



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration
901 Locust Street, Room 404
Kansas City, MO 64106
816-329-3920
816-329-3921 (fax)

Federal Highway Administration
105 Sixth Street
Ames, IA 50010-6337
515-233-7300
515-233-7499 (fax)

July 9, 2009



Mr. Tom Kane
Executive Director
Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Suite 300W
6200 Aurora Avenue
Urbandale, IA 50322-2866

RE: Certification Review Report
Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Area

Dear Mr. Kane:

Enclosed is the final report resulting from the review of the Des Moines Area MPO's metropolitan transportation planning process, which was conducted on March 3-5, 2009, by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The report documents that the Des Moines Area MPO's transportation planning process substantially meets the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303 and is certified. The report describes our observations and findings, and includes specific recommendations for improvement, along with strengths of the local planning process.

Please extend our appreciation to all of those who participated in the review. If you have any questions regarding the report, please contact Mr. Mark Bechtel at FTA (816) 329-3937 or Mr. Tracy Troutner at FHWA (515) 233-7305.

Sincerely,

Lubin M. Quinones
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

Mokhtee Ahmad
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration

Enclosure

cc: w/enclosure:

Lorne Wazny, Iowa DOT
Stu Anderson, Iowa DOT
Peter Hallock, Iowa DOT
Brad Miller, DART
Tracy Troutner, FHWA-Iowa
Mark Bechtel, FTA Region 7



DES MOINES

METROPOLITAN AREA

Transportation Planning Certification Review Report

Certification Review by:

**Federal Highway Administration
and
Federal Transit Administration**

July 9, 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION REVIEW	3
I. CERTIFICATION REVIEW FORMAT AND GUIDELINES	4
II. CERTIFICATION REVIEW PARTICIPANTS	4
III. DESCRIPTION OF METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA	5
IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MPO	7
V. MAJOR REGIONAL ISSUES AND PRIORITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES ..	8
Interstate Access and Land Use Development	8
Long-Range Transportation Plan	9
Environmental Considerations	10
Public Involvement	10
Transit.....	11
VI. DISPOSITION OF ACTION ITEMS FROM THE 2005 REVIEW.....	13
2005 RECOMMENDATIONS	13
VII. OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FROM THE 2009 REVIEW.....	16
CORRECTIVE ACTIONS	16
RECOMMENDATIONS	17
COMMENDATIONS	20
VIII. CERTIFICATION ACTION.....	21
APPENDIX A: NOTIFICATION LETTER.....	22
APPENDIX B: GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW WITH MPO RESPONSES	23
APPENDIX C: PUBLIC COMMENTS	80
APPENDIX D: MPO SURVEY RESPONSES.....	100
APPENDIX E: TRAVEL MODELING QUESTIONNAIRE	115

PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning processes in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. (A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U. S. Census, with a population of over 200,000. There are 155 TMAs in the U. S., based on the 2000 Census.) In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the State DOT, and transit operators in the conduct of the metropolitan planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect local issues and needs. As a consequence, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a local metropolitan planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.

To encourage public understanding and input, FHWA/FTA will continue to improve the clarity of the Certification Review reports.

I. CERTIFICATION REVIEW FORMAT AND GUIDELINES

A Certification Review of the transportation planning process for the Des Moines urbanized area was performed by FHWA and FTA on March 3-5, 2009. The review was conducted at the offices of the Des Moines Area MPO in Urbandale, Iowa. An updated set of guidelines was developed for this review. These guidelines, in the form of questions, were provided to the Des Moines Area MPO, the Iowa DOT, and the Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) agency in advance of the review (See cover letter in Appendix A). A copy of the review questions and answers are attached in Appendix B. The MPO staff provided responses to the guideline questions, including responses included on an FTP website, prior to the review. Although not required, this information was of great assistance to the Federal review team during the on-site portion of the review.

II. CERTIFICATION REVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Those participating in the Des Moines Certification Review were:

FHWA

Ed Christopher
Tracy Troutner
Kimberly Anderson
Egan Smith

Iowa DOT

Amanda Martin
Lorne Wazny
Peter Hallock
Phil Mescher
Adam Shell

DART

Brad Miller
Elizabeth Presutti

FTA

Mark Bechtel

MPO

Tom Kane
Zac Bitting
Adam Noelting
Nokil Park
Lan Wei
Stephanie Ripperger

CIRTPA

Tom Kane
Zac Bitting

HIRTA

Kristin Haar

As part of the review, a public meeting was held at the Botanical Center in Des Moines at 7:00 p.m. on March 3, 2009. The review team opened the meeting by discussing the Certification Review process. The meeting was well attended, with 35 members of the public who signed in, not counting the Federal team or MPO staff. There was extensive testimony from the public concerning the transportation planning process in the Des Moines metropolitan area, as the Federal team received numerous comments. A summary of the verbal comments and the complete written comments received at the

public meeting are provided in Appendix C. Following the review, the Federal review team also briefed the MPO's Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) at their regularly scheduled meeting on March 5, 2009. The team informed the TTC that they will be accepting comments for 30 days there will be a number of 'findings' from the review. The findings of the review will be presented to the MPO Policy Committee following the comment period and drafting of the final report.

III. DESCRIPTION OF METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA

The Des Moines Area MPO is the officially designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Des Moines urbanized area. The metropolitan planning area (MPA) includes much of Polk County and parts of Dallas, Warren and Madison counties. The MPA also includes the cities of Altoona, Ankeny, Bondurant, Carlisle, Clive, Cumming, Des Moines, Grimes, Johnston, Mitchellville, Norwalk, Pleasant Hill, Polk City, Urbandale, Waukee, West Des Moines, and Windsor Heights. The central city of the metropolitan area is the City of Des Moines, the capital city of Iowa. The Des Moines metropolitan planning area is the largest population and employment center in Iowa. Approximately 20% of the state population resides in the Des Moines metropolitan area.

According to the 2000 US Census, the metropolitan area had a population of approximately 400,000 persons. According to the MPO, it is estimated that the population of the metropolitan area increased to approximately 440,000 by 2005. These growth trends, moderate by national standards, are projected to continue for the Des Moines metropolitan area through the year 2030. The 2000 US Census also showed significant growth of the Hispanic and Bosnian populations. Similar to national trends, these minority populations are projected to grow at a rate in excess of Des Moines' overall regional population growth rate.

The Des Moines metropolitan area continues to be the employment center for much of central Iowa, and workers continue to commute into the Des Moines metropolitan area from a wide area. Des Moines and the western suburbs of West Des Moines, Clive, and Urbandale continue to be the two major employment centers in the Des Moines area. The MPO projects that these two employment centers will continue to be the predominant employment centers in the region, however some dispersion of employment is anticipated within the US 65/Iowa 5 corridor, the I-35/80 corridor, and other metropolitan locations as well. The anticipated employment growth in central Des Moines without a parallel increase in residential growth (which is not anticipated) will cause an increase in commuter traffic into the central city, with resultant transportation impacts.

The Des Moines metropolitan area has been a major growth area for Iowa since the year 2000. The west and north areas of metro area have had the most growth. Development is following infrastructure improvements including the beltways and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway. Dallas County and Ankeny have seen significant growth along the

Interstate corridors. Altoona, Pleasant Hill and Carlisle have recently seen development as a result of the US 65 development along the east side of the MPA. The MPO anticipates continued development in the Iowa 5 / US 65 corridor. Downtown Des Moines has had much activity since the 2005 Certification Review with loft, condominium, entertainment, and retail development and redevelopment. Streetscape projects in downtown area have helped improve downtown areas and foster in-fill development. In regard to development patterns in the Des Moines metropolitan area, the MPO has encouraged a balanced growth initiative, which promotes economic development in all sectors and aspires to have no area in the area that is stagnant in regard to development.

Completion of the I-235 reconstruction was a major accomplishment since the last certification review. Project construction began in 2002 and ended in 2007 with a few minor finishing projects in 2008. Approximately \$429 million was the total cost of the reconstruction project. The Iowa DOT/DART/Downtown Community Alliance/MPO-sponsored Transportation Management Association, funded partially with FHWA STP funds, was initially developed for the life of the I-235 reconstruction project. Since the reconstruction project has been completed, the TMA still continues to operate including managing a transportation management center (TMC). The Iowa DOT developed a TMC center in Ames and the Des Moines TMC has been rolled into the statewide Ames center which works with the statewide 511 system. Approximately \$500,000 per year is spent for maintenance of the system (cameras, etc.) and technological improvements have increased the investment needs and system costs. The highway assistance, "Highway Helper," program in Des Moines is still operated out a local Iowa DOT maintenance garage. The deployment of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) activities, including cameras, monitoring traffic congestion, and the "Highway Helper" program assists in maintaining the movement of traffic.

The MPO is commended for its coordination with the surrounding Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA) organization, coordination with the member jurisdictions, and leading regional corridor study efforts that create a regional transportation planning process. The MPO Executive Director has suggested that the MPO and CIRTPA leadership meet quarterly to increase the communication and coordination. A major access management agreement with local governments has been implemented, focusing on development occurring in the US 6 corridor west of Interstate 35/80. The Heartland Highway Coalition, which is focused on the Des Moines to Burlington corridor, is now working on access management for US 34 with the idea in mind that if you "build it and you then need to protect it."

The Des Moines Metropolitan Transit Agency (MTA) was originally instituted by an interagency agreement between five cities. At the previous 2005 Certification Review, the MTA and the MPO were exploring the possibility of establishing a regional transit authority having jurisdiction in Polk County and eastern Dallas County which would provide transit services to most, or all, of the jurisdictions in the Des Moines metropolitan area. Since the 2005 Review, and with the passage of state enabling legislation, the MTA has become a regional transit agency. The Des Moines Area Regional Transit authority

(DART) provides transit services to 20 jurisdictions. Shortly after the 2005 Review, DART hired a general manager who has now been running DART for three and one half years. In 2008, DART experienced their highest ridership ever recorded equaling approximately 4.2 million rides. In September of 2008, DART recorded 18,000 rides per day, which is the highest daily ridership totals DART has ever recorded. Currently, DART is averaging 17,500 rides per day. Thus far in 2009, ridership is up 10 percent over 2008 ridership levels.

DART continues to provide express route services. Since the 2005 Review, DART has added service to 16 of the 20 member cities, started Sunday services (which have been very successful as 3,000 rides per day have been experienced over the 2,500 rides projected), instituted free downtown shuttle service including service to the State Capitol with four trolleys, and launched an employer subsidy program. Under the subsidy program, employers pay DART a fixed subsidy each year that allows all their employees to ride DART for free by showing an ID badge. Nationwide Insurance was the pilot company and, currently, there are over a dozen employers participating in this program. Principal, with 8,000 employees, also participates in the program, and their ridership jumped 40% as a result. The State of Iowa, who has 5,000 employees in downtown Des Moines, has joined as well. DART has plans to add more routes and service in June of 2009, and has plans to enhance service in the northwest metropolitan area by improving two express routes to Clive and Johnston.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MPO

The Des Moines Area MPO was designated by the Governor as the responsible entity for carrying out the region's urban transportation planning process. The MPO also enters into annual agreements with the Iowa DOT governing the utilization of federal planning funds for activities included in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MTA that covers the cooperative transit planning responsibilities of each agency, but an updated MOU between the MPO and DART has not been completed. The basic structure of the Des Moines Area MPO is unchanged since the previous 2005 Certification Review. Since the review, the MPO has added the Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) as a voting member of the MPO TTC and non-voting member of the MPO. The City of Indianola has been added as a non-voting member on both committees. The MPO is composed of 20 member governments, including 16 cities and Polk, Warren, and Dallas counties, and the City of Cumming (non-voting). The MPO Policy Committee has 37 voting representatives with one representative permitted for each member government having a threshold population of 1,500. Member governments are permitted one representative for each 25,000 population or fraction thereof over the first 10,000 population. There is also one non-voting member each from the Iowa DOT, Des Moines International Airport, DART, FHWA, and FTA and an associate (non-voting member) from the City of Cumming.

The MPO Executive Committee provides general direction for the MPO Executive Director and staff. It is composed of seven MPO Policy Committee members selected by

vote of the MPO Policy Committee. An Executive Committee member must be an elected official, not an administrator or citizen. At least one member must be from the City of Des Moines, with the remaining members selected to insure diverse geographic representation within the MPA. Currently, the jurisdictions represented on the MPO Executive Committee are Polk County (2 members) and the cities of Clive, Des Moines (2 members), Johnston, and West Des Moines. Mr. Ted Ohmart of West Des Moines has been elected as the MPO Chair, and in that office, is the Chair of the Executive Committee.

The MPO's TTC is responsible for providing the MPO Executive Committee with recommended actions based on technical analysis and merit. It is composed of 30 voting members, which represent all MPO member governments. The Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA are nonvoting members of the TTC. The Des Moines International Airport, DART, and now HIRTA are voting members on the TTC, and are advisory non-voting members on the MPO.

A quorum for all MPO committees is attendance by a majority of the total committee members. If members miss three consecutive meetings, a letter is sent from the MPO to the Mayor of the absentee's jurisdiction advising that the Mayor may wish to replace the absentee member with a new member to the committee. There is excellent participation in the major MPO committees by the member governments, and not having a quorum is rarely an issue. At the certification review, the Executive Director of the MPO stated that serving on an MPO committee is desired or a "hot ticket" committee assignment within the Des Moines metropolitan area.

The MPO has a nine person staff that includes an Executive Director, an Executive Administrator, an Administrative Assistant, a Principal Transportation Planner, a Senior Transportation Planner, a Travel Demand Modeler, three Associate Transportation Planners, and one/two Interns (seasonal). The MPO advertises job announcements on nationally based transportation planning websites. The MPO staff also serves CIRTPA, the Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA) that covers an eight (8) county area in central Iowa surrounding the MPA.

V. MAJOR REGIONAL ISSUES AND PRIORITY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Interstate Access and Land Use Development

Access to the Interstate system has been a major point of contention in the Des Moines metropolitan area. Often times, a local desire for convenient access to the interstate system is in direct conflict with a regional and national need for mobility and congestion reduction. As more access is granted to the Interstate system, the efficiency of the Interstate system decreases. At the request of the FHWA, the MPO headed a Regional Freeway System Study on I-35/I-80 corridor. This report, completed in January of 2007, evaluates scenarios regarding the viability and need for proposed transportation system improvements and examines all proposed and potential locations for interchanges along

the corridor. Previously, it was a political decision to include an interchange for “everyone and everywhere” in the LRTP. A comprehensive Interstate network study, with recommendations that address all proposed and desired access within the context of a long-term plan, is required for new or revised Interstate access (as per the FHWA policy on additional interchanges to the Interstate system), and FHWA will be utilizing this Regional Freeway System study or other future regional freeway studies when considering future access requests.

The balanced growth initiative is a component of the development of the traffic analysis zones (TAZs) for the traffic demand model. This information guides the conceptual development of long-term regional growth of the metropolitan area. While some areas have recently experienced growth, it is anticipated that other areas will also experience future growth or redevelopment. The balanced growth initiative concept envisions that Des Moines remains the center and core of the metropolitan area and that future development will go hand-in-hand with transportation investments.

Ultimately, a regional perspective to land use development and multi-modal transportation planning is needed to ensure that developments are well coordinated, that investments are equitable, and that considerations are given for contending desires of economic development, environmental stewardship, and the development of livable communities. The MPO is in a unique, yet difficult, position to foster the collaboration of these ideas and to integrate them into the transportation decision-making process. Land use is considered a very local responsibility and, by design, no regional entity exists with land use authority.

Long-Range Transportation Plan

The LRTP is a key planning activity for FY2009, and implementation of the LRTP will guide the transportation planning and decision-making through the horizon year 2035. This plan will replace the previous plan adopted in 2004 with a horizon year of 2030, which was adopted under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) planning requirements. The updated plan and planning process will incorporate several new Federal planning requirements set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The SAFETEA-LU compliant LRTP and planning process seek to address issues that were not required to be addressed under TEA-21 such as:

- Security and safety are now stand alone factors for transportation planning. Each factor will be addressed separately to add emphasis to their distinct issues,
- Coordination of transportation planning and land use/economic development planning,
- New fiscal constraint that considers inflation rates (project costs need to be shown in their year of expenditure and not current year costs),
- Documentation of operations and maintenance costs in the fiscal constraint determination,
- The inclusion of environmental mitigation activities,
- Increased consultation requirements for land use management and other resource agencies,

- Operations and management strategies and the integration of a congestion management process, and
- Improvements to public involvement and visualization techniques.

The travel demand model is a foundational element of the LRTP. The MPO is currently finalizing the validation of the model for the Horizon Year 2035 LRTP, which will project future traffic patterns throughout the region. Currently, there is an issue throughout Iowa with obtaining employment data from the Iowa Workforce Development Agency, and this data is essential for determining the number of trips produced in the model. It is imperative that the Iowa DOT work with the Iowa Workforce Development to overcome privacy concerns.

The MPO is also a beta site for TRANSIMS *activity based modeling*. Activity based models differ from the traditional three or four step processes in concept and structure and recognize the complex interactions between activities and travel behavior. It is unclear, at this time, whether an activity based model can be adapted to an MPO of this size in a satisfactory manner. As of the date of this review, it is unknown if the MPO will choose to continue with a traditional modeling approach or adopt another modeling technique, such as activity based modeling. Although an activity based model may provide more robust forecasts, there are many issues that impact the accuracy of the modeling process including inadequate data, an optimism bias, quality control, and validation errors to name a few. The approach to travel forecasting and complexity of the modeling also depends on the complexity of the issues, the size of the MPO and the level of growth that the MPO is experiencing. The outcome of the beta test for the activity based modeling exercise may lead to changes in the MPO's travel demand model.

Environmental Considerations

The Des Moines Area MPO has been working to implement the new SAFETEA-LU requirements for environmental considerations. A major component of this work activity is the creation of the Stakeholders Working Group, which has been meeting quarterly over the past year. This committee is reviewing transportation planning activities, such as the update to the LRTP, the development of environmental review and mitigation strategies, and the MPO's application for the EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program. It is anticipated that this group will continue to meet and work to address the association between transportation and the environment, and will be a key input to the transportation planning process in regard to environmental considerations. As the next Federal transportation authorization act is crafted, it is anticipated that environmental considerations will continue to be a major consideration for transportation planning and specific projects.

Public Involvement

Public involvement is a challenging issue for many organizations, and continues to be an area where improvements can be made for the Des Moines Area MPO. The SAFETEA-LU planning regulations increased the public involvement requirements expanding the definition of "interested parties" to be engaged in metropolitan transportation planning, now require that participation plans be developed in consultation with interested parties,

require that the MPO publish or make available for public view transportation plans and TIPS, require that the MPO hold public meetings at convenient and accessible times and locations, require that the MPO make information available in electronically accessible formats (e.g., world wide web), and require that the MPO employ visualization techniques to depict metropolitan transportation plans.

Public involvement recommendations were noted in the 2005 review, and this work activity will continue to be included in the list of recommendations for this review as well. The MPO has extensive mailing and email distribution lists for public notices and strives to maintain a web site that contains much of the information that the public seeks in regard to transportation planning. As of the certification review date, there were 689 contacts that receive the *InTouch* newsletter – 364 contacts via email and 325 via mail (some receive both). The mailing list includes 21 neighborhood associations and 78 press release contacts.

Additional work should take place in regard to engagement and communication techniques including public meeting formats. Several comments at the public involvement meeting for this certification review noted frustrations with the transportation planning process. Some feel they are not being heard and no changes were occurring in the transportation planning process as a result of their participation. This sentiment was felt for the entire transportation planning process, and not merely at the MPO level. Dissatisfaction and the lack of “being heard” originate at the city and county government levels. Decisions made at the local level ultimately affect the transportation planning decision-making of the MPO and the Iowa DOT. Some persons also feel that there is a lack of coordination between the local government jurisdictions and a lack of a regional vision for the MPO that transcends transportation planning.

The MPO has been working to involve and consider low income and minority populations in the transportation decision-making process. It is a Federal requirement that the MPO seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services. The MPO should also investigate disproportionate impacts or benefits to these population groups. As a part of the Passenger Transportation Development Plan (PTDP), maps were developed to determine concentration areas of low income, minority, elderly, poverty, disabilities, English speaking, and other social characteristics of the population, and this information was compared with transit routes and services. The PTDP will continue to be updated regularly. It is also expected that the LRTP will include the same type of maps and economic/social population characteristics and analysis in the PTDP.

Transit

With the increases in ridership, DART has expanded its fleet by 10% since the 2005 Review. Currently, DART operates 126 fixed route buses and 26 paratransit service vehicles. DART also has 95 vans in its vanpool program, which currently serves 900 daily riders. This program is self-sustaining and each van accommodates 9-10 passengers. The recent van expansion of 15 vans was funded by FHWA-CMAQ

(Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program) funding. There are currently 12 van pools between Ames and Des Moines, and the upcoming Statewide Public Transit study will include a review of this corridor, which may be suitable for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service.

Since the 2005 Review, DART has experienced much turnover in administrative staff. This has caused a delay in the completion of the Des Moines BRT study, which is presently on hold. The study was proceeding through 2007, and at that time the University Avenue corridor was the only corridor in DART's service area that met the 3,000 daily ridership minimum threshold for an FTA New Starts Very Small Starts program. The new staff at DART is now considering working towards expediting University Avenue transit improvements including extended green cycles, improved stops, bus branding for BRT, and additional bus turnouts without apply for New Starts program funding. DART would like to utilize American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) funding for automatic vehicle location (AVL) technology, which is estimated to cost \$3 million, for transit enhancements along University Avenue. The BRT study has had great involvement from the MPO.

DART is in need of capital improvements, specifically new or expanded storage facilities, as their fleet size has exceeded their existing storage capacity. DART also has a prioritized the need to build a transit hub in downtown Des Moines. DART has been using Walnut Street as a transit mall; however, a recent downtown plan is to turn Walnut Street into a regular street accessible for all transportation. Therefore, a new downtown hub adjacent to passenger rail service is a high priority for DART. In addition, DART desires that the proposed hub is connected to the proposed alignment of a downtown tram, which will be privately funded. ARRA funding will be used for the transit hub design work (\$1 million) and it is expected that the facility will cost approximately \$19 million. DART plans for the hub facility to be LEED (leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified. Also, in regard to capital projects, DART stated at the review that 50% of DART's ARRA funding will be used to order nine new buses.

The transit planning relationship between the MPO and DART is good and is much improved since the 2005 Review. MPO staff attends transit meetings regularly. DART does not have geographic information system (GIS) capabilities, and the MPO has been providing GIS services and mapping services for DART. The MPO has also been researching demographic data for DART and comparing it to their transit services. Utilizing this and the funding formula to build new services has assisted DART in recording record ridership since the 2005 Review. In regard to long-range planning, the current LRTP has a large transit component.

The Transit Roundtable was restructured and changed to a Public Transportation Roundtable. This is a good planning change, because it broadens the Transit Roundtable and goes beyond human services coordination (devolved to that with the PTDP) to larger policy items (i.e. economic development, Transit-Oriented Development [TOD], major capital projects). The Public Transportation Roundtable also gives DART another direct link to the MPO.

HIRTA's planning relationship with DART has been minimal. HIRTA does not provide service in Polk County, but they assist with referring riders between the two organizations.

VI. DISPOSITION OF ACTION ITEMS FROM THE 2005 REVIEW

The following are recommendations from the previous 2005 certification review. The review team has assessed each prior recommendation and has made a determination as to the status of the recommendation.

2005 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ***LRTP Transit Planning*** - *We understand the "Transit 2030 Vision" is being finalized by the "Transit 2030 Committee" and will be amended into the Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan adopted by the MPO on December 16, 2004. Long-range transit planning for the next LRTP update should be completed under the comprehensive LRTP update process carried out by the MPO.*

Current status: The MPO staff is working with DART to develop the LRTP which includes a long-range transit planning section. In addition, the MPO is engaging public, private, and non-profit transportation providers to identify passenger transportation needs and develop short-term and long-term solutions. Where applicable, the LRTP update will incorporate these needs and proposed solutions. This recommendation item is considered resolved.

2. ***Planning Coordination*** - *We recommend that the MPO continue to improve and build upon the metropolitan transportation planning coordination between the MPO, MTA, other transit agencies, and the Iowa DOT. We look for MTA and the Iowa DOT to take proactive steps to improve planning coordination as well. Project level coordination for studies, such as the Bus Rapid Transit study, is one opportunity for improving coordination between these three major transportation planning agencies.*

Current status: Planning coordination between the MPO and DART has remarkably improved since the 2005 Certification Review. DART now consults with MPO staff on an as needed basis, the MPO provides DART with technical analysis and mapping support as needed, and both agencies are involved with the Iowa DOT's Passenger Rail Advisory Committee. The MPO will be involved with DART's Bus Rapid Transit study when it resumes and will be included in with DART and the Iowa DOT in future transit studies. This recommendation item is considered resolved.

3. ***LRTP Vision*** - *The Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan appears to be a collection of local transportation desires rather than a document offering a*

regional focus for the Des Moines metropolitan area's future transportation system. The Plan needs to provide a regional vision, rather than just serve as a compilation of local priorities. Future updates need to take a longer-term, broader regional view with a regional vision and regional priorities, rather than just reflecting short-term goals of local governments.

Current status: The MPO intends to complete the Horizon Year 2035 LRTP update on strategies based upon adopted goals and objectives and on needs analyses, not on local transportation desires. Until the update is adopted, this recommendation for an LRTP vision, which includes transit and operations, continues.

4. **Public Participation** - *Since the 2002 Certification Review there has been an increase in the public's interest in the Des Moines metropolitan area's transportation planning process. In part, this is due to a perception by members of the public that local governments are developing transportation projects without adequate input from the public. It is critical that local governments do not circumvent the established planning and project development processes when projects are being developed, especially if they hope to use federal transportation funding for those projects. We urge the local governments to work through the established processes for planning and developing projects and to re-double their efforts to have processes that are open and inclusive to insure that all viewpoints are heard as part of the project development process. Failure to do so will likely result in lengthy and contentious project development processes that may end with projects being either ineligible for federal funding or cancelled.*

Current status: The MPO has increased its efforts in providing information to the public and in encouraging public comment in the transportation planning process. Other activities the MPO performs to foster public participation include: the utilization of surveys to gather a wider number of responses for public input, increased use of the internet and the Des Moines Area MPO web site as an information portal, continually updating its mailing lists, publishing its *InTouch* newsletter, updating its public participation plan, and looking at holding public input meetings at more transit accessible locations and more convenient times including mid-day and evening hours.

This recommendation continues. The MPO needs to provide more clarity in its public participation processes and encourage member governments to foster public participation. The MPO is also encouraged to show public participation documentation in the LRTP and a comprehensive planning process, and the MPO is also encouraged to document that each member government's approved transportation project has gone through the public participation process.

5. **Financial Constraint Analysis** - *The financial constraint analysis offered by the Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan is not well supported. In particular, there is no apparent basis for the cost figures provided for future minor*

construction and preservation projects, and it is unclear whether maintenance costs are included in those calculations as well. Additional clarification of these figures is needed to support the financial constraint determination of the LRTP.

Current status: The MPO is making progress in meeting this recommendation. The LRTP update will include financial constraint analysis based on SAFETEA-LU requirements and FHWA guidance, and the MPO is analyzing transportation improvement costs to determine lane mile costs for various improvement types, which will assist in determining a basis for estimating future maintenance and preservation project costs. This recommendation continues with the acknowledgment that the MPO is addressing this issue in its work activities.

6. ***Project Selection Process Including Planning Initiatives*** - *The MPO has done a commendable job with a broad range of initiatives including access management, freight, congestion management, and sidewalks. The next step is to bring the products of those initiatives into the project selection process so that the results of those initiatives are reflected in the projects and funding decisions made by the MPO.*

Current status: The MPO plans to use the updated LRTP's goals, objectives, and needs analyses, and plans to review the project analysis scoring system in order to institute these various initiatives into the project selection process. This recommendation continues, as this initiative is being developed and has not yet been completed.

7. ***Planning Area Boundary Adjustment to Development*** - *During the past few years the MPO and its member governments have been involved with discussions and proposals for projects that are outside the MPO's transportation planning boundary. As the metropolitan area continues to grow and develop, there will likely be more issues that impact the metropolitan area that occur in the area outside the MPO's planning boundary. The MPO needs to reassess where the planning boundary should be set and expand the boundary so that it covers all areas directly impacted by transportation in the metropolitan area.*

Current status: The MPO amended its Planning Area Boundary to include areas impacted by development and transportation. The MPO also established the Regional Planning Committee to coordinate future transportation planning activities and identify future transportation corridors including regional corridors for corridor preservation purposes. This recommendation is considered resolved with a commendation for the 2009 Certification Review.

8. ***Employment and Housing Model Inputs*** - *During the past couple years; there has been a tremendous growth in employment and housing in the area west of I-35 and south of I-80. The MPO's travel demand model needs to accurately reflect where employment and housing are located, so that future decisions are based on the most accurate information possible.*

Current status: The MPO has worked with the Iowa DOT to access the REMI statewide economic model which assists the MPO in monitoring growth assumptions adopted in the LRTP. This recommendation is considered resolved.

9. ***Public Participation, and Environmental Justice/Title VI** – In many ways, the MPO is very proactive and does an exemplary job in providing information to the public and providing notification of its actions and activities. One area where the MPO needs to expand its efforts, however, is in the Environment Justice/Title VI area. In particular, the MPO and MTA need to develop a more formal process to identify the transportation needs of low income and minority populations and assess whether those needs are being met through the transportation planning process. Additionally, the MPO needs to establish a process for periodically assessing the effectiveness of their public involvement process and then updating it as part of that process. Further, the MPO needs to explicitly work to include media and social service agencies targeting low income and minority groups, including non-English speaking media if necessary, as part of their overall public involvement process.*

Current status: The MPO has made efforts to address the need to assess the effective public involvement process in updating their Public Participation Process (PPP) to include strategies that target low income, minority and Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations. There continues to be a need to establish data collection methods to assess the effectiveness of the PPP for reducing participation barriers for those that are traditionally underserved, and there continues to be a need to ensure that organizations that represent LEP, low-income and minorities populations are consulted as part of the assessment of the PPP. This recommendation continues.

The need for the MPO and DART to develop a formal process to identify the transportation needs of low income and minority populations and assess if these needs are being met through the transportation planning process continues as a recommendation as well. Some of this work is being done as a part of the PTDP, but this recommendation continues until the MPO develops a formal process to identify the transportation needs of low income and minority populations and assesses if these needs are being met through the transportation planning process.

VII. OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FROM THE 2009 REVIEW

The findings from the Certification Review process include both recommendations for improvement as well as a listing of commendations of the strengths of the Des Moines metropolitan transportation planning process.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

None. No corrective actions were identified as a result of this review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Transit Recommendations

The Review team noted that updating the planning agreement between DART and the MPO needs to be undertaken and the updated agreement needs to be approved between agencies. Both agencies need to explore if there are any improvements to the agreement or changes to the roles and responsibilities that are necessary. It is also recommended that transit goals and objectives are included in the LRTP.

With the new project management staff now in place at DART, it is recommended that the BRT study recommence and that the MPO participate and provide assistance to this effort. We also recommend that the BRT study investigate the use of TRANSIMS modeling for the University corridor and those other corridors that have exceeded minimum thresholds of ridership to warrant modeling.

It is also recommended that the MPO consider DART as a voting member of the MPO. Although this requirement was not in place when the Des Moines Area MPO was established and is not a retroactive requirement, any MPO designated or re-designated after November 29, 1993 is required to have the public transportation agencies on their boards. Including these agencies on a board would normally indicate that they are a *voting* member. Although it is not required in this situation, it is good practice and in the spirit of SAFETEA-LU to include the transit agencies on the board and, therefore, is a recommendation.

2. Long-Range Transportation Plan Recommendations

The Horizon Year 2035 LRTP needs to be developed to meet the SAFETEA-LU planning regulations and address the eight planning factors. Additionally, although not a new requirement, a key aspect of the updated LRTP will be fiscal constraint. FHWA and FTA will be closely reviewing projected costs and revenues to assure reasonable assumptions and projections. Project schedules and project selection will be constrained by reasonable revenue projections. Projects which cannot demonstrate available revenue sources will need to be shown as illustrative, if it is decided to include them in the plan.

It is also recommended that the MPO introduce *performance measures* in the LRTP that will assist the MPO in measuring success and progress toward desired goals. Performance measures are being recommended nationally for measuring progress, for determining expenditures on management and operations, and future Federal funding is being recommended as being performance based with cost/benefit outcomes. Performance measures use statistical evidence to determine progress toward specific defined organizational objectives, and relate to the goals and objectives. We encourage the MPO to expand their role as a data

clearinghouse and provide leadership in tracking progress towards meeting the goals of the LRTP.

3. TIP Recommendations

When TIP revisions take place at the board meetings, it is recommended that revisions to existing programmed projects within the TIP are clearly marked on agendas as such to distinguish them from new projects. This may reduce confusion by the public and the boards as to any TIP action that is being proposed.

4. Public Involvement and Communication Recommendations

The public participation plan, which was updated in 2008, should continue to be revised and developed ‘in consultation’ with interested parties. This means that the MPO should utilize a grass-roots effort of communication by seeking input from the public and interested parties on how to best engage various public groups and entities, rather than developing these techniques in-house and applying the techniques to the public and interested parties. As a part of the next LRTP update, the plan should assess the effectiveness of efforts to engage those traditionally underserved (i.e. minority and low-income populations) through the local public involvement process. It is recommended that there be data collection to support the formal evaluation methods and responses to the findings for reaching the traditionally underserved in the transportation planning process.

The purposes of public involvement are to inform the public and to have the public concerns heard by the decision-makers. Comments from the public indicated a dislike of the open house forum for public meetings because of a ‘divide and conquer’ strategy where not all people in attendance hear comments from all those who attend the meetings. An opposing concern of a large meeting with an open microphone is that some people are not comfortable with large crowds. Ultimately, each type of meeting format has their benefits and drawbacks. The MPO should weigh these considerations with the alternative meeting formats, choose a meeting format that is appropriate for the audience and situation, and document the decision for various meeting formats. Where open house forums are used, it is strongly recommended that all concerns and conversations are documented so that the public feels they are heard.

There is also an issue that the MPO is seen as “the court of last resort” for public participation opportunities. With a healthy process, this should not be the case. As a result, it is recommended that the MPO foster public participation for local projects and work with the local jurisdictions to assure that the public is heard prior to projects reaching the MPO.

5. Title VI and Environmental Justice Recommendations

It is recommended that Environmental Justice (EJ) criteria be incorporated in the project selection process. The MPO should ensure that the planning process and the updated LRTP has a demographic profile of the metropolitan planning area

that identifies the locations of socio-economic groups, including low-income and minority populations as covered by the Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 and Title VI provisions. The planning process needs to identify the needs of the low-income and minority populations and assess if these needs are being met through the transportation planning process. There should be a data collection process to support the analysis effort, and the analysis process needs to seek to assess the benefits and impact distributions of the investments, including but not limited to impacts on different socio-economic groups for the investments identified in the LRTP and TIP. The planning process should document the methods used to identify imbalances, and how the planning process responded to the analyses produced.

6. Congestion Mitigation, Operations and Management Recommendations

The MPO should follow the 8 step process in the development of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) which integrates the results of the CMP into the LRTP and the overall transportation planning process. The CMP is intended to provide strategies for inclusion in the LRTP, and may also be used for intermediate and short-term planning purposes. It is recommended that operations goals and objectives be included in the LRTP to bring Management and Operations strategies to the forefront.

The Federal team is concerned that the Iowa DOT is making decisions in regard to ITS activities without considering the impact on the MPO, in particular, to the Traffic Management Center (TMC) which has been actively supported by the MPO. The TMC provides an opportunity for the region to benefit from greater availability of data, expanded use of intelligent transportation systems, and opportunities for regional cooperation and collaboration. The TMC can improve the active management of the regional transportation system now and in the future. It is recommended that the MPO and the Iowa DOT work cooperatively to arrive at TMC decisions that benefit all parties and the entire region.

Identifying less capital intensive strategies should be one goal of the LRTP update as well. This could include using the CMP to develop congestion management strategies including ITS solutions. The Des Moines Area MPO is updating the regional ITS architecture at this time and this would be an opportune time to tie this into the CMP and integrate it with the LRTP.

The MPO has indicated that it is difficult to address congestion, since there are no serious congestion problems in Des Moines. However, it is recommended that the MPO use its definition of congestion and potential future congestion when developing the CMP and assure that the CMP is linked to the LRTP.

7. Continuation of 2005 Recommendations

Five of the nine recommendations are considered unresolved. The MPO should continue to address the items mentioned, including the LRTP vision, public participation, project selection, and Environmental Justice/Title IV issues. Some

of these recommendations have been restated in the 2009 recommendations listed in this section.

COMMENDATIONS

1. The Des Moines Area MPO is commended for its use of micro-simulation to aid in the analysis of corridor projects and specialized studies, such as evacuation planning, and in support of the development of the long-range transportation plan.
2. The MPO's working relationship with its planning partners is commended. The relationship between the Iowa DOT and the Des Moines Area MPO is very good. They have shared in agreements for use of REMI data, with the use of the travel demand modeling software, sharing and review of model files and data, etc. The MPO Executive Director mentioned that if there is good data and good coordination between the Iowa DOT and the MPO, that modeling can be successful for small and mid-sized MPOs. This is a high commendation for the Des Moines Area MPO. The relationship between the MPO and the CIRTPA on transportation planning and the PTDP and the regional perspective is commended. The working relationship between the MPO and DART for transit planning has substantially improved resulting in improved transit planning and resulted in record ridership and is commended. Finally, the development of the Stakeholders Working Group has increased communication and input from the Federal resource agencies as well as state and local environmental agencies and interest groups. The MPO is commended on this effort, and it is noted as a best practice for the MPO.
3. We commend the MPO for its continued support of intermodalism through the flexing or transfer of FHWA-STP funding to transit for the purchase of transit vehicles.
4. The MPO is commended for the Regional Freeway System Study and its comprehensiveness. This study provides a thorough analysis of potential or considered interchange locations on the Interstate 80/35 freeway section between the Northeast Systems Interchange and the Southwest Systems Interchange. This study acts as a "comprehensive Interstate network study" and will be a basis for future access requests and interstate (access) justification reports within the corridor. This study should also guide the update to the LRTP as well as local comprehensive land use plans in regard to access from the Interstate.
5. Commendations are made for the innovative marketing strategy implemented by DART and supported by the MPO. Examples of these innovations are the unlimited access employer program, the addition of Sunday transit service, and the free downtown shuttle.
6. The MPO is commended on its follow-up to the public participation meeting. The thank you letters and personal connection with the visitors is commendable.

VIII. CERTIFICATION ACTION

Transportation planning activities in the Des Moines metropolitan area are being carried out in accordance with governing Federal regulations, policies, and procedures. The MPO's planning process provides adequate representation and input from all levels of local government and individual interest groups on the transportation needs of the metropolitan area. Overall, the MPO's planning activities provide for a transportation planning process that results in the support and development of transportation improvements for the entire area. In accordance with 23 CFR 450.334, the FHWA and FTA hereby jointly certify the transportation planning process in the Des Moines metropolitan area through July 9, 2013.

APPENDIX A: NOTIFICATION LETTER



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration

901 Locust Street, Room 404
Kansas City, MO 64106
816-329-3920
816-329-3921 (fax)

Federal Highway Administration

105 Sixth Street
Ames, IA 50010-6337
515-233-7300
515-233-7499 (fax)

November 26, 2008

Mr. Tom Kane, Executive Director
Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Suite 300W
6200 Aurora Avenue
Urbandale, IA 50322-2866

Dear Mr. Kane:

This letter confirms scheduling of the meeting for the FHWA/FTA 2009 Certification Review of the Des Moines area metropolitan transportation planning process. The formal review is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2009 through Thursday, March 5, 2009 at the MPO offices. We will finalize a meeting schedule in the near future, which will include time for a public hearing. As you know, FHWA and FTA conduct TMA certification reviews every four years with a goal of highlighting good practices and sharing information, as well as ensuring that Federal regulatory requirements for transportation planning are being met.

Major elements that we anticipate discussing during the review include: MPO organization, planning agreements and coordination, planning area boundaries, transportation planning process and planning factors, financial planning, air quality, public involvement, self certification, Title VI and Environmental Justice, and congestion management. In addition, we will discuss the products of the planning process, including the UPWP, TIP, long range transportation plan, and coordinated human services transportation plan. A copy of the Certification Review questionnaire is enclosed as well as an expanded list of questions for travel forecasting methods. In order to allow for sufficient review time, please provide the model documentation and data files as soon as possible, and please submit your responses to the travel forecasting questionnaire and the Certification Review responses by February 2, 2009. Other data or document requests will be handled on an as-needed basis.

The review will be carried out by FTA and FHWA staff. We anticipate participation by the staff of the MPO, the Iowa DOT and local transit operator, as well as any representatives of cities, counties, and other local officials who wish to participate. Please contact Mr. Tracy Troutner of the FHWA Iowa Division at (515) 233-7305 or Mr. Mark Bechtel of FTA at (816) 329-3937 with any questions you may have.

Sincerely yours,

Mokhtee Ahmad
Federal Transit Administration

Philip E. Barnes
Federal Highway Administration

Enclosure

cc w/enclosure:

Lorne Wazny, Iowa DOT
Stu Anderson, Iowa DOT
Peter Hallock, Iowa DOT
Brad Miller, DART
Tracy Troutner, FHWA-Iowa
Mark Bechtel, FTA Region 7

APPENDIX B: GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW WITH MPO RESPONSES

FTA/FHWA TMA Certification Review for the Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Area – March 3-5, 2009 Review Responses

OVERVIEW

1. Please provide a general briefing of the metropolitan area, i.e. demographics, development trends, etc., and discuss any major transportation issues in the area, highlighting any changes since the previous Certification Review.

Tables 1 through 5 summarize the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (DMAMPO) demographics and development trends.

TABLE 1
Historical and Estimated Population
For
Des Moines MSA Counties

Area	1990 Population	2000 Population	2005 Population	% DMAMPO	2005 DMAMPO Population	2007 Population Estimates	Percent Increase 2000-2007
Dallas	29,755	40,750	51,879	60%	31,127	57,288	41%
Guthrie	10,935	11,353	11,419	0%	0	11,053	-3%
Madison	12,483	14,019	15,148	1%	151	15,416	10%
Polk	327,140	374,601	401,755	98%	393,720	418,339	12%
Warren	36,033	40,671	43,165	35%	15,108	44,503	9%
MSA	416,346	481,394	523,366	84%	440,106	546,599	14%
State of Iowa	2,776,755	2,926,324	2,965,523	15%	440,106	3,002,555 ¹	3%

¹ State of Iowa Population is 2008 Estimate.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Census 1990, Census 2000, Census 2005 Estimates, and Census 2008 Estimates.

Prepared By: Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

TABLE 2
Profile of General Demographic Characteristics:
2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Demographic Characteristic	Dallas County	Polk County	Warren County
Total Population	54,599	410,952	43,747
Male	26,832	200,174	21,482
Female	27,767	210,778	22,265
Age			
5 - 15 years	9,022	64,313	6,628
16 - 64 years	36,739	266,823	28,734
65 years and over	4,448	42,695	4,701
Disability			
Ages 5 - 15 years	323	3,144	458
Ages 16 - 64 years	2,979	29,257	2,290
Ages 65 years and over	1,482	16,553	1,760
Race			
White	51,098	357,642	42,764
Black or African American	539	20,333	219
American Indian and Alaska Native	5	870	54
Asian	882	12,499	225
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	-	90	81
Other	1,678	11,869	145
Two or more races	397	7,649	259

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates.
 Prepared By: State Library of Iowa, State Data Center Program, 1-800-248-4483.
<http://www.iowadatacenter.org>

TABLE 3
Estimated Daytime Population and Employment-Residence Ratios
For
Des Moines MSA Counties: 2000

Area	Total resident population	Total workers working in the area ¹	Total workers living in the area	Estimated daytime population	Daytime population change due to commuting		Workers who lived and worked in the same area		Employment residence ratio ²
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4) = (1)+(2)-(3)	(5) = (4)-(1)	(6) = (5)/(1)*100	(7)	(8) = (7)/(3)*100	(9) = (2)/(3)
Dallas	40,750	15,900	21,746	34,904	-5,846	-14.3%	8,144	37.5%	0.73
Guthrie	11,353	3,723	5,592	9,484	-1,869	-16.5%	2,953	52.8%	0.67
Madison	14,019	4,207	6,998	11,228	-2,791	-19.9%	3,294	47.1%	0.60
Polk	374,601	234,066	198,183	410,484	35,883	9.6%	186,471	94.1%	1.18
Warren	40,671	9,502	21,745	28,428	-12,243	-30.1%	7,500	34.5%	0.44
MSA	481,394	267,398	254,264	494,528	13,134	0.0%	208,362	0.8%	1.05
State of Iowa	2,926,324	1,463,558	1,469,763	2,920,119	-6,205	-0.2%	1,149,863	78.2%	1.00

Note: Data based on a sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, definitions, and count corrections see <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expsf3.htm>.

¹ Workers – people 16 years and over who were employed and at work during the reference week. The reference week is the week prior to the time the census form was filled out or the census data were collected.

² Employment-residence (E-R) ratios - this is a measure of the total number of workers working in an area or place,

relative to the total number of workers living in the area or place. It is often used as a rough indication of the jobs-workers balance of an area. E-R ratios greater than 1.00 occur when there are more workers working in the area than living there. These areas can be considered as net importers of labor. Values less than 1.00 indicate areas that send more workers to other areas than they receive.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000: PHC-T-4.

Prepared By: State Library of Iowa, State Data Center Program, 1-800-248-4483.
<http://www.iowadatacenter.org>.

TABLE 4
Profile of Economic Characteristics:
2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Economic Characteristic	Dallas County	Polk County	Warren County
Employment Status			
Population 16 years and over	41,599	313,817	34,452
In labor force	30,662	230,902	25,342
Civilian labor force	30,638	230,604	25,300
Employed	29,602	219,239	24,438
Unemployed	1,036	11,365	862
Armed Forces	24	298	42
Not in labor force	10,937	82,915	9,110
Commuting to Work			
Workers 16 years and over	28,898	213,171	23,814
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	24,096	177,478	18,755
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	2,882	19,570	2,942
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	15	3,251	24
Walked	302	3,881	590
Other means	293	2,365	124
Worked at home	1,310	6,626	1,379
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.2	18.4	23.2
Industry			
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	29,602	219,239	24,438
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	737	1,240	554
Construction	1,711	15,389	2,092
Manufacturing	2,397	17,255	1,386
Wholesale trade	1,029	8,844	1,090
Retail trade	3,245	26,498	2,751
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1,497	10,219	1,220
Information	721	6,411	518
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5,952	35,872	3,512
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3,077	18,720	1,867
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	5,305	44,344	5,331
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food services	1,943	15,940	2,081
Other services, except public administration	1,163	9,727	1,128
Public administration	825	8,780	908
Income			
Median household income (dollars)	\$62,318	\$54,268	\$58,811
Mean household income (dollars)	77,385	69,387	69,078
Poverty Status			
Percent of persons ages less than 18 years	5.4%	8.7%	7.1%
Percent of persons ages 18 - 64 years	6.1%	11.7%	9.6%
Percent of persons ages 65 years and over	5.0%	7.9%	6.4%
Percent of persons ages 65 years and over	5.5%	5.9%	5.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates.
Prepared By: State Library of Iowa, State Data Center Program, 1-800-248-448
<http://www.iowadatacenter.org>

TABLE 5
Profile of Housing Characteristics:
2005-2007 American Community Survey
3-Year Estimates

Housing Characteristic	Dallas County	Polk County	Warren County
Housing Occupancy			
Total housing units	21,940	179,583	16,984
Occupied housing units	20,115	167,421	16,362
Vacant housing units	1,825	12,162	622
Homeowner vacancy rate	2.6	1.9	1.3
Rental vacancy rate	8.0	6.7	1.2
Year Built			
Before 1959	5,639	65,562	4,661
1960 - 2000	9,931	92,622	10,251
After 2000	6,370	21,399	2,072
Vehicles Available			
No vehicles available	595	9,318	575
1 vehicle available	5,277	53,047	4,031
2 vehicles available	9,617	71,417	6,569
3 or more vehicles available	4,626	33,639	5,187
Value			
Median (dollars)	\$168,800	\$143,800	\$144,500

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
3-Year Estimates.

Prepared By: State Library of Iowa, State Data Center
Program, 1-800-248-4483. <http://www.iowadatacenter.org>.

The DMAMPO:

- notes the following major transportation issues in the DMAMPO's Planning Area and changes since the last certification review:
- The DMAMPO has become more involved in human service transportation coordination following the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) legislation's passage and the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) requirement for a coordinated human service transportation plan (known in Iowa as a Passenger Transportation Development Plan (PTDP));
- The DMAMPO has engaged in more regional planning efforts, both within its planning area and with neighboring planning organizations. Examples include:
 - With the Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA) forming a Regional Planning Committee to identify and to study regional transportation corridors important to both organizations;
 - Working with the CIRTPA, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission (Ottumwa), and the Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission (Burlington) to develop the *Trans Iowa/Illinois Freight Corridor Study*, and participates with those organizations as the Heartland Highway Freight Corridor Consortium to implement the study's recommendations; and,
 - Partnering with the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) and the CIRTPA, as well as with public transit providers and chambers of commerce within the three planning areas, to discuss public transit commuting opportunities between the Ames and Des Moines Planning Areas;
- Undertaking the Regional Freeway System Study (January 2007) to identify which freeway interchanges being proposed by the DMAMPO member governments', along Interstates 35 and 80, that the DMAMPO would support constructing;
- Alternative transportation has gained increased interest in recent years, as evidenced by:
 - The Greater Des Moines Partnership's (GDMP) Transit 2030 Vision Task Force developing a transit vision, from the business community's perspective, to guide future transportation policies;
 - The Des Moines Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) transitioning to the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART);
 - The DART's creating a regional transit levee to fund public transportation services in Polk County;

- The DART's ongoing bus rapid transit study to identify rapid transit services and corridors in the Des Moines Planning Area;
 - Nationwide Insurance's sponsoring a downtown Des Moines tram study;
 - The Iowa Department of Transportation's (DOT) request for Amtrak to study passenger rail service feasibility between Iowa City and Des Moines, part of a larger effort to extend passenger rail service from Chicago to the Quad Cities, to Iowa City, and eventually to Des Moines;
 - The DMAMPO's participating in the Iowa DOT's Passenger Rail Advisory Committee to support passenger rail development in Iowa; and,
 - The DMAMPO's developing a *Central Iowa Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan*;
- The DMAMPO, through its Freight Roundtable, has renewed interest and is working on the Port Des Moines concept;
 - The Port Des Moines concept relates to the *Port Des Moines Concept: A Feasibility Assessment* conducted in 2001 by Iowa State University, with support from the DMAMPO and the GDMP, to evaluate the need for and the feasibility of developing an inland port in the Des Moines Planning Area;
 - The Freight Roundtable is revisiting the issue and is working with the GDMP to develop a "virtual inland port" that will host goods movement, trade, and other information and resources to assist local businesses move goods to, from, and through the Planning Area;
- The DMAMPO has become more involved with North American trade issues, as evidenced by:
 - Membership in the North America's SuperCorridor Coalition, Inc. (NASCO) and NASCO's North American Inland Ports Network (NAIPN); and,
 - Membership in the International Traders of Iowa;
- The DMAMPO has been developing its *Horizon Year 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan* (HY 2035 LRTP) update to the *Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan* (Year 2030 LRTP);
- The DMAMPO has committed to congestion management issues, as evidenced by the DMAMPO's financially supporting the Transportation Management Association (TMA) and the Iowa DOT's Transportation Management Center;
- The DMAMPO's financial support to the TMA supports the TMA's performing a variety of the congestion management strategies identified in the *Congestion Management System*;
- The DMAMPO has become compliant with SAFETEA-LU's requirements of MPOs; and,
- The DMAMPO developed a Stakeholders Working Group, both to address environmental concerns stemming from transportation planning projects and associated issues, and to ensure additional

public and stakeholder input into the DMAMPO's transportation planning process.

MPO ORGANIZATION

2. **How are the members chosen for the MPO's executive and technical functions and what jurisdictions do they represent? What are the committee's structures and the responsibilities of each? Are all jurisdictions represented? Are all modes represented?**

The DMAMPO:

- Requires the DMAMPO Transportation Policy Committee ((TPC) referred to locally simply as the "DMAMPO") to elect the DMAMPO Executive Committee (executive function) from the primary representatives appointed by the DMAMPO's member governments;
- Requires one DMAMPO Executive Committee representative to be a City of Des Moines representative (in the organization's 28E Agreement (Iowa Code Chapter 28));
- Considers geography when electing DMAMPO Executive Committee representatives;
- Includes representatives from the following jurisdictions serving on the Calendar Year 2009 DMAMPO Executive Committee: Polk County and the Cities of Clive, Des Moines, Johnston, and West Des Moines;
- Requires member governments to appoint DMAMPO Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) [technical function] representatives, following the same appointment guidelines as for the DMAMPO; and,
- Requests the DART, the Iowa DOT, the Des Moines International Airport (DMIA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the FTA to appoint representatives to the DMAMPO and the DMAMPO TTC, with the DART, the Iowa DOT, and the DMIA being DMAMPO TTC voting members.

The DMAMPO:

- Requires the DMAMPO TTC to provide the DMAMPO Executive Committee with recommendations for DMAMPO action based upon the requested actions' technical merits; and,
- Takes action on business items based upon the DMAMPO Executive Committee's recommendations (based on DMAMPO TTC input) and policy considerations.

The DMAMPO:

- Includes representatives from all jurisdictions within the DMAMPO Planning Area Boundary with populations 1,500 and over; and,
- Allows communities with less than 1,500 persons to participate as an associate, non-voting DMAMPO member, with the City of Cumming and Madison County the only governments wholly or partially in the Planning Area Boundary falling into this

classification and with the City of Cumming choosing to be an associate, non-voting DMAMPO member and Madison County declining that opportunity.

The DMAMPO:

- Includes air (DMIA) and transit (DART) modes on the DMAMPO (as non-voting members) and on the DMAMPO TTC (as voting members); and,
- Created five roundtables/working groups to consider issues to consider specific transportation issues from area stakeholders;
 - The Public Transportation Roundtable (recently renamed from “Transit Roundtable”) includes representatives from the DART, intercity bus operators, charter bus operators, taxicab operators, the Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA), the TMA, the GDMP, and DMAMPO member governments;
 - The Bicycle-Pedestrian Roundtable includes representatives from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (statewide entity), county conservation boards, municipal park and recreation departments, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), and user groups;
 - The Freight Roundtable includes representatives from the Iowa DOT, trucking companies, rail companies, manufacturers, logistics companies, the DMIA, the GDMP, and DMAMPO representatives;
 - The Traffic Management Advisory Committee (TMAC) includes representatives from local police departments, fire departments, public works, Polk County Emergency Management, towing companies, the Iowa DOT, the FHWA Iowa Division, the Iowa State Patrol, and the TMA;
 - The Stakeholders Working Group includes representatives from local environmental groups, local neighborhood groups, water and waste agencies, the Corps, the FTA Region 7, the FHWA Iowa Division, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Iowa DOT, the State Historical Society of Iowa, county conservation boards, and the DART; and,
 - The DMAMPO also invited representatives from the Des Moines Water Works, the Metro Waste Authority, the Wastewater Reclamation Authority, and the GDMP to participate in identifying growth areas for the HY 2035 LRTP development.

3. How is the MPO staff organized and what are their responsibilities?

The DMAMPO staff:

- Includes the DMAMPO Executive Director, who heads the DMAMPO's staff;
- Includes the following DMAMPO staff positions: a Principal Transportation Planner, a Senior Transportation Planner, a Travel Demand Modeler, three Associate Transportation Planners, an Executive Administrator, an Administrative Assistant, and one/two Interns (seasonal); and,
- Is responsible for data collection, data analysis, research, mapping, report writing, and fulfilling the U.S. DOT's and the Iowa DOT's requirements for metropolitan transportation planning.

AGREEMENTS AND COORDINATION

4. **What interagency agreements exist between the MPO, State DOT(s), and transit operators, and are such agreements current? Have there been any changes to the interagency agreements between the MPO, State DOT(s), and transit operator(s) since the previous planning review? Please include all current agreements with your response packet.**

The DMAMPO:

- Enters into an annual planning agreement with the Iowa DOT to perform transportation planning functions for the Des Moines Urbanized Area, and to document how those funds the Iowa DOT will pass through to the DMAMPO to support the work element activities identified in the DMAMPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); and,
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with MTA (now the DART) in December 2000, outlining each agency's transit planning activities, including the DMAMPO's role for long-range transit planning and DART/MTA's role for short- and mid-range transit planning.

The DMAMPO:

- Proceeded with an unofficial update to the MPO/DART (formerly MTA) Memorandum of Understanding regarding handling certain FTA transit planning funds.

5. **Please discuss efforts of the MPO to promote communication and engage in regular coordination with adjacent regions (RPAs and/or MPOs) on transportation issues, MPO products and activities.**

The DMAMPO:

- Serves as the CIRTPA staff, the Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA) for central Iowa and for the Iowa DOT's Region 11;
- Includes representatives from Dallas, Polk, and Warren Counties who may serve on both the DMAMPO and the CIRTPA;
- Develops the PTDP as a joint plan between the DMAMPO and the CIRTPA;
- Engaged representatives from both the DMAMPO and the CIRTPA to form the Regional Planning Committee in an effort to look at regional transportation planning corridors beyond the existing DMAMPO Planning Area Boundary;
- Met with representatives from central Iowa's transit agencies, the GDMP, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, the Cities of Ames and Ankeny, and the Iowa State University to discuss potential commuting options between the Cities of Ames and Des Moines; and,

- Attends the Iowa DOT's Quarterly MPO Directors and Quarterly RPA Directors meetings held in Ames.

6. Please discuss how you coordinate with other local governments or agencies that impact transportation planning, and whose role may include transit, safety, security, bicycle-pedestrian land use, zoning, and other transportation related roles.

The DMAMPO:

- Composes the DMAMPO and the DMAMPO TTC of DMAMPO member government and participating agency representatives;
- Includes two DMAMPO TTC subcommittees, Engineering and Planning, comprised of engineering and planning staff of the DMAMPO member governments along with Iowa DOT and DART representatives;
- Includes a number of roundtables and working groups, i.e. Public Transportation, Bicycle-Pedestrian, Freight, Traffic Management, and Stakeholders, representing specific planning interests, including transit, bicycle-pedestrian, freight, traffic management, and environmental planning interests;
- Includes special interest and local government representatives on these roundtables and working groups;
- Requests the roundtables and working groups to meet; and,
- Compiles various local data and plans to create regional documents, such as the Transportation Capital Improvement Program (non-federal aid transportation system improvements) and the Future Land Use Map (compiled from the Land Use Element of DMAMPO member governments' comprehensive plans).

7. Please discuss interaction between the State DOT(s), FTA and FHWA in providing support and technical assistance to the MPO. Is there a need to improve the working relationships or responsiveness of those agencies?

The DMAMPO:

- Includes Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA representatives on DMAMPO committees, subcommittees, roundtables, and working groups;
- Attends the Iowa DOT's Quarterly MPO Directors and Quarterly RPA Directors meetings;
- Attends the Midwest Travel Model Users Group, organized and staffed by the Iowa DOT's Office of Systems Planning travel demand modeling team;
- Works with the Iowa DOT Office Systems Planning staff to coordinate planning document review;
- Coordinates with the Iowa DOT's Office of Systems Planning staff to obtain population and employment forecasts from Iowa DOT's Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) model;

- Receives FHWA and FTA technical assistance, as needed (Title VI, Financial Plan, SAFETEA-LU compliance, etc.); and,
- Assists the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA, as needed and as requested.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA BOUNDARIES

The Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) defines the geographic area in which the MPO, the State DOT, and transit operators have agreed to conduct transportation planning under 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C 5303-5305. The MPO defines the area in which federally funded projects must be part of a financially constrained Transportation Plan and a financially constrained TIP. The primary application to Certification is a determination that the MPA has been established in accordance with the regulations, and that the planning and program development processes cover the entire area.

- 8. Please provide a map(s) showing the following boundaries: Census-Urbanized Area (UZA), FHWA Urban Area Boundary (UAB), Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary (MPA), and air quality Nonattainment/Maintenance Area boundaries (if applicable). Have there been any changes to the metropolitan [planning area boundary since the previous planning review? Which, if any, areas are under consideration for inclusion in an expanded MPA in the next 20 years? What factors will determine the decision on expanded boundaries?**

The DMAMPO:

- Expanded its Year 2030 Planning Area Boundary in December 2006 to include the City of Mitchellville (Polk County);
- Expanded its Planning Area Boundary in January 2008 to encompass a planning area consistent with activities to be undertaken in Horizon Year 2035 LRTP Update; and,
- Reviewed member governments' and agencies' respective future land use plans, reviewed public infrastructure expansion plans, and reviewed planned transportation improvements to identify potential areas for inclusion into the Horizon Year 2035 Planning Area Boundary.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

23 CFR 405.308 identifies the requirements for unified planning work programs (UPWP) (also referred to as transportation planning work programs [TPWP] in Iowa) to be prepared for MPOs. CF\$ 420.11 governs work programs required for the expenditure of FHWA highway planning and research funds. MPOs are required to develop UPWPs in cooperation with the State and public transit agencies. [23 CFR 450.308(c)]

9. What is the process to develop and prioritize the work items in the UPWP? How are the needs of each unit of government in the region determined and addressed in the UPWP? How are the major regional transportation needs and policy priorities reflected in the UPWP?

The DMAMPO:

- Develops its UPWP work elements annually by soliciting potential work activity needs for the upcoming fiscal year (FY) from the DMAMPO's member governments and participating agencies by including an open invitation in the DMAMPO and in the DMAMPO TTC's December and January monthly meeting agenda packets;
- Develops its UPWP by referring to federally-mandated regulatory requirements;
- Proposes UPWP work element activities and projects based on the DMAMPO staff's experience and knowledge of the Planning Area's transportation planning activities;
- Requests the DART develop its projects for inclusion in the DMAMPO's UPWP through community input, from identifying transit needs through various means of communication, from individual customer comments to the DART, and from group discussions at public meetings/hearings; and,
- Requests the DART incorporate these community input comments into its transit planning projects such as "Transit Service Planning." And with an example being the DART developing Bus Rapid Transit Study Alternatives Analysis project through community and committee needs identification.

10. Does the UPWP reflect all transportation planning activities and transportation-related air quality activities in the MPO planning area, regardless of how they are funded?

The DMAMPO:

- Does not reflect all transportation planning activities in the UPWP; and,
 - The DMIA does not share with the DMAMPO its airport planning activities for inclusion in the UPWP; and,
 - DMAMPO member governments do not include their respective planning activities for inclusion in the UPWP.

- 11. How does the UPWP provide a strategic view of and a strategic direction for metropolitan planning activities, and how do the activities in the UPWP relate to the goals and priorities identified in the LRTP? Is the UPWP used to provide the direction to the staff on their work on transportation planning work products?**

The DMAMPO:

- Identifies a series of UPWP work elements, their respective activities, and anticipated work products;
- Develops UPWP work elements based on both DMAMPO member government and participating agencies input and on the current LRTP's goals; and,
- Identifies proposed staff hours to accomplish a work element's activities.

- 12. How are the UPWP amendments developed and processed?**

The DMAMPO:

- Amends and revises the UPWP on an as-needed basis; and,
- Presents UPWP amendments to the DMAMPO committees on a two month cycle, in the first month as a discussion item among the committees and then, in the second month, as an action item for the committees.

- 13. In the current UPWP, are all Federal fiscal resources budgeted that are available for planning? How much PL/5303 funds were carried over at the end of the last fiscal year? For the past three years, have all the fiscal resources been spent, and is there a balance of Federal planning funds? If so, what is the current balance? Are there ongoing issues concerning over- or under-budgeting of Federal planning funds?**

The DMAMPO:

- Annually shares with the its member governments a Estimated Operating Reserves worksheet (in the Appendices) prior to developing the upcoming UPWP budget;
- In the Estimated Operating Reserves worksheet, the "new" and "carryover" FHWA/FTA planning funds are itemized
- The Estimated Operating Reserves worksheet notes the proposed budget amount and how well the Executive Director is able to assure the DMAMPO that there, at a minimum, will be five months funding reserve above and beyond the annual budget;
- In developing the UPWP budget, effort is made to use "old funds" first;
- Routinely has a federal planning funds carryover balance at the end of each year, as does the DMAMPO in general;

- Has federal planning fund carryover balances because of its infusion of local funds to cover several UPWP work element activities to counter having to use Circular A-87 guidance for certain activities and to be independent of a Iowa DOT and a FHWA Iowa Division approval process for funds expenditures for certain activities (not to avoid scrutiny, but to limit chance non-compliance);
- Has been conservative in staffing requirements and in indirect cost expenditures;
- Has been supportive of the Executive Director's management style and budget management decisions;
- Requested the Executive Director, in FY 2008, to hold the member governments' annual per capita assessment to support the UPWP and budget at current levels (60¢ per capita) for another five years (recognizing that the Executive Director had one assessment increase since 1996, that of going from 48¢ to 60¢ per capita in 2003 and remaining at that level now for eight years); and,
- Balances between fully programming all federal planning funds (staffing up, more indirect cost items) and being conservative (resulting in federal planning fund carryovers); opting to take a steady, constant course while providing a strong MPO program in the Des Moines Planning Area.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

14. Please explain how the agency carries out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process, and addresses each of the eight planning factors listed in 23 CFR 450.306.

The DMAMPO:

- Uses the federally-mandated eight planning factors as a resource when developing the HY 2035 LRTP goals;
- Addresses those eight planning factors in their transportation planning process through the UPWP and the LRTP, as noted briefly below:
 1. Economic Vitality:
 - Participates closely with the business community through the GDMP and other business development groups;
 - Ensures, through the Freight Roundtable's work, the Des Moines Planning Area and central Iowa remain competitive due to ease of movement of goods/freight in and through this region; and,
 - Works with the Iowa DOT's Office of Systems Planning to use the Iowa DOT's REMI model to forecast population and workforce growth and change;
 2. Safety:
 - Uses the Iowa DOT's crash data;
 - Promotes using Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technology to improve safety of the Planning Area's roadway system;
 - Maintains a Regional ITS Architecture for the Planning Area, using the document as a platform for the various fire, police, highway patrol, emergency management, public works, traffic engineering, towing, and related groups to improve communications that enable and support a safer and more secure metropolitan transportation system;
 - Created the ITS Policy Subcommittee, composed of DMAMPO policy makers, to work with the DMAMPO's TMAC and the Iowa DOT on continued maintenance and operation of the Iowa DOT's Traffic Management Center (TMC) in this Planning Area; and,
 - Created the TMAC, at the request of the Iowa DOT and the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau, to continue the work of federal, state, and local agencies and governments by meeting regularly to discuss operational concerns of the transportation system, with emphasis on incident management/quick clearance.
 3. Security:

- Promotes using ITS technology to improve security of the Planning Area's transportation system;
 - Maintains a Regional ITS Architecture for the Planning Area, using the document as a platform for the various fire, police, highway patrol, emergency management, public works, traffic engineering, towing, and related groups to improve communications that enable and support a safer and more secure metropolitan transportation system;
 - Created the ITS Policy Subcommittee, composed of DMAMPO policy makers, to work with the DMAMPO's TMAC and the Iowa DOT on continued maintenance and operation of the Iowa DOT's TMC in this Planning Area; and,
 - Created the TMAC, at the request of the Iowa DOT and the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau, to continue the work of federal, state, and local agencies and governments by meeting regularly to discuss operational concerns of the transportation system, with emphasis on incident management/quick clearance;
4. Mobility Options for People and Freight:
- Works closely with the DART in maintaining and updating the DMAMPO's PTDP;
 - Created a Transit Roundtable (now the Public Transportation Roundtable) to discuss public transportation issues and opportunities from both a metropolitan and a regional perspective, including transit facility needs, intercity passenger rail service, commuting opportunities between Ames and Des Moines, human service transportation coordination, and transit-oriented development;
 - Has staff attend the GDMP's Transit 2030 Vision Task Force quarterly meetings;
 - Created a Freight Roundtable to consider goods movement issues in the Planning Area, in central Iowa, across the state, and in the North American Trade Corridor (I-35/I-29), encouraging the public and private sectors to work together to ensure our transportation system is secure, safe, well-maintained, and efficient for freight movement intermodally and multi-modally;
5. Environment and Energy Conservation:
- Developed the Stakeholders Working Group to discuss environmental concerns related to the transportation system;
 - Inventoried and identified environmentally sensitive natural resources, as well as social, cultural, and historic significant resources;

- Defers to Polk County Public Works Air Quality Division for monitoring and responding to Planning Area air quality issues; and,
 - At this point in time, understands the Planning Area will not be affected by the U.S. EPA's recent issuance of new air quality standards, particularly as it relates to Lead (Pb) and Ozone (O₃) standards;
6. Connectivity:
- Routinely reviews a member government's comprehensive plan street and highway element to collect transportation elements and components important for that government;
 - Any changes to a member government's comprehensive plan street and highway element are brought forward through the DMAMPO's committee process, with the DMAMPO ultimately voting to agree to incorporate those changes into the "elements map" (also known as the "Future Street and Highway Map"). a composite of all member governments' individual street and highway elements of their respective comprehensive plans;
 - In building and updating the DMAMPO's Future Street and Highways Map, the staff monitors the street and highway system resulting from the staff compiling the individual government information, monitoring to ensure freeway, arterial, and collector street continuity;
 - In updating the LRTP, the DMAMPO works with the CIRTPA to ensure future Planning Area roadway proposals area are consistent with, connected to, and provide continuity with similar roadways in the eight-county CIRTPA region;
 - Has been contacted by member governments to monitor the Planning Area's rail network, and proposed rail abandonment, to ensure rail corridors for future passenger rail service, when feasible, are not lost;
 - Has promoted with local governments and development agencies to recognize proposed rail abandonment and how such proposed abandonment would affect those local governments and development agencies having interest in retaining rail access for future freight rail service and accompanying potential economic development; and,
 - Routinely works with the DMAMPO's committees, subcommittees, roundtables, and working groups to identify and inventory the existing transportation system;
7. System Management and Operations:
- In coordination and cost sharing with the Iowa DOT, acquired the Microscopic Traffic Simulation Model

- (MITSIM) originally for the I-235 reconstruction project and predicting route diversion traffic impact;
 - o Wants to use MITSIM, or similar operational analysis (microsimulation) software, for improving the DMAMPO's ability to go beyond the traditional four-step travel demand modeling process and to try to better understand traffic operations issues (incident management, traffic queuing, roadway congestion) and to evaluate proposed capacity versus operational solutions (i.e. ITS solutions) before actually expending resources for a strategy's implementation;
 - o Plans to take the travel demand model output from the traditional four-step traffic modeling process' model output and incorporate that model output into the microsimulation software and evaluate/analyze traffic operations issues in finer detail;
 - o Believes microsimulation would be an appropriate link to the EPA's MOBILE VI (or most current air quality model);
 - o Maintains and updates the Regional ITS Architecture, as needed;
 - o Remains involved with access management issues, believing access management would have a positive impact on the metropolitan transportation systems operational characteristics;
 - o Routinely uses the Iowa DOT's crash data; and,
 - o Supports the DMAMPO TMAC and the hosting of monthly meetings dealing with transportation system operational issues;
8. Preservation/Maintenance:
- o Has, and continues to use, the Iowa Pavement Management Program (IPMP) data to review and evaluate proposed transportation system infrastructure improvements.

15. If the metropolitan planning area includes Federal public lands and/or tribal lands, were the affected Federal agencies and Indian tribes invited and/or involved in the development of the plans and programs?

The DMAMPO:

- Does not have Tribal Lands within its Planning Area Boundary;
- Does include federal lands at Camp Dodge (Department of Defense), along Saylorville Lake (reservoir)(Corps), and the Des Moines River (Corps);
- Includes representatives from the Corps and the Iowa DNR on the DMAMPO's Stakeholders Working Group; and,
- Identifies the Corps as a stakeholder when proposed transportation improvements may affect their managed federal lands.

16. **Are sub area or corridor studies undertaken in the MPO planning area? If so, what organizations are involved and what are their roles? Are these studies conducted so that planning decisions and analyses may be carried through to the project development and environmental review process?**

The DMAMPO:

- Participates in a number of corridor, subarea, and interchange justification studies;
- Acknowledges a DMAMPO government or agency often is the lead agency in performing one of those studies;
- Instructs the DMAMPO staff to assist consultants in providing transportation system data layers, travel demand model outputs, forecasted future traffic patterns, etc., to the consultants, and to represent the DMAMPO on technical groups involved in and reviewing the study's work; and,
- May take the lead on performing a subarea analysis, such as the DMAMPO moving forward with identifying Northwest Transportation Corridor Study alignment alternatives and being assisted by the affected DMAMPO member governments.

17. How are the public and private transit operators' planning processes coordinated with the MPO's planning process?

The DMAMPO:

- Maintains a Memorandum of Understanding with MTA (now DART);
- Coordinates through the Public Transportation Roundtable, the Public Transportation Roundtable's Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) for human service coordination, and the GDMP's Transit 2030 Task Force;
- Works with transit operators and the TAG to develop the PTDP; and,
- Incorporates the DART's planning activities into the adopted LRTP.

18. Please discuss the MPO's Roundtables planning processes.

The DMAMPO:

- Instructs its roundtable chairs to select representatives to their respective interest group/roundtable;
- Requests roundtables work on longer-term issues;
- Requests its roundtables review pertinent issues relating to the full DMAMPO, as needed, such as part of the public input/internal review process (i.e., LRTP Goals and Objectives); and,
- Requests its roundtables hold meetings routinely, at a minimum quarterly and at a maximum monthly; and,
- Requests its roundtables to be prepared to provide recommendations to the DMAMPO committees on issues topical to their special interest roundtable.

19. Who is the freight community and how have they been engaged in the transportation planning process?

The DMAMPO:

- Created the Freight Roundtable to continue to pursue the Port Des Moines concept for the Planning Area and for central Iowa;
- Created the Freight Roundtable to bring together the public and the private sectors to address the "goods movement" aspect of the DMAMPO's transportation planning responsibilities;
- Has the Freight Roundtable be representative the freight community, including representatives from local governments, the freight industry, including truck lines, railroads, airports, third-party logistics firms, freight forwarders, and manufacturers;
- Designed the Freight Roundtable to help local governments support private businesses, with recent activities including a Goods Movement Studies Update to determine goods movement and conflict points, the Trans IA/IL Freight Corridor Study, and, most recently, the Port Des Moines initiative; and,

- Is involved with NASCO and NAIPN through the Freight Roundtable.

20. What coordination has taken place in regard to other planning efforts, such as the local land use, and coordinated human service plans?

The DMAMPO:

- Has no responsibility and no jurisdiction over land use planning, per Iowa Code;
- Compiles land use information into the DMAMPO's Future Land Use map, a comprehensive compilation of local governments' future land use plans from those governments' comprehensive plan documents;
- Routinely tracks socioeconomic data changes, economic development trends, building permits activity, etc.;
- Coordinates human service plans at the Public Transportation Roundtable, specifically through the roundtable's subcommittee, the TAG:
 - The TAG, and its subcommittees, meet regularly to develop the PTDP, to implement aspects of the PTDP, and to explore other coordination efforts;
 - The TAG has two standing subcommittees, the Marketing Subcommittee and the Coordination Subcommittee;
 - The TAG created the Marketing Subcommittee following the first coordinated human service plan's development, with the group determining many issues identified through its public input efforts stemmed from a lack of knowledge about the existing human service transportation system;
 - The Marketing Subcommittee's goals are to educate the public about passenger transportation, including how to use transit, and to make information about providers easier to find;
 - The TAG created the Coordination Subcommittee following the first coordinated human service plan when public input indicated providers and agencies were interested, but did not quite know what to do;
 - The TAG applied to and received acceptance from Easter Seals attend the Easter Seals' Project ACTION Mobility Planning Services Institute, sending four TAG participants to the institute in Washington, D.C., in April 2008; and,
 - The TAG held its first one-day Mobility Matters Conference during October 2008 in Des Moines;
- Has the opportunity to have DMAMPO staff serving on the State of Iowa's Iowa Transportation Coordination Council, representing Iowa's MPOs/RPAs.

LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The metropolitan transportation planning process shall include the development of a transportation plan addressing no less than a 20-year planning horizon “. . . the transportation plan shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand. [23 CFR 450.322]

21. How is the projected travel demand determined in the LRTP? How is the travel demand model used in the long-range planning and project selection process?

The DMAMPO:

- Uses the Travel Demand Model (TDM) to project future transportation system traffic volumes;
- Uses its TDM to identify corridors in need of transportation capacity improvements;
- Uses its TDM to provide opportunities to member governments and agencies to test scenarios based upon land use changes and transportation improvements; and,
- Uses its TDM and it's output as the foundation data for Interchange Justification Reports, Environmental Assessments, and Environmental Impact Statements;

22. Please describe the use and reference of other planning strategies and plans including the Passenger Transit Development Plan, Strategic Highway Safety Plan, transit plans, trails plans, emergency evacuation plans, local and regional land-use plans, local housing plans, community development and employment plans, environmental resource plans and other such plans as an element of your planning and forecasting.

The DMAMPO:

- Consulted other planning documents when developing the Goals and Objectives;
- Will use those planning documents to assist in identifying transportation system needs and potential programs, plans, strategies, and improvements;
- Requires all proposed improvements to be consistent with planned improvements in member governments' and agencies' comprehensive planning documents;
- Is attempting to coordinate the LRTP's transit sections with the PTDP;
- Coordinates with the DART's strategic planning efforts in an effort to have the LRTP include more long-range transit planning elements; and,
- Coordinates with the DART to have the DART provide direct input into the transit sections.

23. Does the LRTP include performance measures that relate to the LRTP's goals, objectives and project selection?

The DMAMPO:

- Did not identify specific performance measures in the Year 2030 LRTP; and,
- Developed performance oriented goals and objectives for the HY 2035 LRTP and identified measures of effectiveness (performance) for the performance related objectives.

24. Does the LRTP include management and operations (M&O) strategies that are supported by specific goals and measurable objectives contained in the plan? What involvement does the operations community have in the development of these goals, objectives and strategies, and more generally, in the planning process? Are these M&O strategies consistent with those contained in the MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP)?

The DMAMPO:

- Will identify M&O strategies in the HY 2035 LRTP;
- Relies on the TMAC to meet regularly to discuss operational issues;
- Will ensure that the HY 2035 LRTP's M&O strategies are consistent with the *Congestion Management Process*; and,
- Financially supports the TMA in an effort to identify, to implement, and to promote strategies and programs for reducing single-occupant vehicle usage on the freeway system during peak hours.

25. What are your procedures for consultation with State, Tribal, and local and Federal Lands Management agencies responsible for land-use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation? How are these procedures different from your other consultation procedures?

The DMAMPO:

- Has its Stakeholders Working Group include agencies and groups such as the Corps, Iowa DNR, State Historical Society of Iowa, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, county conservation boards, neighborhood associations, and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation; and,
- Requests the Stakeholders Working Group to meet quarterly to discuss various issues, including environmental and land-management planning issues.

- 26. How is the LRTP compared with State and local conservation plans and maps? How is the LRTP compared to inventories of natural or historic resources?**

The DMAMPO:

- Used the Stakeholders Working Group to assist in developing an environmental and historic resources inventory, as part of the mitigation strategies document;
- Used the Stakeholders Working Group to assist in developing additional map identifying Environmentally Sensitive Areas; and,
- Developed an Environmental Sensitivity Rating system to prioritize high environmentally sensitive areas.

- 27. What environmental mitigation policies, programs and/or strategies have been identified? What information has been assembled regarding the location and condition of natural resources that might be affected by the proposals outlined in the LRTP?**

The DMAMPO:

- Is using its Stakeholders Working Group to assist in identifying potential mitigation strategies; and,
- Used the Stakeholders Working Group to assist in developing an environmental and historic resources inventory, as part of the mitigation strategies document.

- 28. How is the distribution of benefits and impacts to different socioeconomic and ethnic minorities identified and measured? How are benefits and burdens across all socioeconomic groups examined in the modeling and planning performed in support of LRTP development and individual project development?**

The DMAMPO:

- Does not have a specific measure to review impact distribution;
- Does map socioeconomic and ethnic minorities locations; and,
- Is committed to not affecting negatively any ethnicity or socioeconomic group, according to the DMAMPO's HY 2035 LRTP's Goals and Objectives.

- 29. Are illustrative projects included in the current LRTP, and how are they treated? Does the MPO intend to include illustrative projects in the next updated LRTP?**

The DMAMPO:

- Did not include illustrative projects in the Year 2030 LRTP;
- Did include projects not formally by FHWA, and included written references to that fact; and,

- Anticipates identifying illustrative projects in the HY 2035 L RTP because fiscal constraint may cause some proposed projects not to be included in the updated L RTP.

FINANCIAL PLANNING

- 30. How are cost estimates developed for the LRTP, UPWP, and TIP? How do you calculate and/or ensure that project costs are in year of expenditure (YOE) dollars?**

The DMAMPO:

- Develops cost estimates for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) from the local government/agency, or their consultant, cost estimates for their respective project(s) in the TIP;
- Encourages each sponsoring government/agency to add inflation costs to their project's total cost;
- Suggests if a government/agency is unsure of the rate of inflation, that the government/agency use the Iowa DOT's recommended per year multiplier to the total project cost of an additional 4% per year;
- Delegates UPWP cost estimate development to the Executive Director;
- Develops LRTP cost estimates using estimates identified from the TIP and/or a cost breakdown, identifying project cost estimates by project type based on per lane mile expenses, from Iowa DOT-collected information;
- Estimates Year of Expenditure (YOE) at an annual 4% rate increase; and,
- Will include in the HY 2035 LRTP cost banding for projects beyond the new LRTP's first five years, and will determine a YOE for groups of projects.

- 31. Do local governments, transit operator(s), and the State DOT provide timely and adequate projections of future revenue for the MPO?**

The DMAMPO:

- Receives from the Iowa DOT annual Surface Transportation Program (STP) and STP Transportation Enhancement (TE) targets of future revenues.

- 32. How do you calculate operations and maintenance (O&M) costs? Does O&M include costs for existing, plus planned facilities (highways, transit, trails, etc.)?**

The DMAMPO:

- Receives from the Iowa DOT operations and maintenance (O&M) costs for the TIP;
- Reports O&M costs as system-wide totals, and includes all federal-aid system routes, transit facilities, and the local road systems; and,

- Receives from the Iowa DOT O&M revenue data derived from city and county-submitted road use tax finance reports.

33. Please discuss any current or possible future innovative financing techniques or programs for the MPO area.

The DMAMPO:

- Has identified several new and/or possible revenue sources;
- Supports the Iowa DOT-developed TIME 21 initiative and discussions of a group of potential revenue sources, including the pros and cons of those revenue-generating strategies; and,
- Recognizes that these proposed revenue-generating initiatives would help to provide additional revenues to the State of Iowa or to local jurisdictions for infrastructure investment.

34. Is the TIP fiscally constrained by year? What assumptions do you use for revenue projections?

The DMAMPO:

- Ensures the TIP is fiscally constrained by year;
- Maintains DMAMPO STP and STP TE balance sheets, recording estimated funding targets, funds allocated “rollover” funding, and projects returning or exceeding their funds award to help balance programmed funding versus available funding;
- Assumes governments/agencies supplying project funding information would ensure financial capacity to carry out projects identified in the respective fiscal years;
- Receives from the Iowa DOT an annual federal STP and STP TE funding targets;
- Assumes governments/agencies apply a 4% YOY to all total project costs for projects in out years; and,
- Applies a 4% YOY to all project total costs of those governments/agencies that did not add a 4% YOY to their projects in out years.

35. What mechanism is used to ensure project cost updates from completed environmental review documents, mega project cost plans, and final designs are included in the LRTP and TIP?

The DMAMPO:

- Requests a project sponsor to annually inform the DMAMPO of updates in total project cost of all the project sponsor’s TIP projects and requests project sponsors to update the total project costs for projects in the TIP that roll over to reflect the additional year of expenditure cost;”

AIR QUALITY

Provisions governing air-quality-related transportation planning are incorporated in a number of metropolitan planning regulations rather than being the primary focus of one or several regulations. For MPOs that are declared to be air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas, there are many special requirements in addition to the basic requirements for a metropolitan planning process.

- 36. Describe the roles and responsibilities of all the organizations responsible for air quality monitoring and analysis. Does the MPO use Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding and if so, what types of projects have been CMAQ funded?**

The DMAMPO:

- Notes that Polk County Public Works Air Quality Division performs the air quality analysis for the Des Moines Planning Area;
- Works with the Polk County Public Works Air Quality Division on air quality issues, data, and documents for the Des Moines Planning Area;
- Includes representatives from the Iowa DNR Air Quality Bureau and the EPA Air Planning and Development Branch on the Stakeholders Working Group;
- Addresses air quality topics through the Stakeholders Working Group; and,
- Notes that DMAMPO member governments and participating agencies receive Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funding through the Iowa DOT's Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP):
 - In recent years, ICAAP-funded projects include extension of transit services for the DART, intersection modification, corridor improvements, environmentally friendly bus upgrades, traffic signal interconnects, and corridor widening.

- 37. Please describe any air quality/potential nonattainment issues your planning area is facing.**

The DMAMPO:

- Does not have any air quality attainment issues; and,
- With redefinition of air quality standards, is moving in the non-attainment status direction.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The MPO is required, under 23 CFR 450.324, to develop a TIP in cooperation with the State and public transit operators.

38. Does the TIP contain the following?

- All of the transportation projects to be funded under Title 23, U.S.C., with the exception of categories that are specifically exempt (e.g., safety projects funded under 23 U.S.C. 402)
- All regionally significant transportation projects regardless of funding source or lead agency
- Cost estimates
- Project phase and implementation status
- Amount of Federal funds proposed to be obligated during each program year
- Proposed sources of Federal and non-Federal funds
- Public Involvement Process
- Project Selection Process
- Connection to LRTP
- Financial Plan
- Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

The DMAMPO:

- Identifies these listed elements in the TIP, except for the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects:
 - The TIP contains a status report for each project of the previous Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) identifying authorization, letting, “rollover,” and so forth; and,
 - At the end of FFY 2008, the DMAMPO began publishing the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects as a separate document.

39. Please discuss the criteria used to determine which projects will be included in the TIP. How are projects prioritized? Are any Federal funds, such as STP or Section 5307 funds, suballocated among jurisdictions or modes? If so, how much funding is suballocated and through what process?

The DMAMPO:

- Includes regionally significant transportation projects in the TIP, regardless of funding source;
- Solicits STP and STP TE project applications from member governments and participating agencies (the Iowa DOT and the DART):
- Requests interested parties submit STP and STP TE applications to the DMAMPO;
- Works with the various subcommittees of the DMAMPO TTC to score and rank the projects, with projects scoring 50 points or

above (on 100-point scale) being eligible for DMAMPO STP and/or STP TE funding;

- Requires project sponsors to formally present their projects to the DMAMPO's STP Funding Subcommittee, with the subcommittee chaired by an Executive Committee member and the other representatives being policy makers;
- Instructs the STP Funding Subcommittee to review all projects and to submit recommended project funding to the Executive Committee;
- Makes the final decision on STP and STP TE project funding, based on the Executive Committee's recommendation, based on the STP Funding Subcommittee's recommendations on the DMAMPO TTC's project scoring; and,
- Does not suballocate STP or STP TE funds.

40. What is the process for ensuring that the projects in the TIP are consistent with the MPO's LRTP and the Statewide LRTP?

The DMAMPO:

- Requires projects to be consistent with the DMAMPO's adopted LRTP to be eligible to apply for DMAMPO STP or STP TE funding:
 - The DMAMPO's defined federal-aid system contains all roadways classified as collector or higher for the urban area, or major collector or higher for the rural area, under the Federal Functional Classification System;
 - Roads and bridges must be on the federal-aid system; and,
 - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities must be on the DMAMPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities map.

41. How successfully does the TIP serve as a management tool for implementing the LRTP?

The DMAMPO:

- Implements the LRTP by requiring a project to be included in the TIP be consistent with that project's description and anticipated year of construction contained in the current LRTP;
- Uses the TIP to identify the criteria and the process for prioritizing transportation plan elements implementation for inclusion in the TIP under the DMAMPO's *Guidelines for STP and STP TE Funding* Project Priority Ranking section; and,
- Does not include in the TIP a list of implemented major projects from the previous TIP and does not identify any significant delays in the planned implementation of major projects.

- 42. Please discuss how the MPO staff, member agencies, the State DOT, and the transit operators collaborate on the development of the TIP. Please discuss if improvements can be made to this process. What barriers exist in implementing these improvements?**

The DMAMPO:

- Collaborates differently among the referenced governments and agencies;
- Prepares for TIP development by requesting each project sponsor to submit a status report on their project(s) for the current FFY and to update any projects in the TIP with new project costs, letting dates, project scopes, and so forth;
- Continues collaboration with member governments when listing projects in the TIP, verifying all projects have accurate information;
- Is in constant communication with the Iowa DOT throughout TIP development;
- Requests the DART to supply all transit-related projects, and additional information, to be included in the TIP's Transit Section;
- Continues working with the DART throughout the FFY on needed amendments and revisions to TIP's Transit Section;
- Is unaware of any barriers that exist in implementing improvements; and,
- Has improved communication among the various governments and agencies involved over the past 24 months:
 - Data gathering is more efficient;
 - The Iowa DOT's TPMS makes representing projects easier;
 - The various local staffs make TIP development a smooth process; and,
 - The remaining area for improvement would be receiving "accurate project costs."

- 43. What process is used to ensure that projects utilize the federal funds in the year for which they are programmed? Over the past three years, what percentage of projects in the TIP actually advanced to construction?**

The DMAMPO:

- Requests project sponsors semi-annually submit their STP or STP TE programmed project(s)' status and progress:
 - Sponsors submit synopses of project progress accomplished or project delays encountered in project implementation;
- Believes in a rapid turnover of federal funds and specific projects being implemented to avoid jeopardy and loss of project funding; and,

- Notes that a member government's/agency's STP or STP TE programmed project does not make satisfactory progress and does not obligate the STP or STP TE funds the DMAMPO provided within the year those funds were programmed, then the DMAMPO may cancel the remaining STP or STP TE funding for the project and return those STP or STP TE funds for inclusion in the next fiscal year's STP or STP TE funding program.

44. What are the procedures (including public involvement) for TIP amendments and administrative modifications? Are major/minor revisions defined? What is the process for ensuring “rollover projects” are included in the TIP?

The DMAMPO:

- Uses SAFETEA-LU regulations and defined procedures for TIP amendments and administrative modifications;
- Informs the DMAMPO's committees of all minor administrative revisions within the monthly meeting agenda process;
- Issues a public input notice to interested parties regarding TIP amendments 30 or more days prior to a scheduled public input meeting;
- Defines major and minor TIP administrative modifications;
- Develops the future TIP by requesting each project sponsor to submit a status report on their project(s) for the current FFY and to update any of their projects in the TIP having new project costs, letting dates, project scopes, and so forth;
- Uses this status report process to obtain any knowledge for the need to “rollover” a project in the TIP to the next FFY;
- Is notified by the Iowa DOT, through TPMS, when the FHWA authorizes a project; and,
- Holds a project until that project receives that TPMS notice of authorization; and,
- “Rolls a project over” if the FHWA authorization is not received and reprograms that project into the next FFY and includes that “rollover” project in a future TIP.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The requirements for public involvement are set forth primarily in 23 CFT 450.316(a)(1)(2)(3) and (b) which address elements of the metropolitan planning process. Public involvement also is addressed specifically in connection with the Transportation Plan in 450.322(g)(1)(2), (i), and (j) and the TIP in 450.324(b); participation and consultation requirements which pertain to the Transportation Plan and the TIP, also included in 450.322 (f)(7) and (g)(1)(2), (i), and (j) and in 450.324(b).

45. What opportunities are provided for public participation at key decision points in the planning, programming, and project development phases of transportation decision making? How is the process managed and updated to meet the changing needs of communicating with the public and their expectations for active involvement?

The DMAMPO

- Holds a Citizen Transportation Congress semi-annually to educate the public/community on the DMAMPO's role in the community;
- Holds the Citizen Transportation Congress to gather public comment regarding transportation issues in general;
- Schedules public input meetings for DMAMPO documents, disseminating information about these documents to the public and soliciting public review and comment on these same documents;
- Holds public input meetings to solicit public review and comment on amendments to any DMAMPO documents;
- Hosts a number of roundtables, subcommittees, and working groups who hold regular meetings to discuss transportation planning-related issues, such as freight, transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and the environment, with all such meetings open to the public:
 - These roundtables, subcommittees, and working groups consist of various special interests concerned about various relevant issues;
 - These roundtables, subcommittees, and working groups work to represent their constituents and customers throughout the transportation planning process; and,
 - These roundtables, subcommittees, and working groups also provide recommendations and comments to the DMAMPO during transportation planning produced development, such as the Bicycle-Pedestrian Roundtable offering initial recommendations on STP TE project funding.
- Updates the participation process on a continual basis;
- Attempts new strategies for public outreach and for information provision to the public on a regular basis:
 - Recent examples include the change in the Citizen Transportation Congress' event format and change in the *InTouch* newsletter;
 - The DMAMPO changed the Citizen Transportation

Congress' event format to address a specific transportation planning issue at each meeting, such as discussion regarding developing HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives or the HY 2035 LRTP planning process, with the DMAMPO continuing to use the Citizen Transportation Congress as a forum to provide public input and comment regarding the DMAMPO's transportation planning function and purpose;

- The DMAMPO changed the *InTouch* newsletter to address specific transportation issues, such as the function and purpose of the DMAMPO, the long-range transportation plan process, density requirements for different types of public transportation, and public participation strategies used by the DMAMPO. The DMAMPO continues to use the *InTouch* newsletter to provide announcements for public input meetings”;
- Uses additional public input strategies in developing the HY 2035 LRTP;
- Is implementing a series of open houses for the public to review and to offer comment on the draft HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives;
- Is supplementing the open houses with a survey of the public's mood and view on each proposed HY 2035 LRTP Goal or Objective level of importance to the public; and,
- Has updated the DMAMPO's *Public Involvement Process*, approved in 2002, to the DMAMPO's *Public Participation Plan*, approved in 2009, with the newly issued *Public Participation Plan* defining strategies and procedures the DMAMPO will follow in conducting public participation.

46. How does the public participation process demonstrate explicit consideration and responsiveness to public input received during the planning and program development process? Specifically, in what instances have comments raised through public participation resulted in changes to policy, plans, programs or projects?

The DMAMPO:

- Attempts to incorporate the public into the initial phase of plan development;
- Reviews, summarizes, and presents all meeting comments to the DMAMPO's committees before those committees take their actions; and,
- Notes the following instances when public input resulted in changes:
 - NE 18th Street did not re-apply for ICAAP funding due to public comment;
 - The Regional Planning Committee removed a proposed future transportation corridor from its document due

- to public comment;
- o Public comment helping shape HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives development; and,
- o The DMAMPO's roundtables/working groups helped develop plans.

47. Has the MPO updated its public participation process to include the expanded list of "interested parties" identified in SAFETEA-LU?

The DMAMPO:

- Identified the following groups and individuals as having potential interest in public input and involvement opportunities and has updated its *Public Participation Plan* accordingly:
 - o Neighborhood organizations;
 - o Homeowner associations;
 - o The GDMP, Chambers of Commerce, and other business groups;
 - o Private transportation providers;
 - o Groups representing travel modes – trucking, railroad, transit, bicycle, pedestrian;
 - o Advocacy groups for the disadvantaged, disabled, and/or minority groups;
 - o Transportation providers for groups lacking access to private vehicles;
 - o Media – newspapers, television, radio;
 - o Governmental agencies;
 - o Schools, environmental organizations, social action groups, and hospitals; and,
 - o Organizations or individuals interested in public participating in the public hearings for major projects or providing comments relating to public hearings for major projects.

48. Please discuss efforts to make MPO information and documents available in electronically accessible formats.

The DMAMPO:

- Publishes its documents in a digital format (Adobe PDF[®]) for easy download;
- Uses its website, www.dmampo.org, to provide links to DMAMPO meeting agendas, committee representatives, staff contact information, news, maps, plans, and publications;
- Uses its website to provides links to member government and partner agency websites;
- Regularly updates and maintains its website; and,
- Sends information electronically on upcoming events, meetings, and summary information about current activities to citizens included in the DMAMPO's mailing list database.

49. How does the MPO engage in public education efforts designed to make the transportation planning process and decisions it produces easier to understand in laypersons' terms?

The DMAMPO:

- Hosts a semi-annual Citizen Transportation Congress to provide information to the public about the DMAMPO and the DMAMPO's transportation planning activities:
 - The Citizen Transportation Congress also serves as a general input meeting for citizens to provide feedback on any transportation-related concerns citizens may have; and,
- Publishes the *InTouch* newsletter to address topical transportation planning topics and issues:
 - *InTouch's goal* is to provide citizens with a better understanding of more detailed aspects of how the DMAMPO's is involved and what are its responsibilities related to development of the Planning Area's transportation system.

50. What visualization techniques have been used to aid the public in understanding the transportation planning process including the UPWP, LRTP, TIP, and supporting studies?

The DMAMPO

- Develops maps, charts, graphs, and other figures and tables to display data.

SELF CERTIFICATION

Self-Certification of the metropolitan planning process, at least once every four years, is required under 23 CFR 450.334.

51. What process/procedures are used to self-certify the planning process?

The DMAMPO:

- Meets with and follows the Iowa DOT's requirements for developing plans and programs to ensure documents meet the federal regulations' full intent;
- Submits to the Iowa DOT, FHWA Iowa Division, and to FTA Region 7 draft versions of the TIP and UPWP annually for review and comment; and,
- Recognizes that its staff meets weekly to discuss and to review planning project status, activity, and progress.

52. What educational efforts, background information, guidance or documentation is the policy board provided to help them understand the meaning of self-certification in regard to the various Federal laws and requirements listed in 23 CFT 450.334(a)?

The DMAMPO:

- Receives from staff, through monthly meeting agenda packets, background information of proposed transportation planning process changes/additions to meet new requirements; and,
- Requests the staff to host an Representatives Workshop, primarily for newly appointed DMAMPO representatives, to explain the MPO process, requirements, and activities.

TITLE VI AND RELATED

Over the past few years, US DOT has encouraged a proactive approach to the participation of protected groups and implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (non-discrimination the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, physical handicap) and the Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice (addresses disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations) requirements. This approach is intended to ensure compliance with other related requirements, such as NEPA.

- 53. Has the planning process developed a demographic profile of the metropolitan planning area that includes identification of the locations of socioeconomic groups, including low-income and minority populations? What data was utilized for this determination? Has your planning process determined and measured the impact of projects on these identified locations of low-income and minority populations?**

The DMAMPO:

- Has developed maps using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Decennial Census, Census Transportation Planning Package,, and American Community Survey;
- Has developed maps using the U.S. DOT's National Household Travel Survey;
- Has developed maps using its many other socioeconomic data sets;
- Does not provide a specific measure to quantify impacts to minority populations and socioeconomic populations;
- Has identified and mapped certain populations (low-income persons, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, persons with limited English proficiency, and households with no vehicles available) in the PTDP, and has compared and analyzed transit service availability to these populations; and,
- Will include a socioeconomic analysis in the HY 2035 LRTP:
 - A breakdown of the population by age, sex, race, disability status, and income, as well as any other pertinent information;
 - The population information included at the beginning of the certification review question responses; and,
 - An analysis of the recommended projects' impact on various population groups in the Environmental Review section to comply with Environmental Justice requirements.

- 54. What strategies and efforts has your planning process developed for ensuring, demonstrating, and substantiating compliance with Title VI? As per the Environmental Justice requirements, how has the MPO sought to seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by transportation systems (such as low income, minority households, or limited English proficiency persons) that may face challenges accessing employment and other services?**

The DMAMPO:

- Addresses Title VI in its *Public Participation Plan* and its *Title VI Compliance Report*; and
- Addresses in the PTDP services locations, minority population locations, and socioeconomic populations' locations, and access to facilities.

- 55. Have there been any Title VI or ADA complaints regarding the MPO or the transportation planning process? What is the Title VI reporting process?**

The DMAMPO:

- Has not received any Title VI or ADA complaints regarding the DMAMPO or the transportation planning process; and,
- Includes the Title VI reporting process as a section of the *Public Participation Plan*:
 - Persons wishing to file a formal discrimination complaint may do so by completing the Title VI Complaint Form, available by contacting the DMAMPO;
 - Persons are instructed to send the form to the DMAMPO's designated Title VI Coordinator, Stephanie Ripperger;
 - Within 10 calendar days, the DMAMPO will forward this form and any additional information to the Iowa DOT Title VI Coordinator;
 - Once received, the Iowa DOT will conduct an investigation into the complaint and will make a recommendation to the FHWA;
 - The FHWA will make the final determination regarding a complaint; and,
 - The Iowa DOT and the DMAMPO will inform the person filing the complaint of the FHWA's final determination.

56. Please discuss significant ADA issues in the metropolitan area. How has the planning process been utilized to implement ADA requirements and address these issues?

The DMAMPO:

- Discusses in its PTDP ADA accessibility of the DART's buses;
- Notes the Public Transportation Roundtable's TAG and the Bicycle-Pedestrian Roundtable have discussed potential ADA issues regarding Planning Area sidewalks; and,
- Addressed and identified ADA issues in the HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives.

TRANSIT AND COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Under SAFETEA-LU, as a condition for receiving formula funding under FTA's New Freedoms, Job Access Reverse Commute, and Elderly and Disabled Transportation FTA programs, proposed projects must be derived from a locally developed coordinated human services transportation plan. Under the New Freedoms and Job Access Reverse Commute programs, a fair and equitable competitive selection process for projects derived from the Plan needs to occur at intervals not to exceed two years.

- 57. Does the MPO's planning area have a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan? If so, is the Plan being annually updated? Which agency coordinated the development and administers the plan? Is the plan and the process used to develop the plan consistent with the metropolitan planning process?**

The DMAMPO:

- Develops and coordinates the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, in Iowa known as the PTDP:
 - Developed the PTDP FYs 2007-2011, and,
 - Is developing the draft PTDP update now, for FYs 2010–2013;
- Ensures the process is consistent with the DMAMPO's transportation planning process; and,
- Includes public input, stakeholder consultation, and formal PTDP approval via the standard DMAMPO committee structure.

- 58. Is there a competitive project selection process? What entity conducts selection process? Was the availability of funds and selection criteria publicly advertised in appropriate formats and forums to potential applicants? Following the competitive selection process, was a list of selected projects published?**

The DMAMPO:

- Coordinates with the DART on the Section 5316 and Section 5317 funds competitive selection process:
 - The DART is the designated FTA Section 5316 and Section 5317 funds designated recipient;
 - The DART handles the public announcement process for the competitive project selection process;
 - Because the DART also can be the applicant for these funds, the DART and the DMAMPO entered into an agreement, via the Transit Roundtable (now the Public Transportation Roundtable) to have the Transit Roundtable's TAG receive the project applications for those funds and to select recipients for the Sections 5316 and 5317 funding based on the DMAMPO's PTDP process; and,

- In compliance with Section 5316 and Section 5317 guidelines, the DART:
 - In FY 2009, requested and was awarded funding for up to three years;
 - Published announcements of a competitive process for the FY 2008 and FY 2009 funding; and,
 - Published notification of FY 2008 project awards, but has not published, as of this date, notification of FY 2009-2011 project awards.

59. With the implementation of this Plan, please discuss how are federally funded transportations services are being coordinated.

The DMAMPO:

- Notes the DART currently coordinates with a number of human service agencies to provide services:
 - Human service agencies contract with the DART for service rather than provide their own service;
 - The DART provides Polk County-funded paratransit service; and,
 - Agencies contracting with the DART include: Iowa Human Service, Plymouth Place Apartments, Easter Seals, Wesley Acres, Aging Resources of Central Iowa, Fountain West Care Center, Drake University Head Start, Stonecrest Apartments, Mercy Rehabilitation, Day Care for Exceptional Children, Fleur Heights Care Center, Iowa Civil Rights, Broadlawns Medical Center PATH Program, Iowa Jewish Senior Life Center, Jasper County Coordinator, New Horizons Adult Day Care, Elsie Mason Manor, West Chester Church, Visiting Nurse Services, Community Support Advocates, Story County Coordinator, and Younkers Rehabilitation Center;
- Notes the DART also coordinates with other transportation providers for service:
 - The DART contracts with Trans Iowa, a local taxi company, for Trans Iowa to provide service at times and to locations inefficient for the DART to provide service;
 - The DART provides service for Link Associates, a local human service provider, at times that are inefficient for Link Associates to provide that service;
 - The DART mechanics conduct vehicle inspections for the HIRTA; and,
 - The DART assists West Des Moines Human Services in

- purchasing West Des Moines vehicles;
- Notes the DART provides an Unlimited Access Program which allows employers to pay the DART up front in exchange for their employees riding for free on the DART's system;
- Notes the DART has used Section 5316 funds to continue its University Avenue bus service and its evening bus services;
- Notes the DART has used New Freedom funding to offer Sunday service and on-call service;
- Notes the DART has used Section 5317 funding to continue subcontracting paratransit operations to Trans Iowa;
- Notes the Public Transportation Roundtable currently is working with the DART, the HIRTA, and CyRide on commuting options between Ames and Des Moines; and,
- The Public Transportation Roundtable's TAG is working on initiatives identified in the PTDP process, including additional marketing/public education for passenger transportation and efforts to foster coordination among transportation providers.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT

Federal legislation and regulations require a Congestion Management Process (CMP) in TMAs. “. . . The transportation planning process in a TMA shall address congestion management through a process that provides for safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system, based on a cooperatively developed and implemented metropolitan-wide strategy of new and existing transportation facilities eligible for funding under Title 23 U.S.C. and Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 through the use of travel demand reduction and operational management strategies. [23 CFR 450.320; also see 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(3)]

The following Congestion Mitigation questions need to be answered only by TMAs (MAPA, Des Moines, and Bi-State)

- 60. Describe how the CMP has been fully integrated into the overall metropolitan planning process. For instance, do the visions and goals articulated in the LRTP support the CMP and vice versa? Are transportation systems' management and operations strategies part of the metropolitan planning process?**

The DMAMPO:

- Developed the HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives to be consistent with the *Congestion Management Process*:
 - The *Congestion Management Process* will be a subset of the HY 2035 LRTP's established operational goals.

- 61. Does the CMP follow the 8-Step approach, as defined by the CMP Guidebook? If not, are there any steps being taken to align the CMP with the recommended 8-Step approach?**

The DMAMPO:

- Currently, may not meet the 8-step approach with its existing *Congestion Management System*; and,
- Is using the 8-step approach to update its *Congestion Management Process*.

- 62. Does the CMP address the mobility needs of people and goods? How are freight mobility needs assessed and addressed through the CMP?**

The DMAMPO:

- Notes the existing *Congestion Management System* document focuses on personal mobility through the central Iowa region;
- Will focus the *Congestion Management System* update on both personal and goods (freight) mobility; and,
- Worked with the DMAMPO's Freight Roundtable to identify freight movement mobility concerns within and through the central Iowa region, as part of the DMAMPO's 2006 *Goods Movement Study* update.

63. Please explain how the CMP leads to the development of programs and projects contained in the LRTP and TIP. How are these activities supported in the UPWP?

The DMAMPO:

- Notes the majority of Year 2030 LRTP projects identified reduce congestion by adding capacity;
- Used the *Congestion Management System* to identify strategies to assist in reducing transportation system demand;
- Works with the TMA and the DART to identify feasible strategies for inclusion in the *Congestion Management Process*;
- Funds the TMA with DMAMPO STP funds, to assist the DMAMPO in implementing and in promoting the *Congestion Management System*-identified strategies; and,
- Supports the DART, through the DMAMPO's annual allocation of STP funds to metropolitan transportation projects, with STP funds to aid the DART in purchasing new transit vehicles (buses).

64. What monitoring systems are being developed to provide a framework for additional effectiveness evaluation? What data sources are used to identify areas of congestion? Who collects and analyzes this data? Is this data shared with others?

The DMAMPO:

- Monitors the transportation system through ITS technologies;
- Annually completes a Travel Time Survey and a Vehicle Occupancy Survey to monitor the travel trends during a.m. and p.m. peak hours, and publishes those results;
- Uses traffic counts and Travel Time Survey results to identify congested roadway locations:
 - Traffic counts identify locations where daily traffic volumes near or exceeding the planned roadway capacity; and,
 - The Travel Time Survey aids in identifying congested roadways through detected travel time delays during the survey.

65. What performance measures has the MPO established to monitor the transportation system in the region? What are the existing and future data needs for these performance measures?

The DMAMPO:

- Adopted a performance measure for reducing the number of single-occupant vehicles on the Planning Area's freeway system during the peak hour by 10%, known locally as Travel Demand Management-10 (TDM-10);
- Will use the DMAMPO's Travel Demand Model to forecast future traffic volumes to assist in identifying congested roadway corridors;
- Adopted a Level of Service D threshold as an acceptable Level of Service for the Planning Area's roadway system before considering transportation investment due to capacity needs; and,
- Will continue to collect travel time survey and vehicle occupancy survey data.

66. What is the status of ITS in the metropolitan area? What is the status of the regional architecture?

The DMAMPO:

- Is updating its *Regional Intelligent Transportation System Architecture* with the HY 2035 LRTP; and,
- Requested the TMAC to review the Regional ITS Architecture to ensure the architecture's completeness and consistency within and among the operating agencies.

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS REVIEW

67. How are the UPWP amendments developed and processed?

1. MTA is developing a “2030 Strategic Plan for Transit” which when completed, will be submitted for inclusion into the Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan adopted by the MPO on December 16, 2004. Long-range transit planning for the next LRTP update needs be completed under the comprehensive planning process performed by the MPO. In addition, long-range transit planning needs to include the participation of all public and private transit agencies in the Des Moines metropolitan area.

- MTA/DART did not develop a formal strategic 2030 plan; instead, local stakeholders worked with the GDMP to develop the Transit 2030 Vision Plan;
- This vision’s five principals help guide the future metropolitan transportation system’s development through collaboration among the DMAMPO, the DART, and the GDMP;
- The GDMP invited DMAMPO policy makers to serve on the Transit 2030 Vision Plan Task Force, and, based on the DMAMPO’s review of the Transit 2030 Vision Plan, the DMAMPO affirmed its commitment to work to get member governments to recognize and work toward better land use/transportation integration in their comprehensive planning process, which leads into the regional land use plan map document;
- The DMAMPO staff consulted with the Transit 2030 Vision Task Force when developing the DMAMPO’s HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives.
- The Transit 2030 Vision Plan, in part, helped the DART develop proposed bus rapid transit services. The DMAMPO will include proposed rapid transit corridors in the HY 2035 LRTP, has incorporated rapid transit service into the HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives, and has encouraged local communities/agencies to include transit, in particular the rapid transit corridors, into their comprehensive planning documents.
- The DMAMPO staff is working with the DART to develop the HY 2035 LRTP’s Transit section, incorporating more long-range transit planning into the LRTP; and,
- Through its work with the PTDP, the DMAMPO is engaging public, private, and non-profit transportation providers to identify passenger transportation needs and to develop short-term and long-term solutions to those identified needs. Where applicable, the HY 2035 LRTP will incorporate these identified needs and proposed solutions.

2. **We recommend that the MPO continue to improve and build upon the metropolitan transportation planning coordination between the MPO, MTA, other transit agencies, and the Iowa DOT. We look for MTA and the Iowa DOT to take proactive steps to improve planning coordination as well. Project level coordination for studies such as the Bus Rapid Transit study is one opportunity for improving coordination between these three major transportation planning agencies.**
 - The DART staff consults the DMAMPO staff, on an as needed basis, as the DART develops its short-range and long-range transit planning activities;
 - The DMAMPO staff provides the DART staff technical analysis and mapping support, as needed and as requested;
 - The DMAMPO staff has provided the DART's bus rapid transit planning consultants with data and other materials during the bus rapid transit planning process;
 - The DMAMPO's Public Transportation Roundtable has and will continue to discuss long-range transit planning needs of central Iowa, including issues of needed transit facilities and land use policies as related to the larger multimodal transportation system;
 - The DMAMPO and the DART are involved with the Iowa DOT's Passenger Rail Advisory Committee to plan for bringing passenger rail service to central Iowa;

3. **The Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan appears to be a collection of local transportation desires rather than a document offering a regional focus for the Des Moines metropolitan area's future transportation system. The Plan needs to provide a regional vision, rather than just serve as a compilation of local priorities. Future updates need to take a longer-term, broader regional view with a regional vision and regional priorities, rather than just reflecting short-term goals of local governments.**
 - The DMAMPO consulted with the public, with its roundtables, and with partner agencies to develop regional Goals and Objectives for the HY 2035 LRTP. These Goals and Objectives provide a long-range, performance oriented vision for a regional, multimodal, and intermodal transportation system;
 - The DMAMPO intends the HY 2035 LRTP to recommend projects and strategies based on the adopted Goals and Objectives and on needs analysis, rather than on local transportation desires;
 - The DMAMPO staff will evaluate projects included in the Year 2030 LRTP to ensure the HY 2035 LRTP's Goals and Objectives and needs analysis support those projects;
 - The DMAMPO will ensure projects identified in the HY 2035 LRTP are consistent with member government/participating agency planning documents; and,
 - The DMAMPO will ensure the HY 2035 LRTP is consistent with other approved regional plans, goals, and strategies.

4. Since the 2002 Certification Review there has been an increase in the public's interest in the Des Moines metropolitan area's transportation planning process. In part, this is due to a perception by members of the public that local governments are developing transportation projects without adequate input from the public. It is critical that local governments do not circumvent the established planning and project development processes when projects are being developed, especially if they hope to use federal transportation funding for those projects. We urge the local governments to work through the established processes for planning and developing projects and to re-double their efforts to have processes that are open and inclusive to insure that all viewpoints are heard as part of the project development process. Failure to do so will likely result in lengthy and contentious project development processes that may end with projects being either ineligible for federal funding or cancelled.

- The DMAMPO established its Stakeholders Working Group in 2008 to comply with and to support SAFETEA-LU and to get stakeholders' inputs on environmental issues early in the DMAMPO's transportation planning process;
- The Stakeholders Working Group includes local, state, and federal agencies, environmental organizations, utility companies, neighborhood organizations, development groups, transportation authorities, and the business community;
- The DMAMPO has increased its efforts in providing the public with information and in encouraging public comment in the transportation planning process;
- The DMAMPO publishes its *InTouch* newsletter, has updated its *Public Participation Plan*, continues to hold its Citizen Transportation Congress semi-annually, and is taking steps to hold public input meetings at more transit accessible locations and at more convenient times (mid-day as well as evening).

5. **The financial constraint analysis offered by the Year 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan is not well supported. In particular, there is no apparent basis for the cost figures provided for future minor construction and preservation projects, and it is unclear whether maintenance costs are included in those calculations as well. Additional clarification of these figures is needed to support the financial constraint determination of the LRTP.**

- The DMAMPO will include fiscal constraint analysis in the HY 2035 LRTP that is based on SAFETEA-LU requirements and on FFHWA guidance;
- The DMAMPO contacted the FHWA and the Iowa DOT to ask for technical assistance and guidance in developing the DMAMPO's financial plan as part of the updated HY Year 2035 LRTP; and,
- The DMAMPO currently is analyzing past transportation improvement investments to determine lane mile costs of various

types of improvements and is doing so with assistance from the Iowa DOT and DMAMPO member governments/participating agencies.

6. The MPO has done a commendable job with a broad range of initiatives including access management, freight, congestion management, and sidewalks. The next step is to bring the products of those initiatives into the project selection process so that the results of those initiatives are reflected in the projects and funding decisions made by the MPO.

- The DMAMPO will use the LRTP's goals, objectives, measures of effectiveness, and needs analysis to develop and to select projects for inclusion in the updated HY 20305 LRTP;
- The DMAMPO will incorporate into the updated HY 2035 LRTP recommendations from other DMAMPO transportation studies, reports, and plans, such as the *Goods Movement Study*, the *Central Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan*, the *Trans Iowa-Illinois Freight Corridor Study*, the updated 2009 Regional Intelligent Transportation System Architecture, and the updated 2009 Congestion Management Process;
- The DMAMPO intends the HY 2035 LRTP to recommend projects and strategies based on the adopted goals and objective and needs analysis rather than, as noted in Question 67, Comment 4, developing a plan based “. . . on local transportation desires . . .”;
- The DMAMPO's STP Funding Subcommittee meets, at a minimum, on an annual basis to review the next federal fiscal year project applications and to propose changes, as necessary, to the project analysis scoring system.

7. During the past few years the MPO and its member governments have been involved with discussions and proposals for projects that are outside the MPO's transportation planning boundary. As the metropolitan area continues to grow and develop, there will likely be more issues that impact the metropolitan area that occur in the area outside the MPO's planning boundary. The MPO needs to reassess where the planning boundary should be set and expand the boundary so that it covers all areas directly impacted by transportation in the metropolitan area.

- The DMAMPO amended its Planning Area Boundary to include areas targeted for development by HY 2035;
- The DMAMPO has established a working relationship with the CIRTPA to coordinate on transportation planning issues extending into the CIRTPA's planning area; and,
- The DMAMPO established the Regional Planning Committee to coordinate future transportation planning activities and to identify future transportation corridors for corridor preservation purposes, including future regional corridors outside the DMAMPO's adopted Planning Area Boundary.

8. **During the past couple years; there has been a tremendous growth in employment and housing in the area west of I-35 and south of I-80. The MPO's travel demand model needs to accurately reflect where employment and housing are located, so that future decisions are based on the most accurate information possible.**

- The DMAMPO reviews and tracks building permits, employment growth, and planned and proposed infrastructure improvements to identify potential growth areas; and,
- The DMAMPO has collaborated with the Iowa DOT's Office of Systems Planning for access to the REMI statewide economic model, allowing the DMAMPO to have access to annual countywide population and employment forecasts in order to monitor the growth scenario assumptions adopted with the current LRTP.

9. **In many ways, the MPO is very proactive and does an exemplary job in providing information to the public and providing notification of its actions and activities. One area where the MPO needs to expand its efforts, however, is in the Environment Justice/Title VI area. In particular, the MPO and MTA need to develop a more formal process to identify the transportation needs of low income and minority populations and assess whether those needs are being met through the transportation planning process. Additionally, the MPO needs to establish a process for periodically assessing the effectiveness of their public involvement process and then updating it as part of that process. Further, the MPO needs to explicitly work to include media and social service agencies targeting low income and minority groups, including non-English speaking media if necessary, as part of their overall public involvement process.**

- The DMAMPO recently updated its *Public Participation Plan* to include additional Environmental Justice/Title VI information;
- The DMAMPO has extended its public notice mailing list to include additional media outlets, including non-English speaking media as well as social service agencies;
- The DMAMPO's PTDP identifies various socioeconomic groups' transportation needs, including low-income persons, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, persons with limited English proficiency;
- The DMAMPO Stakeholders Working Group is working to identify areas of environmental concern, including the natural and the social environments and including elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and low income persons; and,
- The DMAMPO HY 2035 LRTP Goals and Objectives include language supporting reducing impact to all populations, regardless of age, race, or income.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

68. Please provide any additional comments for consideration during the Certification Review.

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC COMMENTS

**Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization TMA Certification Review
Public Involvement Meeting
March 3, 2009, 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM
Des Moines Botanical Center**

Tom Kane commenced the meeting at 7:00 PM with a moment of silence for the recent passing of Bob Mickle.

Ed Christopher began with an introduction of the federal certification review team. The team includes: Ed Christopher, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Resource Center, Olympia Fields, IL; Egan Smith, FHWA Headquarters, Washington, D.C.; Mark Bechtel, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Kansas City, MO; Kim Anderson, FHWA Iowa Division, Ames, IA; and Tracy Troutner, FHWA Iowa Division, Ames, IA. Mr. Christopher proceeded to provide an overview of the transportation planning process with a PowerPoint presentation. The slides and discussion included: the Federal requirements for conducting a certification review for Transportation Management Areas (TMAs), the purpose for conducting a public hearing and seeking input from the public during this process, the timeline for requesting comments and submitting the final report, actions to be taken as a result of the certification review findings, a description of a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and the planning requirements for an MPO, and the purpose and role of an MPO.

Tom Hanson spoke of a few needs for the MPO including: an elevated train from downtown Des Moines to other cities/suburbs such as the south-side of Downtown and through downtown and to the other cities, concerns with parking for the riders and drop-off stations for a train station. Mr. Hanson is concerned about the access to Amtrak service and would like to see a connecting service from Des Moines to Osceola to connect to larger cities, and is concerned with environmental issues and impacts to the environment from transportation projects.

Laura Belin represented 1,000 Friends of Iowa and spoke on behalf of them. Ms. Belin also provided written comments on Behalf of 1,000 Friends of Iowa. Ms. Belin stated she would like to see a regional planning agency for Central Iowa, would like the member cities to discontinue the open house forum for public meetings because of a 'divide and conquer' strategy where not all people in attendance hear comments from all those who attend the meetings. Ms. Belin also mentioned the Stakeholders Working Group recommendations in regard to the order of 'minimize, and mitigate, avoid' and that it should be in the order that is commonly used (avoid, minimize, and mitigate), and that this recommendation was not considered by the MPO. Ms. Belin encouraged the use of Smart Growth principles by the MPO and encouraged that Federal funds be used for Smart Growth projects as a priority. Tracy Troutner followed up her comment in regard to the 'minimize, mitigate and avoid' order to let everyone know that the MPO had

decided to change the order of the words to align with the common order of ‘avoid, minimize and mitigate’.

Walter Eidbo spoke on his concerns of bus stops and the need for benches, would like to see bus stops to be near the entrances of storefront entrances, and believes there needs to be safety considerations for bus passengers.

Nancy Stillians spoke about Smart Growth and the need for the Smart Growth principles, that politics affect good decision-making, and that the NW 26th Street project has been going so long at it must end. The N.W. 26th Street project has had so many meetings and there have been attempts to prohibit communication; it is her feeling that most of the people who have attended these meetings are opposed to the project, but there is still a driving force to push the project. Ms. Stillians is concerned about a toxic dump site between Ames and Ankeny, and believes there is a need for a limo service between Osceola (the Amtrak station) and Des Moines.

Rebecca Holdridge, a member of the Greenwood Acres Association, is concerned that the MPO boards are weighted too much with the member governments, and that there needs to be more citizens on the committees to give the public more of a voice. The citizens don’t feel like they have a voice. She spoke of the need for transit and the elimination of railroad tracks, which could be used for future development.

Mark Hanson, a Dallas County Supervisor and a member of the MPO Policy Committee, commended the MPO staff for its qualifications. Mr. Hanson discussed the growth of Dallas County and that it is the fastest growing county in Iowa and the 4th fastest growing county in the nation. He is concerned about the balanced growth scenario of the MPO and that the growth has not been balanced, and that this causes transportation issues on the 74th Street interchange (George Civic Parkway), and there needs to be another interchange at Alice’s road to relieve congestion in this area.

Nancy Stillians spoke of the need for light rail in the area, and that light rail is never discussed or considered.

Bill Graham believes there is something wrong with the public participation process. Mr. Graham stated that nobody comes to the meetings, nobody listens to the people that come, and nothing results from the comments. The NW 26th Street is an example of this, where development interests in the suburbs are controlling these projects. The traffic studies for this project are from the 1960s and are the basis for this project, which is a concern. He believes that the projects are not a result of a proper planning process, and the public participation is seen only as a step that must be taken, but is not used as a consideration for the project development.

Rebecca Holdridge commented on the use of traffic counters, and that it is difficult to get information in regard to the reason there is a traffic counter in an area. Ms. Holdridge also stated that the counts can be skewed as a result of weather, construction in the area, or other factors.

Jay Byers, representing the Greater Des Moines Partnership, works very closely with the Des Moines Area MPO and attends many public meetings. He believes the MPO is open and that the staff are very professional.

Tom Hanson spoke of the job creation opportunities that a train service would bring to the Des Moines metropolitan area.

John Morrissey, praises the MPO staff for the work they do in this political environment. Mr. Morrissey believes that the main issue that inhibits the MPO from doing a good job is their lack of control over land use, and this needs to change. The NW 26th Street extension is a concern. Polk County is the lead agency for this project and has contracted with a local engineering firm to do the work. A Citizen Advisory Committee was created by Polk County, which holds meetings on this project, but it is not clear if the public is invited to these meetings. Mr. Morrissey stated that the public is not allowed to comment at these meetings, which is a concern. Mr. Morrissey also spoke of the new driver's license station that was built in Ankeny, and that the new interchange had to be developed to access this new driver's license station. Mr. Morrissey stated that the Director of the Iowa Department of Transportation did not take into consideration the accessibility to non-motorists in Des Moines, and as a result of this need, DART had to create a bus line to access the driver's license facility for non-motorists.

Nancy Stillians spoke about the political and economic development issues that are driving decision-making.

Stephanie Weisenbach discussed the update of the MPO's long-range transportation plan and stated that growth scenarios have been developed within the committees and have not been done with public involvement. Ms. Weisenbach is concerned about the need to have local land use plans prior to their inclusion in the long-range transportation plan, and is concerned about the lack of higher density land use and transit solutions in the plans as well. Ms. Weisenbach spoke of the new administration (Obama) and the direction they are seeking. Ms. Weisenbach also recommended that the MPO set a performance goal for the reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Ed Christopher followed up with a discussion on land use and the struggles that are dealt with in regard to controlling or directing land use.

Tracy Troutner followed up in regard to the comments of not being heard and the public involvement efforts that are being undertaken for various transportation planning efforts. Mr. Troutner welcomed those in attendance to provide ideas to the MPO on how they the public involvement efforts could be more effective.

Julie Hanefin, representing Hanefin Towing Company, spoke of her concerns with the median cable barrier that has been installed on Interstate 35 between mile marker 89 (east mix master) north to mile marker 102. Ms. Hanefin stated that this median cable barrier has caused a high number of serious accidents. Ms. Hanefin believes the width of the

shoulder is insufficient, and ambulances and tow trucks have gotten hit as a result of the narrow shoulder. Ms. Hanefin stated there is a substantial drop-off on the shoulder as well. Ms. Hanefin stated there has been at least one fatality as a result of the barrier, and there may be more to come.

Skip Conkling, a City Council member from Altoona, is grateful that the MPO does not have control over land use, and that land use is a local decision that should be guided by local comprehensive land use plans and economic development needs of the area. Mr. Conkling mentioned the difficulties of public involvement and doesn't know how to change it, but recommends that the MPO and local governments continue to work on improving it. Mr. Conkling commends the MPO's efforts in regard to transit, transportation planning, and working with the local governments on these issues.

Walter Eidbo discussed the Highway 65/69 project and how the public involvement and political efforts were successful. Mr. Eidbo recommended that the public does not give up on the issues they are passionate about.

There was a question from the audience as to what happens to the written comments that are submitted for this certification review. Mr. Troutner stated that the comments will be incorporated into the final report. It was asked if the Federal team will be responding in writing to all the written comments. Mr. Christopher stated that all the comments will not be individually responded to. A question was asked if the review is considered a compliance review, and the team responded that it is, and that the certification review is its opportunity to review all components of the transportation planning process.

Stephanie Weisenbach requested that the MPO notify all the attendees of this public involvement meeting via email as to when the report is posted on the MPO web site, and Ms. Weisenbach also recommended to make this notification in the newsletter as well.

It was asked if there could be some responses in the report which address the questions and comments that were raised at this meeting. Mr. Troutner stated that the report will summarize the comments that were made during the public involvement meeting.

Michelle Orfield-Koranda represents Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) and stated that it is a challenge to integrate transit projects into local area comprehensive plans. Mr. Bechtel stated that best practices will be sought out for this.

Butch Snyder commented on the cable barriers, and that he believes they are too close to the travel lanes. Mr. Snyder recollected when the center median used to prohibit traffic from crossing the center median, but then it was filled in. Now, the cable barriers have been cause vehicles to bounce back into the traffic flow during a collision. Mr. Snyder also commented on the allowance of bicycles on the highways and how this causes a safety concern. Mr. Snyder stated that bicycles are not treated like other slow moving vehicles, and that the liability rests with the vehicle driver, which is not fair.

Additional comments were made in regard to the safety issues that the cable median barriers have created along Interstate 35.

Comments were made in regard to environmental justice. This comment was made in regard to the future impacts on the Martin Luther King Drive low income and minority neighborhood as a result of the extension of N.W. 26th Street to Martin Luther King Drive.

Additional comments were made about the SAFETEA-LU public participation plan requirements, and that the MPO has improved the public participation as a result of this. It was recommended that the plan be a little more specific, that it include bullet points, and that it highlights the successful practices they are doing in regard to public involvement.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
 Public Participant Sign-In
 March 3, 2009

Please Print Name	Address	Email	Do you want to be added to the MPO mailing list?
X Dick Vegors	IDED.	Have	Yes No
X John Morrissey	2913 Oxford St	Des Moines	Yes No <i>ALREADY</i>
X Van Stillman	1604 24 th place	DSM 50310	Yes No
X Kristin Haar	5500 Fleur Dr. Suite 215 Dm 50321	khaar@ hrtapublictransit.com	Yes No
X Stephanie Weisbach	3841 Lower Beaver Rd Des Moines 50310	jonackennister@ yahoo.com	Yes No
X Tom Hanson	1235 Birch Lane Des Moines IA 50315	telhanson4@msn.com	Yes No
X JOE COREY	WDM	joe.corey@udm-ia.com	Yes No
X GARY M HEKERTZ	Polk City	hekertzg@polkcity	Yes No
X GARY C. MAHANNAN	Polk City	gmahannan@polkcity	Yes No
X Julie Hanifan	Ankeny	hanifanj@aol.com	Yes No
X JAMES H WINKERST	Hwy 4 Grand Ave	and 600 W. In	Yes No
X Michael Baldus	501 College Ave	mbaldus2@msn.com	Yes No <i>already on</i>
X Peter Hollings	<i>Ankeny</i> 5533 NE 28 th	—	Yes No <i>on it!</i>
X Pat Tracy	2514 NE 9 th Pl Ankeny Ia 50022	—	Yes No <i>on it!</i>
X Michelle Orfield-Koranda	DSM	—	Yes No <i>on it!</i>

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
 Public Participant Sign-In
 March 3, 2009

Please Print Name	Address	Email	Do you want to be added to the MPO mailing list?
X E. Bitch Snyder	2075 NE 126 th Ave ALLENHURST 50007	bwsnyder@prairie.net, net.net	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>
X Virginia Seelberg	5979 Dogwood C. Johnston IA	seelbergv@cox.com	Yes No
X Ross Harris	5525 Merle Hay Rd	rharris@vgreen.com dintonn@cp.com	Yes No but on most already...
X Walter B Seiff	3201 Wauwala	Des Moines IA	Yes No
X WILLIAM GRAHAM	3818 CARPENTER DM IA 50311	wsgraham3@mchsi.com	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
X Carmen Muriello	513 4th WDM	carmen.muriello@welmia.com	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
X Mark Campbell	2110 40th St DSM 50310	wgc22@yahoo.com	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> already on
X MARK HANSON	595 N BRANCH WYKES, 50263	mmhanson@hickorytech.net	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
X Dana Corn	1917 Glenbrook Dr. Des Moines, IA 50316	dcorn@drivetimes.com	Yes No on ↓
X Mary Lawyer	200 Court Des Moines, IA	mlawyer@countymd.com	Yes No on ↓
X Ted Amant	1026 31st	tedamant@jake.com	Yes No
X Laura Belin	1705 Plaza Circle Windsor Heights 50322	laurabelin@ajahw.com	Yes No
X Mark Jensen	200 2nd St NE Boulevard	marenjen@cityofband.com	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>
X Terne Wazny	AMES, IA	terne.wazny@dot.iowa.gov	Yes No
X Jane Clark	9871 LINCOLN	Clive jclark@radix.net	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Public Participant Sign-In
March 3, 2009

Please Print Name	Address	Email	Do you want to be added to the MPO mailing list?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Skip Conkley	Altamonte Ia 516-6 th St NW GDMN	conkleyj@msw.com	Yes No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jay Byers	700 Locust, Ste 100 Des Moines, IA 50301	JBYERS@ DESMOINESMETRO.IA	Yes No
			Yes No

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
 Public Participant Sign-In
 March 3, 2009

Please Print Name	Address	Email	Do you want to be added to the MPO mailing list?
17 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Libby Nelson	2100 Maury St	libby.nelson@kemin.com	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes No
18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Andrew Couch	7008 Sheridan Cir	couchand@gmail.com	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes No
19			Yes No
20			Yes No
21			Yes No
22			Yes No
23			Yes No
24			Yes No
25			Yes No
26			Yes No
27			Yes No
28			Yes No
29			Yes No
30			Yes No
31			Yes No
32			Yes No

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Public Participant Sign-In Sheet to Speak

March 3, 2009

Interest/Representing	Please Print Name	Signature	
L.E. Butch Snyder	L.E. SNYDER		37
			38
			39
			40
			41
			42
			43
			44
			45
			46
			47
			48
			49
			50
			51
			52
			53
			54

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
 Certification Review - Public Input Meeting
 Des Moines Botanical Center
 March 3, 2009

To: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
 Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

From:
 (optional)

Rebecca Holdridge
 Name
 2533 NE 98th Pl, Ankeny, Ia, 50027
 Address City Zip Code
 # 515/964-5914 iowa3c@netins.net
 Phone E-mail

Comments:

- 1) Because the MPO has so many member government representatives from surrounding cities, there tends to be a more one-sided decision process or weighted decision-making process. Yes, the citizens are given the opportunity to attend the MPO meetings and participate. City representatives are usually present, also. The problem is with no citizens in the final decision votes, and thus no balance. Since citizens give of their time, it is imperative that we feel it is not just a figurehead.
- 2) As a tax paying citizen, and in the economy it is frustrating that cities continue to push for new projects and bridges that go to nowhere where there is only a small community. Wasted money is continually spent on surveying and environmental studies which are done over and over. There must be changes to this process. As citizens, we are tired of seeing such

Page 2-

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Certification Review - Public Input Meeting
Des Moines Botanical Center
March 3, 2009

To: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

From: (optional)

Rebecca Holdridge
Name
2533 NE 98th Pl, Ankeny, Ia, 50221
Address City Zip Code
515/964-5114 Phone
louasa@netris.net E-mail

Comments:

waste in governmental spending. Please set some new standards to be followed.

As an example, in 2005-2006, citizens were asked to volunteer their time for a year planning process for a new Polk County Comprehensive Plan. Many of us never missed a meeting and were continually asked to make changes on what should be depicted from a map. Throughout this process, each meeting changes were not made and it became apparent that we were just figureheads to the process. Later I found out that a particular multiple housing development that was off a main highway and to be built in the future had already been contracted three years earlier to Regency Homes. This does not seem fair and, of course, Regency Homes is a company that has gone under because of bad planning which was no surprise.

When governing bodies have such a large say and citizens no equal final vote, the decision making process is flawed and funds are mis-

allocated and do not go where the greater needs are at the time.

There is a need for mass transit and would value our current transportation systems. There is a concern that enough planning ahead has not been done in some areas. Essentially, railroad tracks are continually being removed. These tracks could be used in the future for transit lines and exist in and around the metro area of Des Moines. It makes more sense to keep what exists, then to build completely new ones.

Instead of pushing for new highways and bridges, cities should use the existing capital which is smart growth. Applying for money through "a Clean Air" act because they want to bridge to nowhere "to force growth is not good money sense. That is why citizens need to have a vote and weight in these sort of unnecessary spending.

The MPO is a great "vehicle" for citizens, but want an equal vote process. Tom Kane and his staff are hardworking and do a great job of addressing issues, giving information and helping. But their hands are tied until the citizen/governmental representation vote process is changed.

Thank you
Rebecca Holdrege

Comments on the MPO's planning process and its effectiveness:

Are Federal Guidelines being followed? The Long Range Transportation Plan data were gathered using flawed language by saying minimize, compensate, and putting avoid last. Federal expectations, regarding wetland mitigation, for instance, say "all appropriate and practicable steps must first be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources. For unavoidable impacts, compensatory mitigation is required..." The recent Compensatory Mitigation Rule, in Questions and Answers #11, says "Does the mitigation sequence (i.e., avoid, minimize, compensate) still apply? Answer: Yes. The mitigation sequence established by the Clean Water Act Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines has been retained in this rule. Proposed impacts must be avoided to the maximum extent practicable, remaining unavoidable impacts must then be minimized, and finally compensated for to the extent appropriate and practicable." This flaw in the survey was brought to the attention of the MPO but the MPO task force chose to put "avoid" last to "soften" the language.

Citizen Input: Officials from each local community seems to put out their own desires, generally related to their vision for economic development (which they seem to see as dependent on more interchanges and more roadways.) I feel the MPO needs to be where "the big picture" for transportation is considered; not just "I'll help you get your road if you help me get mine."

Citizen input at meetings is formatted for chatting with staff and looking at maps. Written comments are allowed, but I saw no indication that questions and concerns shared with the staff verbally were recorded. Seldom are people given the chance to share concerns with the group and hear other citizen's issues.

Virginia H. Soelberg
5979 Dogwood Circle
Johnston, Iowa 50131
515-253-0232

Land Use: The distortion of the order of impact to resources (putting avoid last) indicates to me that consideration of natural and social resources is a low priority with the MPO. And when growth is projected, the "solution" to traffic needs seems to be more roads and more sprawl, rather than considering public transit and alternatives such as rail.

Our bicycle and trail planning seems to be well done and effective.

Laura Belin, President
1000 Friends of Iowa
3850 Merle Hay Road
Des Moines, IA 50310-1300

History of land-use planning in Iowa and Central Iowa

In 1985 Governor Branstad dissolved the Office for Planning and Programming in Iowa. That office provided an umbrella to oversee eighteen state agencies and twenty-eight boards, councils and committees which were concerned with one or more aspects of land resource allocation or planning. For the past twenty-four years Iowa has no one agency which is aware of land use planning or programming in our state. Our own Central Iowa Council of Governments, CIRALG, in charge of regional planning, was dissolved around the same time. That left central Iowa as the only region of the state without regional planning. State and regional planning would give equal consideration to economic, environmental and social issues and would yield plans that then incorporated transportation planning resulting in a better quality of life for Iowans. 1000 Friends of Iowa hopes that some day we will get to that point. However, for now...the DMAMPO is our area planning agency, and transportation issues are the priority for this office. A regional planning agency would ideally consider the social, environmental and economic issues as well.

Citizen Education and Involvement

All land use decisions start locally. 1000 Friends recommends that the MPO member communities discontinue the "Open House" venue for public education meetings. Often nearly 100 citizens fill large noisy rooms with tables full of maps, while representatives are present to answer questions. Participants are unable to build on each other's information and knowledge by hearing other questions asked and answered. It is a "divide and conquer" strategy that we would like to see end. 1000 Friends has been provided video footage of such meetings by members that can be viewed on You-Tube or at <http://www.1000friendsofiowa.org/content/view/245/223/>.

Occasionally, members of the public have received incorrect information at these Open House meetings, but because there was no forum, other people could not hear those answers or correct the information. Many answers are evasive non-answers. When member organizations build their comprehensive plans and projects with this type of citizen input, it makes the MPO's job harder. Our Central Iowa members can relate many instances when plans and projects have been advanced in spite of citizen opposition.

Stakeholders Working Group

The Stakeholders Working Group is a recommending body for the DMAMPO of which 1000 Friends is a member. The group was asked for comments on the goals and objectives of the 2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan for the MPO. Sierra Club brought to the group's attention the Goal: Preserve, protect and enhance the natural and human environment Objective #1, was not written using the same language as the federal objective. The federal objective states, "Avoid, minimize or mitigate transportation impacts to environmentally sensitive natural resources if practical." The DMAMPO's

objective stated, “Minimize, mitigate or avoid transportation impacts to environmentally sensitive natural resources if practical.” A majority of Stakeholders Working Group felt the placement of the words altered the implied priorities. After a lengthy discussion with staff and with Chair, Tom Armstrong, advocating for the proposed DMAMPO wording, MPO leadership said the Stakeholders Working Group’s suggestion would be taken under consideration to keep the language the same as the federal government’s language. The goals and objectives were taken to the public for comment February 3-10. The wording was not changed on the document. We were pleased to learn at the Certification Review public meeting that the wording has since been modified to reflect the federal language. The placement of the words could be instrumental when considering road projects like the proposed NW26th Street (MLK Extension) project and the NE Polk County Beltway.

1000 Friends advised the DMAMPO to write a grant to the EPA to advance Smart Growth Principles in their planning processes. The grant wasn’t funded. At a January 20, 2009 Stakeholders Working Group meeting, 1000 Friends was pleased to hear the DMAMPO ask the Stakeholders Working Group if DMAMPO should pursue funding the project through their own funding sources without the EPA grant. The Stakeholders Working Group agreed that Smart Growth criteria and implementation guidelines are needed to be incorporated at DMAMPO and endorsed the idea. The proposed project would help develop a regional alternative transportation oriented development plan. Currently, because of the lack of federal funding, there are no plans for light rail in any member community’s comprehensive plan. Funding to continue and expand DART programs have been under fire from member cities’ city councils. 1000 Friends is hoping that with the removal of the EPA as a funder, this project will keep Smart Growth Principles at the forefront of the proposed project.

Federal Stimulus

1000 Friends of Iowa also recommends that Smart Growth Principles be incorporated into the rule making of any federal stimulus funds that are made available for transportation. Using federal highway dollars to “fix-it-first” will improve safety and the quality of life in our communities while increasing property values. Using stimulus dollars primarily for new road construction would fuel sprawl and increase future infrastructure maintenance costs. Stronger leadership at the national and state levels will set guidelines for our DMAMPO to serve Central Iowa to improve our quality of life. Thank you for your interest in our issues with the DMAMPO.

From: Mark Campbell
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2009 4:32 PM
To: Troutner, Tracy
Subject: DMAMPO

Good day Tracy,
I am the guy who sat with Kim Anderson Tuesday evening.

I have had limited dealings with the DMAMPO but they have all been positive.
They mail me several times annually their meeting and hearing schedules.

My negative comments are not directed so much at the MPO but toward the IDOT and its assignment of routes to the so-called southern beltway. Typically north-south routes are assigned an odd number, while east-west route are assigned an even number.

But the southern beltway is a combination of Iowa 5 and US 65. There are moments of confusion to some as they are westbound and encounter a sign proclaiming "Iowa 5 North" or "US 65 South." One could be eastbound and see signs saying "Iowa 5 South" or US 65 North."

For most people that is not a problem but for my wife it was a nightmare. She is directionally challenged. She worked at a school on Des Moines' south side and wanted to go to a hairdresser on Douglas Avenue, west of I-35/80 on the northwest side. She was told by a colleague to simply head south on East 14th to Iowa 5, then head west to I-35, then north to Douglas and west to her appointment. My wife had driven south to Iowa 5 and was westbound when she saw a sign telling her she was northbound on Iowa 5. I don't know how she did it but she ended up in Indianola.

When I worked for the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau I brought this up to the Metropolitan Traffic Management Team, a multi-disciplinary safety team, that met monthly somewhere in Des Moines. A member of the team mentioned that Des Moines City Council member Christine Hensley had commented on that issue as well.

We were told that changing a highway designation was probably not feasible. Several people mentioned the possibility of looking at the circle of I-35, I-80, US 65 and Iowa 5 as a loop and naming it. Suggestions ranged from the Polk Circle to the Lovable Loop. Others suggested naming it after a person. The Jack Lateral Loop or the Leonard Boswell Circle (one must be careful about naming it after live people though), a name that would lend continuity to the loop. After all, it could not be given an interstate designation. Another thought was to assign it a number such as was done with Iowa 27 and the Avenue of the Saints.

Thanks for the opportunity to vent.

Mark Campbell
2110 40th St
Des Moines IA 50310
515 274 3769

From: Mark Hanson
Sent: Monday, March 09, 2009 6:07 PM
To: Troutner, Tracy
Subject: Des Moines Area MPO

Dear Tracy:

I spoke at the public hearing regarding the census increase in population in Dallas County. I spoke to the Mayor of West Des Moines last week (Steve Gaer) and he said Iowa DOT Director Nancy Richardson has received pictures of the back-up on 74th Street Exit (Jordan Creek Parkway) in West Des Moines. A western reliever exit (Alyces Road in Waukee/105th Street WDM) is sorely needed or interstate 80 will back-up.

Although DMA MPO uses a balanced growth scenario...you cannot ignore real growth. 40.5% population growth since 2000 (40,000 to 57,000) and more than likely 60,000 plus after the next census. One exit more off the interstate seems logical...even if the majority of the policy board would want the money spent in Des Moine/Polk County.

Mark Hanson
595 North Branch Drive
Waukee, Iowa 50263

Dallas County Supervisor



501 College Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50314
mbaldus@NNRPP.org

April 1, 2009

Tracy Troutner
FHWA – IA Division
105 6th St.
Ames, IA 50010

Dear Sirs:

My thanks to all of the FHWA and FTA representatives for attentively listening to the concerns of citizens in Des Moines March 3rd, and thanks especially to Ed Christopher for leading the discussions. My having contracted a virus along with other events led to my being unprepared to speak that night, but I do have a few comments for your consideration.

As I understand it, the focus of your visit was to solicit citizen input as to the effectiveness of the DMAMPO and the processes it follows. I am for the most part new to this whole subject and therefore uneducated (although I have been to several DMAMPO sponsored public input meetings), but I will do my best to make my comments as intelligent as I can under the circumstances.

It is imperative that all of you, along with all concerned citizens, repeat the message to Congress and those who have the ear of our Senators and Representatives, that mandating a regional planning authority while giving it no teeth is a failure of purpose. Anything short of this can only result, as I believe your own report 4 years ago alluded to, in nothing more than a wish list collection of the member governments. If you feel mostly helpless to affect this situation, I say that only by a chorus of many voices will this oversight or (lack of will) be corrected. They need to hear it from you, the experts. If you have already been doing this for years, I apologize, and please accept my gratitude.

There is a fundamental flaw which lies at the very heart of the regional planning organization: every one of the current members is an entity whose mission is to grow as much as possible, and who is in competition with every other member for that growth. That competition, complete with worry about being outpaced by neighboring communities, results in local governments that obsess over rapid growth, and lose the ability to think in any other terms. Hence it is common for the elected officials to have an irrational and highly filtered view of their own planning. As I recall only two elected officials got up and spoke that night. Consider what each had to say: Mark Hansen (sp?) spoke of the exponential growth of Dallas County, and the need for expanding roadways, while maintaining that the requested road building is for "relieving pressure, rather than fueling more growth". Here is a supposedly rational man attempting to disconnect the expansion of roadways from the inevitable result of more growth! The other elected official, whose name I missed, said: "Thank God we don't have land use planning". As though regional transportation planning could possibly be effective or comprehensive (let alone socially just) without incorporating land use planning! The disturbing fact is that both of these men aren't regarded as fringe fanatics, but instead are representative of the mainstream in these local governments.

The DMAMPO must also undergo the necessary structural changes to allow more stakeholders in the process – as full voting members. Again, the result of the current configuration is simply a collection of project wish lists of member communities with a "grow or die" mantra. Even if the DMAMPO had enforcement authority, the end results would be the product of favor trading and other compromises, with outcomes nearly identical to today.

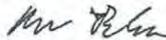
As to considering the effectiveness of reaching the public, I urge you to look at the simple fact: the turnout at DMAMPO public meetings is proof of the failure. The reason for the failure is simple: citizens have no real say in the planning process. As one of the citizen speakers stated that night: "We go to meeting after meeting, and nothing ever changes". Few citizens will bother to waste their time attending meetings to speak to an organization that: 1) has no structural means of giving the citizen any power to affect outcomes, and 2) lacks real enforcement authority anyway. They can blame "lack of public interest" all they want, but the real blame doesn't lie with the public.

If the show-stopping structural problem can be fixed, and citizen stakeholders can be given real power, then I have some additional comments regarding gaining public interest. Advertisers deal with lack of public interest every day, and they never accept it as an excuse. We would find it ludicrous if a marketing professional blamed poor sales on "lack of public interest" wouldn't we? Instead, their job is to create the interest. If the DMAMPO is to truly meet any serious goal of gaining public participation, they need to spend more time and more money on advertising. I would also suggest that they utilize existing organizational networks, such as neighborhood associations, sporting and recreational groups, and even church groups. They need to commit more resources to outreach. I will state again however, that there is no point in that commitment of resources under the present circumstances.

In conclusion, although I commend Tom Kane and the rest of the DMAMPO staff for doing an excellent job of executing a nearly impossible task, my harsh but frank assessment is that the DMAMPO is predominantly a failure, and will be until such time as it is given enforcement authority, and the membership balance of power undergoes dramatic structural change. Although I am tempted to say that it's better than having no central planning organization at all, I am not entirely certain that's true, for acknowledged chaos might actually be preferable to a system that anesthetizes us into believing that we have something to carry out the desperately needed regional planning mission when in fact we don't.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your responses in whatever form they follow.

Sincerely,



Michael Baldus
President, NNRPP

APPENDIX D: MPO SURVEY RESPONSES

NOTE: This survey was developed and administered by the Des Moines Area MPO as a part of the public involvement efforts for the 2009 TMA Certification Review.

Q1. Do you belong to an organization you would like to list? If so, please provide the name below. (optional)

Answer Options	Response Count
	16
answered question	16
skipped question	18

Des Moines Transportation Company
Des Moines International Airport
Eastern Polk Regional Development, Inc.
Des Moines Water Works
city of altoona
GOVERNOR'S TRAFFIC SAFETY BUREAU
Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
Ingersoll Park Neighborhood Association
Lower Beaver Neighborhood
City of Johnston
Beaverdale Neighborhood Association
Ingersoll Neighborhood Association
Ingersoll Park Neighborhood Association
Ingersoll Park Neighborhood Association
Clive Fire Department

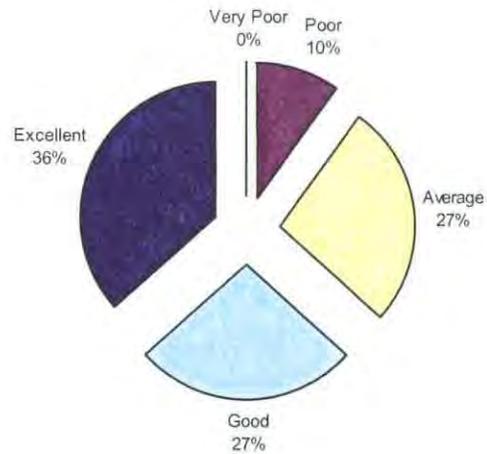
Q2. Please provide your 5-digit Zip Code for your home.

Answer Options	Response Count
	34
answered question	34
skipped question	0

50314
50131
50312
50323
50310
50009
50321
50009
50325
50009
50309
50021
50325
50312
50273
50310
50310
50021
50310
50312
50312
50312
50312
50312
50312
50312
50325
50263
50315
50023
50309
50320
50310
50312
50266

Q3. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	0.0%	0
Poor	10.0%	3
Average	26.7%	8
Good	26.7%	8
Excellent	36.7%	11
Comments		13
	answered question	30
	skipped question	4



Written Comments (verbatim)

I believe the DMAMPO has consistently addressed the issues related to the Des Moines International Airport with respect to seeking input to air transportation planning needs and the surface transportation aspect which is critical to air transportation. Air Transportation at an "origin/destination" airport relies almost entirely on surface transportation to provide the first and last transportation mode of transport between the public and the Airport. The City of Des Moines' Department of Aviation staff have worked closely with the DMAMPO technical staff to ensure this important relationship between the DMAMPO and the Des Moines International Airport promotes the surface and air transportation needs of the community. The staff of the DMAMPO and its leadership are to be commended for their diligence and hard work to strive to meet the transportation planning needs of the community.

The DMA MPO provides many opportunities for people and organizations in the Des Moines area to learn about their activities and participate in the public meetings and forums.

I don't really know because I don't know that much about what you do beyond road planning. I am not in favor of building new roads in our community, such as the NE corridor bypass, MLK extension, etc. I would like you to focus more on preserving what we have and alternative forms of transportation such as mass transit, car pooling, bike trails, etc.

I've attended one public meeting where there were excellent ideas shared by people with experience who have lived in other larger metropolitan areas around the world. I'm hopeful their voices are heard because they have a broader perspective that those who've only lived in Des Moines or Iowa don't have. They have experienced transportation systems and community development that go beyond what Des Moines has developed. One of my major concerns is that so much of our infrastructure is oriented to support an ongoing dependence on cars. Our community and lifestyle has been structured around the assumed use of automobiles for transportation. It is my hope that your proposals will support a broader base of transportation methods. Personally I hope there will be an emphasis on creating more small commercial centers (neighborhood shopping centers) where groceries & other basic needs can be met by walking or taking another form of transportation rather than having to drive.

What does 3-C mean? Also, it seems to me one of the most basic modes of transportation is the two feet at the ends of most of our legs - until there are adequate sidewalks walking is less of a transit option than it should be.

Des Moines politics is driven (pun somewhat intended) by a small clique of established and wealthy individuals obsessed with the property they own in downtown Des Moines. Much of the central Iowa elected and appointed governmental entities are beholden to this clique.

Several of the more powerful transportation organizations that feed into the DMAMPO are thus focused on the needs of the clique and not the needs of the community. The DMAMPO, I believe, wants to be able to include the larger and more diversified community but the staff doesn't always know how to go about doing that; moreover, the decision-making groups that are beholden to the clique are more inclined to listen to the DMAMPO only when it suits the purposes of those groups. This, in turn, leaves members of the public who try to help shape the DMAMPO approach and decisions frustrated and feeling ignored. I was, however, impressed with changes made to the recent 2035 Horizon Plan; changes that came about because of growing citizen involvement and vocalization.

MPO has almost no visibility and no widely-know achievements

As a member of the Traffic Management Advisory Council, having some insight on the progress seems unfair. But I will share that after working with this group and all of the other groups others involved, the citizens in the metropolitan DSM area should be assured that more forethought and planning goes into the planning process for comprehensive transportation plans in this area. With the "crossroads" of the United States right here (I-35/80 junctions), it takes alot of proactive teamwork and planning to successfully complete these projects. It is easy for a motorist to react to diversion routes and delays, but they should be assured that their frustration is shared and completely understood in advance, and that every effort is made to minimize delays and closures. I have been very impressed with the pre-construction meetings and number of agencies involved in the pre-planning process. To the casual observer, it may seem like overkill, but when you consider the number of agencies involved long before a project is underway (sometimes over a year in advance), it is clearly a team effort more comprehensive than most know. Regular meetings keep all abreast of traffic studies/findings, and sub-committees of key players are formed as needed to address more specific concerns, policies, or procedures. As a representative of emergency services, it is reassuring to know that the I-DOT and DMAMPO keep public safety a very high priority in planning projects and systems.

They do an admirable job, but in my opinion they go to an extreme to be careful not to show the west side of Polk County and Dallas County as much support as they do other areas. In some circles there is jealousy and a bias against these areas because they are newer and growing faster than the rest of central Iowa. These western areas have earned, deserve, and need the support of expanded transportation. In my opinion, the highest return on transportation investment is in this area and should be treated as such. In my view, leveraging growth is every bit as important as boot-straping areas.

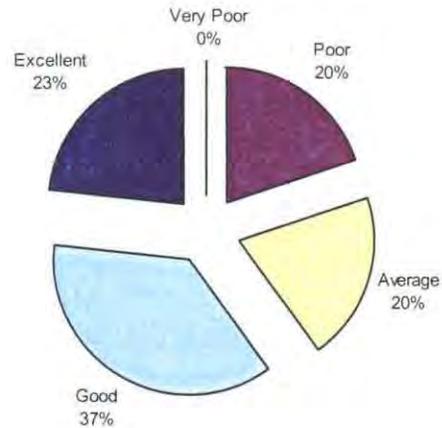
The MPO member representatives and staff have repeatedly demonstrated a commitment to make informed decisions in an orderly and transparent manner, with regular, intentional opportunities for the public to be informed; to provide input; and to receive education about the decisions that are made and the rationale that supports them.

Progress on actual implementation of programs that can be self funding seem to be lacking. Too dependent upon funding from taxpayers or government agencies.

As a person on disability due to my osteoporosis and a person recovered from brain surgery for a seizure disorder, having to depend on the buses for transportation, the more I think about and notice how the service is not what it was thirty years ago, I had to respond. Having moved to Des Moines from my hometown of Marshalltown, back in 1977, there was a bus on every route, every fifteen minutes at that time. Now one is lucky to see a bus, once per hour. Very poor in my opinion for the growth the Des Moines, Polk County Area has seen in the last thirty years. It's not just Des Moines. The Suburbs have cut back on the support they provide as well, despite the fact they have all had tremendous growth since that time.

Q4. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is planning for the street and highway system.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	0.0%	0
Poor	20.0%	6
Average	20.0%	6
Good	36.7%	11
Excellent	23.3%	7
Comments		8
	answered question	30
	skipped question	4

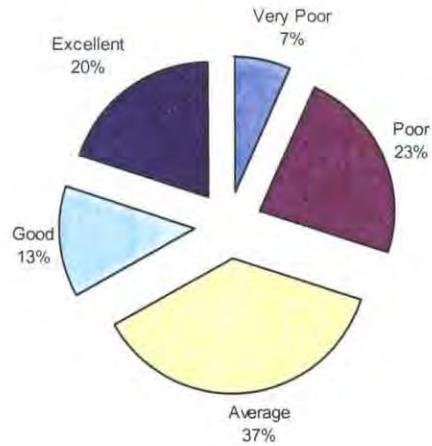


Written Comments (verbatim)

Unknown
If fostering urban sprawl is it's purpose then it's doing a wonderful job
I have no idea - shouldn't that be a choice here?
This is an oddly-phrased question. The phrasing implies the technical versus the use side of the street and highway system. Does the DMAMPO have staff knowledgeable on the cost of constructing and maintaining streets and highways? Does the DMAMPO have staff knowledgeable on the engineering requirements of roadways? Does the DMAMPO have staff knowledgeable on the latest safety features? The list could go on for several more questions. I do not have answers to these questions. Is the DMAMPO planning for streets and highways based on real needs, governmental directives, and other factors? I would answer that the DMAMPO is following the guidance of its member organizations; however, that answer comes with the caveat in the previous answer regarding the clique of Des Moines.
There's next to no sign of planing streets and higways aside from the big project from DOT
The Alice's Road/I-80 Interchange is the most important project currently under consideration.
Routine maintenance and planning are below expectations. In our area of town - south side and downtown - once streets are completed - they begin falling in disrepair. This increases costs down the road as complete replacement then needs to take place.

Q5. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is planning for the public transportation system.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	6.7%	2
Poor	23.3%	7
Average	36.7%	11
Good	13.3%	4
Excellent	20.0%	6
Comments		9
	answered question	30
	skipped question	4

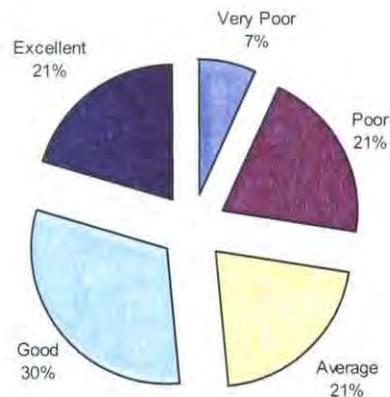


Written Comments (verbatim)

I feel they need to be more aggressive given the high capital expenditures required while fighting for limited resources.
We have public transportation?
As before.
See my answer to #4. I would add an example here. Since Federal money has been available to assess possibility of light rail, Des Moines and transportation-related entities, such as DMAMPO, have been including the option of light rail. Does planning for the public transportation system mean how well can the DMAMPO incorporate a light rail into the landscape or does it mean is light rail the best option in the best location for the needs of the community?
I would like to see more work on mass transit.
I can't really speak to the public transportation system at this point. My involvement mainly pertains to emergency response, minimizing delays and closures, and public notification etc.
Why wouldn't you plan a light rail system from downtown West Des Moines to Downtown Des Moines, instead of spending so much money on a downtown loop system that transports people around who are already there?
Lack of actual implementation of public transportation. The shuttle system downtown is fabulous and I heard high marks during the recent tournament. Unfortunately it did not run and night or weekends for these folks and I kept hearing how much more convenient it would have been to use and not drive and re-park each day. Additionally, mobility - they wanted to visit additional restaurants in the east village, however did not always want to take cabs. Great product, just need to increase usage. All said they were willing to pay to ride - could this not become self-sufficient? Additional comments such as using solar energy to operate vehicles was something I heard as well - future?

Q6. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is planning for the bicycle and pedestrian facilities system.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	6.9%	2
Poor	20.7%	6
Average	20.7%	6
Good	31.0%	9
Excellent	20.7%	6
Comments		12
	answered question	29
	skipped question	5

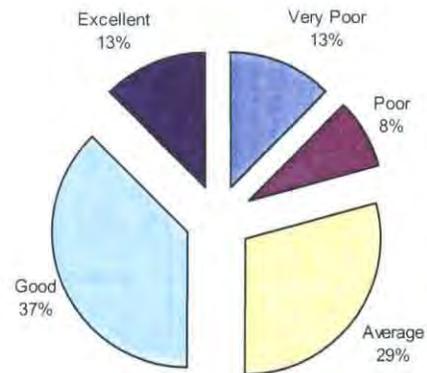


Written Comments (verbatim)

They have been fairly good at grouping the many local municipalities and organizations to assemble a respectable bicycle trail system throughout the metropolitan area. Unfortunately, they do not have a united 'Polk Area' or Des Moines Metropolitan government to enable them to be as successful as they need to be.
This is an area where the DMAMPO has especially excelled, bringing the bicycle and pedestrian needs of the DMA communities' overall transportation network together.
I haven't been as connected to the bicycle and pedestrian facilities discussions the last several years, but I know from participating in the long range planning process 5+ years ago that bicycle and pedestrian issues were raised and considered then.
Unknown
What one of the most rare things you see in Des Moines? A sidewalk. So even if we did have some form of convenient public transportation, how would one get there to take it?
Do not really have any interaction on these topics.
More attention for pedestrians - LESS for cyclists who are very poor when it comes to the rules of the road. I also think there should be restrictions on cycling during snowstorms and other bad weather as they are a danger to drivers.
See #4 and #5. I would add, what is the purpose of the planning in terms of how pedestrians and bicyclists travel primarily. As I stated in public comments on the 2035 Horizon plan, pedestrians and bicyclists will never be given proper attention, in planning or in development, until elected officials and senior political appointees stop thinking the default is everyone has a car.
I see more people bicycling to work. But some friends comment they don't always feel safe (from cars) and need a changing facility at work. But, we have improved our trails and street markings for bikes. Keep it up!
Emergency services has high concerns of bicycle and pedestrian systems. Injury prevention is a large part of our business as well as response to incidents, so we have a stake in this facet of transportation. As far as planning, we would like to be considered for input, review, or comment on systems in the area.
Very good. Update Skywalks and construction should be more logical however. Very few direct routes, confusing to visitors, and certainly not aesthetically appealing.

Q7. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is planning for the freight system.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	12.5%	3
Poor	8.3%	2
Average	29.2%	7
Good	37.5%	9
Excellent	12.5%	3
Comments		10
	answered question	24
	skipped question	10

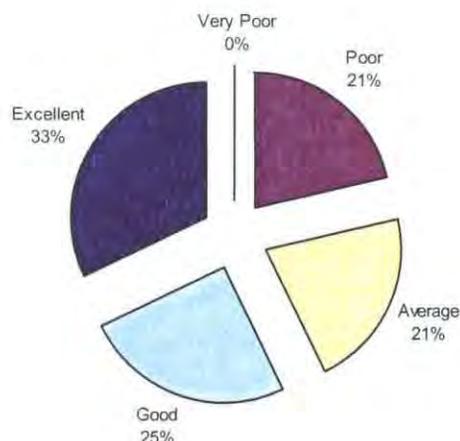


Written Comments (verbatim)

There are many opportunities available but with the faltering economy and diverse freight system in Central Iowa they need a strong city, county and state government to enable them to attain their goals.
Unknown
Same situation as #6
Not well informed on this aspect of the plans
No idea.
While my answers to previous questions still apply, I marked Good on this one because there are factors outside of the control of the Des Moines clique and local citizens in play with freight. If there are to be products to buy and merchandise to export, there has to be movement of freight. I believe the DMAMPO is aware of and working on the demands freight places on an infrastructure and freight-hub location. However, I will not comment on how well the DMAMPO is planning for the directions in which the freight will flow (i.e., what part of the Des Moines metropolitan area will see freight traffic based on where it is originating and where it is terminating).
I don't know much about this, but we need a good system to keep good jobs and attract new or expanding business.
As far as over the road freight, they consider every possible impact when planning. Very well done in my opinion. AS far as "in town" type freight, I can not speak to that.
N/A

Q8. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization considers the natural and social environment in its transportation planning process.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	0.0%	0
Poor	21.4%	6
Average	21.4%	6
Good	25.0%	7
Excellent	32.1%	9
Comments		9
	answered question	28
	skipped question	6

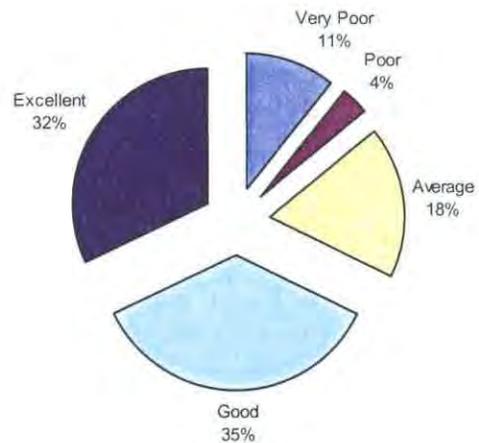


Written Comments (verbatim)

Not familiar enough to offer any opinion.
Unknown
Supporting urban sprawl in the name of progress - just like, with a few exceptions, every other city our size - want to see our future? Visit Austrin Tx. If that's progress then I'm glad I'm getting old.
No idea. I would imagine then that the communications branch of DMAMPO needs some attention.
My marking of Poor is not intended as a reflection on the abilities or the intent of the DMAMPO. Rather, it goes back to my earlier comment that the assumption is everyone has a car. The Federal government has determined public transportation will be geared towards moving senior citizens and the disabled, who may not be able to drive themselves; the poor, who may need public transportation because they cannot afford a reliable car (or gasoline for a car); and, the full range of the working class in terms of commuting to reduce air pollution during rush hours and building more roadways only to carry rush hour traffic. The Federal money is not available to serve the whole community and Iowa does not provide support for that purpose, either. Then there is the reality that putting a highway through a low-income neighborhood is cheaper than putting it through a well-heeled location. The DMAMPO is limited in what it can do for the social environment because of the Federal restrictions.
DNR is always a represented agency, or at the least, consulted prior to any potential environmental impact a project may have. Very well considered.
Still focusing on gas/diesel trucks for transportation. Bus stands are rarely covered, not lit, this does not create safe environment. Private sponsorship of these wait stands could be sought - reducing need for government funding - additionally by having these - routes could be displayed, status of bus, and explanation of what the rider needs to do - to get to their destination.
Bulldozing is fine with me, we can always plant more trees.

Q9. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is carrying out a public participation process.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	10.7%	3
Poor	3.6%	1
Average	17.9%	5
Good	35.7%	10
Excellent	32.1%	9
Comments		7
	answered question	28
	skipped question	6

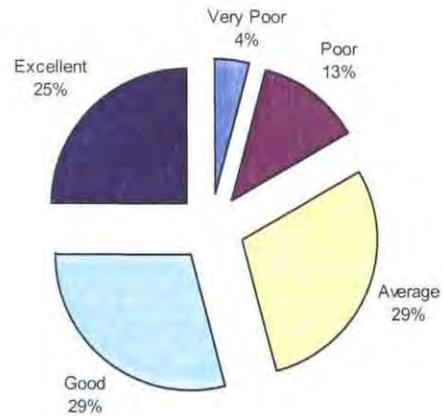


Written Comments (verbatim)

I think if you mean interested parties e.g. companies, government organizations, then yes they actively solicit input from these parties. If you mean the general public, they probably should attempt to attain some additional editorial response from newspaper, radio and television to get certain part of the general population that may have valuable input.
I believe the DMAMPO has performed very well soliciting and receiving public input to the overall transportation planning process.
This came to me from my neighborhood association - it is run is a state employee.
The public meeting on March 3, 2009, is a perfect example of bias that is built into any public comment process. The Des Moines Botanical Center is a half-hour walk from any bus stop. Plus, the 7 pm meeting begins after some bus lines have halted their service for the day. (In my case, I would have to leave the 7 pm meeting at 7 pm to walk to the bus stop in time to catch a bus that would take me to the downtown transfer location in order to catch the 7:45 bus that is the last one of the day. Otherwise, I could leave the meeting when it ended, grab a bus to the downtown transfer location and take an hour to walk the rest of the way to my home.) I'm not going to attend that meeting, neither is anybody else who chooses or needs public transportation. Many of the public meetings are held at the DMAMPO's offices, which are nowhere near public transportation. The DMAMPO staff makes an effort to outreach the public but the resources they have in the Des Moines area are so limited that the outreach is often discouraging to both the public and the staff because it limits the number of people who can participate. It also doesn't help that the report written by the main local newspaper on a well-attended meeting on the 2035 Horizon Plan reported the attendee's number one concern as though it were the most positive of comments.
The DMAMPO has made it a policy in scheduling public information/input meetings to have at least one of them at a location in proximity to public transportation routes, as well as choosing locations that are readily accessible to those dealing with physical/mobility challenges.
Outstanding - this is an example - would like to see more out of the box thinking, private funding and/or self sustaining funding, and visionary planning. We have a tendency to do what other cities are doing - why not use things that locally make sense - without the spending of dollars for "another" consultant.

Q10. Please rate how well you feel the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization integrates land use and the transportation system in the planning process.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very Poor	4.2%	1
Poor	12.5%	3
Average	29.2%	7
Good	29.2%	7
Excellent	25.0%	6
Comments		12
	answered question	24
	skipped question	10

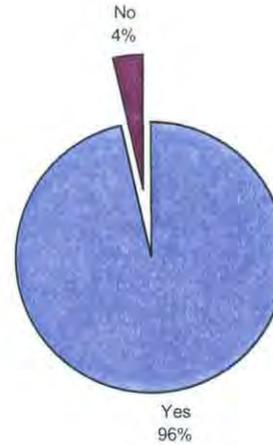


Written Comments (verbatim)

Des Moines has the luxury to not have the space limitations larger metropolitan areas have so this is not as big of a hurdle.
This is a very difficult and demanding aspect of transportation planning in any metropolitan area. I believe the DMAMPO has utilized the appropriate resources to foster effective integration of land uses into the transportation planning process.
Unknown
too many roads being built in the corridor surrounding the cities, ripping up farmland and natural areas that should be preserved. Once we have concrete poured, there is no going back.
Not well enough informed on this important aspect of planning to comment
How can I know?
Sprawl and growth of automobile use is encouraged, but that is also due to policies made by member-entities of the DMAMPO. It's also part of the academic culture that focuses on sustainable housing communities but not a whole community. I don't have the sense that the DMAMPO is able to devise creative ways to reduce land use impact and to promote the best balance in the transportation system.
I am concerned about urban sprawl. I am not in favor of government control, but we have many pockets of undeveloped areas in the current metro area that could be developed before we move further out.
The emphasis thus far has been upon information gathering and dissemination. This is an evolving area of the planning process, occasionally hampered by parochial priorities and concerns of governments and neighborhoods within the planning area.
Again, I point to downtown - instead of promoting the additional building of parking garage monstrosities - could the city/county not have used property vacated in the area and created a large parking facility with bus pickup - eventually could tie to shuttle or rail?
I do not support regional land use planning; I like that the MPO leaves land use planning in the hands of local governments and I'd like it to stay that way.

Q11. Did you know the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization projects future growth for the metropolitan region by estimating increases in population, households, and jobs over the next 30 years?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.4%	27
No	3.6%	1
Comments		6
	answered question	28
	skipped question	6

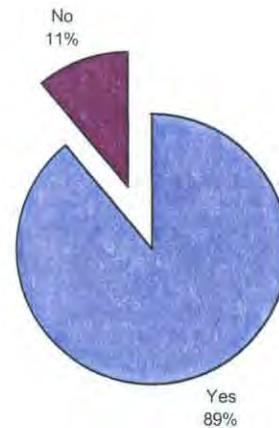


Written Comments (verbatim)

I certainly am aware that their vision is long term though I do not recall seeing a 30 year plan. DART uses this information too and thank the MPO for making it available.
It is simply common sense that they would do this.
I have no respect for the projections, however. A few years ago I listened as a major participating entity, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (now known as DART), argued for greater downtown Des Moines presence of public transportation because there was a projected 65,000 people working in downtown in the next ten years. I then found an evacuation plan for downtown Des Moines, indicating there already are 65,000 people working in the downtown area.
And how is this incorporated into planning. What has already come of this type of planning? Other than bike trails and the daytime shuttle - what other transportation systems have been implemented?

Q12. Did you know the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization uses these growth projections to forecast future traffic on the I

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	88.9%	24
No	11.1%	3
Comments		6
	answered question	27
	skipped question	7



Written Comments (verbatim)

They make everyone aware of their projections which was very evident on the 235 project and the new Southern beltway.
Another obvious.
I agree that they purport to do such, but I don't always believe that the projections carry much weight in their decisions.
The regional planning process constantly must struggle with a unavoidable competition between the philosophy that roads should be built where people are already going in order to make their movement more efficient and safer, on the one hand, and the philosophy that "if it is built they (people/economic development/activity/traffic) will come. Each philosophy has merit and the balance between them must necessarily fluctuate over time. The commitment of the DMAMPO to "balanced growth" speaks to that perrenial competition and the commitment of the DMAMPO to find and preserve that balance.
See above.

Q13. Please add any additional comments.

<p>Iowa and Des Moines are geographically poised to benefit from a strong successful MPO. Given the location of Des Moines, with the excellent highway, airport, and rail infrastructure along with our abundant natural resources, this group could have the potential to steer Iowa to long term prosperity - given the opportunity.</p>
<p>I believe the DMAMPO staff has done an excellent job, overall, in all major aspects of transportation planning, especially with respect to identification of funding, support to DMA communities, public participation and recreation trails. The work of the DMAMPO is very difficult, integrating the transportation needs and goals of individual DMA communities' to the overall transportation system is complex and requires excellent cooperation and coordination with community representatives. The DMAMPO has performed well providing a very healthy and efficient transportation plan to the Des Moines Area.</p>
<p>Another good answer to these questions would be "don't know".</p>
<p>In a few weeks I will have finished a project I started a couple of years ago which was to walk every street in Des Moines. If you are really interested in transportation and especially public transportation, then it's an exercise I suggest that some of the staff try. They won't have to go far to observe what I have. You will find DSM to be an extremely pedestrian unfriendly town manifested by the lack of sidewalks, the lack of cross walks (try to find a safe place to cross, Fleur, MLK, University, Ingersoll, SW 9th, Army Post, SE14th, E14th, etc.) the lack of enforcement of laws intended to keep sidewalks, where they do exist, safe and a driving population that frequently makes their displeasure known when they have to slow down to accommodate a pedestrian, that is, if they actually do slow down. On more than one occasion I have been tempted to give this whole thing up after a close encounter with a motor vehicle. This city is a testimonial to the automobile. Except for a few areas, it is impossible to live without one. For example, I am now walking the area to the south and east of the airport which is within an easy stroll to the numerous stores on Fleur Drive. But how is one to get there on foot? Walk in the mud along the fence of the Wakonda Club on Fleur Drive? Maybe that's why in over 2 years I have encountered less than a dozen people actually walking with a purpose of going somewhere to conduct business. The greatest absurdity I have seen is the development of the walking path at Gray's Lake which is impossible to get to on foot. One has to drive a car in order to use it! And the suburbs are even more amazing. Extensive paths through expanded greenspaces that lead to nowhere, yet no way of safely walking to a store.</p>
<p>I hope that the MPO will become very forward thinking, taking into account that we have to think beyond gasoline and cars to what our next options are going to be. If roads are the primary focus, we'll get more urban sprawl. Whenever possible, look toward improving access by pedestrians and bicyclists. For example, Fleur Drive has no sidewalks. In order to get to Grey's Lake, you have to drive! That makes no sense! Better and more usable bus lines would also be appreciated. The only time we really feel comfortable and able to use the bus is the Park n Ride to the State Fair. The system works wonderfully for that, but on a day-to-day basis, just isn't worth the hassle ... because it's so complicated and non-user friendly. Other ideas: Regular public transportation to/from Ames, Iowa City, Chicago, Minneapolis, KC, Omaha (but of course, that only works if there is also good enough public transportation to utilize at the other end!). Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment.</p>
<p>I have been involved with the MPO at some level for the past six years. It provides a tremendous service to the member communities. Without it the area would have no united effort in the transportation area.</p>
<p>I encourage more publicity regarding the public meetings of the MPO that include what the goals of this organization are. I'm on the mailing list & regularly receive updates, however, I don't know what is done on an ongoing basis to continue to grow the attendance at your public forums. Having these public forums promoted on public, local TV news programs and in the various newspapers & neighborhood association newsletters would be beneficial. If they</p>

already are, I encourage the continuation of this and to continue to find new & different ways to spread the word about these meetings.

If you really want the public to participate, you should communicate more directly with those of us that pay property taxes in the affected zip codes; i.e. direct response.

I thank the FHWA and the FTA for visiting the Des Moines Area. I have respect for the staff of the DMAMPO. I appreciate their desire to include the public, not just as a funding requirement but also as an awareness of the public's desire to be involved. I would like to be more involved, but I can't get away from work for daytime meetings and I cannot walk home from evening meetings. Written comments are important, but there is no substitute for a group of citizens sitting in a room feeding ideas off of each other and the DMAMPO staff. I would ask that the FHWA and FTA representatives take back to Washington the message that the DMAMPO cannot do its job as long as the Federal government continues to consider the automobile a presence in most homes and creates services targeted to groups that will solve only specific problems.

I think they do an incredible job. The I-235 project was a most impressive project over 7 years. Have you ever watched an escalator repairman try to fix the escalator while it keeps people moving? No, it is usually shut down until fixed. But the I-235 project was completed while the escalator was still moving! Impressive in my opinion.

Nice job MPO!

Joni A. Gilchrist Unit"A" 527-40th Street Des Moines, Iowa 50312-3527 e-mail:
jag-gilly@earthlink.net

APPENDIX E: TRAVEL MODELING QUESTIONNAIRE

Certification Checklist for Travel Forecasting Methods

Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Area Review Responses For March 3-5, 2009

Key Indicators of Risk

- 1) *Is the metropolitan area a designated serious, severe or extreme ozone or serious carbon monoxide non-attainment area?*

No, the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (DMAMPO) currently is in air quality attainment for all air pollutants, mobile and stationary.

The DMAMPO depends on Polk County Public Works' Air Quality Division for air quality monitoring for the Des Moines metropolitan area.

- 2) *Is the metropolitan area a designated non-attainment or maintenance area, and has the MPO used travel demand models previously?*

No, this Planning Area is in air quality attainment.

The DMAMPO has maintained and used a travel demand model since the early 1990s, when the Iowa DOT agreed to transfer travel demand modeling responsibility directly to this staff. However, the DMAMPO had not had to the need to use the travel demand model for non-attainment or maintenance purposes/activities.

- 3) *Does the metropolitan area plan to apply for an FTA transit new start grant?*

The DMAMPO has no current plans to apply for an FTA transit new start grant for this metropolitan area; the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) has mentioned the FTA "small starts" program, but do not believe the DART actually has made application to the FTA.

- 4) *Does the transportation plan include any major projects that will significantly increase highway capacity or add an interchange to the Interstate System?*

The DMAMPO's *Year 2030 LRTP* (Year 2030 LRTP) identifies a number of projects that increase transportation system capacity. The proposed Northeast Beltway construction, connecting Interstate 80 and Interstate 35, would increase capacity significantly in the Planning Area's northeastern quadrant. Additionally,

the proposed Southwest Bypass construction connecting Interstate 35 and Iowa Highway 5 would significantly increase capacity significantly in the Planning Area's southwestern quadrant.

Additionally, the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) has a number of other proposed capacity improvements to the existing Interstate System, including Interstate 35, Interstate 80, and Interstates 35/80 capacity improvements.

The *Year 2030 LRTP* identifies a number of proposed freeway interchanges and a number of proposed existing freeway interchange modifications. Proposed new Interstate System interchanges locations include: Interstate 35 at the proposed junction of the Northeast Beltway (north of Ankeny), Northeast 36th Street at Interstate 35 (Ankeny), Northwest 26th Street at Interstates 35/80 (Polk County), Northwest 100th Street at Interstates 35/80 (Urbandale), Meredith Drive at Interstates 35/80 (Urbandale), Alice's Road/105th Street at Interstate 80 (Waukee/West Des Moines), Southwest Bypass at Interstate 80 (West Des Moines), Southwest Connector at Interstate 35 (Warren County), Interstate 80 and U.S. Highway 65 existing interchange reconstruction for the proposed Northeast Beltway (Altoona/Polk County); and Grand Avenue at Interstate 35 (West Des Moines).

5) *Is the metropolitan area proposing any transportation projects where there is strong and coordinated opposition by local advocacy groups?*

The DMAMPO often receives public criticism from local advocacy groups regarding the proposed Northwest 26th Street at Interstates 35/80 Interchange, particularly that part of the project termed the M.L.King, Jr. Parkway extension over the Des Moines River. Public criticism often focuses on potential environmental impacts to the Des Moines River and to its surrounding wildlife area.

Additionally, the DMAMPO often receives criticism for the proposed Northeast Beltway, Interstate 80 north and west to Interstate 35. Public criticism often focuses on the need for constructing this new roadway (from Des Moines' Euclid Avenue north to Interstates 35/80 and continuing north to tie into Polk County's NW 26th Street) and this proposed roadway/interchange's potential impact to existing land use.

6) *Has the MPO been a defendant in, or threatened with, legal action in which the adequacy of their travel forecasting methods was challenged?*

No. The DMAMPO's travel forecasting methods have not been involved in legal actions.

Indicators of Agency Technical Capabilities

1) *Who is responsible for travel forecasting at the MPO?*

The DMAMPO staff develops, maintains, and updates its travel demand model. The DMAMPO coordinates that work with the DMAMPO Transportation Technical Committee's (TTC) Engineering Subcommittee and with the Iowa DOT, Office of Systems Planning, travel demand modeling team.

2) *What modeling package is used for travel demand modeling?*

The DMAMPO currently uses Caliper Corporation's TransCAD[®] 5.0 travel demand modeling software to complete the traditional 4-step modeling process. TransCAD[®] 5.0 is compatible with the DMAMPO's Geographic Information System files, and is consistent with the travel demand modeling software used by the Iowa DOT and by Iowa's other MPOs. The DMAMPO utilizes the TransCAD[®] software.

During Interstate 235 reconstruction, the DMAMPO developed a micro-simulation model to review and analyze traffic operations related to the effects of Interstate 235 ramp closures and route diversion strategies in the Planning Area. The Iowa DOT and the DMAMPO use the Microscopic Traffic Simulator (MITSIM) software on a Linux-based operating system platform. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering developed MITSIM. When implemented, the DMAMPO worked with MIT's Dr. Mithilesh (Mit) Jha and Dr. Moshe Ben-Akiva.

Currently, the FHWA, Headquarters, Washington, D.C., and Cambridge Systematics, Inc., Cambridge, MA, selected the DMAMPO as a beta site for Cambridge Systematics project to test whether an activity-based model (Transportation Analysis Simulation System (TRANSIMS)) can be deployed successfully to a medium-to-small sized MPO. The Cambridge Systematics team includes Tom Rossi and Dr. Bruce Spear.

3) *What formal training has the MPO technical staff received?*

Staff has taken courses in traffic engineering/travel demand modeling while in college. Dr. Park completed his Ph.D. in Transportation Engineering, and participates in the Transportation Research Board. Other DMAMPO staff have taken classes while in college at Iowa State University or the University of Iowa. The DMAMPO staff routinely offers the transportation planners opportunity to attend FHWA-sponsored Introduction to Travel Demand Modeling course, as those courses are available.

The DMAMPO staff attends and/or participates activities, such as Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP) webinars; TMIP Virtual Mentoring and Technical Support Center (VMTSC), Transportation Research Board (TRB) annual meetings; Travel Modeling Workshops; Midwest Travel Model User Group (MTMUG); , and other conferences, workshops, and training sessions as appropriate and as available.

The DMAMPO staff subscribes to the TMIP listserv, the TransCAD@yahoo listserv, and the Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP) listserv.

The DMAMPO staff works with the Iowa DOT to access traffic data collected through the Iowa DOT's Traffic Management Center in Des Moines. The DMAMPO uses the Iowa DOT TMC-collected data to review operational issues on the Planning Area's freeway system. Collected Iowa DOT traffic data includes vehicle counts, vehicle type identification, and vehicle travel times.

Cambridge Systematics provides DMAMPO staff TRANSIMS activity-based model training as part of the DMAMPO's support of Cambridge Systematics TRANSIMS model development project for the DMAMPO. This Cambridge Systematics/DMAMPO partnership provides the DMAMPO staff training and explanation on both TRANSIMS development and usage.

4) Does the MPO technical staff require training in specific technical areas?

At this time, the response is no. The DMAMPO staff routinely is involved in travel demand model training, i.e., from TMIP via Internet-based webinars, providing for improved staff travel demand modeling capabilities. The DMAMPO staff has a working knowledge of travel demand forecasts using TransCAD[®] and uses this TransCAD[®] knowledge and experience to develop and to maintain the DMAMPO's travel demand model.

5) Does the MPO organizational structure include a technical committee to review planning assumptions and forecasting methods?

The DMAMPO staff coordinates with the DMAMPO TTC Engineering Subcommittee to develop and to review the travel demand model, its inputs, and its outputs, and to support the DMAMPO with developing, maintaining, and updating the DMAMPO's travel demand model. Transportation (traffic) engineers, public works directors, and planners from DMAMPO member governments and participating agencies, along with an Iowa DOT staff person, comprise the Engineering Subcommittee. The DMAMPO TTC Engineering Subcommittee representatives self-nominate, with the DMAMPO TTC Chair's concurrence.

The DMAMPO staff is working with the Iowa DOT, and the Iowa DOT's consultant, in developing a Statewide Travel Demand Model (Statewide Model). The Iowa DOT's Statewide Model would assist the Iowa DOT with statewide freight issues on Iowa's roadway system and would assist Iowa's MPOs by

generating external trip data for use in the their respective MPO travel demand models.

- 6) ***Does the MPO have a strategic plan and a guaranteed minimum level of funding in its Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for maintenance and improvements to its travel forecasting methods?***

Yes. The DMAMPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Work Element 1.0, Long-Range Transportation Planning, annually identifies and funds DMAMPO travel demand model development, maintenance, and update activities.

The DMAMPO's UPWP also contains Work Element 12.0, Travel and Training, contains funds for the DMAMPO staff to attend activities such as technical training, sessions, workshops, conferences, and TRB activities.

- 7) ***Has the MPO convened a peer review or other independent assessment of their travel forecasting methods?***

The Iowa DOT's Office of Systems Planning hosted and convened a Peer Review Session during March 30 - April 1, 2004. The Peer Review Session focused on model calibration and validation pertaining to each specific area of the travel demand modeling process. For more information, please visit:

http://tmip.fhwa.dot.gov/services/peer_review_program/documents/iadot.

The DMAMPO staff has not convened a Peer Review for a general review of the DMAMPO's travel demand model. However, the DMAMPO does work the Iowa DOT staff to review proposed model updates and improvements to the DMAMPO's travel demand model. The Iowa DOT, MPO, consultant, and software developer staff do have peer review opportunities as part of the quarterly MTMUG meetings.

- 8) ***Is there a formal memorandum of agreement between the agencies to delineate technical responsibilities, lines of communication and review, authorized expenditures and reimbursement procedures?***

Not Applicable.

- 9) ***Who on the MPO staff is responsible for evaluating the technical work of the contractor?***

Not Applicable.

- 10) ***Does the MPO have a formal policy for sharing its travel demand model files?***

The DMAMPO staff does not share its TransCAD® travel demand model's internal model files. The DMAMPO staff does share travel demand model outputs, but only after careful DMAMPO staff review. The DMAMPO staff does share travel demand model network data, including network capacities, network speeds, and network traffic counts. The DMAMPO staff does share Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) data for review of projected socioeconomic data.

The DMAMPO staff does share all TransCAD® travel demand model files with Iowa DOT staff due to the DMAMPO and Iowa DOT Office of System Planning staffs close working relationship. This arrangement allows Iowa DOT staff to run the DMAMPO's travel demand model and review with the DMAMPO staff the Iowa DOT's review and findings regarding the DMAMPO's model.

Additionally, the DMAMPO does share its travel demand model files for academic purposes. The DMAMPO shares model files with the Iowa State University's Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE). The DMAMPO provided its travel demand model files to the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) for NJIT's work on the FHWA-sponsored Transportation Economic and Land Use Model (TELUM) project.

11) Does the MPO have a digital data licensing agreement for entities that obtain the MPO's model files?

Yes. The DMAMPO has a Digital Data Licensing Agreement. In addition, the DMAMPO staff has developed a travel demand model request form, requiring DMAMPO member governments/participating agencies and their consultants to submit a formal request that details why and for what purpose access is needed the DMAMPO's travel demand model.

Documentation

1) Does the Documentation Include a Sufficient Inventory of Current Conditions?

The DMAMPO's travel demand documentation includes highway network; socioeconomic data (population/households/employment) by TAZ; land use; and, 2001 National Household Travel Survey Add-on (2001 NHTS Add-On) data, including vehicle trips by day and month, person trips by age, number of vehicles by household size, income, trip length, vehicle mileage, and work trip characteristics.

The DMAMPO's travel demand model documentation does not have transit trip information directly, because the DMAMPO does not use the model's mode choice step given the 2001 NHTS Add-On identifies trips as being less than 0.1% of total daily trips in the region.

2) Are the Planning Assumptions used in the Model Development Appear to be Reasonable?

The DMAMPO's future socioeconomic forecasts are trend-based.

The DMAMPO derived other model assumptions from the 2001 NHTS Add-On and the 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package. Assumptions derived from the 2001 NHTS Add-On include trip purposes, trip rates, average trip lengths, and socioeconomic data profiles.

3) How are future regional population and employment control totals determined?

Year 2030 LRTP

In determining Year 2030 LRTP population and employment forecasts, the DMAMPO staff, under the direction of the DMAMPO TTC Planning Subcommittee and the DMAMPO LRTP Task Force, offered different employment and population forecast methodologies for consideration.

For employment forecasts, the DMAMPO staff reviewed the following sources and methodologies: Woods & Poole, Inc. forecasts; Shift-Share technique; Constant Share technique; and, the *Horizon Year 2025 LRTP's* Extrapolation technique.

For population forecasts, the DMAMPO staff reviewed the following sources and methodologies: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., forecasts; Cohort Component technique; and, *Horizon Year 2025 LRTP* forecast methodology., The DMAMPO staff calculated population and employment forecasts and reviewed their forecasts against the three-county Des Moines Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Census data. For the Year 2030 LRTP, the Des Moines MSA consisted of Dallas, Polk, and Warren Counties.

The DMAMPO staff calculated Year 2030 employment forecasts first, using the Shift-Share technique. With the Shift-Share technique, the DMAMPO staff used Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) employer/employee data to calculate a Year 2030 Des Moines MSA employment forecast. The DMAMPO supplemented the IWD data with 2000 U.S. Census data. The DMAMPO staff combined the IWD and the 2000 Census data sources using the Shift-Share technique, creating a Year 2030 Des Moines MSA employment growth forecast.

The DMAMPO staff then calculated Year 2030 population forecasts from the Year 2030 Des Moines MSA employment forecast. In this methodology, the DMAMPO staff deducted commuters – at a rate of five percent (5%) of the total Des Moines MSA Year 2030 employment forecast, deriving a Planning Area employment forecast total

Horizon Year (HY) 2035 LRTP

The DMAMPO staff coordinated with the Iowa DOT Office of System Planning staff to obtain from the Iowa DOT's Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI) statewide model county-level population and employment forecasts for the Des Moines MSA. For HY 2035, the Des Moines MSA continues to include Dallas, Polk, and Warren Counties, adding Madison and Guthrie Counties.

The DMAMPO staff then disaggregated the REMI county-level MSA forecasts into smaller geographic units within each of the Planning Area –related counties (Guthrie County is not contiguous to the Planning Area) before distributing the forecasts into smaller TAZs. The DMAMPO TTC Planning Subcommittee and the DMAMPO Growth Scenario Task Force reviewed growth trends, planned infrastructure improvements, and communities' future planning documents before developing a recommendation for the DMAMPO Transportation Policy Committee.

4) Is there a formal approval of the future year population and employment totals and distribution by an MPO committee?

The DMAMPO's Growth Scenario Task Force (GSTF) is DMAMPO subcommittee comprised of DMAMPO policy makers. The DMAMPO's GSTF makes a recommendation to the full DMAMPO, for formal action, via the DMAMPO's committee structure. The DMAMPO's Growth Scenario Task Force (GSTF) is a DMAMPO subcommittee comprised of DMAMPO policy makers. The DMAMPO's GSTF received input and recommendations from the DMAMPO's technical committees before making a recommendation to the DMAMPO Executive Committee, for formal action via the DMAMPO's committee structure. The GSTF developed a horizon year growth scenario based on forecasted population and employment, the DMAMPO committees reviewed and forwarded the GSTF's recommendation to the full DMAMPO. The DMAMPO voted to concur with the recommendation in February 2008.

Forecasting Methods

The DMAMPO's travel demand model documentation includes the following information:

- Model inputs, including transportation network, TAZ, and socioeconomic data;
- Model specifications, including model coefficients, model trip purposes and trip rates, and model factors for the trip generation, trip distribution, and trip assignment steps;
- Model validation, including scatter plots, R square (R^2), Root Mean Square Error (RMSE), Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) error, and screenline analysis; and,
- TransCAD[®] user guide; and,
- TransCAD[®] GISDK code with a detailed step-by-step process.

The DMAMPO's travel demand model documentation is available to download from the DMAMPO's web site.

Practical Use of the Travel Demand Model

1) What sources of data are used to determine reasonable trip-making characteristics?

The DMAMPO staff uses the DMAMPO's socioeconomic data and trip generation formulas to estimate trips consistent with the DMAMPO's 2001 NHTS Add-On results.

The DMAMPO staff uses the 2000 Census Transportation Planning Package data to determine reasonableness and to verify the DMAMPO's TAZ socioeconomic data.

Staff used the 2001 NHTS Add-On data to update the DMAMPO's HY 2035 travel demand model for trip generation formulas and cross-classification rates.

Staff also used the 2001 NHTS Add-On data to develop a new trip length frequency distribution to check the DMAMPO's HY 2035 travel demand model's trip length outputs for reasonableness.

2) Does the MPO practice post processing of travel demand model output pursuant to NCHRP 255 for project specific applications?

At the Iowa DOT Office of System Planning staff's recommendation, the DMAMPO staff uses NCHRP 255 methodologies to check the travel demand model's output for reasonableness and for post processing the model output.

3) How is the travel model used in the project selection process?

The DMAMPO's Surface Transportation Program (STP) project scoring process involves several travel demand model outputs, including projected Annual Daily Traffic levels, Vehicle Miles of Travel, and Level of Service.

The DMAMPO completes a similar analysis process for reviewing and screening potential LRTP transportation system projects.

4) How is the travel model used for long-range planning?

For the *Year 2030 LRTP*, staff identified congested facilities based upon distributed Planning Area from the DMAMPO's adopted population and employment forecasts. The forecasted and distributed population and employment changes among TAZs aided staff identifying corridors where one would anticipate future traffic congestion.

The DMAMPO's member governments submitted proposed transportation capacity improvements consistent with their respective comprehensive plan documents and the Street and Highway Element of those plans. ^{Staff} reviewed each submitted project and that project's impact on the transportation system in terms of congestion, Level of Service, and Vehicle Miles of Travel.

The DMAMPO staff uses the travel demand model to identify corridors needing capacity improvements and to review proposed projects for improvements provided to the overall Planning Area transportation system.

The DMAMPO uses the travel demand model to respond to DMAMPO member government requests to test proposed land-use change or transportation improvement scenarios.

Most often, the DMAMPO travel demand model's output is required by and used in work on Interchange Justification Reports, Environmental Assessments, and Environmental Impact Statements.