

Scott County Comprehensive Plan

CHAPTER 9: FINANCE, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND IMAGE

This chapter summarizes information on county finance, intergovernmental relations, and image. These factors influence the county government's ability to serve its citizen efficiently and effectively. Citizen support for programs, services, and projects allow county government to meet needs and achieve its goals and objectives. This support can be accomplished by thoughtful policies, good decision-making, and quality customer service. Clear and consistent communications can also influence how county government is perceived by its citizens. The public input workshops held as part of this comprehensive planning process recognized Scott County as a well-managed government and a great place to call "home."

Finance

Scott County is highly regarded for its fiscal responsibility. The County operates on a Fiscal Year beginning July 1st and ending June 30th. The Fiscal Year 2008 Budget amounts to \$70,816,565. Public safety and legal services is the largest single expenditure of the County and represents 27.2% of the budget. This service area is followed by the state-mandated mental health service area, which represents 21.9% of the expenditures. The budget includes the following service areas:

- Public Safety and Legal Services
- Physical Health and Social Services
- Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Developmentally Disabled Services
- County Environment and Education Services
- Roads and Transportation Services
- Government Services to Residents
- Administration Services
- Debt Service
- Capital Improvements

While Scott County ranks third in size to other counties statewide, it ranks lowest among the eight largest metropolitan Iowa counties in the urban area tax levy rate for Fiscal Year 2006-07 at \$5.41. Scott County ranked second lowest among the eight metropolitan Iowa counties in its rural levy rate of \$8.53 in Fiscal Year 2006-07. Additionally, Scott County has the third lowest county property tax amount per capita of all counties statewide. The Scott County property tax per capita is \$218 (FY07). It is 31% below the statewide average (\$315 per capita). (Source: Summary of Administration Recommendation on the Scott County FY08 Budget, January 25, 2007).

The County completes an audit of its financial statements annually. Scott County has received 17 consecutive Certificates of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for its comprehensive financial report through the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005. This achievement required the County to publish an easy to read and efficiently organized financial report that satisfied both accounting principles generally accepted in the United States and applicable legal requirements. Additionally, the

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County received GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its annual budget document dated March 7, 2006, judged on its proficiency as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communications device. Both documents can be easily found on the County website.

The FY08 Budget appropriates \$7.4 million for capital projects in Fiscal Year 2008. This represents approximately 10.5% of the expenditures. The budget also outlines a five-year capital project plan with unprogrammed needs of \$7.5 million through FY11. The largest expenditures for capital projects in FY08 are within the equipment acquisition and building and grounds categories, followed by secondary roads. The FY09 budget will see the conclusion of \$29.7 million renovation/expansion of the existing jail facilities. This was another intergovernmental project through the creation of the Public Safety Authority by action of the Board of Supervisors and Davenport City Council.

Whenever possible and appropriate, county officials will work with other public and private entities to share costs and services. In addition to taxes, other funding sources may help defray or pay for facilities and services, such as grants, user fees, impact fees, special assessments, memorials, trusts, etc. A sample listing of grants is outlined below that may provide funding sources for county projects.

Sample Listing of Available Grants

- **Assistance to Firefighter's Grant – Federal**
- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) – Federal**
- **Community Attraction and Tourism Program – State**
- **Community Economic Betterment Account (CEBA) – State**
- **Community Orienting Policing Programs (COPS) – Federal**
- **Enhancement Fund – State and Region 9 Area**
- **Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP) – State**
- **Iowa Community Development Fund – State**
- **Iowa Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP) – State**
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund – Federal**
- **Living Roadway Trust Fund – State**
- **Pedestrian Curb Ramp Construction Program – State**
- **Recreation Enhancement and Protection Projects (REAP) – State**
- **Recreational Trails Fund – State**
- **Revitalization for Community Improvement (RACI) – State**
- **Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) – State**
- **Rural Business Opportunity Grants – Federal**
- **Solid Waste Assistance Program (SWAP) – State**
- **Surface Transportation Program (STP) – Region 9 Area**
- **Traffic Safety Improvement Program – State**

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- **Volunteer Fire Assistance – Federal**
- **USDA – Rural Development Grants and Loans - Federal**

Intergovernmental Relations

Scott County actively participates in a number of intergovernmental activities for emergency services, solid waste management, and tourism, among others. It is a member of the Scott County Emergency Management Commission, Scott County Library Board, Waste Commission of Scott County, Quad City Development Group, Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau, Scott County Blue Ribbon Committee, Scott County Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Committee, Seventh Judicial District Court Services Board, Vera French Mental Health Center Board, Work Force Development Board, as well as Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC). Scott County is also a member of Bi-State Regional Commission, which provides assistance with planning, technical support, grant writing, etc.

As the County develops over time, leaders are encouraged to continue interagency and intergovernmental cooperation. Coordination between local groups and organizations and local, state, and federal agencies and governments will be key to remaining a vital and sustainable County.

The County will periodically review the potential for intergovernmental agreements to provide more efficient, cost-effective public services. It is suggested that Scott County maintain communication with local, state, and federal governments and organizations through conversations, meetings, associations, memberships, and other forums that promote cooperation and further community goals.

Another intergovernmental opportunity for the County is to work closely with the local community college system to further educational and economic goals within the County and region. Recreational facilities may be developed in partnership with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, as well as recreational programming.

With greater awareness for the need to develop plans for safety and security related to emergency response. The County will need to examine its emergency response and evacuation planning in cooperation with city and state officials to address unintentional and intentional hazards related to vulnerable facilities, whether they are roads, buildings, or utilities. The purpose of this planning effort would be to ensure the safety of the County residents from natural, man-made, and biological hazards. This will require coordination with multiple law enforcement, emergency response agencies, and health officials in Scott County.

Image

Vision. Within Scott County, there is overwhelming support for farmland preservation and an emphasis for land development to be located within municipalities. A vision statement has been formulated to express a clear statement of what a county wants to become.

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“Scott County will be distinguished as a governmental leader by underscoring its farming heritage and preserving its agricultural land within the unincorporated areas, protecting its critical resource areas and cooperatively promoting economic vitality within the County through well-defined land use policies.”

Civic Involvement. To foster the vision, the County can encourage public participation in county government. There are a variety of opportunities for civic involvement in Scott County, both public and private, such as the Board of Supervisors, County Assessor Board of Review, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Conservation Board, Board of Health Mental Health Planning Council, Veterans Commission, Civil Service Commission, and Compensation Board and other groups, as well as other clubs/associations. Youth involvement is another aspect to encourage long-term residency in the County. Partnering with the school districts and/or community colleges to develop a youth leadership, as a way to “grow” the young leaders, may provide a vehicle to encourage greater participation in county government. By encouraging youth involvement, the County leaders are drawing in the involvement of their families and cultivating future leaders of the Scott County. This type of anchoring encourages stronger ties to the county which are important for long-term residency.

Marketing. Scott County utilizes various media to communicate its policies, programs, and services. The County brands itself with a logo and emphasizes professionalism, responsiveness, involvement, dedication, and excellence. It also promotes: Doing it Right, Doing it Now, Doing it Together, Doing it with Commitment, and Doing it Well. It supports an extensive website and produces a comprehensive government guidebook. There are department level brochures, documents and materials used daily that also provide information on Scott County. Ongoing review of county communications for consistency with these messages will further the Scott County vision where the government is distinguished as a leader.

Ordinances. An objective within the goals section of the plan indicates: “Promote a diverse regional economy and quality of life opportunities.” The county image can be managed through marketing, governmental and intergovernmental relations, and civic involvement. Another way the image of Scott County and its physical appearance can be managed is through a review of the County ordinances on litter, weed control, disabled vehicles, parking, signs, and landscaping. Reviewing development and nuisance controls and ensuring effective enforcement will aid the county in achieving a quality image. County development codes or book of ordinances can also be used to help protect and enhance the environment by protecting its natural areas, such as the bluffs, drainage ways, forested areas, farmland, and the riverfront.