

# LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

## 2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### 1 INCREASE COG ASSISTANCE TO \$1,000,000.

In 2016, the 17 councils of governments (COGs) collectively received an appropriation of \$200,000. This funds only \$11,674 per region.

### COGS HAVE AN IMPACT ON IOWA

For every **\$1 invested** by the state, COGs assist local governments by **managing \$1,420**.

### WHY AN INCREASE?

COGs provide valuable and unduplicated services to cities and counties, especially small communities without professional staff. Each COG provides programs and services based on the unique needs of its region and its communities. Now is the time to strengthen the partnership between the state of Iowa and COGs. By increasing the COG assistance from its current level of \$200,000 to \$1,000,000, COGs will be able to add to their service capacity. This is a low-cost means to assist cities and counties in the entire state.

### 2 CREATE AND FUND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT RURAL ECONOMIC VITALITY.

The state enterprise zone program expired a couple of years ago, eliminating the only state economic growth program that had rural economic growth as a primary focus. Rural communities and regions need assistance in boosting economic growth – which is why creating and funding a regional economic development grant program is imperative.



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### **3 INCREASE FUNDING FOR THE STATE HOUSING TRUST FUND.**

The State Housing Trust Fund is funded through the real estate transfer tax (\$3 million) and through a \$3 million standing appropriation out of the state's infrastructure fund. The number of local housing trust funds has increased, so each housing trust fund now receives less funding. Additional funding is necessary to adequately support the local housing trust funds.

### **4 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES**

Watershed Management Authorities help communities improve water quality and reduce flooding risks. All communities within a watershed are invited to join, creating a regional entity committed to working together to address important water issues. As these entities get up and running they need facilitation and planning assistance, tasks that councils of governments provide across Iowa. Councils of governments stand ready to assist communities seeking to create a Watershed Management Authority and support efforts to provide financial resources to help get WMAs operational.

### **5 PARTNERSHIP**

ICOG works closely with ISAC, the League of Cities, PDI, the Chamber Alliance and numerous state agencies, and it supports their legislative agendas.



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For more information, or to find the COG that serves your city, visit [www.iarcog.com](http://www.iarcog.com)