alcohol license and the introduction of the Automatic Renewal Program, bring about opportunities for streamlined processes for both licensees and local authorities. Cities are encouraged to update their code books to align with these changes, ensuring clarity, accessibility, and compliance with state laws. As Iowa adapts to these new measures, licensees, local authorities, and cities collectively contribute to a more efficient and transparent regulatory framework for the retail alcohol industry. <<



Providing engineering and technical management solutions that **build communities and improve lives.**



HRGREEN.COM

▶ CEDAR RAPIDS  
DES MOINES

BROADBAND + CONSTRUCTION + ENVIRONMENTAL + GEOSPATIAL  
GOVERNMENT + LAND DEVELOPMENT + PLANNING + TRANSPORTATION + WATER



## Financing Options for Cities

Mickey Shields, Director of Membership Services for the Iowa League of Cities. He can be reached at (515) 244-7282 or [mickeyshields@iowaleague.org](mailto:mickeyshields@iowaleague.org).

City governments occasionally utilize debt to finance needed projects and purchases that exceed what is available in a given annual budget. Cities have a handful of debt options available and are strongly encouraged to regularly visit with their financial advisor to make strategic decisions and to consult their city attorney and bond attorney to ensure proper legal steps are completed.

The following is a summary of the more commonly used types of debt.

Authorized under Chapter 384, Division III of the *Code of Iowa*, cities may issue general obligation bonds and incur debt that is to be repaid with property tax revenue generated from a city’s debt service levy. The state code uses two classifications of general obligation bonds, essential corporate purpose and general corporate purpose. The state code also sets parameters on the sale of general obligation bonds, the form of bonds and more. In addition, federal laws and rules require certain filings and disclosures for municipal bonds.

### Essential Corporate Purpose

<b>Purposes</b>	Road infrastructure construction and repair, construction and improvements of sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water and solid waste facilities and infrastructure, equipping of fire, police and ambulance services, urban renewal projects, nuisance abatement and dangerous building acquisition and demolition, and more.
<b>Approval Process</b>	A city must publish (or post for cities 200 and less in population) notice of the proposed bond issuance, including the amount and purpose of the bond as well as the time and date of the public hearing on the proposal. The council must then hold a public hearing on the bond issuance proposal and receive any oral or written objections. Following the hearing the council can vote to approve the bond issuance by simple majority.

### General Corporate Purpose

<b>Purposes</b>	Acquisition, construction, reconstruction or improvement to city facilities, utilities and buildings not included under essential corporate purposes.
<b>Approval Process</b>	<p>A city is required to call for a special city election to place the bond referendum on the ballot, with at least 60 percent voter approval required to proceed with the issuance of the bonds. <b>House File 718, approved during the 2023 legislative session, restricts such referendums to November elections.</b></p> <p>However, a referendum is not required for the following smaller bond issuances unless citizens petition for an election on the matter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities 5,000 or less in population - \$400,000 or less*</li> <li>• Cities 5,001-75,000 in population - \$700,000 or less*</li> <li>• Cities over 75,000 in population - \$1,000,000 or less*</li> </ul> <p>For such smaller bond issuances, the city must still publish (or post for cities 200 and less in population) notice of the proposed bond issuance, including the amount and purpose of the bond, and the right of citizens to petition for an election. If no petition is filed, the city may proceed with the authorization and issuance of the bonds.</p>

\*The current thresholds will increase by 30% for Fiscal Year 2025, and thereafter be tied to consumer price index percentage changes.

**Authorized under Chapter 384, Division IV, cities may issue revenue bonds to incur debt to be repaid with fees collected from a city enterprise, typically a city utility system.**

<b>Purposes</b>	Revenue debt is most commonly used to finance the construction, reconstruction, improvement or repair of a city utility system. Such debt is not repaid with property taxes and therefore does not count against the city’s debt limit.
<b>Approval Process</b>	A city must schedule a public hearing on the proposed issuance of revenue bonds and publish (or post for cities 200 and less in population) notice of the hearing. The notice must include the time and date of the hearing, the amount and purposes of the bond, and the city utility system whose revenues will be used to make debt payments. The council must then hold a public hearing on the bond issuance proposal and receive any oral or written objections. Following the hearing the council can vote to approve the bond issuance by simple majority.

**State code Section 384.24A permits cities to form loan agreements with financial institutions for any public purpose. Such agreements may be seen as an alternative to issuing bonds. Cities may sell notes or bonds through this mechanism at either a public or negotiated sale.**

<b>Purposes</b>	Any public purpose. Notes or bonds issued under a loan agreement count against a city’s debt limit if payments are made from the general fund or debt service levy. For agreements to be repaid from the general fund, a city must show that annual payments will not exceed 10 percent of the city’s previous year’s general fund budget amount.
<b>Approval Process</b>	For loan agreements using the city’s debt service levy, a city must follow the same process as required for issuing general obligation bonds (dependent on purpose). If using the general fund, the process for general corporate purpose bonds must substantially be followed.

**Under Section 364.4 of the state code, cities may enter into lease and lease-purchase agreements for real or personal property.**

<b>Purposes</b>	Most commonly used to finance the use and/or purchase of equipment. The state code permits leases and lease-purchases of property for its useful or economic life. Lease agreements paid from property taxes count against a city’s debt limit unless annual appropriation provisions are used. For leases to be repaid from the general fund, a city must show that annual payments will not exceed 10 percent of the city’s previous year’s general fund budget amount.
<b>Approval Process</b>	For leases using the city’s debt service levy, a city must follow the same process as required for issuing general obligation bonds (dependent on purpose). If using the general fund, the process for general corporate purpose bonds must substantially be followed.

The tables above detail common types of debt used by cities, although city officials should be aware of other options. These may include special assessment debt, tax increment finance debt, Local Option Sales Tax debt, anticipatory notes, internal loans and more. As when using the more common types of debt, cities are urged to work closely with financial advisors and legal counsel. <<



# Surveying: A High-Tech Career



Tim Devaney, Survey Team Leader and Keefer Thurman, Survey Crew Chief for McClure.

Surveying has been an essential part of human civilization for centuries. From ancient civilizations using basic tools to modern-day technological advancements, surveying has played a crucial role in shaping our world. And with the rapid development of geospatial technology, it truly is a high-tech career.

## The Evolution of Surveying Tools

Surveying has come a long way from the days of land surveyors using basic tools like chains and compasses. The introduction of electronic distance measurement (EDM) in the 1950s revolutionized the industry, making it faster and more accurate. The 1970s saw the introduction of the first total station, which combined EDM with electronic theodolites, further improving accuracy and efficiency.

## Geospatial Technology Takes Over

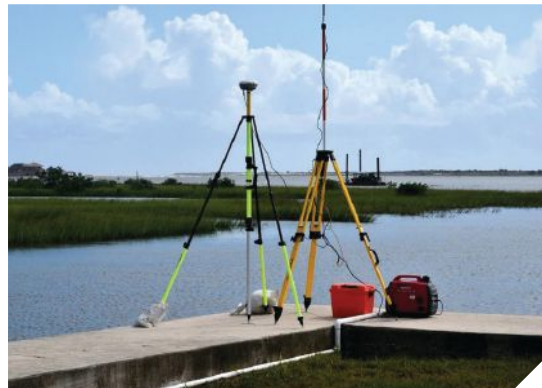
The 1990s saw the rise of geospatial technology, which uses satellite imagery and GPS to map and measure the Earth's surface. This technology has greatly improved the accuracy and speed of surveying, making it possible to map large areas in a fraction of the time it would have taken with traditional methods.

## GPS Surveying

GPS technology has been a game-changer in surveying, and it continues to evolve. The latest GPS surveying tools use real-time kinematic (RTK) technology, which provides centimeter-level accuracy in real-time. This allows surveyors to work faster and more accurately, even in challenging environments.

## Laser Scanning

Laser scanning, also known as LiDAR, is another technology that is transforming the surveying industry. This technology uses laser beams to measure distances and create 3D models of objects and environments. It is particularly useful for surveying large areas and capturing detailed data, making it a valuable tool for infrastructure projects, urban planning, and environmental monitoring.



## Drone Surveying

The very first photogrammetry mission was completed in 1917 by the US Geological Survey, who mounted a camera to the bottom of an airplane. It wasn't until 1995 that cameras began being mounted to drones and were used in the military. Then in 2009, DJI produced the very first commercial drone equipped with a high-resolution camera, beginning the photogrammetry age in Survey.



In 2016, the FAA ruled to allow the use of commercial drones to attach LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) payloads.

This technology is particularly useful for surveying hard-to-reach or dangerous areas, such as construction sites, mines, and disaster zones. It also

allows for more frequent and accurate surveys, providing real-time data for better decision-making.

## The Benefits of Advanced Surveying Technology

The advancements in surveying technology have numerous benefits, including:

- Increased accuracy: With the use of advanced tools and techniques, surveyors can achieve higher levels of accuracy, reducing the margin of error and improving the quality of data.





- **Timesaving:** The use of drones, GPS, and laser scanning allows surveyors to cover larger areas in less time, making the surveying process more efficient and cost-effective.
- **Improved safety:** With the use of drones and other remote surveying tools, surveyors can avoid dangerous or hard-to-reach areas, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries.
- **Real-time data:** The use of advanced technology provides real-time data, allowing for better decision-making and faster response times.

### The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Surveying

Artificial intelligence (AI) is another technology that is set to revolutionize the surveying industry. AI-powered tools can analyze large amounts of data and identify patterns and trends that would be difficult for humans to detect. This can help surveyors make more informed decisions and improve the accuracy of their work.

### Challenges and Limitations

While the advancements in surveying technology are exciting, there are still some challenges and limitations that need to be addressed.

### Cost

The latest surveying tools and technologies can be expensive, making it difficult for smaller companies to invest in them. However, as technology continues to evolve, we can expect to see more affordable options in the future.

### Training and Education

With the introduction of new tools and techniques, surveyors will need to undergo training and education to keep up with the latest advancements. This can be a challenge for some, but it is essential to ensure the accuracy and effectiveness of surveying.

For students pursuing surveying, a solid foundation in technology, mathematics, and a passion for the outdoors are essential. Understanding construction processes and the full surveying workflow, from design to completion, will prepare them for the dynamic landscape of the industry.



### Data Management

The use of advanced technology means that surveyors are collecting more data than ever before. This can be overwhelming and challenging to manage, making it crucial to have efficient data management systems in place.

### The Future is Bright

The surveying industry has come a long way, and with the rapid development of geospatial technology, the future is set to be even more revolutionary. It is essential for surveyors and surveying firms to embrace these changes and invest in surveying technology to provide the best services to their clients. The future of surveying is here, and it is an exciting time to be a part of this industry. <<



**SURVEYING:  
THE FIRST STEP  
FOR LASTING  
SUCCESS.**

Before land becomes a shopping center, a school, or a roadway, McClure surveyors are there, gathering critical data that becomes the foundation for achieving your vision.

**Trust McClure for surveying expertise that ensures the safety and success of your project.**

**M<sup>C</sup>CLURE™**  
Your vision. Engineered here.

[www.mcclurevision.com](http://www.mcclurevision.com)

# Cities and the State of Iowa - What We're Hearing

Mike Armstrong, Communications Coordinator for the Iowa League of Cities. He can be reached at (515) 244-7282 or [mikearmstrong@iowaleague.org](mailto:mikearmstrong@iowaleague.org).



State policy has a direct impact on cities. How is Iowa providing a platform for success for its cities, from communities of 200 people to 200,000? With 940 cities in Iowa of different sizes and conditions, it can be difficult to craft legislation that lifts up all Iowans.

This spring, the Iowa League of Cities interviewed cities from all corners of Iowa on upcoming projects, the impacts of recent legislation, and what they need from the state to plan for the future of their communities. While every city is different, there are several common themes shared across Iowa.

## Cities are Following the Local Vision

Local government is the most connected to Iowans. These are members of the community representing their neighbors and city in a way that is approachable, accountable, and accessible. As the boots on the ground representatives, local officials need the freedom to enact the community's vision for itself through local democratic process.

Osceola, IA | 2022 Population: 5,568 | Southern Iowa Ty Wheeler, City Administrator

*The state needs to know that we do not hear from our residents that the city needs to “do less”. Residents want quality of life assets and resources, they want their town cleaned up, they want the city engaged in economic development/housing, they want a safe community, and they want the drinking water to run/sewers to flow/snow plowed without issue. They also want the city council to have the discretion to make decisions and not be subject to the state government on local matters.*

## Infrastructure Needs

Aging infrastructure is prevalent all over Iowa. From public buildings and transportation to utilities and housing stock, many cities are nearing endpoints in facility lifecycles built decades ago. The central issue is that these are very expensive projects, generally beyond the means of the community. Upgrading or replacing a wastewater treatment plant or major bridge is not something a city of 5,000 can readily accomplish on its own.

Independence, IA | 2022 Population: 6,179 | Eastern Iowa Matthew Schmitz, City Manager

*The biggest project we have on the horizon is a full replacement of our wastewater treatment plant. That project is in design at the moment and is currently estimated to come in at \$37 million, the largest project this city has ever completed. We do not have funding in place for it, and of course that is a large focus at the moment. A second project would be the replacement of our fire station. Currently the fire station is essentially the back 60% of city hall. We recently engaged an architect to help us start moving through that process, and have identified that we need approximately 22,000 sq. ft. and we currently have 10,000. We have the ability to add on to the south, but that would only generate about 6,400 additional sq. ft. and would not solve the problems. In fact, it would make it worse since the distance from the sleeping quarters to the apparatus would almost double. We project the cost to be around \$8 million.*

## Funding Flexibility

When we asked what cities most need from the state, the consistent response was funding flexibility and local control. Many cities have used strategies like the Local Option Sales and Services Tax (LOSST) or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) with overwhelming voter approval in order to fund public amenities and key infrastructure. With these and other standard revenue options, such as property taxes, being preempted or restricted in state code, cities struggle to provide essential services using funding options that voters approved at the local level.

Logan, IA | 2022 Population: 1,385 | Western Iowa

Angela Winther, City Clerk

*Funding sources!! We need access to more grant opportunities and continued access to low interest loans through state and federal agencies. If interest rates stay high, we will have to delay projects potentially until they are more affordable. We will need TIF for development. We will need more access to funding to comply with DNR requirements for our lagoon and water treatment plant. We have been utilizing the CDBG Disaster Recovery housing grant this year to build 3 new houses. We have received two Community Catalyst grants and one Downtown Housing grant from the IEDA to help with revitalization of our downtown and those have been a great source of funding. We need those to continue for small towns to thrive. We need our Governor and legislators to stop talking about removing the LOSST from cities and counties. Every time the legislature has taken back or taken away funding from us, promising to backfill the money, those backfills have ended. Our citizens voted these taxes in, knowing that they would receive more local benefits because of it. <<*




# MSA



MSA Professional Services specializes in the sustainable development of communities.


Big or small, we do whatever it takes to meet each need, working to make Iowa municipalities stronger in the process.

**When you partner with MSA, it's more than a project. It's a commitment.**




**www.msa-ps.com**  
**(888) 869-1214**

CEDAR RAPIDS | DES MOINES  
DUBUQUE | QUAD CITIES



## CALHOUN-BURNS & ASSOCIATES, INC.

BRIDGES | STRUCTURES | TRANSPORTATION



1500 30<sup>TH</sup> STREET | WEST DES MOINES, IA 50266  
http://calhounburns.com | PHONE (515) 224-4344



## GARDEN & ASSOCIATES, LTD.

Engineers & Surveyors

Engineering a better Iowa...  
Helping build stronger communities.

WASTEWATER | SURVEY | PLANNING  
WATER | STREETS | STORM WATER

www.gardenassociates.net

OSKALOOSA, IA 641.672.2526  
CRESTON, IA 641.782.4005

SINCE 1952



## FRENCH-RENEKER-ASSOCIATES

ENGINEERS & SURVEYORS

Planning • Studies • Design  
Surveying • Staking •  
Construction Observation

Fairfield, Iowa • email@french-reneker.com  
641.472.5145 • www.french-reneker.com



## MARTIN GARDNER ARCHITECTURE

Building Project Experts.

Marion (319) 377-7604  
Strawberry Point (563) 933-4712

www.MartinGardnerArch.com

# Annexation Procedures and Strategies: What to Know Before You Grow

Maria Brownell and Jenna Sabroske, Ahlers & Cooney, P.C.  
They can be reached at [mbrownell@ahlerslaw.com](mailto:mbrownell@ahlerslaw.com) and [jsabroske@ahlerslaw.com](mailto:jsabroske@ahlerslaw.com).



Adding land to city boundaries can serve a number of goals that benefit the public. Cities can offer new territory higher levels of municipal services, and new developments often need access to critical infrastructure within city limits. City growth happens most smoothly when leaders engage in careful planning, and outside agencies and consultants can be invaluable resources in the process.

## Voluntary Annexations

There are three primary categories of voluntary annexations: (1) 100% voluntary annexation, and no other neighboring city is within two miles of that territory; (2) 100% voluntary annexation of territory, and the land is located within two miles of another neighboring city; and (3) 80/20 voluntary annexation, where property owners representing at least 80% of the proposed annexation territory are requesting annexation, and up to 20% of the annexation territory (determined by land area) is included without consent. There are also separate procedures that apply when neighboring cities compete to annex the same land.

The simplest of these voluntary annexations is a 100% voluntary annexation that is not within two miles of the corporate limits of another city. This kind of annexation is the only one that does not require the approval of the **City Development Board**. Following City Council approval of the annexation proposal, the annexation is submitted to the Secretary of State's office.

All other voluntary annexations start with a petition from landowners who own land adjoining city boundaries, followed by notices, consultation meetings with affected public entities, and a public hearing before the city council, before a proposal is considered by the City Development Board. When planning for annexation, building a schedule that includes all necessary notifications and approvals is a critical first step. Given the detailed procedural requirements and timelines, cities are advised to seek legal counsel in the earliest stages of annexation planning.

The **City Development Board** is a state agency established under Iowa Code section 368.9 to oversee annexations, boundary changes, incorporations, and discontinuances of cities across Iowa and, by doing so, promote better long-term planning for city development.

## Involuntary Annexations (more than 20% of territory is not in favor of annexation)

Iowa law favors voluntary annexations over involuntary annexations. Involuntary annexations involve significantly more time and expense, and the proposals are subject to an election.

Involuntary annexations are initiated by petition. A petition is followed by notices to affected agencies, landowners, and utilities, including a notice of intent and notice of public hearing. Upon completion of required notices and public hearing by the petitioning city, the petition can be submitted to the City Development Board. The Board then appoints a committee, which will include "local representatives." The committee is responsible for holding a public hearing and reviewing written briefs before making its decision. If the committee approves the petition, then the proposal is scheduled for an election, to be voted upon by registered voters within the area. The proposal must be authorized by a majority of the persons voting in the election in order to pass. Prior to an election, any interested person may challenge the committee's approval in court.

## The Role of Local Planning

Successful city development action, including annexations, starts with intentional planning for the community's goals and vision for the future. A city's comprehensive plan is an ideal starting point for annexation planning, which should be reviewed for updates at regular intervals.

*Ahlers & Cooney, P.C. is a trusted partner of the Iowa League of Cities. Learn more at [www.ahlerslaw.com](http://www.ahlerslaw.com).*

If a comprehensive plan calls out a certain region of the city for future growth, city leaders may consider proposing **pre-annexation agreements** with owners of territory outside of the city. These agreements often involve a city offering to extend city services to property owners outside the city in exchange for consent to future annexation. Cities can also offer a tax abatement that provides for a “phase in” period of city taxes on the property.

In addition, long-term annexation planning can involve collaboration among communities. Neighboring cities can jointly plan for growth using moratorium or boundary adjustment agreements.

The City Development Board adopts rules for annexations, including criteria for approval. The rules are another starting point in the planning process for cities when considering any annexation. The rules the Board will apply for considering annexation petitions can be found in the Iowa Administrative Code, Agency 263. As of the date of submission of this article, the Board is in the process of revising its administrative rules for all types of city development action pursuant to Executive Order 10. Revised proposed rules can be found on the City Development Board’s website. <<

**Pre-annexation agreements** can be made between a city and a landowner, documenting an intention for future annexation of certain land. These agreements are recorded against the subject property and therefore are binding on subsequent owners of the property.

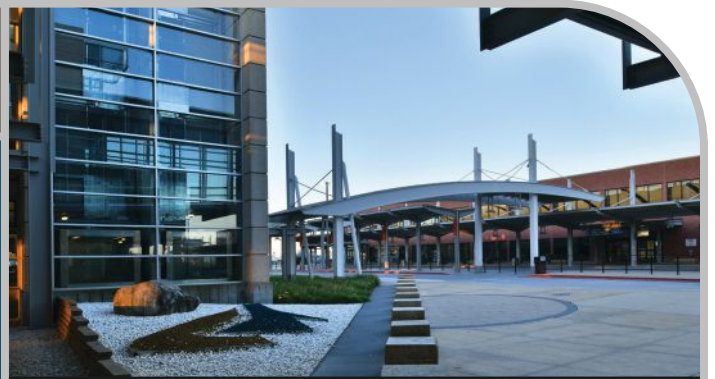


**Ahlers & Cooney, P.C.**  
100 Court Avenue, Suite 600 | Des Moines, IA 50309  
[www.ahlerslaw.com](http://www.ahlerslaw.com) | [info@ahlerslaw.com](mailto:info@ahlerslaw.com) | 515-243-7611

For over 130 years, Ahlers & Cooney has represented Iowa’s cities, counties, municipal utilities and other public bodies.

**Comprehensive services include:**

- Public Improvement Contracting
- Economic Development
- Public Financing
- Lease Financing Transactions
- Environmental Compliance
- Land Use/Community Development
- Employment Law
- Internal Investigations
- Labor Negotiations
- Litigation
- Board Governance
- Special Assessments



*Des Moines International Airport*

**FOX Strand**  
Ames, IA | 515.233.0000



# We are Water and Wastewater Experts

**FOX Strand specializes in water and wastewater solutions that help cities and industries provide clean water.**

# Comprehensive Planning in Iowa: Forward Thinking Policymaking in Practice

*Luke Seaberg is a Community Development Specialist at Iowa State University Extension and can be reached at seaberg@iastate.edu.*

If you are like me, you read the executive summary of a city's comprehensive plan before traveling there for a conference, vacation or day trip to get a sense for the place. Then again, this habit may be more a reflection of my planning nerdiness than a common thing...

Examining a city's comprehensive plan is an excellent way to understand what its residents and public officials prioritize when it comes to land use and the built environment. A city's comprehensive plan plays an integral role in guiding decisions determining the community's future and is an indispensable tool to ensure that decisionmakers' actions have constituent buy-in, are understood by commercial interests, and can be defended against legal challenge.

This article provides a general overview of comprehensive plans, explains how they are created and modified, describes the value of having one, and gives examples of how comprehensive planning works in Iowa.

## What Is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a city's policy statement, a long-range planning document for a defined area with an emphasis on the physical environment. The plan should be informed by public participation

– the more residents involved in the process, the more representative that plan is likely to be. Three of the key factors distinguishing a comprehensive plan from a strategic plan or a capital improvement plan are geographic coverage, subject matter and time horizon.

The geographic coverage of a comprehensive plan is the entire land area governed by the body creating the plan, including surface or groundwater resources controlled by the locality. As the name suggests, a comprehensive plan's subject matter includes all topics related to physical development in a community like land use classifications, transportation, utilities, parks and recreation, public buildings, floodplains, and wetlands.

Time horizon refers to the length of time that the plan considers. Typically, this is around 20 years, depending on factors such as the community's size, the pace of population change and broader regional socioeconomic dynamics. Plans should be periodically updated throughout their useful lifespan to ensure that the data used to reach conclusions about population trends, lifestyle preferences and environmental conditions are still valid. Events like a major employer closing a facility or a natural disaster like a derecho

occurring early in the time horizon of a comprehensive plan, while unwelcome, should be considered so that the plan does not become obsolete.

The main purpose of a comprehensive plan is to serve as the basis for land use decisions in the community related to zoning, siting public facilities and infrastructure. The plan's text is typically divided into sections or chapters dealing with different elements of land use, focusing on housing, open space, and commercial areas. Plans may set a context by summarizing the city's history to describe major events that influenced the city's development. Demographic data will often accompany this history to paint a picture of the city's population breakdown along racial, socioeconomic and gendered lines.

Complementing this text is the future land use map. While most maps represent the way things are now (topography, building footprints, trail systems) the future land use map serves as a synthesis of the comprehensive planning process. It reflects how the city envisions itself growing and evolving.

Rather than dictating what can be built on a plot of land like a zoning map or what is located at a specific set of coordinates, a future

land use map is composed of more generalized designations with names like “Neighborhood Core – Mixed Use”, “Residential Neighborhood-Expansion”, or “Employment”. This language serves as a guide for users of the plan – namely developers, city staff, and city officials – when they are proposing, reviewing, and approving plans and taking other land use actions. There are no strict guidelines about how many categories of land classification need to be included on a future land use map and many smaller communities will not need to concern themselves with creating a dozen different kinds of residential categorizations, eight light industrial levels and four institutional groupings. The benefit of the map is that it reflects the future your community wants to see for itself, and creative public input can yield a creative future land use map.

Having established that a comprehensive plan is a policy statement guided by citizen input intended to serve as the basis for all future land use decisions on a (roughly) twenty-year time horizon for the entire geography of a city, the question you may be asking yourself is: so how does this all happen?

**How Do Comprehensive Plans Get Written and Updated?**

The process begins when an elected body passes a resolution directing staff and the planning commission to draft or update a comprehensive plan. Depending on the size and

resources of the city, the process will be led by city planning staff or consultants. Many cities opt to contract their comprehensive plan to an outside consultancy that specializes in plan writing to allow paid staff to focus on more of their day-to-day responsibilities.

Smaller communities can collaborate with their local Council of Governments (COG) to create a comprehensive plan. Partnering with a COG makes sense for communities without a staff planner to guide the planning commission/committee’s efforts. Many COGs have staff experienced working in smaller communities whose plans present a cost-effective option for less resourced municipalities.

Drafting a comprehensive plan takes anywhere from several months to several years, depending on size and scope, as well as how much public input is sought. Data gathering and mapping to discern existing conditions comes next, with a continued focus on public involvement. Next comes a suite of processes familiar to those working in local government: SWOT analyses, needs assessments and feasibility studies. The specifics of this step will depend in large part on the individuals leading the process. The plan’s final sections focus on implementation strategies for controlling land development and incorporating other responsibilities of local government into the document.

**What Value Does a Comprehensive Plan Provide for a City?**

The comprehensive plan is drafted by members of and referenced in deliberations of the elected representatives of a city, the level of government that interacts most directly with its constituents. This, as well as the fact that a community’s plan is drafted with significant public input, makes the plan one of the most representative and responsive documents in government. Additionally, the plan helps a community efficiently use public funds, avoiding unnecessary expenses through prioritization and sequential upgrading of public facilities, roads and other pieces of essential infrastructure. While intended to be realistic, the time horizon of the comprehensive plan lends itself to longer-term, aspirational thinking, which is often shunted aside in favor of more immediate administrative concerns.

More concretely, comprehensive plans provide a justification and rationale for public officials when governing the conduct and activities of private landowners. In fact, Iowa Code Chapter 414 contains language that requires cities’ zoning regulations to be established “in accordance with” a comprehensive plan. So, while having a comprehensive plan is not a requirement of Iowa cities, cities that want to have a zoning ordinance must have a comprehensive plan of some kind. Having a comprehensive plan also allows municipalities to create



◀ several other types of policies under Iowa Code, such as urban renewal and urban revitalization.

Beyond “just” being a long-range document providing a framework for governance and justifying ordinances and policies, the comprehensive plan is also often one of the primary sources judges use to determine the legality of a city’s decision to approve or deny an application from a developer or resident. When an official’s decision can be supported by text taken from the city’s comprehensive plan, it makes the city attorney’s job a little easier.

### **Comprehensive Planning in Iowa**

Although Iowa Code does not require cities to have a comprehensive plan, Iowa Code Chapter 18B, the Smart Planning Act, provides a list of ten principles to consider when drafting a plan: collaboration; efficiency, transparency and consistency; clean, renewable and efficient energy; occupational diversity; revitalization; housing diversity; community character; natural resources and agricultural protection; sustainable design; and transportation diversity.

A city should factor these principles into its process when developing a plan, as well as socioeconomic trends.

An example is trend data from the U.S. Census Bureau showing that many rural areas in Iowa experiencing flat or downward population trends, while the metropolitan areas surrounding urban centers like Des Moines, Cedar Rapids and Sioux City experience rapid population growth.

North Liberty, situated between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City along a major highway, finalized its new comprehensive plan in early 2023, with assistance from a private planning consultancy. As one of the fastest growing communities in Iowa, it makes sense to have a new comprehensive plan focusing on principles like “encourag[ing] flexible but compatible mixing of uses”, “promot[ing] diverse housing options for all life stages and abilities”, and “be[ing] commerce ready to support a range of enterprises”. Intelligent growth management and setting priorities for future development loom large in this city’s plan.

Two hours away, in a non-metropolitan area, the city of Albia also finalized its own comprehensive plan in late 2020, with assistance from its regional COG. Albia’s goals, including quality of life, housing and economic development, are very

similar to those of North Liberty’s, but with a slightly different focus. For instance, over a third of homes in Albia were built prior to 1939, so revitalization, affordability, and consistent code enforcement feature more prominently in its plan. Historic preservation of buildings and a large senior population are discussed as an opportunity to foster volunteerism in the community as well.

Comparing and contrasting these two communities’ comprehensive plans illustrates how the same document can be molded to fit the needs of places with different internal and external constraints, albeit with similar goals and aims. Using the Iowa Smart Planning Act’s guiding principles, both cities crafted plans unique to them that reflect their constituents’ vision for their future and focus their officials’ energy and decision making. This gets back to the core of the comprehensive planning process – it is a way for cities to think critically about their future, examine and analyze relevant data, and use that opportunity to implement policies that will positively impact the way their land is used, protected and preserved for future generations. ◀◀

For more information on comprehensive planning in Iowa, visit Iowa State University Extension & Outreach’s resources on [Planning, Zoning, and Land Use](#) online or attend an [Introduction to Planning and Zoning for Local Officials](#) workshop. The slate of regional spring workshops begins in early April and you can find more information about these workshops here: [www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/intro-planning-and-zoning-workshops](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/intro-planning-and-zoning-workshops).





# LET'S DO THE WORK

Whether it's planned service or a jobsite repair, we're here to help you do the work. Stop by your nearest Ziegler CAT location for more information on parts, service, and the latest technology.

LEARN MORE:  
[www.zieglercat.com](http://www.zieglercat.com)

ZIEGLER 

## » CITY SHOUT-OUTS

The League knows cities and their staff are doing some amazing things. This page features examples of these.



### Marshalltown Industrial Site Achieves Certification Status

Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) and Iowa Finance Authority Director Debi Durham joined utility partners and officials from **Marshalltown** to commemorate the certification of the Marshalltown Industrial Site through IEDA's Certified Sites Program. The site joins 22 other sites across Iowa which are currently designated as project-ready.

The Marshalltown Industrial Site consists of 95 acres, almost all of which are developable. The site is located less than four miles from four-lane U.S. Highway 30 for transportation access. Marshalltown's central location provides access to over 520,000 workforce-aged population. The site and community are well suited for industries such as advanced manufacturing, food production and animal food production.

For more information on Iowa's Certified Sites Program, visit [iowaeda.com/locations](http://iowaeda.com/locations).

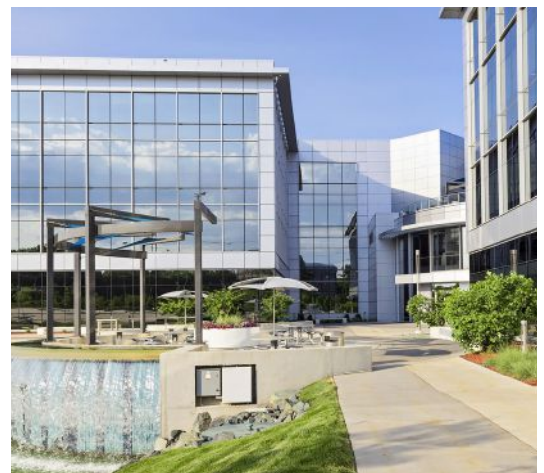


You could be in *Cityscape* magazine. Send us your latest successes, projects, promotions or new hires. Email us at [mbrsvcs@iowaleague.org](mailto:mbrsvcs@iowaleague.org).

olsson.com

Most see an office park.  
We see economic growth.

**ENGINEERING  
POSSIBILITIES.**



715-781-4680

New Richmond WI  
Mitch Campeau



2012 freightliner M2, 106, 109,000 miles, 300 HP Cummins 9 L, Allison, 18K front 23K rear, air ride rear, heat, air conditioning, P locks, P windows, P mirrors, cruise, heated windshield, Stainless steel 10 foot box, 11 foot Berkey road tamer Hydro turn plow, 9 foot wing, Swenson VBox spreader with Pre-wet, force America, hydraulic controls, pintle hitch, Municipal owned

**\$129,900**

715-781-4680

Great inventory of quality heavy duty equipment.  
Call today for more details and photos!

New Richmond WI  
Mitch Campeau



2009 Sterling LT 9511, cat C 13 350 hp, Allison auto, 169, 700 miles force America hydraulics, Dickey John spreader control, 12 foot poly Hydro turn plow, 11 foot wing, 15 foot stainless steel box, stainless steel sander, 12' Hydro turn under body scraper, municipal, owned and well-maintained

**\$79,900**





Iowa League of Cities  
500 SW 7th Street, Suite 101  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

# MLA

## MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

### MLA Part Three Begins in April

#### MLA Part Three Topics Include:

- ***Economic Development***  
Learn about the city's role in economic development and the tools used by city governments to retain and attract businesses and housing. This session is essential to understanding the critical role city officials have in maintaining and improving their local economy.
- ***Community Betterment***  
All want a healthy, clean and vibrant community, but it does not come easy. Hear how your city can proactively clean up properties and neighborhoods, improve its nuisance abatement efforts and boost community pride.
- ***Acting Strategically***  
Any successful city must think and act strategically by establishing priorities, setting goals and executing plans. This session will help attendees understand how to be strategic and discuss ways to work together.

#### Dates and Locations

**Thursday, April 4, 2024**  
**Ottumwa**

**Saturday, April 6, 2024**  
**Cedar Rapids**

**Thursday, April 11, 2024**  
**Algona**

**Saturday, April 13, 2024**  
**Harlan**

**Thursday, April 18, 2024**  
**Virtual**

**Saturday, April 20, 2024**  
**Ankeny**

**Register online at [www.iowaleague.org](http://www.iowaleague.org)**