

WHY COUNTIES MATTER!



ISAC
Iowa State Association of Counties

NACO
National Association of Counties

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Transportation and infrastructure are critical components that support the economies of our counties and improve the standard of living for all Iowans. Of the nearly 115,000 miles of public roads in Iowa, almost 90,000 miles are in the secondary roads system. Counties also own around 80% of Iowa's bridges. It doesn't stop there, Iowa counties are involved in transit, waste management, airports and more.

Services include:

- Roads
- Bridges
- Transit
- Airports
- Construction of public facilities
- Water and sewage systems
- Solid waste management
- Utilities like gas and electricity

COUNTIES ARE INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION OF

4%

of public airports

COUNTIES INVEST

\$266 Million

in construction of public facilities annually

COUNTIES OWN

19,248

bridges

IOWA COUNTIES INVEST

\$690 Million

IN BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE AND MAINTAINING AND OPERATING PUBLIC WORKS ANNUALLY

COUNTIES OWN AND MAINTAIN

79%

of Iowa's roads

COUNTIES ARE INVOLVED IN

17%

of public transit systems

COUNTIES INVEST

\$15 Million

in sewage and solid waste management annually

HEALTHCARE

Counties create support systems to keep you healthy from the time you are born until the time you grow old. Many counties operate hospitals and health facilities that provide clinical services, cancer and cardiac care, mental health and substance abuse services, and emergency and trauma care. County care facilities offer restorative care and rehabilitation, and promote quality of life and wellness to the elderly. From preventative measures like administering flu shots to educating the public with health information, county health departments ensure the everyday health of their residents. Including the services below, counties also provide services not covered by Medicaid or other federal funding.

Services Include:

- Hospitals
- Care facilities
- Behavioral and mental healthcare
- Immunizations
- Testing services
- Indigent healthcare
- Health code inspections
- Health clinics
- Public health

IOWA COUNTIES SUPPORT

46 HOSPITALS WITH A
TOTAL OF **1,393** BEDS
THAT SERVE MORE THAN
99,054 PATIENT DAYS

COUNTIES provide
home and community
based services to
Iowa's aging and
disability populations
in over **70%** of local
health departments.

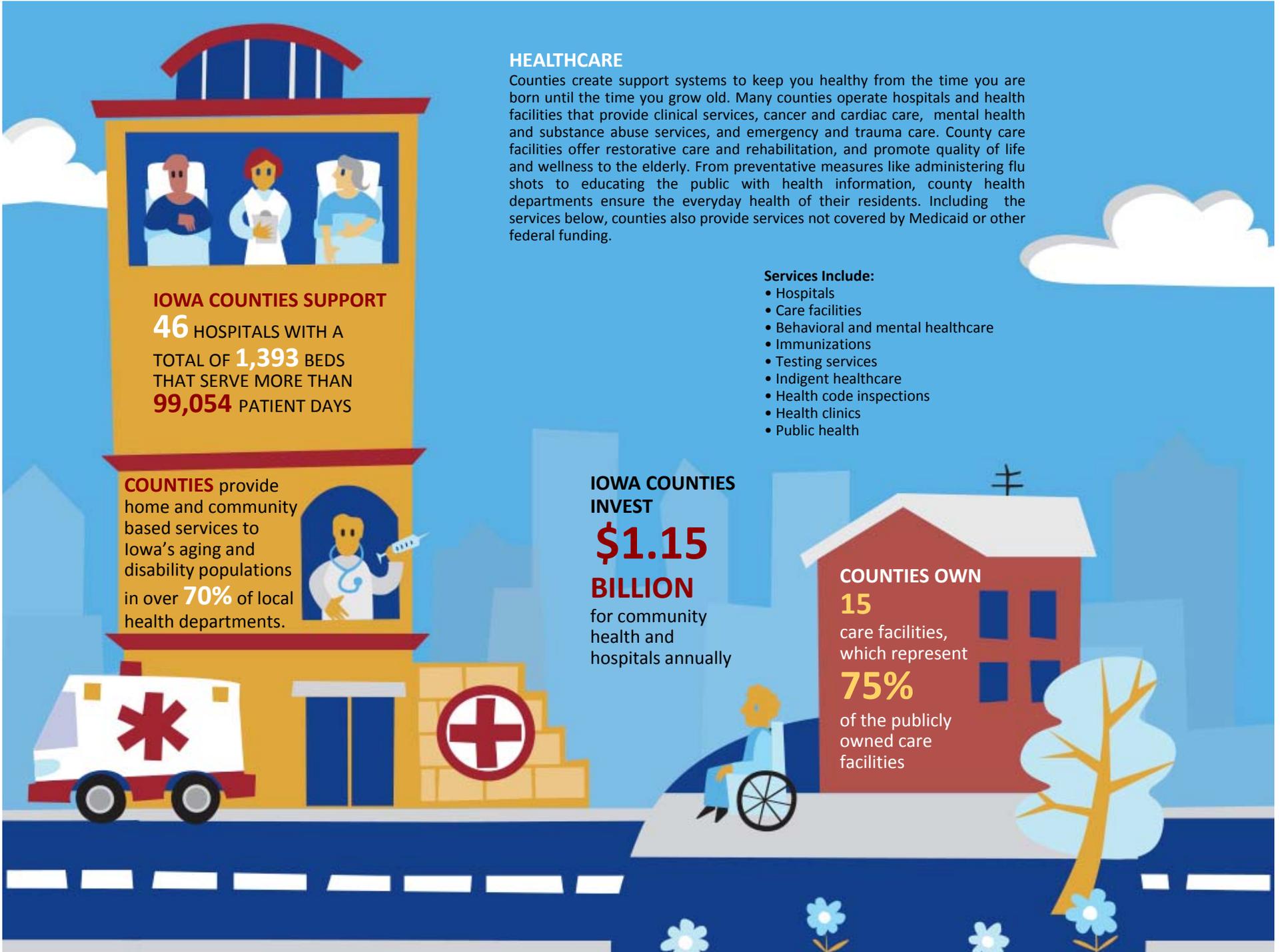
IOWA COUNTIES INVEST

**\$1.15
BILLION**

for community
health and
hospitals annually

COUNTIES OWN

15
care facilities,
which represent
75%
of the publicly
owned care
facilities



COUNTIES IN IOWA INVEST
\$405 MILLION

TOTAL in justice and public safety services annually, of which ...

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Counties keep communities safe by providing law enforcement and promoting crime prevention. From patrolling and policing the streets, to operating and maintaining county jails, to serving as the arm of the county courts, county sheriffs are the linchpin of the criminal justice system.

Criminal justice components Include:

- Sheriffs offices
- County court systems
- Jails and correctional facilities
- Juvenile detention and justice services
- County attorneys
- Coroners and medical examiners

THERE ARE
99
sheriffs offices
and
94
jails

\$157 MILLION
IS SPENT ON
SHERIFFS
OFFICES

\$181 MILLION
IS SPENT ON
CORRECTIONAL
FACILITIES

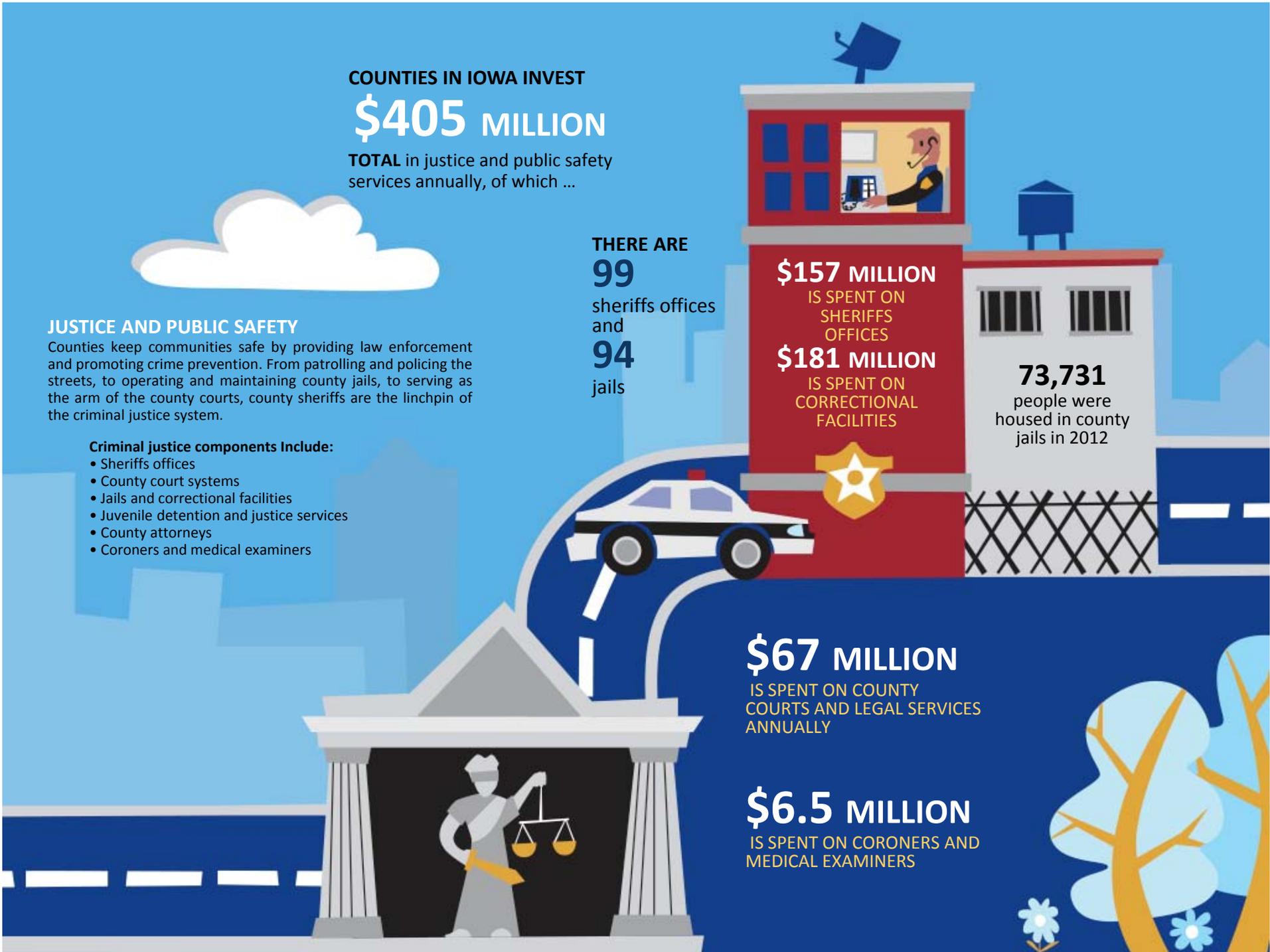
73,731
people were
housed in county
jails in 2012

\$67 MILLION

IS SPENT ON COUNTY
COURTS AND LEGAL SERVICES
ANNUALLY

\$6.5 MILLION

IS SPENT ON CORONERS AND
MEDICAL EXAMINERS



COUNTY MANAGEMENT

Counties provide vital services to all Iowans. Each county office provides many services to ensure safe, healthy and resilient communities for Iowa residents. Many services require the involvement of multiple offices. For instance, assessors, auditors, recorders and treasurers offices all play important roles in real estate transactions.

Some services Include:

- Real estate mapping, property valuation – Assessor
- Claims /warrants, elections, tax levies – Auditor
- Child care, mental health - Community Services
- Camping, hunting, fishing, parks – Conservation
- Disaster planning/response - Emergency Management
- Bridge construction /maintenance – Engineer
- Food permits, solid waste – Environmental Health
- County websites, cybersecurity, training – IT
- Building permits, subdividing – Planning and Zoning
- Health programs, public awareness – Public Health
- Birth certificates, marriage licenses – Recorder
- Jail administration, public safety – Sheriff
- Drivers licenses, vehicle titles /registrations – Treasurer

Every TWO
Years ...

COUNTIES FUND AND
OVERSEE MORE THAN
1,800
polling places

THERE ARE
868
elected county officials;
377
are county supervisors

AND COORDINATE
MORE THAN
9,000
poll workers

ANNUALLY, COUNTIES INVEST

\$15.5 MILLION

into economic
development

Iowa's county conservation system hosts
24 million visitors spending over
\$850 million annually

IOWA COUNTIES INVEST

\$48 MILLION

to build and maintain parks and
recreational facilities a year



ISAC's CORE PRINCIPLES



Empower county leaders with new skills, resources and ideas



Assist counties with first-class, cost-effective services



Provide timely, informative and value-added data, knowledge and programs



Promote sound public policies that advance the interests of counties



Exercise sound stewardship and management of ISAC's financial, intellectual, and human resources



Enhance the public's understanding of county government

ISAC's CORE FUNCTIONS



Legislative, regulatory, and judicial representation in the state's capital



Research



Education and technical assistance



Cost saving programs



Solutions for critical problems



Innovative programs that meet future county needs

THE DIVERSITY OF IOWA'S COUNTIES

No two counties are exactly the same. Counties are one of America's oldest forms of government, dating back to 1634 when the first county governments were formed in Virginia. Iowa's first two counties, Des Moines and Dubuque, were formed in 1834 when Iowa was still part of the Michigan Territory. Following reformations of the territories, Iowa became a state consisting of 46 counties in 1846. The last county, Humboldt, was created and Iowa's current constitution were adopted in 1857.

Counties across the country are diverse in the way they are structured and how they deliver services to the communities because the states decided the roles and responsibilities of the counties. The citizen's in Iowa voted by a large majority in 1978 to approve an amendment to the Iowa constitution granting counties home rule authority, which gave counties the power to decide their own structural, functional and fiscal organization. Because of this, Iowa citizens decide the structure and form of county government that best suits their needs.



377
elected county
supervisors



\$2.59
BILLION
total expenditures
annually



24,625
county employees



Service to
3.1
MILLION
county residents

- Iowa's counties collect your property taxes but spend only 22% of that check. Schools receive nearly 42%, cities over 29%.
- Iowa's counties are responsible for nearly 80% of bridges statewide, the highest share among states in the nation.
- Iowa county treasurers issue drivers' licenses in 81 of Iowa's 99 counties.
- Of Iowa's 99 counties, 60% have a population under 20,000 while the five most populous account for 35% of the state's citizens.

*Figures based on 2014 data.



ISAC — PROMOTING EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT FOR THE PEOPLE OF IOWA.

The state's 99 county governments provide the essential services to create healthy, vibrant, and safe communities. Counties support and maintain public infrastructure, transportation and economic development assets; keep residents healthy; ensure public safety to protect our citizens; maintain public information and coordinate elections; and implement a broad array of federal, state and local programs in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

People depend on counties to provide services that build, maintain, and protect their homes, schools and neighborhoods. Counties are also an instrumental player in America's intergovernmental system of federal, state, and local governments.

ISAC members support state and federal policies and programs that provide the tools, resources, and solutions needed to spur job growth, improve the quality of life for all Iowans, and increase the economic competitiveness of Iowa's counties and communities. To accomplish this, ISAC adheres to a set of core principles through its core functions.

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