

Spotlight Issues

Purpose: Spotlight issues highlight the integrated nature of transportation. Many crucial regional initiatives call out transportation as a barrier or challenge for their initiative's success. So how do we plan the transportation network as a connector rather than a barrier? Using spotlight issues, we can see how transportation impacts health, opportunity, and quality of life throughout the region.

Goal 1: Optimize and maintain the current system

Spotlight Issue: Limited access to existing job opportunities.

Initiatives: OpportUnity, Capital Crossroads, HIRTA (Norwalk)

Summary: Many workplaces are not located near transit lines or feature shifts outside transit hours.

Goal 2: Expand multimodal options

Spotlight Issue: Aging population that wants to remain in their homes.

Initiatives: Age-Friendly Iowa

Summary: People outlive their ability to drive by an average of 7-10 years. Central Iowa has a rapidly aging population that already experiences transportation barriers to independent living. Providing walking and transit options to these populations is crucial for them to age in place.

Goal 3: Improve environmental quality

Spotlight Issue: Inadequate stormwater practices to prevent flooding, and improve water quality.

Initiatives: Regional Stormwater Policy

Summary: Central Iowa has experienced both flooding and flash-flooding in recent years while water quality continues to be a regional issue. Impervious pavements, stormwater management practices, and transportation facilities play a major role in our vulnerability to flooding.

Goal 4: Improve regional health and wellbeing

Spotlight Issue: 28,000 central Iowans go hungry every day. Over half are children.

Initiatives: Hunger Free Polk/Dallas County, OpportUnity

Summary: Food insecurity and hunger are significant issues for central Iowa. Quick, low-cost transportation options are not often available to food pantries, community meal sites, and grocery stores with healthy options.