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## Des Moines Area MPO recognized with five statewide awards

The American Planning Association Iowa Chapter yesterday announced five awards for the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization during the Upper Midwest APA Conference in Dubuque.

“Rarely does an organization take home so many awards in one year,” said Ben Champ, president of the APA Iowa Chapter. “The awards, which were selected by out-of-state judges, just reinforce that central Iowa is being well served by the innovation and leadership of the Des Moines Area MPO.”

The five awards include:

**Planning Agency – Des Moines Area MPO:** This award honors the work of a public-sector planning agency that has continually produced a program of exceptional work that has elevated awareness about planning. Judges noted the Des Moines Area MPO’s exceptional work to include the Iowa Data Bike, the Container Locator website, and the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan. More information at [www.dmampo.org](http://www.dmampo.org).

**Transportation Planning – Complete Streets Initiative:** This award honors efforts to increase transportation choices for all populations, reducing dependence on private automobiles and helping to ease congestion and reducing climate-change impacts. The Des Moines Area MPO received this award for its Complete Streets initiative, for developing a model Complete Streets policy adopted by several metro communities. More information at [www.dmampo.org/complete-streets/](http://www.dmampo.org/complete-streets/).

**Best Practice – Iowa Data Bike:** This award is for a specific planning tool, practice, program, project, or process. This category emphasizes results and demonstrates how innovative and state-of-the-art planning methods and practices help create communities of lasting value. The Des Moines Area MPO received this award for the Iowa Data Bike, a new planning tool for collecting pavement-condition data on paved trails. More information at [www.dmampo.org/data-bike/](http://www.dmampo.org/data-bike/).

**Urban Design – Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan:** This award honors efforts to create a sense of place, whether a street, public space, neighborhood, or campus effort. The Des Moines Area MPO received this award for its work on the Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan, a regional roadmap for enhancing citizen experiences along 150 miles of waterways in Greater Des Moines. More information is at [www.dmampo.org/water-trails/](http://www.dmampo.org/water-trails/).

**Planning Advocate – Rick Tollakson:** This award honors an elected or appointed official who has advanced or promoted the cause of planning in the public arena. This award went to Hubbell Realty President and CEO Rick Tollakson, who is the chair of the Water Trails Advisory Committee and has been an effective champion of creating water trails in central Iowa, notably the Water Trails Engineering Study. More information is at [www.dmampo.org/water-trails-engineering-study/](http://www.dmampo.org/water-trails-engineering-study/).

The recognition of excellence from APA Iowa follows this spring’s federal review, which found the Des Moines Area MPO to be a national model of an intermodal transportation planning agency, establishing best practices around the country.

**Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization** acts as a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state, and federal agencies in regard to planning issues and to prepare transportation plans and programs. MPO develops long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects projects for federal funding based upon regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.