

FINAL DELIVERABLE

Title	Maquoketa Gender Equity Policy Study
Completed By	Sarah Ballard, Camille Bonar, Marissa Good, Elisabeth Neruda
Date Completed	December 2021
UI Department	School of Planning and Public Affairs
Course Name	PBAF: 3560 Public Policy and Persuasion
Instructor	Carrie Schuettpelz
Community Partners	City of Maquoketa, Jackson County Economic Alliance

This project was supported by the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC), a program that partners with rural and urban communities across the state to develop projects that university students and faculty complete through research and coursework. Through supporting these projects, the IISC pursues a dual mission of enhancing quality of life in Iowa while transforming teaching and learning at the University of Iowa.

IISC is a member of the Educational Partnerships for Innovation in Communities - Network (EPIC-N), a growing network of educational institutions across the globe using the EPIC Model to partner existing course work and university human capital with the needs of local governments, and communities, to improve quality of life. Learn more about other network programs at www.epicn.org.

Research conducted by University of Iowa faculty, staff, and students exists in the public domain. When referencing, implementing, or otherwise making use of the contents in this report, the following citation style is recommended:

[Student names], led by [Professor's name]. [Year]. [Title of report]. Research report produced through the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities at the University of Iowa.

This publication may be available in alternative formats upon request.

Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities
The University of Iowa
347 Jessup Hall
Iowa City, IA, 52241
Email: iisc@uiowa.edu
Website: <http://iisc.uiowa.edu/>

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The University also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to University facilities. For additional information contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, (319) 335-0705.

Date: December 10, 2021

To: City of Maquoketa

From: Sarah Ballard, Camille Bonar, Marissa Good, and Elisabeth Neruda

Re: Maquoketa Gender Equity Policy Study

SUMMARY

As the community of Maquoketa grows with a diversifying population, local boards and commissions need to more adequately reflect the identities of Maquoketa residents, particularly women. To better advocate for all community members, Maquoketa leadership must reevaluate current board and commission recruitment strategies and programming to cultivate new leaders in the area, thus balancing the gender distribution of individuals in public positions.

BACKGROUND

Gender inequity is an issue that spans every state and community in the nation. On a national level, women make up 51% of the population and are still underrepresented in every level of government from local school boards to Congress. Currently women make up only 24% of the Senate, 27% of the House of Representatives, and 30% of statewide elected officials.¹

Currently in Maquoketa there are 146 public positions on councils and boards. Thirty-three of those seats are held by women (Figure A), which represents just 23 percent. There are some anomalies in this trend, namely the Library Board and the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors where more than half of the members are women.

Decreasing gender inequity across communities is a very important issue to address. One study found that two-thirds of Americans believe it is especially important for women starting their careers to have women in leadership positions as role models.² Additionally, research shows that when women run for elected office, they win at the same rate as men.³ The problem is that they do not get the same encouragement as men to run (Figure B). Overcoming gender roles, discrimination, and a lack of support also affects women's desire to run.⁴ There are also systemic issues such as inadequate childcare and a lack of education on subjects like fundraising, which may be a new skill set. After all, nine out of ten women list fundraising as a key factor in deciding not to run for office.⁵ Fortunately, there are steps that can be taken now to show women that their presence is wanted and needed in public service.

BEST PRACTICES

- **Iowa City Management Association Mentoring Program**
 - This is a mentoring program between senior and upcoming government executives, managers, and administrators. The overall goal is to help improve and increase the exchange of knowledge between those experienced and entering into

¹ Carrie, Blazina, et al. *A record number of women are serving in the 117th Congress*. Pew Research Center, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/01/15/a-record-number-of-women-are-serving-in-the-117th-congress/>

² The Rockefeller Foundation. *Women in Leadership: Why It Matters*.

³ Jennifer, Lawless, et al. *Men Rule*. Women & Politics Institute, 2012. <https://www.american.edu/spa/wpi/upload/2012-men-rule-report-web.pdf>

⁴ Anil, Wasif, et al. *Why don't more women run for office?* iPolitics, 2021. <https://ipolitics.ca/2021/02/01/why-dont-more-women-run-for-office/>

⁵ "Cost of Success" *The Ascend Fund*, <https://www.theascendfund.org/post/cost-of-success-political-fundraising-as-a-barrier-to-equity>

this profession. This is a volunteer-based program and provides aspiring managers a chance to get advice and insights about what they deem most necessary from their mentors. This could range from general career advice to finding more leadership opportunities to expanding their network of contacts.⁶

- **She Should Run Incubator**

- She Should Run is an organization focused on identifying the barriers to women being elected and convincing women to see themselves as qualified candidates. The Incubator is a set of free online courses that cover modules like cultivating leadership, building networks, fostering communication, and finding a path to elected office. These courses help women across the political spectrum see themselves as qualified public servants by building on the qualifications they already have.⁷

- **Iowa Commission on the Status of Women**

- The Iowa Commission on the Status of Women (ICSW) aims to address gender-equity issues in the state of Iowa. Composed of seven positions filled by women and appointed by the Governor, ICSW has historically advocated for gender-balanced boards and commissions throughout the state of Iowa, making recommendations and identifying recruitment best practices for rural and urban communities alike. Additionally, ICSW offers other resources for Iowa communities including a talent database, presentations and tips for inclusive recruitment and application processes, and networking strategies to lead to more gender-inclusive boards and commissions. ICSW also identifies Iowa communities with boards and commissions excelling in gender-diverse representation, allowing an avenue for shared advocacy, community-building, and best-practices across the state.⁸

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Engage in strategic recruitment of women and people of color in order to increase the presence of underrepresented groups in local government**

- Women are just as likely as men to respond favorably to the suggestion of a candidacy, but they are less likely than men to receive this encouragement.
- 32% of women say that someone tried to discourage them from running compared to only 25% of men⁹
- Women were also far less likely than men to be “self-starters” who said that the initial decision to run for elective office for the first time was entirely their idea. Only about a quarter of women state representatives (26%) compared to nearly half of their male colleagues (43%) were “self-starters”²
- Strategic recruitment is necessary to help women feel confident running and applying for positions and counteract any discouragement

⁶ “IaCMA Mentorship Program”. *Iowa City/County Management Association*, <https://www.iacma.net/index.asp?SEC=3BE80343-A57F-4F37-9EFD-F09963C0EAD8>

⁷ “The She Should Run Incubator” *She Should Run*, <https://sheshouldrun.org/explore/incubator/>

⁸ “Commission.” *Iowa Department of Human Rights*, <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/cas/icsw/commission>.

⁹ Sanbonmatsu, Kira, et al. *Poised to Run*. Center for American Women and Politics, 2009, https://cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/poisedtorun_0.pdf.

- **Ensure women are equipped with knowledge and skills needed to feel ready to run for office or join a board through participation in the Chamber of Commerce Leadership program**
 - The Chamber of Commerce leadership program should include workshops specifically for women to teach them skills and give them the confidence needed to get involved in leadership positions.
 - Workshops should address the unique barriers women face
 - Make sure the leadership program recruits women to be involved
- **Identify women who are in places of leadership already and match them up with women who are interested in a mentor**
 - One study found that 87% of mentors and mentees feel empowered by the relationship and reported greater confidence and career satisfaction. Connecting Maquoketa women with women who currently or previously held a leadership position could help increase confidence and lead to greater gender equity in leadership¹⁰

NEXT STEPS

- Reach out to current leadership members and suggest strategic recruitment of women on boards and commissions.
 - This could include inviting women to attend board/commission meetings to learn more about the duties involved
- Ensure board applications are transparent and simple
 - Certain application requirements (i.e. education, minimum experience, local references) may unintentionally prevent applicants from applying to boards and commissions, resulting in unbalanced representation
- Promote election and board involvement information in public places and on the Maquoketa website to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to be involved with leadership positions
- Ensure Chamber of Commerce leadership program targets women when recruiting applicants for the program
- Reach out to the Maquoketa women leaders about the possibility of serving as a mentor (See figure C for list of suggested women)

¹⁰ Kramer, Andie. “Women Need Mentors Now More Than Ever.” *Forbes*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andiekramer/2021/07/14/women-need-mentors-now-more-than-ever/>. Accessed 10 Dec. 2021.

APPENDIX

A. Board Makeup by Gender¹¹

Organization	# of women/total # (for 2021)	Elected or appointed position?	Term and Meeting Frequency
City Council	0/8	Elected	4 year term
School Board	2/5	Elected	4 year term Meets monthly
Airport Board	2/5	Council Appointment	5 year term Meets monthly
Cable TV Commission	0/3 (and 2 vacant seats)	Mayor Appointment	2 year term Meets as needed
Civil Service Commission	0/3	Council Appointment	6 year term Meets as needed
Historic Preservation Commission	2/3 (and 2 vacant seats)	Mayor Appointment	3 year term Meets as needed
Library Board	8/9	Mayor Appointment	6 year term Meets monthly
Parks Board	1/4 (and 1 vacant seat)	Council Appointment	3 year term Meets at needed
Planning and Zoning Commission	1/6 (and 1 vacant seat)	Council Appointment	5 year term Meets as needed
Property Maintenance Board	2/4 (and one vacant seat)	Mayor appointment	3 year term Meets as needed
Sidewalk Board	0/2 (and 5 vacant seats)	Mayor Appointment	3 year term Meets as needed
Tree Board	3/5	Mayor Appointment	3 year term Meets as needed
Utility Board of Trustees	4/5	Mayor Appointment	6 year term Meets monthly

¹¹ "Boards and Commissions." *City of Maquoketa*, <https://maquoketaia.com/city-departments/boards-and-commissions/>. Accessed 10 Dec. 2021.

Zoning Board of Adjustment	1/5	Mayor Appointment	5 year term Meets as needed
Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors	7/11	Data not available	Data not available
Total:	33/146= 22.6% women		

B. Recruitment by Gender¹²

Table 8
Gender Differences in Recruitment to Specific Offices

	Women	Men
Local or Community Office		
School Board	18%	21%
City Council	16	22
Mayor	6	10
District Attorney	1	2
State Level Office		
State Legislator	16	24
Statewide Office (i.e., State Treasurer)	1	2
Governor	1	4
Federal Office		
House of Representatives	4	10
Senate	2	4
Sample Size	1,766	1,848

Notes: Entries indicate the percentage of respondents who report ever receiving the suggestion to run for the office. The gender gap is significant at $p < .05$ for all comparisons.

C. Potential Mentors

- a. Tanya Roeder (school board)
- b. Mary Herring (school board)
- c. Susan Siems (airport board)
- d. Sue Sandberg (airport board)
- e. Ellen Frantzen (chair of historic preservation board)
- f. Jennifer Fowler (historic preservation board)
- g. Lori McCaulley (library board)
- h. Kendra Beck (library board)
- i. Mary Pat Burns (library board)
- j. Elizabeth Wright (library board)
- k. Jessica Pape (library board)
- l. Lynn Bopes (library board)

¹² Lawless, Jennifer L., and Richard L. Fox. Men Rule: The Continued Underrepresentation of Women in U.S. Politics. American University, 2012, <https://www.american.edu/spa/wpi/upload/2012-men-rule-report-web.pdf>.

- m. Cindy Hepker (library board)
- n. Judy Lyon (library board)
- o. Sara Nelson (parks board)
- p. Mary Ann Lindgren (planning and zoning commission)
- q. Barb Schroeder (chair of property maintenance board)
- r. Pat Walke (property maintenance board)
- s. Maggi Muhlhausen (chair of tree board)
- t. Elaine Edwards (tree board)
- u. DeAnn Montoya (tree board)
- v. Jan Kahler (utility board of trustees)
- w. Andrea Jones (utility board of trustees)
- x. Megan Andresen (utility board of trustees)
- y. Abby Gehl (utility board of trustees)
- z. Jennie Wilcox (zoning board of adjustment)
- aa. Jenni Joos (chamber of commerce vice-president)
- bb. Megan Simmons (chamber of commerce treasurer)
- cc. Rachelle Zeimet (chamber of commerce secretary)
- dd. Chris Schaeffer (chamber of commerce director)
- ee. Kathy Seyfert (chamber of commerce director)
- ff. Deb Shea (chamber of commerce director)
- gg. Carissa Spain (chamber of commerce director)