



Cedar County Extension Office
107 Cedar Street, Tipton, IA 52772

Tuesday, April 8, 2014
5:30 PM

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order – 5:30 PM**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Agenda Additions/Agenda Approval**
4. **Communications**
 - a. **Unscheduled**
5. **Consent Agenda (1 motion to approve all * items)**
 - a. ***Approve Minutes**
 - b. ***Approve Financial Reports**
6. **Unfinished/Old Business**
 - a. **Budget Fiscal Year 2014-2015**
 - b. **Performance Review for Office Manager/Marketing Assistant**
 - i. **COLA**
 - ii. **Merit raise for next year**
 - c. **Purchased QuickBooks**
 - d. **Other**
7. **New Business discussion and possible action on**
 - a. **Alliant Energy Branching Out Program**
 - b. **Other**
8. **Announcements**
 - a. **Board Boot Camp with Brian Perry of ISU- reschedule May 20th, 5:30 p.m. at the Extension Office, with Board meeting to follow**
9. **Reports**
 - a. **Executive Director**
 - i. **Questions on Director's Report**
 - b. **Office Manager/ Marketing Assistant**
 - i. **Attended Marketing Workshop on March 31st at Cedar Rapids Library**
 - ii. **Working on template for CCEDCO Newsletter**
 - c. **City Reports**
 - i. **Website- Please provide feedback on the categorized list of businesses in your city**
 - ii. **Report something unique that the other Board members would not know about your community- if time allows**

Adjourn

Please report CCEDCO Board meeting information to your councils, thank you.

Cedar County Economic Development Commission

March 11, 2014

5:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Pam Spear (Board Chair-Tipton), Greg Wagner (Vice Chair-Stanwood), Jon Bell (Cedar County Board of Supervisors), Betty Ellerhoff (Cedar County Board of Supervisors), Charlene Myers (Bennett), Pat Hasenbank (Clarence), Doug Beland (Durant), Adam Sandberg (Mechanicsville)

Staff Present: Shelise Parsley (Director) and Lisa Decker (Office Manager/Marketing Assistant)

Guests: Leanne Zearley (Alternate-Tipton), and Sue Hall (Reporter-Tipton Conservative)

Chair Pam Spear called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda Additions/Agenda Approval

- Betty Ellerhoff made a motion to approve the Agenda and Greg Wagner seconded. Motion carried.

Communications

- None

Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the minutes and financial reports from February 2014. A motion was made by Jon Bell, seconded by Doug Beland to approve minutes and financials. Motion carried.

Unfinished/Old Business

- The Office Manager presented three quotes on the cost of QuickBooks. Office Max is \$399, Latta Harris is \$280, and Amazon is \$249. It was proposed by the Executive Director to purchase QuickBooks from Latta Harris since they are a local company. Pat Hasenbank asked if payroll software could be added. The Executive Director said it could, but the cost would be more than what CCEDCO currently pays Latta Harris for payroll. A motion was made by Jon Bell to approve the purchase of QuickBooks and Pat Hasenbank seconded. Motion carried.

New Business

- The Executive Director proposed looking at dropping the CCEDCO 1-800 number for cost savings. The number of calls CCEDCO receives through it are on off hours and weekends. The office also receives a fair amount of hang-up calls each week. Charlene Myers commented most people use cell phones with calling plans. Betty Ellerhoff made a motion to drop the 1-800 number and Greg Wagner seconded. Motion carried.
- The FY2015 Budget was reviewed. The revenue will be increasing with Lowden and West Branch rejoining CCEDCO. Chair Pam Spear said she did not expect approval at this time, but wanted to know if there were any questions or concerns. Once the budget is passed, the Executive Director will be allowed to make financial decisions as needed. Software will probably be needed and printers will need to be replaced. The Executive Director would like to hire a company to research a 150-mile business attraction study. Jon Bell agreed once the budget is adopted, the numbers are in place for the Executive Director to make purchases. Chair Pam Spear is delighted the budget is close to balancing.
- The Executive Director would like to add five pages to the CCEDCO Website which would include a Photo of the Month Contest, Business Opportunities, Why Cedar County?, and Places to Live. A quote was received from F&B for the cost of the added pages. It will be a high priority to maintain these pages and keep them current. To keep the website fresh, changes should be made to website photos and pages every two years. Adam Sandberg asked if F&B provided any statistics from our website. The Executive Director said we have Google Analytics and it is a high priority to increase traffic.

- The Executive Director and Office Manager did job evaluations for the Office Manager's three-month review. The Office Manager's six month probationary period will be in June and her one-year anniversary in November. Chair Pam Spear would like to maybe see a merit raise for the Office Manager at her one-year anniversary and have an established pay scale. Jon Bell suggested putting \$22,000 in the budget for next year for the Office Manager's salary and working the details out later. The Office Manager/Office Assistant's performance review was completed in March.

Announcements

- The next Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8th. Clarence would like to host, but it may be a conflict with the location and guest Curt Eldred from the Clarence Telephone Company.
- There was some discussion about moving the monthly meeting to a different city, but some concern about a new location each month. It was decided to keep the meetings in Tipton and occasionally have a different city host a meeting.

Reports

Executive Director

- The Executive Director was contacted by Kim Johnson from Kirkwood Regional Welfare Development Coalition, and would like her to be on their Board. There are approximately three meetings totaling 20 hours this year.
- Webinar training for LOIS was completed on March 6th. This site is an asset to advertise vacant commercial buildings in Cedar County for new businesses.
- A master business list, by category, for each city, was given to each city representative for review and additions and/or corrections. Currently, CCEDCO website only provides a business list by town. This new business list, by category, will be given to F&B for the CCEDCO website, which will make each business stand out. The Executive Director stated more changes are also needed to each city's web page to make them more personal with individual flare. The Office Manager will send each city clerk their city's web page for suggestions.

Office Manager/Marketing Assistant

- The Office Manager is still familiarizing herself with the office, policies and practices, and the website. Updating the contact log and business listing is an ongoing effort. She completed webinars on LOIS and The Use of Photography to Increase Website traffic. Future projects are still developing a newsletter, more informative links to businesses on the website, and improvements to the website.

City Reports

- There were no city reports.

Adjourn

- With no further business, a motion was made by Pat Hasenbank and seconded by Greg Wagner to adjourn at 6:29 PM.

Board Chair

Preparer of Minutes

CCEDCO**Checking Account Summary for March 2014**

Checking Account Balance as of March 1, 2014 **\$ 3,697.57**

Income/Deposits

<u>Date</u>		<u>Description of Transaction</u>	<u>Amount</u>
03/04/2014	Deposit	Schroeder Restitution	\$ 60.00
03/07/2014	Transfer	From Interest Bearing Account	\$ 2,000.00
03/28/2014	Transfer	From Interest Bearing Account F&B Web Hosting - March \$16.95	\$ 16.95
Total Deposits			\$ 2,076.95

Expenses

02/27/2014	1515	Latta Harris	February IPERS - Decker **VOID**	\$ -
02/27/2014	1516	IPERS	Decker - February	\$ 234.36
03/03/2014	1517	F&B	March Web hosting \$16.95-Training \$35.00	\$ 51.95
03/03/2014	1518	Lisa Decker	Mileage - Durant TIF Meeting	\$ 20.16
03/05/2014	1519	Lisa Decker	Salary - 02/17-02/28	\$ 608.39
03/05/2014	1520	Latta Harris	Professional Fees - 2014 1st Quarter	\$ 150.00
03/07/2014	1521	Tipton Chamber of Commerce	Membership Dinner	\$ 40.00
03/07/2014	1523	VISA	February F&B Web hosting \$16.95; cedarcounty.org domain renewal \$59.98	\$ 76.93
03/10/2014	1524	Shelise Parsley	Mileage 02/18-03/10	\$ 140.34
03/12/2014	1525	EITA	Marketing Workshop - Decker	\$ 50.00
03/14/2014	1526	Windstream	February telephone & internet	\$ 162.54
03/17/2014	Auto w/d	IRS	Withholding - Decker	\$ 335.00
03/19/2014	1527	Lisa Decker	Salary 03/03-03/14	\$ 608.39
Total Expenses			\$ 2,478.06	

Checking Account Balance as of March 31, 2014 **\$ 3,296.46**

Outstanding Checks

03/07/2014	1522	The Workplace Learning Connection	2014 Funding	\$ 925.00
03/21/2014	1528	IPERS	Decker - March 2014	\$ 234.36
Total Outstanding Checks			\$ 1,159.36	

CCEDCO

Third Quarter Marketing Fund Summary

January 2014 - March 2014

Marketing Fund balance as of January 1, 2014 \$ 4,167.36

Income / Deposits

<u>Date</u>	Description of Transaction	Amount
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TOTAL DEPOSITS

Expenses

<u>Date</u>	Description of Transaction	Amount
01/23/2014	Transfer to Checking	
	F&B Web hosting - January	\$ 16.95
02/18/2014	Transfer to Checking	
	F&B Web hosting - February \$16.95; cedarcountry.org domain renewal \$59.98	\$ 76.93
03/28/2014	Transfer to Checking	
	F&B Web hosting - March	\$ 16.95

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 110.83

Marketing Fund Balance as of March 31, 2014 \$4,056.53

CCEDCO

Interest Bearing Account July 2, 2013 to March 31, 2014

2013-2014

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Transfer Out</u>	<u>Transfer In</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Beginning Balance 2013-2014 Fiscal Year				\$ 115,647.62
07/01/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (1,000.00)		\$ 114,647.62
07/03/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (3,000.00)		\$ 111,647.62
07/31/2013	Interest		\$ 47.49	\$ 111,695.11
08/06/2013	Board Dues (All)		\$ 80,000.00	\$ 191,695.11
08/19/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (2,000.00)		\$ 189,695.11
08/31/2013	Interest		\$ 75.57	\$ 189,770.68
09/19/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (2,000.00)		\$ 187,770.68
09/30/2013	Accrued Interest		\$ 77.66	\$ 187,848.34
10/07/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (2,000.00)		\$ 185,848.34
10/21/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (12,000.00)		\$ 173,848.34
10/31/2013	Interest		\$ 77.28	\$ 173,925.62
11/25/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (1,000.00)		\$ 172,925.62
11/30/2013	Interest		71.39	\$ 172,997.01
12/26/2013	Transfer to checking	\$ (2,000.00)		\$ 170,997.01
12/31/2013	Interest		\$ 73.03	\$ 171,070.04
01/13/2014	Transfer to checking	\$ (2,000.00)		\$ 169,070.04
01/30/2014	Transfer to checking	\$ (3,000.00)		\$ 166,070.04
01/31/2014	Interest		\$ 72.04	\$ 166,142.08
02/28/2014	Interest		\$ 63.73	\$ 166,205.81
03/07/2014	Transfer to checking	\$ (2,000.00)		\$ 164,205.81
03/31/2014	Interest		\$ 69.90	\$ 164,275.71
Current Balance as of March 31, 2014				\$ 164,275.71

CCEDCO

Financial Summary for March 2014

CURRENT ASSETS

Checking

Liberty Trust Checking Account	\$	3,296.46
Liberty Trust Marketing Account	\$	4,056.53

CD/Money Market

Liberty Trust, Interest Bearing Account	\$	164,275.71
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TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS \$ 171,628.70

NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Loans

Clarence Development (Original Loan 2/26/92 \$20,000.00)

0% Interest	\$	20,000.00	
2001 1st payment	\$	1,000.00	\$ 19,000.00
Jul-02	\$	1,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
Aug-03	\$	1,000.00	\$ 17,000.00
Oct-04	\$	1,250.00	\$ 15,750.00
Nov-05	\$	1,250.00	\$ 14,500.00
Jul-06	\$	1,250.00	\$ 13,250.00
Aug-07	\$	1,250.00	\$ 12,000.00
Jul-08	\$	1,250.00	\$ 10,750.00
Jul-09	\$	1,250.00	\$ 9,500.00
Jul-10	\$	1,250.00	\$ 8,250.00
Jul-11	\$	1,250.00	\$ 7,000.00
Jun-12	\$	1,250.00	\$ 5,750.00
Jun-13	\$	1,250.00	\$ 4,500.00

Clarence Development (Original Loan 7/01/93 \$15,000.00)

0% Interest	\$	15,000.00	
Jul-02 1st payment	\$	1,000.00	\$ 14,000.00
Aug-03	\$	1,000.00	\$ 13,000.00
Oct-04	\$	1,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Nov-05	\$	1,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
Jul-06	\$	1,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Aug-07	\$	1,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
Jul-08	\$	1,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Jul-09	\$	1,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Jul-10	\$	1,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Jul-11	\$	1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Jun-12	\$	1,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Jun-13	\$	1,000.00	\$ 3,000.00

TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS \$ 7,500.00

TOTAL ASSETS \$ 179,128.70



107 Cedar Street, Tipton, IA 52772
 Phone: 563-886-3761 | 1-800-737-5576
 www.growcedar.com

BUDGET

	2013-2014 BUDGET APPROVED	2013-2014 YTD ACTUALS	2013-2014 YEAR END PROJECTED	2014-2015 PROPOSED BUDGET
MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT	\$90,377	\$115,648	\$115,648	
OPERATING ACCOUNT BUDGET				
REVENUE:				
Dues	\$101,318	\$102,375	\$102,375	\$109,654
Clarence Loan	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250
Misc. Interest	\$500	\$560	\$800	\$800
Restitution	\$0	\$430	\$660	\$660
Total Operating Revenue:	\$104,068	\$105,615	\$106,085	\$113,364
EXPENSES:				
Labor:				
Director Salary (ISU contact)	\$42,553	\$30,851	\$41,210	\$44,681
Fringe Benefits P&S @ 37%	\$15,332	\$9,484	\$13,575	\$16,532
Travel and operating (ISU Contract)	\$3,500	\$1,857	\$3,500	\$3,500
Travel and operating CCEDCO	\$300	\$64	\$300	\$550
Office Admin/Marketing Assistant- Estimate	\$21,000	\$10,808	\$17,900	\$22,000
Withholdings (CCEDCO's share- Medicare/SS/IPERS)	\$3,330	\$2,090	\$2,968	\$3,648
Staff Health Ins.	\$4,200	\$721	\$721	\$0
Director moving expenses	\$1,300	\$1,299	\$1,300	\$0
				West Branch/Lowden
Labor subtotal:	\$91,515	\$57,175	\$81,474	\$90,911

	2013-2014 BUDGET APPROVED	2013-2014 YTD ACTUALS	2013-2014 YEAR END PROJECTED	2014-2015 PROPOSED BUDGET	
Office expense:					
Office expense/supplies	\$1,750	\$1,050	\$1,320	\$1,500	
Software	\$0	\$0	\$430	\$1,000	
Accounting (Latta Harris & Annual Audit)	\$3,200	\$2,758	\$3,200	\$3,200	Latta/Audit
Postage	\$200	\$49	\$100	\$200	
Equipment Upgrades/hardware	\$1,000	\$823	\$1,000	\$450	printers
Insurance Business Owner's liability & Workman's Comp	\$1,250	\$460	\$914	\$1,100	lowered/ISU contract
Phone/DSL	\$2,500	\$1,697	\$2,500	\$2,300	lowered \$30 per month
Newspaper/ads	\$500	\$349	\$500	\$500	
Office subtotal:	\$10,400	\$7,185	\$9,964	\$10,250	
Promotion:					
Conference/education/memberships	\$1,500	\$529	\$1,500	\$1,500	Heartland Class Expense- Office Manager
EICCD Refund 11/2012 moved to Marketing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,315	Moved to Marketing Fund
Business Retention and Attraction Project	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$900	Mailing to businesses with resource list with magnets
150 Mile Business Attraction	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	Research and outreach to companies with professional materials
Kirkwood/Workplace Learning Connection	\$925	\$0	\$925	\$925	
IWD Labor shed study to be completed in 2014-15 budget	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,500	Cost sharing with Tipton
Promotion subtotal:	\$2,425	\$529	\$2,425	\$12,140	
Total budget expenses:	\$104,340	\$64,889	\$93,863	\$113,301	
Total budget revenue:	\$104,068	\$105,615	\$106,085	\$113,364	
Total budget expenses:	\$104,340	\$64,889	\$93,863	\$113,301	
Net + or -	(\$272)	\$40,726	\$12,222	\$63	
AVAILABLE RESOURCES	\$90,105	\$156,374	\$127,870		
(Money Market and Operating Accounts)					

COUNTY MARKETING FUND:

	2013-2014 BUDGET APPROVED	2013-2014 YTD ACTUALS	2013-2014 YEAR END PROJECTED	2014-2015 PROPOSED BUDGET	
Beginning Balance	\$4,622	\$4,622	\$4,622	\$3,197	
REVENUE:					
EICCD Refund 11/2012	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,315	EICCD Refund 11/2012 moved from operating account
Total Revenue	<u>\$4,662</u>	<u>\$4,662</u>	<u>\$4,622</u>	<u>\$7,512</u>	
EXPENSES:					
Web hosting and Upgrades	\$925	\$211	\$925	\$700	
Regional Marketing Grant Match- Creative Corridor	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	5 Adding pages/tabs- stock photos Agreed to at BOD meeting 12/2011
Marketing Materials	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$700	Design of postcard and printing
Promotion items	\$500	\$288	\$500	\$0	
	<u>\$1,925</u>	<u>\$499</u>	<u>\$1,425</u>	<u>\$3,400</u>	
Total budget revenue:	<u>\$4,622</u>	<u>\$4,622</u>	<u>\$4,622</u>	<u>\$7,512</u>	
Total budget expenses:	<u>\$1,925</u>	<u>\$499</u>	<u>\$1,425</u>	<u>\$3,400</u>	
Net + or -	<u>\$2,697</u>	<u>\$4,123</u>	<u>\$3,197</u>	<u>\$4,112</u>	



Shelise Parsley, Executive Director

563-886-3761 office, 319-383-4412 cell, sparsley@iastate.edu

Lisa Decker, Office Manager/Marketing Assistant, lisaccedco@windstream.net

APRIL 2014

Marketing:

Website:

• **Business Directory Changes:**

- Proceeded on business directory; F&B is working on the project and anticipate the completion by Mid-Spring.
 - Continuing: The Office Manager/Marketing Assistant is working on linking businesses to the most recent website page vs. manta.com. This is time-consuming research, verifying if there is a web presence on tripadvisor.com, Facebook, and city websites. The Office Manager aims to have this completed by the end of April/beginning of May.

• **E-newsletter and News and information on website:**

- E-newsletter- The Marketing Assistant is gathering newsletter samples and working on what will best suit CCEDCO's needs and distribution methods. A draft should be available at the May Board meeting.

• **Business Opportunities Tab:**

- In the works

• **Photo of the Month Contest:**

- CCEDCO will approach the 4-H photographers at the Cedar County Fair to see if they would possibly supply photos for the photo contest, city pages, and homepage of the CCEDCO website.

• **LOIS (Location One Information System)**

- Attending an additional training in May
 - Working with ISU GIS and will approach Cedar County GIS specialist to provide assistance with the different aspects of the LOIS site to increase site value.
 - CCEDCO will be taking over Tipton's LOIS entries and will work with Abby Kisling to ensure the correct and recently updated information.
 - The Office Manager/Marketing Assistant spoke with Kirk Wenndt Realty about CCEDCO listing their commercial properties on LOIS. Other realtors were contacted about listing their buildings on the site.
 - More and new photos are needed of existing sites and buildings; which is on hold until the weather breaks.

• **Web Presence:**

- On-going: Including links to:
 - Improving metadata – checking with F&B on whether it is advantageous to add business names that have linked websites and established traffic.

• **Other:**

- Housing and Partnership page is on hold until budget is approved
- "Why Cedar County vs. The rest of the world." Have completed working documents that highlight local and regional economic development incentives, funding programs, State of Iowa incentives funding programs, training incentives, and tax information. The cities will be broken out on the local and regional incentives document with their incentives; AKA Downtown Revitalization Incentive Program (DRIP) in Tipton.

Business retention and expansion – BR&E:

- 80% of economic development comes from existing business.
- Working on creating a printable resources page for small businesses- gathering information with website links and working on putting together the document.
- Project: 150 mile- on hold until 2014 Fiscal year budget approval.
- Worked with the City of Tipton to provide information packet to a business that is interested in locating to Tipton.

Better communication between cities:

- Quarterly Clerk's Luncheon on March 18th had good attendance with 15 people. Durant was unable to attend. Larry Nagel of ECIA (COG) will be retiring this summer.

Keep Main Street strong:

- The Durant Chamber of Commerce Board and CCEDCO will be working on a punch card shop local campaign.
- Sent three requests for information to Cities that fit the specifications.
- Spoke with West Branch about Iowa's Best Bites program for the Hoover House.

Regional Alliances:

- Creative Corridor will be meeting on April 9th (postponed from March), Cedar County will be represented in the next commercial and the expenditure for this year will be \$500.
- The Director is working with Muscatine County, West Liberty, Wilton, and Quad Cities First to explore the possibility of creating a regional alliance. A formal meeting will take place in April.

Organization:

- Completion of the reporting and documents for the Director's ISU review- the official review will be in Ames on April 10th
- ISU in-service March 26-28th in Perry
- ISU computer (CCEDCO is not responsible for the computer) is starting to die. All files are being backed up as they are updated
- The Office Manager cancelled the 1-800 service and removed the information from the Website- we will keep looking for other places it may be listed and needs to be removed
- Training on CCEDCO is ongoing with employee
- Worked on Budget documents with history
- QuickBooks has been ordered
- Continuing to look for cost savings and areas to spend to achieve results
- Office Manager attended Marketing Workshop on finding your core audience and how to reach them
- The staff attended webinars:
 - The Use of Photography to Increase Sales
 - Economic Development through the League of Cities

Vacation and Sick Time:

Director- Available Vacation Time- 68.36 hours; Sick Time- 77.87 hours

Office Admin and Marketing Assistant- Available Vacation Time- 11.25 hours; Sick Time- 13.0 hours



Branching Out



A community grant program to plant trees and improve energy efficiency in Iowa

Branching Out is a nationally-recognized grant program where Alliant Energy, Trees Forever and your community work together to fund and implement tree-planting projects. Celebrating more than two decades of plantings, the program encourages energy efficiency, environmental awareness, and community stewardship in Iowa.

Planting trees provides more shade and cools the air, helping to lower energy costs and reduce peak electric demand. Environmentally, the trees planted represent an energy savings of over 14 million kilowatt-hours (kWh). That's the equivalent of removing 7,800 vehicles from Iowa roads each year.

Branching Out also helps diversify the tree population in the community and across the state. A diverse tree population is key to limiting the negative impacts of pests like the Emerald Ash Borer, and to making sure the investments made now provide value well into the future. A diverse urban forest is the best way to ensure resiliency when faced with threats such as the Emerald Ash Borer, or whatever the next major disease or pest threat might be.

Trees make a community beautiful. Apply for a *Branching Out* grant today!

[Download the *Branching Out* program flier](#)
 (/wcm/groups/wcm_internet/@int/@ae/documents/document/mdaw/mdmy/~edisp/032186.doc) [PDF]

[Download the *Branching Out* application](#)
 (/wcm/groups/wcm_internet/@int/@ae/documents/document/mdaw/mdmy/~edisp/032897.pdf) [PDF]

[Spring 2014 *Branching Out* grant recipients](#)
 (/wcm/groups/wcm_internet/@int/documents/document/mdaw/mdmx/~edisp/031042.pdf) [PDF]

Eligibility

Branching Out is offered exclusively to Iowa communities where Alliant Energy provides electric and/or natural gas service. The utility provides grants of \$1000 to \$10,000 for community-based, tree-planting projects - like parks, gateways, cemeteries, nature trails, libraries, nursing homes, schools and more. Trees Forever administers and facilitates the program, providing educational and planning support.

How to apply

To apply for a *Branching Out* grant, complete an [application form](#)
 (/wcm/groups/wcm_internet/@int/documents/document/mdaw/mdi2/~edisp/026182.pdf) and submit a site plan and proposal letter that addresses ten key areas (see proposal letter guidelines on the application). The process is competitive and preference is given to applicants that meet all guidelines.

Grant cycle and deadlines

Grants are awarded two times per year, to coincide with the spring and fall planting seasons. Proposal letters and applications are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the year, but are considered only in the next

grant-making cycle (spring or fall). Your community may apply and receive funding for multiple projects in a single grant cycle.

Grant Cycle	Request Deadline	Grants Announced	Funding Awarded
Spring	November 1	January 15	March 1-31
Fall	June 1	August 15	September 1-30

Send completed applications, proposal letters and site plans to:

Trees Forever
c/o Branching Out
770 7th Avenue
Marion, Iowa 52302

The Trees Forever staff is available to help you complete applications, develop a planting project, and plan a planting event. If you have questions, please call 1-800-369-1269, ext. 110.

Apply today! (/wcm/groups/wcm_internet/@int/documents/document/mdaw/mdi2/~edisp/026182.pdf) We look forward to working with you. Together, we can make Iowa communities more beautiful and energy efficient.

Comments from across the state

Branching Out has received national recognition for its success in promoting urban and rural tree planting. The program has been honored by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the National Arbor Day Foundation, Renew America and the National Awards Council for Environmental Sustainability.

Since the start of the Branching Out program in 1989, more than 1.4 million trees and seedlings have been planted as part of more than 2,400 Iowa projects by a volunteer force exceeding 125,000 people.

Here is what a few community leaders in Iowa have to say about *Branching Out*.

CLINTON

"Trees forever has for years, partnered with the City of Clinton in our projects which have enhanced our way of life in one way or another. Thanks to Trees Forever and Alliant Energy for doing what you do best, making Clinton more beautiful."

-LaMetta K. Wynn, Mayor, City of Clinton

DYERSVILLE

"On behalf of the directors of the Dyersville Trees Forever Committee, I would like to thank Alliant Energy for the grant we have received. Many trees will be planted in our community, thanks to your generosity."

-David A. Clemen, Dyersville Trees Forever Committee

CLARINDA

"Thank you for the grant award and we look forward to continuing working with Trees Forever and Alliant Energy in the near future."

-Jean Negly, Chairperson, Clarinda Trees Forever Committee.

A word from Alliant Energy and Trees Forever

"By increasing the diversity of the tree populations in Iowa, we're helping make sure the investment in these natural energy efficiency tools lasts a long time. Energy efficiency is important to us and we believe our investment in tree planting and education will help our customers and communities."

Doug Kopp, President of Alliant Energy's Iowa utility

"Every Branching Out project focuses on long-term tree care with a special emphasis on energy efficiency and conservation. We are pleased to continue a long-term partnership with Alliant Energy in a combined effort to educate Iowans on the importance of trees, and improve our environment one community at a time."

-Shannon Ramsay, president and CEO of Trees Forever

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