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.