

# The Update



**March / April 2023**

Serving the Counties of Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Montgomery, Mills, Page, Pottawattamie, and Shelby

## Transit (SWITA) Special Edition

### SWITA Gets SW Iowans Where They Need to Go



Southwest Iowa Transit Agency (SWITA) is Southwest Iowa's public transportation system. Transportation is available for all residents in Cass, Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Montgomery, Page, Pottawattamie and Shelby counties. Anyone can ride SWITA, there are no age or income requirements.

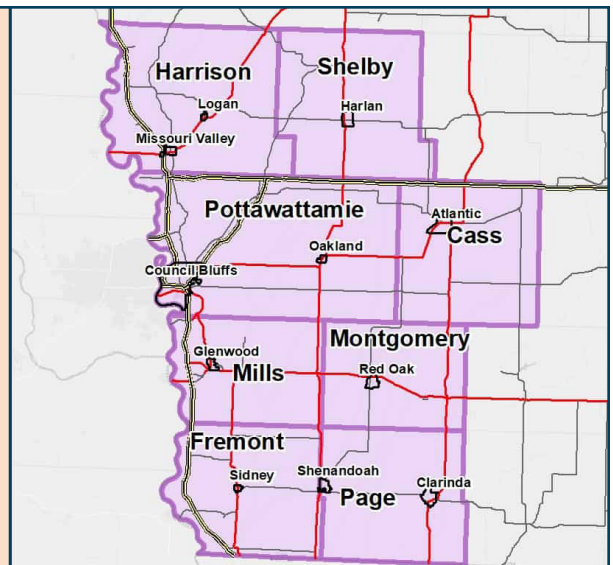
SWITA is Iowa's largest rural public transit agency and has continued to grow since the Covid Pandemic, while all other Iowa transit agencies have seen declining ridership. In fiscal year 2022, SWITA had 480,229 rides which is an increase from FY21 at 377,547 rides and FY20 at 305,932 rides. Workforce ridership is one specific area of growth for SWITA and ridership nearly doubled from FY20 at 43,363 rides to FY22 at 84,524 rides.

SWITA offers Taxi Services, Medical Transportation, Student Transportation (tripper service), Workforce Transportation, Summer Fun Bus, and Special Trips.



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## Taxi Services

Ever wish you could take a taxi or ride share, but you live in a small town and think there are no services near you? With SWITA taxi services in Southwest Iowa, there is a taxi near you — and it's convenient, safe and very affordable.

Public transportation should be safe, convenient and affordable. We make every effort to keep our bus fares, taxi fares and special transportation fares as low as possible. When you add up the cost of your time, gas and vehicle wear and tear, most of our bus fares and other ride rates are cheaper than driving. All SWITA services are open to the general public, including persons with disabilities.

To schedule a ride, call 712-254-2518 or 1-800-842-8065. Taxi tickets for Atlantic may be picked up at SWITA office, 1501 S.W. 7th Street, Atlantic, IA 50022. For other cities, the tickets will be mailed to you, but we will notify the driver immediately if you need to ride before the tickets arrive and your ride will be covered by your tickets. Drivers also accept cash or check at the vehicle.

### Taxi Rates:

**\$2.50 per trip for the general public**

**\$2.00 per trip for elderly riders (over 60)\*\***

**\*\*Connections Area Agency on Aging form must be filled out to receive discounted elderly fare\*\***

### Taxi Service is available through SWITA in the following towns:

**Atlantic — 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday – Saturday; Sundays 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

**Glenwood — 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday – Friday**

**Harlan — 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday – Friday**

**Missouri Valley — 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday – Friday**

**Red Oak — 7:30 a.m. to Noon and 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday**

**Shenandoah — 8:30 a.m. to Noon and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Friday**

### For additional taxi service, please contact the sub provider in your area:

**Clarinda: Clarinda Area Volunteers 712-542-7950**

**Fremont County: Faith in Action 712-313-0131**





### Medical Transportation



There are many reasons why you might want to have someone else drive to a medical appointment. We offer medical transportation services for seniors, dependents, clients, or anyone else who needs a safe, reliable ride to and from a medical appointment. People with disabilities and mobility issues welcome. At SWITA, there's always a place for you.

SWITA vehicles are equipped with wheelchair accessibility and one personal care attendant rides free. In order to ensure appropriate accommodation is made, please let

your dispatcher know when scheduling a ride.

No more missing important medical appointments because of unreliable transportation. We offer flexible scheduling and very affordable rates. Medical transportation is available at a rate of \$30 per hour. SWITA does not bill private insurance, but we do accept rides provided through Medicaid/Title



19 booked through the provider. SWITA operates vehicles early and late, pending vehicle and driver availability. Rides must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Visit [www.swita.com](http://www.swita.com) or call SWITA at 712-243-2518 or 1-800-842-8065 for more information or to schedule your ride. Office hours are Monday - Friday 6 a.m. - 5 p.m.

## Student Transportation (Tripper Service)

There are big gaps in school bus services in Southwest Iowa because many schools do not run in-town buses. That makes it hard for many families to get their kids to school. SWITA provides an option when there are no school bus routes that serve you. Your child can get safe, reliable and affordable transportation to and from preschool or school. Student Transportation is flexible and includes scheduled early dismissal days and weather-related schedule changes. The cost is \$1.50 per ride per child. Registration forms are accepted at any time and new registrations will be able to start riding the following Monday after forms and payments are submitted before noon on Friday's.

### List of schools/communities served:

Atlantic K-12  
Atlantic Pre-Schools  
Glenwood K-12  
Glenwood Pre-Schools  
Harlan K-12  
Harlan Little Cyclones Pre-School  
Shelby County Catholic School  
Red Oak K-12  
Red Oak Pre-School



To register your child for Student Transportation, locate our SWITA Student Transportation Registration Form at [www.swita.com](http://www.swita.com) under student transportation services (you can use the register here link to access the form). You may submit the form via email to [swita@swipco.org](mailto:swita@swipco.org), mail it, or bring it to our office. You can pay for your student's rides online, or you can drop off or mail payment to SWITA, 1501 S.W. 7th Street, Atlantic, IA 50022.

Don't see your child's school on the list, or have other questions? Email us at [swita@swipco.org](mailto:swita@swipco.org) or call 712-243-2518 or 1-800-842-8065. Visit [www.swita.com](http://www.swita.com) for more information.





### Workforce Transportation

SWITA provided transportation to the OSI plant in Oakland from Atlantic, Omaha, and Council bluffs seven days a week. SWITA also provides transportation Monday through Friday from Omaha and Council Bluffs to the Monogram plant in Harlan. These routes are tailored to the schedules of the plants and are open to the public. Departure and arrival times and addresses are as follows:

#### Monogram Foods (Harlan Routes): \$4.00 each way

##### Depart Omaha



- 12:30pm - ODM, 2705 N 20th, Omaha
- 1:30pm - OPS, 3230 Burt St, Omaha
- 10:00pm - 2701 Edward Babe Gomez Ave, Omaha

##### Arrive Harlan

- 3:15pm - Monogram, 1231 870th, Harlan
- 3:15pm - Monogram, 1231 870th, Harlan
- 11:00pm - Monogram, 1231 870th, Harlan

##### Depart Harlan



- 1:00am - Monogram, 1231 870th, Harlan
- 1:00am - Monogram, 1231 870th, Harlan
- 6:00am - Monogram, 1231 870th, Harlan

##### Arrive Omaha

- 2:00am - OPS, 3230 Burt St, Omaha
- 2:10am - ODM, 2705 N 20th, Omaha
- 7:00am - 2701 Edward Babe Gomez Ave, Omaha

#### OSI (Oakland Routes): \$3.50 each way

##### Depart Atlantic



- 5:15am - Library, 507 Poplar, Atlantic
- 2:00pm - Library, 507 Poplar, Atlantic

##### Arrive Oakland

- 6:00am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 2:45pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland

##### Depart Oakland



- 4:00pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 12:00am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland

##### Arrive Atlantic

- 4:45pm - Library, 507 Poplar, Atlantic
- 12:45am - Library, 507 Poplar Atlantic

##### Depart Omaha/Council Bluffs



- 4:15am - 4725 S 25th St, Omaha
- 1:50pm - 4725 S 25th St, Omaha
- 2:00pm - 409 S 8th St, Council Bluffs
- 9:20pm - 900 9th Ave, Council Bluffs
- 9:30pm - 2701 Edward Babe Gomez Ave, Omaha

##### Arrive Oakland

- 5:00am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 3:15pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 3:15pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 10:00pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 10:00pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland

##### Depart Oakland



- 4:00pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 4:00pm - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 1:00am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 1:00am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 6:30am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland
- 6:30am - OSI, 21876 US 59, Oakland

##### Arrive Omaha/Council Bluffs

- 4:30pm - 4725 S 25th St, Omaha
- 5:00pm - 409 S 8th St, Council Bluffs
- 1:45am - 409 S 8th St, Council Bluffs
- 2:00am - 4725 S 25th St, Omaha
- 7:00am - 900 9th Ave, Council Bluffs
- 7:15am - 2701 Edward Babe Gomez Ave, Omaha

### CDS Van Pool:

A vanpool option is available for individuals living in or around Red Oak, Iowa going to work in Harlan, Iowa rate is \$120.00 per rider per month and this transportation is centered around a Monday – Friday 8 am to 5 pm work day.

For more information on any of our work routes, please contact the SWITA office at 712-243-2518 or 1-800-842-8065.



### Summer Fun Bus

SWITA offers a safe, reliable, and affordable way to get your student to their summer activities. SWITA'S summer bus service will take your K-12 child to tennis, swimming pool, Vacation Bible School, summer camp activities, band lessons, golf, the library, grandma's house, or anywhere else you pre-approve them to go (within two miles of city limits).

Summer Fun Bus is available in Atlantic, Glenwood, Harlan, Red Oak, and Shenandoah. Rides are available Monday through Friday 7am to 5pm in Atlantic and 8am to 5pm in Glenwood, Harlan, Red Oak, and Shenandoah. Youth (18 and under) Summer Fun Bus rate is \$1 each way or \$40 for an unlimited summer pass.

To register for Summer Fun Bus, visit <https://www.swita.com/services/summer-fun-bus/> and complete the Summer Fun Bus Registration Form. You may submit the form via email to [swita@swipco.org](mailto:swita@swipco.org), print it out and mail it, or bring it to our office. You can pay for your student's rides online, or you can drop off or mail payment to SWITA, 1501 S.W. 7th Street, Atlantic, IA 50022.



# SWITA SUMMER FUN BUS

Atlantic 7am-5pm  
Glenwood 8am-5pm  
Harlan 8am-5pm  
Red Oak 8am-5pm  
Shenandoah 8am-5pm

**\$1 each way or  
\$40 for an unlimited  
summer pass**

**Monday - Friday  
K-12 Students**

**WE PROVIDE RIDES TO:**

Summer camps & activities, Vacation Bible School, Grandma's house, Friend's house, Swimming pool, Tennis lessons, Piano lessons... and more!



**CALL  
712-243-2518 OR  
1-800-842-8065**

**SPACE IS  
LIMITED**

SWIPCO is an equal opportunity Provider, Employer, and Lender.



### Special Trips

SWITA also offers Special Trips. Sometimes, you just need a ride there. Often, that means riding a taxi within city limits or signing up for one of our work routes. But what if you live in Shenandoah and need to get to an event in Council Bluffs? Leaving from Atlantic and need a ride to the airport in Omaha? That's where our special trips come in.



SWITA has transported individuals over the last year for honor flight, IWCC band students to play at a celebration for honor flight members, a group traveling to Rome for a pilgrimage, and many other special trips. Some special trips are considered charter trips, and must follow some special rules, so it's best to contact the office early to discuss a special trip request.

Subject to driver and bus availability, cost is \$40 per hour for non-medical transportation, \$55 per hour for charter trips, and \$30 per hour for medical trips. Trips are billed each way for every passenger.

Schedule a ride online or call our office at 712-243-2518 or 1-800-842-8065 Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. to get started.



### Birthdays & Anniversaries



**Cindy Johnson**  
Transit Scheduler I  
1 Year of Service - March

### Southwest Iowa Transit Agency does not run on the following holidays:

- January 1 – New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- July 4 – Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- December 25 – Christmas Day

# SWITA Staff Make It Happen

SWITA employs 71 skilled drivers. It takes a strong team to provide the level of service that our region expects, and the skill and dedication of our office staff and drivers is what makes SWITA successful as Iowa's largest rural public transit agency.



**Mark Lander**, Transit Director, has been with SWITA for 9 years. Mark is directly responsible for the day-to-day operations of the transit system. He supervises all transportation staff and assures that all agency, state, and federal policies are followed. Mark also coordinates the programming requirements of the transit system, prepares reports for the Policy Board and Executive Director, funding sources, contractors, etc., and coordinates vehicle replacement.

**Kristen Templeton**, Transit Coordinator, has been with SWITA for 9 years. Kristen is directly responsible for coordinating transit services by ensuring that driver schedules and vehicles are coordinated to meet client needs, and overall assisting the Transit Director with daily operations of the transit system. She oversees the dispatch of vehicles and driver assignments, maintains record of all trips, vehicles, and drivers, ensures that agency, state, and federal policies are followed, and supervises and assigns duties to scheduler staff.



**Christy Pederson**, Transit Reporting Coordinator, has been with SWITA for 16 years. Christy is directly responsible for recording driver log sheets into the Dispatch Software for billing, payroll and tracking purposes. She performs driver trip verifications and maintains records within Dispatch Software. Christy produces driver payroll and transit reports and performs DOT statistical reporting. She completes bank deposits, and assists with accident reports and files.





**Tracy Clark**  
Transit Scheduler III  
4 years at SWITA



**Kersten Abild**  
Transit Scheduler II  
2 years at SWITA



**Cindy Johnson**  
Transit Scheduler I  
1 year at SWITA

**SWITA Transit scheduler staff** is responsible for answering transit phones and radios and relaying important information to the appropriate sources. Schedulers provide callers information, assistance, and/or transfer calls to appropriate personnel. They dispatch rider information to appropriate drivers, relay client trip information to transit coordinator and/or record client trip information in an appropriate place, and receive, sort and distribute drivers' paperwork. Without the schedulers, SWITA rides would not happen timely and people would not be able to get where they need to go safely.

**Mark Hansen**, Fleet Mechanic, has been with SWITA for 15 years. Mark is directly responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of all SWIPCO/SWITA vehicles. He makes sure that our buses make it on the road safely and develops/implements a safety inspection system in compliance with all local, state, and federal requirements. He performs all repairs and preventive maintenance that can be done in the SWIPCO shop and arranges/oversees repairs that must be completed outside of the shop.




**Michael Ballinger**, Maintenance Assistant, has been with SWITA for 3 years. Mike implements vehicle cleaning and sanitation protocols for all SWITA and SWIPCO vehicles. Mike performs maintenance on SWITA / SWIPCO buildings and grounds, shuttles vehicles as necessary, and acts as a fill in driver as needed. He also performs regular maintenance and repairs to agency facilities and grounds.

### SWITA by the Numbers

## ***SWITA***

CAPABILITIES AS OF  
END OF FY22





### VEHICLES

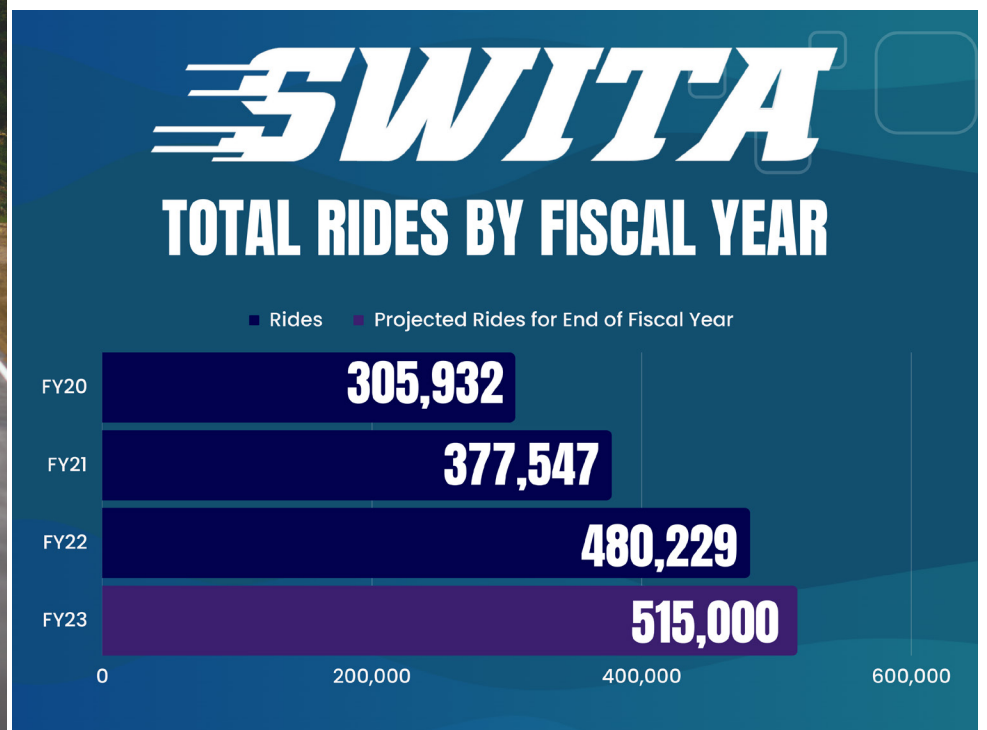
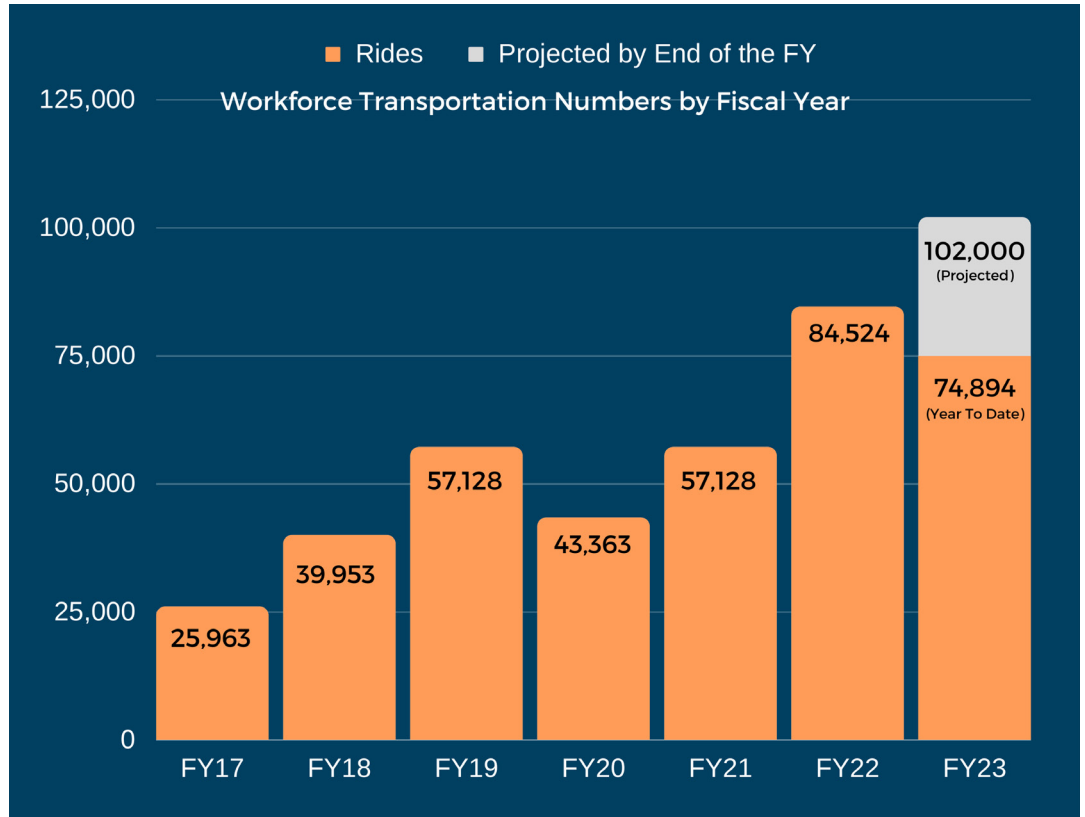
- \*110 Total Vehicles
- 65 Light Duty Buses
- 30 Mini Vans
- 4 Sedans
- 4 Medium Duty Buses
- 2 SUV's
- 1 Passenger Van
- 4 STS Light Duty Buses

### DRIVERS

74 Drivers









# From the Desk of the Executive Director...

**John McCurdy**  
Executive Director

This is the third and final installment of our special newsletter series on the various departments at SWIPCO. SWITA is by far the biggest component of SWIPCO in terms of employees, physical infrastructure, and the number of clients directly served. Once you notice a SWITA bus in our region, you begin to realize they are everywhere! That's the way we want it to be. Unfortunately, across the country rural areas have major issues with transportation accessibility. Our goal with SWITA is to meet our clients where they are and get them where they need to go—anything from a medical appointment to going to the swimming pool.

Everything we do at SWIPCO is focused on the people of Southwest Iowa, who primarily live in small towns. Our goal, whether it is a water project, housing rehab program, or by providing transportation is to ensure that if someone wants to live in a town of 200 or 2,000, they have the same access to services as our city cousins. That being said, there are certain inefficiencies we encounter because of the rural nature of our area. For example, to provide the level of transit service that we do we regularly drive more than 2 million miles a year—which is hard on vehicles and drivers, but it's what we need to do to serve our community.

Even though we are the largest rural public transit provider in the state of Iowa, we know that there are still plenty of folks who don't think that they can access our service—and there are many who don't know about it at all. It is our hope that through publications like this, and your help spreading the word, people realize that SWITA is here to help all our neighbors in Southwest Iowa. If you have a transportation need, even if it isn't something covered in this newsletter, give us a call and we'd be happy to explore whether it is something that we can help with!

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**Kersten Abild**  
Transit Scheduler II  
2 Year sof Service - April



**John McCurdy**  
Executive Director  
10 Years of Service - April



**Mark Lander**  
Transit Director  
Birthday Month April



**Aaron Koontz**  
Grant Specialist I  
Birthday Month April



**Teresa Wright**  
Finance Specialist  
Birthday Month April



## SWIPCO STAFF

**John McCurdy, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Mark Lander**  
Transit Director

**Erin Hudson**  
Community Development Director

**Karen Mauer**  
Administrative Services Director

**Rhonda Brown**  
Finance Manager

**Daurine Petersen**  
Human Resources Coordinator

**Kersten Abild**  
Transit Scheduler II

**Ann Anstey**  
Grants Specialist II

**Mary Auten**  
Grants Specialist I

**Michael Ballinger**  
Maintenance Assistant

**Dani Briggs**  
Lead Planner

**Tracy Clark**  
Transit Scheduler III

**Tammy DeBord**  
Grants Specialist III

**Mark Hansen**  
Fleet Mechanic

**Sandy Hansen**  
Grants Specialist III

**Ashley Hayes**  
Disaster Recovery Coordinator

**Dee Holtz**  
Administrative Assistant

**Mindy Jensen**  
Communications Coordinator

**Cindy Johnson**  
Transit Scheduler I

**Aaron Koontz**  
Grants Specialist I

**Matthew Lee**  
Building Inspector II

**Christy Pederson**  
Transit Reporting Coordinator

**Nicole Rhodes**  
Grants Specialist II

**Phil Richter**  
Building Inspector I

**Kristen Templeton**  
Transit Coordinator

**Teresa Wright**  
Finance Specialist

Southwest Iowa Planning Council  
1501 S.W. 7th Street  
Atlantic, IA 50022-2206

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**SWIPCO**  
A Bright Look Ahead™

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March / April 2023

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