



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SWIPCO receives 2024 Innovative Project Award from ICOG

SWIPCO honored for work on Harvest Hills development in Woodbine.

DES MOINES – Southwest Iowa Planning Council (SWIPCO) has been awarded the 2024 Innovative Project Award from the Iowa Association of Councils of Governments (ICOG) for work with the City of Woodbine on the Harvest Hills Development. The award was accepted at the ICOG Staff Retreat in Des Moines.

SWIPCO worked with the City of Woodbine to apply for and obtain a Community Development Block Grant from disaster recovery funds following the 2019 Missouri River floods to create an affordable housing project. SWIPCO worked with the city and NuStyle Development to administer funds and help coordinate the project to construct 40 new homes and the supporting infrastructure in the Harvest Hills subdivision located on the west edge of Woodbine.

SWIPCO's Ashley Hayes, Erin Hudson, Aaron Koontz, Mary Auten, and Barb Boggs had hands on the project. SWIPCO's team has filled many roles along the way after helping obtain the initial grant funding. Work has included helping 2019 flood displaced and low to moderate income residents match with the new housing opportunities, assuring that federal standards and guidelines are followed, coordinating planning, and assuring proper paperwork has been filed.

The infrastructure involved with this project was significant with a new water tower and solar power grid included to meet Iowa Green Streets energy standards. The full scope of the project has been a \$20,772,189 undertaking and was entirely funded through CDBG-Disaster Recovery funds and the developer's financing.

SWIPCO Disaster Recovery Coordinator Ashley Hayes said, "I'm proud of our team here at SWIPCO and how quickly we all adapt to the ebbs and flows of grant work at this scale. The rapport each one of us has developed with each of the developer's team members and with the City of Woodbine, as well as IEDA, has been very helpful throughout this project and others as well. We are excited for the city to continue to thrive with this additional housing and infrastructure and it's great to know there are



individuals and developers that are willing to invest in our rural communities. It's exciting to know that our work as a team has been recognized in this way.”

These funds are a rare opportunity for small, rural communities to bring new residents in without the need for large matching funds. Cities involved in these types of projects work in tandem with SWIPCO to manage the grant and project, ultimately realizing a big impact that may not otherwise be possible.

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