

# -- IOWA AT WORK --



# INTRODUCTION

Iowans have seen firsthand the impact made by investments from the Biden administration. Our state has received billions in public funding, propelling Iowa’s transportation, infrastructure, and improving our daily lives. Following record positive impacts from the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Iowa has continued to benefit from a commitment to infrastructure investments, clean energy, climate and disaster resilience, and economic development from additional major legislation, including the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The state has received billions in public funding, propelling Iowa’s transportation and infrastructure into a future-oriented position.

This report was published by a coalition of partner organizations: Iowa Farmers Union, Common Good Iowa, Iowa State Education Association, Interfaith Alliance of Iowa, Iowa Citizen Action Network, RuralOrganizing.org, AFSCME Council 61, Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO and Progress Iowa. In addition to the Iowa At Work report, [IowaAtWork.com](http://IowaAtWork.com) will provide regularly updated information about investments made by the Biden administration in Iowa.

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## Increase Jobs and Wages

During the Biden administration, the economy experienced improvements in job creation and wage growth, leading to a positive impact on various sectors across the country, and Iowa was unmistakably one of the locations seeing these benefits.

Under President Biden's leadership, [Iowa returned to an impressive unemployment rate of 2.7%](#), on par with pre-pandemic employment levels, indicating a robust labor market and economic stability. In terms of job creation, the Biden administration successfully oversaw the addition of [67,000 new jobs in Iowa](#).

The Biden administration's policies and initiatives also played a crucial role in encouraging entrepreneurship and small business growth. In Iowa alone, the government received a staggering [72,545](#) applications from aspiring entrepreneurs seeking to start their own businesses. This surge in new business applications signals confidence and optimism in the economic future under Biden economic policies.

The successful implementation of the [Child Care Stabilization program](#) under the American Rescue Plan has been a marked economic parachute which had dual impacts on individuals' jobs and wages. This plan provided crucial support to childcare businesses to stay open and provide essential care that kept workers in the workforce, particularly women. Thanks to President Biden's efforts, [2,155 childcare programs were able to remain open in Iowa](#), ensuring that working parents had access to reliable and affordable childcare services. This measure not only supported working families but also contributed to the stability of the labor force and Iowa's economy during the worst impact in a generation.

[Economic leadership from the Biden administration](#) has helped to preserve and revitalize the restaurant and bar industry in Iowa, which faced extraordinary challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Iowa, 846 restaurants and bars were able to remain open, safeguarding jobs and preserving vital businesses within the community. This demonstrated the administration's commitment to supporting the hospitality sector and ensuring its continued contributions to the economy.

With increases in jobs and wages as a top priority for people in small towns and rural communities, the Biden administration is coming through. Biden-era policies and initiatives have had a positive impact on job creation, wages, and the overall economic well-being of Iowa and the nation as a whole. The low unemployment rate, the surge in new jobs, the support for entrepreneurship and small businesses, the preservation of childcare programs, and the successful rescue of restaurants and bars all reflect a dedication to fostering economic growth, job security, and prosperity for all Americans.

## Decrease Daily Expenses

Under the [comprehensive efforts of the Biden administration](#), a series of initiatives has successfully decreased daily costs for Iowans. From expanding affordable high-speed internet access to providing home energy rebates, implementing Medicare reforms, and investing in infrastructure development, these measures have delivered substantial savings, improved access to essential services, and bolstered economic growth throughout the state.

- Since President Biden took office, a total of [93,000 households](#) in Iowa have received affordable, high-speed internet through the [Affordable Connectivity Program](#).
- Hardworking families have benefited from \$121.3 million in home energy rebates, which have helped them reduce their energy costs by weatherizing their homes and replacing old appliances with more efficient models.
- A total of 518,900 seniors and other [Medicare Part D beneficiaries in Iowa](#) will experience cost savings on prescription drugs due to President Biden's initiatives, including a \$2,000 yearly cap on out-of-pocket prescription drug costs, a \$35 monthly cap per insulin prescription, and free vaccines.
- During the open enrollment period for 2023, over [82,700](#) individuals in Iowa signed up for health insurance through the Affordable Care Act Marketplaces. These individuals are expected to save thousands of dollars per year on healthcare premiums.
- [The City of Waterloo has been awarded \\$20.5 million to revitalize La Porte Road](#) by investing in complete streets improvements along 2.7 miles of the road. The improvements include the addition of sidewalks, bicycle trails, lighting, transit benches, platforms, and a bus shelter.
- The [Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids has received \\$20.4 million](#) from the Federal Aviation Administration to modernize and expand its passenger terminal. This includes adding more gates and improving accessibility for passengers with special needs.
- The [Iowa Department of Transportation will receive \\$15.8 million to support urban and rural transit agencies](#) in purchasing battery electric buses and charging equipment. The funding will also be used to develop transit facilities and provide workforce development activities.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will invest [\\$829 million in the Upper Mississippi River System](#), which forms the Missouri, Illinois, and Iowa border. The funds will be used to construct a new 1,200-foot lock, modernize existing locks and dams, and undertake environmental restoration projects, aiming to strengthen supply chains and facilitate the movement of goods.

## Improving Quality of Life

[Measures of quality of life](#) typically include domains like ecology, economics, politics and culture and often include measures like the level of employment, freedom, belonging, and health. In 2022, 86% of participants in an [Iowa State Extension Farm and Rural Life poll](#) reported that “quality of life for their families either stayed the same or improved over the five years leading up to February/March 2022. This represents a substantial uptick from what had been a downward trend from 91% in 2014, 87% in 2016, 84% in 2018 and 80% in 2020.”

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) are two tools that efficiently deliver quality of life and economic improvements without a lot of administrative overhead. [Iowa Department of Revenue estimates](#) that the impact of EITC on education and employment outcomes suggest an \$1,000 increase in EITC exposure between ages 13 and 18 leads to a 1.3 percent increase in high school graduation rates, a 4.2 percent increase in college graduation rates.

In the [2021 tax year](#), Iowa families made 256,000 EITC Claims totalling \$493 Million in payments directly to working families. This averaged \$1,926 per tax filing.

In the same year, the Census Bureau's [Household Pulse Survey](#) found that four in ten households that received Child Tax Credit (CTC) payments used it to pay off debt, while three in ten families spent their Child Tax Credit advance payments on school expenses. “Non-Hispanic Black and Hispanic families used the CTC for school expenses in much higher proportions than non-Hispanic White households,” [reports the Census Bureau](#).

Iowa saw 625,623 children and 358,312 families benefit from the CTC in 2021.

Quality of life includes clean air, water, and soil, and [policies under this administration have pushed for places that are safe and clean to live](#). Climate-smart agriculture practices are helping Iowa's 84,900 farmers lead on climate solutions, and investments in the greening of electric cooperatives will enable them to deliver cleaner and cheaper power to about 235,000 Iowa homes and businesses.

# INVESTMENTS ALONG RAGBRAI

RAGBRAI, which stands for the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa, is the iconic bike event every Iowan knows. It takes place annually and is the oldest, largest, and longest recreational bicycle touring event in the world. [This year, over 100,000 riders are expected to join in an attempt to set a world record for the largest single-day bike ride.](#) Cyclists will cover a distance of approximately 400-500 miles, showcasing the beauty of Iowa's landscapes, towns, and communities. RAGBRAI touts the ability to provide riders with a unique experience of the charm and hospitality of rural America.

The event is known for its festive atmosphere, camaraderie, and support from local volunteers and communities along the route. RAGBRAI has become a cherished tradition that promotes physical fitness, adventure, and the celebration of cycling culture.

Take a look at the Biden-era investments [along the RAGBRAI route](#) as you follow riders next week!



The RAGBRAI route will pass through eight major cities in Iowa and 18 counties between Sioux City and Davenport.

## Sioux City

[Briar Cliff University was awarded \\$2 million in a \\$3.6 million project](#) by the EDA to support the renovation and expansion of a former residence hall at Briar Cliff University.

The project aims to transform a former residence hall into an academic building and central hub for health sciences programs. The renovated space will bring together existing health sciences programs under one roof, providing new classrooms, labs, learning studios, faculty offices, and a pediatric clinic for hands-on learning. The project addresses staffing shortages in the healthcare industry, particularly in the Sioux City area and surrounding rural critical access healthcare facilities, which have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. By expanding training and educational capacity, the initiative contributes to the region's healthcare workforce strategy and supports market growth and resilience. The new center for health sciences programs will accommodate around 500 students, nearly doubling current enrollment and allowing for future expansion. Over the next nine years, the university anticipates educating and placing up to 913 graduates in high-demand, well-paying healthcare positions within the Sioux City tri-state region, across Iowa, and nationwide.

## Storm Lake

For a small investment under \$12,000, two low- to moderate-income rural households were able to maintain stable housing through loan subsidies through the Rural Housing Service. The Rural Housing Service within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) focuses on providing financial assistance and support for housing in rural areas. The RHS offers various loan and grant programs to help individuals and families with low to moderate incomes obtain safe and affordable housing in rural communities. Its primary goal is to promote rural development, increase homeownership opportunities, and improve the quality of life for rural residents.

## Carroll

The airport in Carroll, Iowa has received double boosts from [ARP](#) and [IIJA](#) during Biden years. [Funding is supporting](#) maintenance and development of airport facilities, such as terminal buildings, maintenance facilities, and aviation hangars; runway, taxiway, and apron development; fuel systems; navigational aids; maintenance of aviation weather systems; runway marking; windsocks; emergency operational repairs; land-use planning; air service initiatives; and the mitigation of obstruction and wildlife hazards at airports.

## Ames

[Several federal awards delivered to Ames](#) invest in sciences and education. One award is helping develop surveillance tools and strategies for the rapid detection and characterization of new variants of COVID, including in animals, while another is funding research to advance computational thinking in K-12 students. Another investment will advance AI technology's ability to produce high-accuracy information.

## Des Moines

Pollution prevention efforts have received a \$350,000 boost in Des Moines from the IJJA. The funding supports the [Iowa Department of Natural Resources P2 program](#), which dedicates interns to businesses to reduce pollution by reducing business inefficiencies in processes or the inefficient use of raw materials. A testimonial from Sheldon Iowa states, ““This program is an excellent resource to employers in the State of Iowa. Each year, our assigned intern has provided us with results that have helped us improve our sustainability programs and environmental management.”

Since 2001, the program has supported over 200 Iowa organizations, saving them over \$114.5 million and achieving [environmental benefits that include the reduction of:](#)

- 9 billion gallons of water
- 266,777 tons of solid waste
- 10,139 tons of hazardous waste
- 510 million kilowatt hours of electricity
- 23 million therms of energy.

## Tama-Toledo

The [Sac and Fox Tribe of Mississippi in Iowa](#) received \$1.2 million from the Reconnect Pilot Program, [an innovative initiative](#) to reconnect communities that are cut off from opportunity and burdened by past transportation infrastructure decisions. The program provides planning grants, technical assistance, and capital construction grants to help restore communities that have been harmed by the [legacy of redlining and segregation practices rooted in racism](#).

## Coralville

Coralville Lake, a critical piece of flood risk management infrastructure in Iowa, [has received funding](#) to keep the lake in operation and to bolster its secondary uses for recreation, fish and wildlife management, and forest management. The \$4.5 million in discretionary funding from the Corps of Engineers Civil Works is a critical investment in the area's safe, clean, and prosperous environment.



## Davenport

In 2021, Scott County, Iowa hosted three of the country's most-traveled bad bridges. Major investments in Davenport bridge replacement are [keeping folks safe as they cross the Mississippi](#). The National Highway Performance Program, bolstered by the IIJA, has ensured robust funding for this and several smaller bridge repairs and replacements in the city of Davenport.

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# BIDEN PROGRAMS BENEFIT IOWA

## The American Rescue Plan (ARP) - Continuing Benefits

The American Rescue Plan is a comprehensive economic stimulus package that was signed into law by President Joe Biden in March 2021. The plan aimed to provide relief and support to individuals, families, businesses, and communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With a total value of \$1.9 trillion, the American Rescue Plan included a wide range of provisions and initiatives. It offered direct payments to eligible individuals and families, extended unemployment benefits, and provided funding to support COVID-19 testing, vaccination efforts, and healthcare infrastructure. Additionally, the plan allocated resources to assist small businesses, schools, and childcare centers, and implemented measures to combat food insecurity and support housing assistance programs. The American Rescue Plan played a crucial role in mitigating the economic and social impacts of the pandemic, providing much-needed relief to individuals and helping to jumpstart the recovery of the U.S. economy. The [Campaign for Rural Progress](#) published a comprehensive report on the impacts of the program in Iowa after one year. After an additional year, even more benefits are emerging.

## The ARP Child Care Stabilization Program

The Child Care Stabilization Program, funded by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), has brought significant benefits to Iowa, making it a progressive win for the state. Through the program, 2,155 child care programs in Iowa have received stabilization support, which has had a positive impact on up to 73,900 children.

The ARP allocated an impressive \$227.6 million to Iowa's Child Care Stabilization program, recognizing the critical role of child care centers and family child care providers in the state. This investment has been crucial in ensuring that child care facilities remain open or reopen, allowing parents to have reliable options for high-quality care while they work. By keeping child care workers on the payroll, the program supports the stability of these small businesses, which are essential for families, communities, and the overall economy.

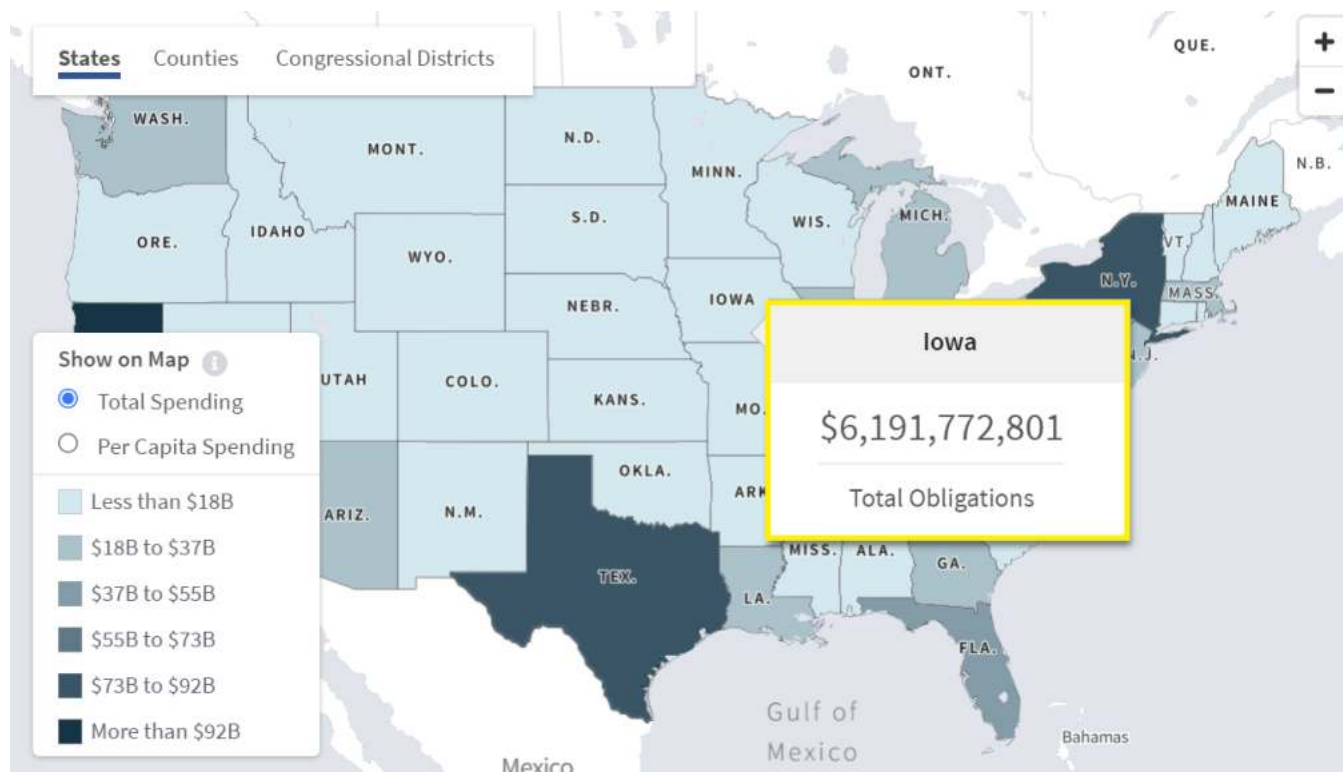
The ARP's Child Care Stabilization program has acted as an unprecedented lifeline for the child care sector in Iowa, facilitating the return of parents to work and driving economic recovery. This program has had a far-reaching impact across the country, providing assistance to over 220,000 child care programs and potentially benefiting up to 9.6 million children nationwide.

[In Iowa specifically](#), the positive outcomes of the program are evident.

- Child care providers in 100% of Iowa counties have received funds, ensuring widespread support throughout the state.
- The stabilization payments received by 855 child care centers have been predominantly utilized to cover personnel costs, ensuring that these programs can retain their staff.
- Similarly, the 1,300 child care family homes that received stabilization payments have primarily used the funds for rent and mortgage payments, which are typically their most significant operating expense.

On average, child care centers in Iowa have been awarded \$210,500, while family homes have received an average of \$27,700. These financial resources have played a vital role in stabilizing the child care sector, allowing providers to continue offering their services and maintaining affordable options for families in need.

## Spotlight: ARP in 2023 RAGBRAI Counties



The American Rescue Plan averted economic disaster during one of the most traumatic events in generations. The state of Iowa has received over \$6 billion in investments, with over

\$1.6 billion going to the counties seeing RAGBRAI riders in 2023. While some ARP funds have been distributed to local governments to allocate according to local needs, federal programs directly supported many purposes. While there still may be more benefits to see through the end of 2024 as local governments decide how to use the locally-directed funds, we already know many of the benefits of this federal program.

<b>RAGBRAI County</b>	<b>ARPA Investments Delivered<sup>1</sup></b>
BENTON	\$6,235,769
BOONE	\$5,829,902
BUENA VISTA	\$13,219,968
CARROLL	\$4,667,967
CHEROKEE	\$3,001,973
GREENE	\$2,837,399
IOWA	\$4,659,117
JASPER	\$8,711,890
JOHNSON	\$275,941,177
MUSCATINE	\$9,594,420
PLYMOUTH	\$5,968,414
POLK	\$916,568,730
POWESHIEK	\$11,520,984
SAC	\$2,170,374
SCOTT	\$126,528,797
STORY	\$150,866,828
TAMA	\$28,475,060
WOODBURY	\$108,097,169
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,684,895,938</b>

Of the 18 counties touched by the RAGBRAI route, every one of them has received economic support from the American Rescue Plan.

**Benton County**

Benton County has seen 31 separate awards from the ARP. Highlights include keeping individuals in their home through relief delivered through the Rural Housing Service with amounts ranging from \$1,100 to \$13,000. The Virginia Gay Hospital benefited from an investment of nearly a half-million dollars in Vinton, Iowa, and six restaurants in four towns were able to stay open due to investments from the Restaurant Revitalization Fund.

<sup>1</sup> Calculation includes assistance and contracts and excludes direct payments and loans.

## Boone County

The airport in Boone, Iowa, like in many small towns across the country, got badly needed support from ARP funds, which it used to reconstruct its runway. Government bodies got the greatest share of the funds sent to Boone county, enabling economic stability. Over half the awards, though (ten out of eighteen), went to small businesses through economic injury loan forgiveness and paycheck protection.

## Buena Vista County

With 24 awards, Buena Vista County has seen over \$13 million in ARP investments so far. The Buena Vista Regional Medical Center received over \$2 million to make sure it could continue caring for those in need Buena Vista University got several tranches of funding to ensure they could continue to operate in a new environment, and fourteen small businesses and restaurants received funding to help them stay in business.

## Carroll County

Carroll County has [leveraged ARP funds to support access to broadband](#), and to support the health workforce, but the largest number - 25 of the county's 28 awards - have gone to support small businesses.

## Cherokee County

With a population under 12,000, Cherokee County has received 27 grants and contracts so far. Like most counties in Iowa, the majority of awards (19 of them) went to small businesses and restaurants (five awards), while the Cherokee Airport received funds to respond directly to the pandemic as well as to reconstruct taxiway lighting.

## Greene County

The largest portion of ARP funds deployed to Greene County have so far gone to keeping the county's budget balances, while there is still about \$4 million allocated toward airport improvements that haven't yet been spent. The Rural Utilities Service has obligated a million dollars toward the Greene County Medical Center which still stands to be distributed, and 21 businesses and two low income households were supported to stay put through ARP dollars.

## Iowa County

Iowa County supported The Staffing For Adequate Fire And Emergency Response (SAFER) Program which ensured adequate staffing of emergency personnel, rural rental assistance, and rural healthcare outreach with their ARP dollars.

## Jasper County

Forty-five awards have been delivered to Jasper County. Thirty-eight of those awards supported small businesses. The Mercy Medical Center was kept afloat, and the Newton Airport received funds to both respond to the needs of the pandemic and also to reconstruct the taxiway.

## Johnson County

As a bigger population county, Johnson county received 437 awards from ARPA funds. While Johnson County supported many of the same purposes as smaller counties, it also saw funds directed toward ensuring people were housed during the pandemic via emergency housing vouchers, research funding to understand the impacts on students of remote and in-person learning environments, and the National Health Service Corps which supports more than 20,000 primary care medical, dental, and behavioral health providers through scholarships and loan repayment programs.

## Muscatine County

Of the 46 awards sent to Muscatine County, 42 went to small businesses. The county also identified a need for investment in infrastructure and revitalization; as late as the end of 2022, the [County Board of Supervisors agreed to allocate funds](#) to the Mulberry Corridor Revitalization Project. Nurses in the county also benefitted; nurses received nearly \$60,000 in loan repayments through the Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program.

## Plymouth County

In addition to ensuring Head Start was able to keep their employees, Plymouth County's ARP investments supported 32 businesses and helped the Le Mars Municipal Airport respond to pandemic needs.

## Polk County

Polk County saw the greatest number and dollar amount of ARP investments along the RAGBRAI route, with 760 awards. Polk County aimed to make "system changes" through affordable housing, bolstering mental health care, improving water quality and fostering economic stability. One specific investment: [600 new units of affordable housing](#). Also among the investments are [\\$1 million for more hospital workers](#), and [\\$2 million to hire at least 90 mental health workers to reach communities of color underserved by mental health resources](#). Rural areas haven't been forgotten, either: through Section 8 vouchers and the Rural Housing Service, 55 awards have been delivered to help rural residents stay in their homes.

## Poweshiek County

With 41 total awards, Poweshiek County has seen funding go toward renters assistance to stabilize housing and education stabilization at Grinnell College. There have also been some less common investments, including the [placement of new radio towers](#). The [County has also approved](#) the recovery and reconstruction of the Historical and Genealogical Society building which was damaged by a sewage flood, a \$30,000 sum toward [Grinnell Historical Museum Society](#) for plumbing improvements, and a considerable sum to [Grinnell Fire Department to purchase medical equipment and supplies for Advanced Life Support \(ALS\) response](#). These investments add to the

small business and restaurant supports received in the county, the housing supports, and the airport investments.

### Sac County

[Broadband](#) access is under expansion from ARP funds in Sac County, in addition to 20 other awards delivered to the county. The County also saw a water main expansion and extension to ensure the community's infrastructure can support potential future larger scale industrial or commercial development along the corridor. This investment through the Economic Development Administration is meant to support long term economic development in the county.

### Scott County

Over \$40,000 in elder housing rental assistance was distributed in Scott County, Iowa, and funds also went to stabilize education provided by three higher education institutions in the county. Two community health centers received support in Davenport, Iowa.

### Story County

Unique to Story County, two awards have been made totaling over \$30,000 for firefighters to conduct fire prevention and safety. Funding to increase the supply of affordable housing was allocated via the Home Investment Partnerships Program. Story County saw more restaurant support than most other counties, with 30 awards through the Restaurant Revitalization Fund.

### Tama County

As one of the few areas in Iowa with federally recognized Native American Tribal Governments, the Sac and Fox Tribe received funding in Tama County for education. Given the impact of COVID-19 on Native elders, it is powerful to see some of the ARP funds dedicated to the Meskwaki Language Preservation Project. There was also investment in Tribal housing through ARP funds in Tama County.

### Woodbury County

Woodbury County received funding for homeless assistance and supportive services from the ARP. The National Health Service Corps and Nurse Corps repaid loans via several separate awards, and ARP supported those living in multifamily housing in rural areas with rental assistance.

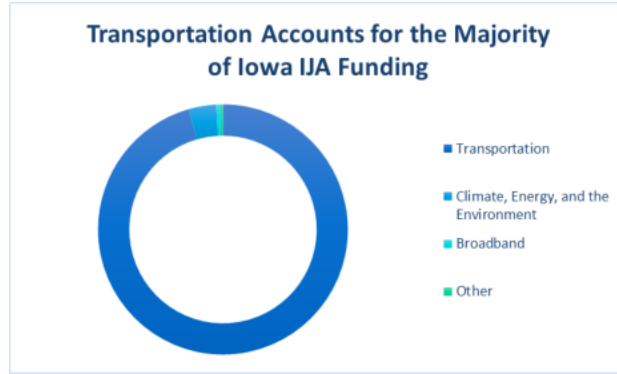
## Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law)

During the Biden administration, Iowa has witnessed considerable public infrastructure investments totaling over \$2.5 billion from the [Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act \(IIJA\)](#). These investments encompass a range of critical areas, including transportation, community resilience, and clean water initiatives. Notably, a substantial portion of the funding, amounting to \$2.1 billion, has been allocated for transportation projects, focusing on improving roads, bridges, public transit systems, ports, and airports across the state. Additionally, \$71.1 million has been announced to enhance community resilience in the face of climate change and other threats. Beyond this, \$235.9 million has been dedicated to providing clean water and enhancing water infrastructure throughout Iowa, with a specific allocation of \$74.2 million earmarked for replacing lead pipes and service lines. These investments signify a commitment to improving the quality of life, enhancing sustainability, and fortifying vital infrastructure in Iowa.

Subcategory of IIJA Funding in Iowa	Iowa Funding
Roads, Bridges and Major Projects	\$658,920,813
Ports and Waterways	\$360,505,000
Airports and Federal Aviation Administration Facilities	\$90,452,244
Safety	\$44,365,171
Resilience	\$37,487,004
Public Transportation	\$32,719,554
Electric Vehicles, Buses and Ferries	\$11,364,859
Broadband	\$5,984,092
Environmental Remediation	\$5,167,400
Other	\$4,606,850
Water	\$2,424,900
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,253,997,888</b>

### Revitalizing Transportation Systems

While transportation projects make up the bulk of the funding from the IIJA to Iowa, comprising about 96% of the total, over \$45 million has been allocated for climate, energy, and environmental initiatives. These diverse projects encompass a range of crucial endeavors, such as fish passage programs to improve aquatic ecosystems, the construction of sanitation facilities in collaboration with the Indian Health Service to enhance public health, inland flood risk management projects to mitigate flood impacts, a National Seed Strategy for biodiversity conservation, and pollution prevention grants to promote sustainable practices. These initiatives demonstrate a comprehensive approach to address sustainability, ecological well-being, and public health within the state, ensuring a more resilient and environmentally conscious future for Iowa.



Bolstering the infrastructure and fortifying the resilience of rural communities, IJA has earmarked substantial funds for rural projects, including the [Iowa Inland Flood Risk Management project at Saylorville Lake](#). This remarkable investment stands as the largest allocation apportioned to any city in the state, specifically benefiting the town of Johnston, which boasts a population of just over 24,000 residents. This large investment in rural communities like Johnston underscores the commitment to ensuring the sustainable growth, safety, and prosperity of smaller communities. It reflects the government's recognition of rural communities' integral character for an environmentally safe state, and the importance of equitable development across Iowa. The infusion of funds into Johnston through the IJA not only promises to enhance flood risk management measures but also signifies a broader investment in the overall well-being and future of rural areas throughout the state.

**For the \$11.3 million invested in electric vehicles, buses, and ferries for sustainable transportation, the vast majority of funding was spent in rural Iowa communities. Here are the largest 10 investments:**

Iowa City	EV, Buses and Ferries Funding
Logan	\$1,975,000
Bussey	\$1,580,000
Sidney	\$1,185,000
Preston	\$1,185,000
Donnellson	\$790,000
Andrew	\$790,000
Hawarden	\$790,000
Conrad	\$790,000
Delmar	\$790,000
Manning	\$395,000
<b>Total of top 10 investments:</b>	<b>\$10,270,000</b>

Source: Internal analysis of [BIL Map Data](#) provided as of May, 2023



## Case Study: Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program

The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) (BIL) established the new Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over 5 years. The SS4A program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

The SS4A program supports the U.S. Department of Transportation's [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) and our goal of zero roadway deaths. [Two safe streets grants totalling a million dollars were recently announced in the state.](#)

## Case Study: Clean School Bus Program

The Clean School Bus Program, established by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, has had a transformative impact on Iowa's education system. Under this initiative, Iowa school districts have received significant funding to replace existing school buses with clean and zero-emissions models, leading the way towards a greener and more cost-effective future. [State Auditor Rob Sand lauds the program's success](#), highlighting bipartisan collaboration, substantial financial savings for school districts, and the positive outcomes achieved.

During the first funding round, 15 Iowa school districts were awarded a combined \$11,515,000, facilitating the replacement of 32 school buses. These investments not only contribute to environmental sustainability but also yield substantial financial benefits. Auditor Sand emphasizes the program's ability to save districts millions of dollars, enabling more efficient allocation of resources.

Looking ahead, Auditor Sand encourages all Iowa school districts to participate in the program's second round of funding. With an estimated \$400 million in competitive grants available for clean and zero-emissions school buses, this presents an exceptional opportunity for districts to enhance their transportation fleets while reducing emissions and operational costs. The recent visit to Sea Electric in Grimes showcased the potential of clean and zero-emissions school buses. Auditor Sand's tour of their facility highlighted the practical application and benefits of clean transportation for Iowa's education system.

## Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Programs

While some benefits of the Inflation Reduction Act have begun, the positive impacts will be felt in Iowa for years to come. From health to sustainable agriculture to renewable energy, the IRA is a landmark law set to change the course of the state toward a more affordable and more sustainable future.

## Lowering Healthcare Costs

[The IRA](#) caps prescription drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries in Iowa, reducing out-of-pocket expenses for essential medications. The law prevented health insurance premium hikes at the beginning of this year and it will also lower health insurance premiums for tens of thousands of Iowans, saving them an average of \$1,170 per year. Additionally, the act expands coverage to approximately 15,000 Iowans and caps insulin copayments for Medicare beneficiaries using insulin. These measures address the high costs of prescription drugs, improve financial security, and narrow disparities in access to healthcare, ultimately benefiting the well-being and financial stability of Iowans. Most of these healthcare cost reductions are already in place.

## Sustainable Agriculture

Programs that help support a healthy environment through conservation agriculture are popular in Iowa, but funding runs out before all the eligible farmers are able to be funded through programs like the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) which incentivizes practices like planting cover crops, and the [Conservation Stewardship Program](#), which funds activities such as developing wildlife habitats. Some IRA funding is expanding these existing programs to reach more applicants, including in Iowa.

## Renewable Energy

[Electric cooperatives](#) provide power for over 650,000 Iowans in all 99 counties, but funding systems have prevented these electricity providers from transitioning to greener power sources, sources which will reduce energy costs for Iowa families. The IRA takes a number of large strides toward a renewable energy transition; it introduces a stand-alone storage tax credit for the first time ever, encouraging the manufacturing of energy storage technologies in the United States. This will contribute to the growth of clean energy industries and provide benefits to coal plant and disadvantaged communities.

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service has exclusively invited electric cooperatives to apply for \$11 billion for rural electrification situated in a "substantially underserved trust area." In these cases, electric cooperatives can benefit from grants covering up to 25 percent of a project's total cost and loans covering up to 100 percent of total costs. [The projects must be clean energy projects.](#)

[Consumer-facing tax incentives and rebates](#) come with the IRA, too. The act includes wind and solar tax credits for both utilities and consumers, with the potential for enhanced credits for projects focused on low-income or tribal communities. Consumers can now receive tax credits amounting to 30% of expenses for rooftop solar, heat pumps, and small wind energy systems until 2032, providing significant support for adoption. Energy efficiency and building decarbonization programs will play a crucial role in reducing energy costs for Iowans, offering \$9 billion in consumer home energy rebate programs for electric appliances like heat pumps and energy efficiency retrofits. And tax credits will also incentivize a transition to electric vehicles, with \$7,500 for new cars and \$4,000 for used cars, with income-based caps for eligibility.

# PRIVATE CLEAN ENERGY PROJECTS

Iowa, under the progressive agenda of President Joe Biden, is experiencing a transformative impact, particularly in the realm of clean energy. The state has become a hub for private clean energy projects that are set to revolutionize Iowa's energy landscape. These projects demonstrate the commitment of both local and out-of-state companies to invest in sustainable and renewable energy sources, contributing to a greener and more sustainable future for Iowa.

## Case Study: Alliant Energy's \$750 million solar power project

[Alliant Energy has an ambitious plan to develop a massive solar power project.](#) Alliant Energy, a Wisconsin-based company operating through its Iowa subsidiary Interstate Power & Light Co., has pledged to invest \$750 million into the construction of 400 megawatts of solar power generation and 75 megawatts of battery storage in eastern Iowa. This solar project, expected to be the largest in the state, will play a vital role in diversifying Iowa's energy portfolio and reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuel-based power sources. Alliant Energy aims to file a plan with the Iowa Utilities Board, outlining its intent to acquire a planned 200-megawatt installation, which will include sections on the grounds of the Duane Arnold nuclear power plant in Palo, northwest of Cedar Rapids, which is currently being decommissioned.

## Case Study: MidAmerican Energy's \$3.9 billion Wind and Solar project

Des-Moines-based [MidAmerican Energy](#) has planned a substantial clean energy endeavor called Wind PRIME. [The company has outlined the impressive \\$3.9 billion project](#) to add 2,042 megawatts of wind generation and 50 megawatts of solar generation to Iowa's energy infrastructure. MidAmerican Energy's project aligns with the company's goal of transitioning to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to wind and solar, MidAmerican Energy has expressed interest in exploring other clean generation technologies, including carbon capture, energy storage, and small modular nuclear reactors, through feasibility studies.

## Case Study: TPI Composites's Wind Blade Manufacturing

[The reopening of the TPI Composites plant in Iowa](#) signifies an encouraging development in the clean energy sector. TPI Composites, a wind blade manufacturer, has made the decision

to reopen its Iowa facility, which was [previously closed](#) by its Arizona-based parent company. This move holds the potential to contribute to job creation and economic growth in Iowa by reestablishing the 700 previously supported jobs.

## IMPROVING THE LIVES OF VETERANS

After four years of [denigration, attacks, and disrespect](#) under the Trump presidency, President Biden has signed into law over 25 bipartisan bills to address issues faced by veterans. [Iowa's 193,861 veterans](#) are being recognized and supported through [fourteen administration priorities](#) in the Biden administration:

1. Delivering timely, high quality benefits and services
2. Addressing toxic exposures
3. Reducing veteran suicide
4. Ending veteran homelessness
5. Supporting women veterans
6. Removing barriers to services for LGBTQ+ veterans
7. Protecting service member and veteran education benefits
8. Protecting veterans and military families from fraud
9. Connecting more veterans with resources for training and employment
10. Expanding services for veteran caregivers
11. Helping educators support military-connected students
12. Supporting children living with wounded, ill, or injured service members and veterans
13. Ending hunger and promoting healthier living
14. Helping heal trauma

### Case Study: The Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act

[Under the PACT Act of 2022](#), decades of denied care have ended as illness screenings become accessible for veterans. The Act has enabled primary care physicians within the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to initiate conversations with their patients regarding potential exposure to environmental hazards during their military service. This development is expected to lead to increased awareness and treatment for medical conditions associated with burn pits, pesticides, industrial chemicals, and other toxic substances encountered by veterans. advocates express concerns that the screening process does not adequately educate veterans about potential toxic exposures, improved access to treatment at all is a huge milestone.

[With the implementation of the Act](#), veterans now have improved access to screenings that address their potential exposure to hazardous substances. The new screening process, conducted during primary care visits, involves a brief but essential conversation between physicians and veterans. This allows for the identification of symptoms, concerns, and any

potential links between their health conditions and past exposures. By integrating these screenings into routine healthcare encounters, the PACT Act ensures that veterans receive the necessary attention and medical care they deserve. The Act serves as a significant step forward in prioritizing the well-being of veterans and ensuring they receive timely and targeted medical interventions based on their unique needs and potential exposure history.

### Case Study: 988 Veterans Crisis Line

A comprehensive public health strategy for [reducing military and veteran suicide](#) created last year has led to declines in veteran suicides reported by both the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration. By dialing 988 and pressing 1, veterans can directly connect with trained responders who possess expertise in crisis intervention and military culture, providing them with the necessary support 24/7. Furthermore, the availability of alternative communication channels such as text (838255) and online chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) ensures that veterans can access assistance in the format that best suits their preferences and comfort.

### Case Study: Declining Veteran Homelessness

The number of veterans experiencing homelessness [declined by 11%](#) between 2020 and 2022. [The Veterans Administration awarded over \\$130 million and created three new grants](#) to help ensure veterans are housed - rapid-rehousing services, case managers, and temporary beds are all funded under these innovations.

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## BIDENOMICS MET WITH OBSTRUCTION

Rejecting federal money is a consistent pattern that has cost the state more than \$200 million, resulting in substantial financial consequences due to the repeated refusal of crucial resources.

- Gov. Kim Reynolds announced on Fox News in 2021 that she'd returned [\\$95 million](#) in federal money for COVID-19 testing in schools claiming Iowa didn't need it.
- Her administration also declined a [\\$30 million](#) federal grant for child care services in November
- As of February, had forfeited at least [\\$89.5 million](#) in emergency rental assistance.

Meanwhile, as eviction moratoria ended in Iowa, the likelihood of eviction or foreclosure suddenly threatened over more than ten thousand Iowans, according to [data from the Census Bureau](#) and many characterize the status of child care in Iowa a "crisis" (see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).

## Case Study: Iowa Rejects Federal money For Pollution Reduction

[Iowa, along with three other state governments](#), failed to meet the deadline last week for participation in the federal Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program. By opting out of accepting \$3 million in planning grants, which do not require a state match, Iowa will miss the opportunity to access phase II of the program. This phase involves a substantial \$4.6 billion allocation intended to assist states in their transition towards clean energy economies.

Iowa's decision to reject federal Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) highlights the consequences of turning down available funding. By declining \$3 million in planning grants, Iowa also forfeited the opportunity to access a \$4.6 billion allocation for transitioning to clean energy economies in phase II of the program. While local entities such as Polk County and the DSM Area Metropolitan Planning Organization planned to pursue CPRG participation, this fragmented approach means that the funds may be allocated to specific metropolitan areas rather than a coordinated statewide effort.

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# PROGRESS AND POTENTIAL UNDER PRESIDENT BIDEN

In President Biden's third year in office, Iowa has experienced a profound transformation fueled by a progressive agenda. The state has reaped the benefits of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) as well as additional major legislation such as the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). These initiatives have injected billions of dollars into Iowa, leading to a robust labor market and economic stability.

Iowa's transformation under President Biden's progressive agenda has been remarkable. The state has benefited from significant investments in infrastructure, clean energy, and economic development, leading to job creation, wage growth, and improved quality of life for its residents. The commitment to addressing the needs of veterans and the focus on sustainable initiatives further demonstrate the administration's dedication to a better future for all Iowans. However, overcoming obstruction will be crucial to fully realizing Iowa's potential and maximizing the benefits of federal resources for the state.