



# DES MOINES AREA MPO

## Policy Committee Meeting

August 17, 2023



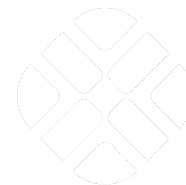
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METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

# APPROVAL OF AGENDA

# August 17, 2023, Agenda

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1. Call to Order
2. VOTE: Approval of Agenda
3. VOTE: Approval of Meeting Minutes
4. CONSENT and VOTE: Approval of Financial Statement
5. PUBLIC COMMENT on MPO Actions
6. REPORT and VOTE: Transload Development & Operational Agreement Amendment
7. REPORT and VOTE: Employee Handbook
8. REPORT and VOTE: Policies and Procedures Manual
9. REPORT and VOTE: Interim Executive Director Annual Review and Compensation Adjustment
10. REPORT and VOTE: Temporary Salary Adjustment for Interim Executive Director
11. REPORT and VOTE: FFY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment
12. REPORT and VOTE: Water Trails BUILD Grant Payment
13. REPORT and VOTE: Comprehensive Safety Action Plan Consultant Contract
14. REPORT: Mobilizing Tomorrow Update Overview
15. REPORT: FY 2025 Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program Pre-Applications
16. REPORT: Purple Heart Highway Update
17. VOTE: Enter Closed Session to Discuss Personnel Matters
18. OPTIONAL VOTE: Action in Public Session Related to Personnel Matters
19. Other Non-Action Items of Interest to the Committee
20. Next Meeting Date – September 21, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
21. Adjournment



# APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

# **APPROVAL OF THE JULY FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

# **PUBLIC COMMENT ON MPO ACTIONS**

# **TRANSLOAD DEVELOPMENT & OPERATIONAL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT**

# Transload Agreement Amendment

- MPO and Des Moines Industrial (DMI) entered into agreement in October 2019. Agreement lays out flow of DOT funding from MPO to DMI for transload facility development.
- Paragraph 13 of agreement states DMI will reimburse MPO for up to \$250,000 of expenses incurred as fiscal agent and facilitator of funding.
- After issuing first invoice in January, MPO learned from DOT it would be ineligible to collect funds from DMI as MPO had already been reimbursed for expenses from DOT.
- Amendment would remove paragraph 13 from agreement.



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

# Employee Handbook

- Last handbook update was approved in 2012
- MPO staff undertook update and brought to board in March 2023
- Subcommittee formed to review and provide guidance
  - David Jones, Ankeny (Chair)
  - Dean O'Connor, Altoona
  - Joe Gatto, Des Moines
  - Len Murray, Pleasant Hill
  - Mike Jones, Windsor Heights
- Subcommittee met twice over last few months
- Legal counsel has reviewed
- Draft update included in agenda packet



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# Employee Handbook – Recommended Updates

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- Minor formatting, editing, and general clarifications throughout.
- Chapter 1 – Introduction:
  - Clarified that changes to the handbook are the purview of the Policy Committee.
  - Added language that the handbook should be reviewed periodically.
- Chapter 2 - General Policies:
  - Updated and further defined the Drug and Alcohol Policy.
- Chapter 3 – Employment Policies:
  - Updated the initial employment/probation period from 3 to 12 months.



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# Employee Handbook – Recommended Updates

- Chapter 4 – Attendance and Leave Policies:
  - Placed a maximum accrual of sick time of 1200 hours.
  - Added language that up to 240 hours of accrued vacation time may be carried over to the next fiscal year (a max of 40 hours may be cashed out); if time carried over is not used, it is lost.
  - Increased the vacation allowance from 80 hours to 120 hours for employees with less than 5 years of service.
  - Clarified time allowed for bereavement leave depending on the employee's relationship to the deceased.
  - Updated the military leave policy to comply with state and federal laws.



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# Employee Handbook – Recommended Updates

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- Chapter 5 – Compensation:
  - Added language to be consistent with the salary schedule and compensation adjustment matrix previously approved by the MPO.
  - Increased the longevity bonuses offered to employees from \$600 increments to \$750 increments.
- Chapter 6 – Employee Benefits:
  - Clarified language regarding coverage during military leave.

# Employee Handbook – Recommended Updates

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- Appendix A – Remote Work Policy:
  - Clarified remote work is available for up to two days per week.
  - Reviewed/updated workplace safety/liability section.
- Appendix B – Drug and Alcohol Policy and Testing Program:
  - New section added to support policies identified in Chapter 2.

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

# Policies and Procedures Manual

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- Staff assembled all operational policies/procedures into one manual
- Sent to legal counsel for review
- Financial policies/procedures reviewed by Finance Subcommittee
- Additional policies identified during process
  - Credit Card Policy
  - Public Purpose Policy
  - Financial Roles/Responsibilities
  - Employment Expense Authorization Procedures



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# Policies and Procedures Manual

Chapter	Source	Notes
1: Introduction & Authority	Staff developed based off Omaha MPO policy	Existing
2: Payments & Contract Approval	MPO policy adopted June 2017	Existing
3: Purchasing Procedures	Staff update of MPO policy adopted in early 90's	Existing
4: Credit Card Use	Based on City of West Des Moines policy	New
5: Employee Expenses	Staff developed, based off travel policy	New
6: Travel Policy	Staff update of MPO policy from early 90's; update based off Omaha MPO policy	Existing
7: Public Purpose Policy	Staff developed based off City of Dubuque and City of Ankeny policies	New
8: Financial Roles and Responsibilities	Staff developed & reviewed by Finance Subcommittee & auditor	New
9: Audit	Staff update of existing MPO policy (original approval date unknown)	Existing

# Policies and Procedures Manual

Chapter	Source	Notes
10: Investment Policy	MPO policy last updated June 2023	Existing
11: Consultant Selection/Contracting	Staff developed based off Omaha MPO policy	Existing
12: Records Retention	Staff developed based off Omaha MPO policy	Existing
13: Public Access to Data	Staff developed based off Omaha MPO policy	Existing
14: Meeting Procedures	Staff developed summarizing elements of MPO bylaws/28E; weighted vote section approved by MPO in October 2018	Existing
15: Communications Policy	Staff developed	Existing
16: Staff Salary Ranges & Annual Adjustments	Approved by MPO in May 2021	Existing
17: COVID-19 Policy	Staff developed based on City of Des Moines policy	Existing

# **INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNUAL REVIEW & COMPENSATION ADJUSTMENT**

# Interim Executive Director Annual Review

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- MPO Chair appointed an Executive Director Review Committee
  - Courtney Clarke, City of Waukee (chair)
  - Joe Gatto, City of Des Moines
  - Tom Hadden, City of West Des Moines
- Committee recommends a 4.25% increase in salary effective July 1
- The Executive Committee approved the salary increase at the August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting

# **TEMPORARY SALARY ADJUSTMENT FOR INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

# Salary Adjustment for Interim Executive Director

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- Executive Director Review Committee also recommended a temporary salary adjustment for Interim Executive Director for time serving in the position
- Committee recommends a 12.5% increase in base salary
- The Executive Committee approved the temporary salary increase at the August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting

# **FFY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENT**

# FFY 2023-2026 TIP Amendment

- Sponsor: Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Project: US 69 (Item 54869)
- Location: In Des Moines from N of RR Viaduct to S of Fremont St (NB)
- Federal Aid Amount: \$400,000
- Total Cost: \$500,000
- Type of Funding: NHPP, PRF
- Change: Add to FFY 2023



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# **WATER TRAILS BUILD GRANT PAYMENT APPROVAL**

# Water Trails BUILD Grant Payment Approval

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- Snyder & Associates has submitted the Application for Partial Payment No. 8 to Polk County for review and approval
- Polk County has reviewed the pay application and concurs with the \$325,383.16 amount.
- \$191,732 is immediately reimbursable, and the remaining \$133,651 is in stored materials.

# Water Trails BUILD Grant Payment Approval

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- Progress Update
  - Work continues to work on south bank downstream of the recreational drops
  - Constructed working platform to place rip rap
  - Didn't haul as much rock this month
  - Levee work on the north bank is wrapping up which will allow work on the maintenance path to begin shortly

# Water Trails BUILD Grant Payment Approval

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- As discussed last month, staff recommends ability for staff to approve/pay future estimates administratively vs. board approval.
  - Waiting for board approval adds ~3 weeks to process.
  - Contractors expect payment within 2 weeks of pay estimate submittal.
  - All payments are and would continue to be included in monthly financial statement.
  - Change orders would still come before board for approval.



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# **COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY ACTION PLAN CONSULTANT APPROVAL**

# Comprehensive Safety Action Plan Contract Approval

- Submitted RFPs:
  - Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig (FHU) – Fehr & Peers and Group Creative Services
  - SRF – Alta Planning + Design and Snyder & Associates
  - Toole Design – HR Green, Confluence, and HDR Engineering
- Selection Committee:
  - Mark Holm – City of Ankeny
  - Marketa Oliver – City of Bondurant
  - Stephanie Riva – City of Norwalk
  - John Davis – City of Des Moines
  - Eric Peterson – City of West Des Moines
  - Luis Montoya – DART
  - Jeremy Lewis – Street Collective

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# Comprehensive Safety Action Plan Consultant Approval

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- After compiling the scores, Toole Design (HR Green, Confluence, and HDR Engineering) had the highest score of 119/145
- In July, Executive Committee authorized staff to begin contract negotiations with Toole Design team
- Draft contract, included in agenda packet, has been developed and reviewed by legal counsel (not to exceed \$1,000,000)
- Grant Agreement is still under review by the US DOT



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# **MOBILIZING TOMORROW UPDATE OVERVIEW**



# Mobilizing Tomorrow Update Overview

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- The MPO is required to update their Long-Range Transportation Plan every 5 years
- The last update was approved in November 2019 and the next update is due in November 2024
- Staff began background work in November 2022
  - Monthly meetings with Iowa DOT and HDR regarding the model
  - Data collection



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# Mobilizing Tomorrow Update Overview

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- Goals for the Plan Update
  - Update not an overhaul
  - Improve readability/conciseness
  - Release draft chapters individually for review

# Mobilizing Tomorrow Update Overview

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## Timeline

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2024
  - Finalize Model Update
  - TAZ development
  - Planning Area and Urban Area Boundary review/update
  - Project Solicitation

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# Mobilizing Tomorrow Update Overview

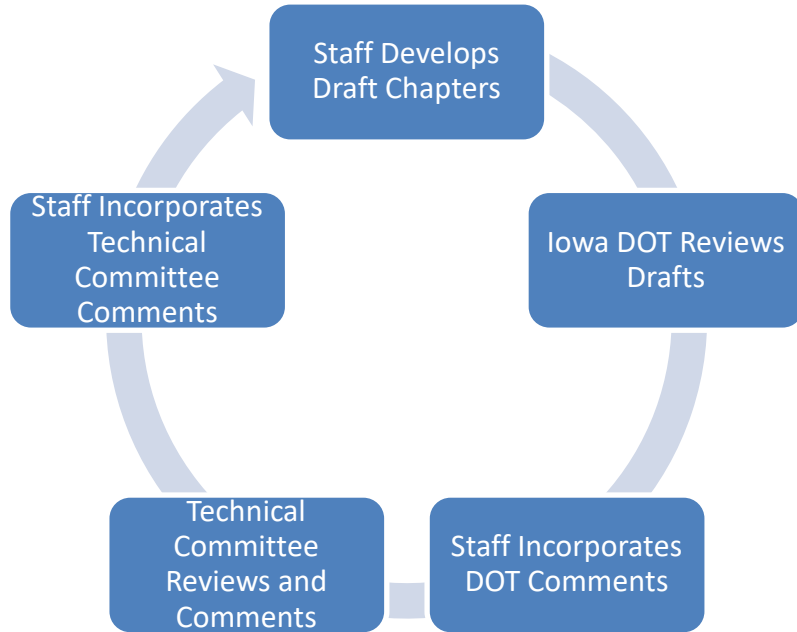
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## Process Changes

- No Steering Committee for this update
  - Will have a steering committee for \$1 million Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
  - Proposing a basic update to Mobilizing Tomorrow
- Will depend more on Technical Committee review

# Mobilizing Tomorrow Update Overview

## Technical Review



## Policy Approval



# **FY 2025 IOWA CLEAN AIR ATTAINMENT PROGRAM PRE-APPLICATIONS**

# FY 2025 ICAAP Pre-Applications

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- Ankeny – N Ankeny Boulevard Improvements - \$1,900,000
- Polk County – Traffic Signal Improvements - \$349,300
- West Des Moines – Traffic System Vehicle Detection Improvement - \$732,000

# FY 2025 ICAAP Pre-Applications

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- ICAAP Schedule
  - September 2023 – Recommendation presented to Policy Committee and resolutions are forwarded to project sponsors
  - October 1, 2023 – Project sponsor submit their applications to the DOT



# PURPLE HEART HIGHWAY UPDATE

# RECAP: Iowa DOT Action Plan for Interstate Designation

There are clear benefits to the traveling public and the metropolitan area with Interstate designation. In addition, there are significant challenges associated with Interstate designation; however, those challenges can be fully mitigated through a multi-step process as described below and in this order:

- 1) Congress passes a provision allowing current state legal weight limits on the bypass to remain in effect should the corridor be designated as an Interstate in the future. There are many examples in existing United States Code where these provisions have been implemented, including with the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- 2) Iowa state legislature passes legislation to allow the bypass from the Iowa 5/US 65 junction with US 69 to the US 65 junction with US 6 to operate without a forty mile per hour minimum speed limit, if designated as an Interstate. This would allow slow-moving agricultural equipment to continue using this stretch of the bypass.
- 3) Complete the additional Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) analysis and study efforts required to pursue Interstate designation.
- 4) After completion of the previous steps, Iowa DOT will submit the formal requests necessary for Interstate designation.

Ongoing – Iowa DOT Identify and implement additional safety measures to assure continued safety for slow-moving agricultural equipment.



# RECAP: Engagement of ag stakeholders



## MET IN NOVEMBER



## MET IN DECEMBER



# Engagement continued

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- Follow-up meeting among ag stakeholders was delayed due to farm season.
- Meantime, positive signals from representatives of the ag stakeholder group (Bill Northey of Agribusiness Association of Iowa and Mike Steenhoek of Soy Transportation Coalition).
- A follow-up meeting of ag stakeholders was finally held in late summer.
- Representatives met with MPO, Partnership, Iowa DOT in late June to share feedback of the group.

# Feedback

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## POSITIVES

- Appreciation for the positive approach and meaningful engagement.
- Interest in continuing engagement more broadly on transportation topics.

## NEGATIVES

- Polk County Farm Bureau said they were opposed.

# Farm Bureau Policy

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According to ag stakeholder group representatives, the Polk County Farm Bureau adopted a policy position following the last discussion around interstate designation. It reportedly says something to the effect of:

*We oppose converting divided highways into interstates if no safe and viable alternative route is available for farm equipment.*

## NOTES:

- Policy started in Polk County as a reaction to this issue, then it was adopted by the Iowa Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau.
- Exact language and meaning needs to be clarified.
- Not sure how deep the opposition is.

# Additional takeaways

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## OTHER

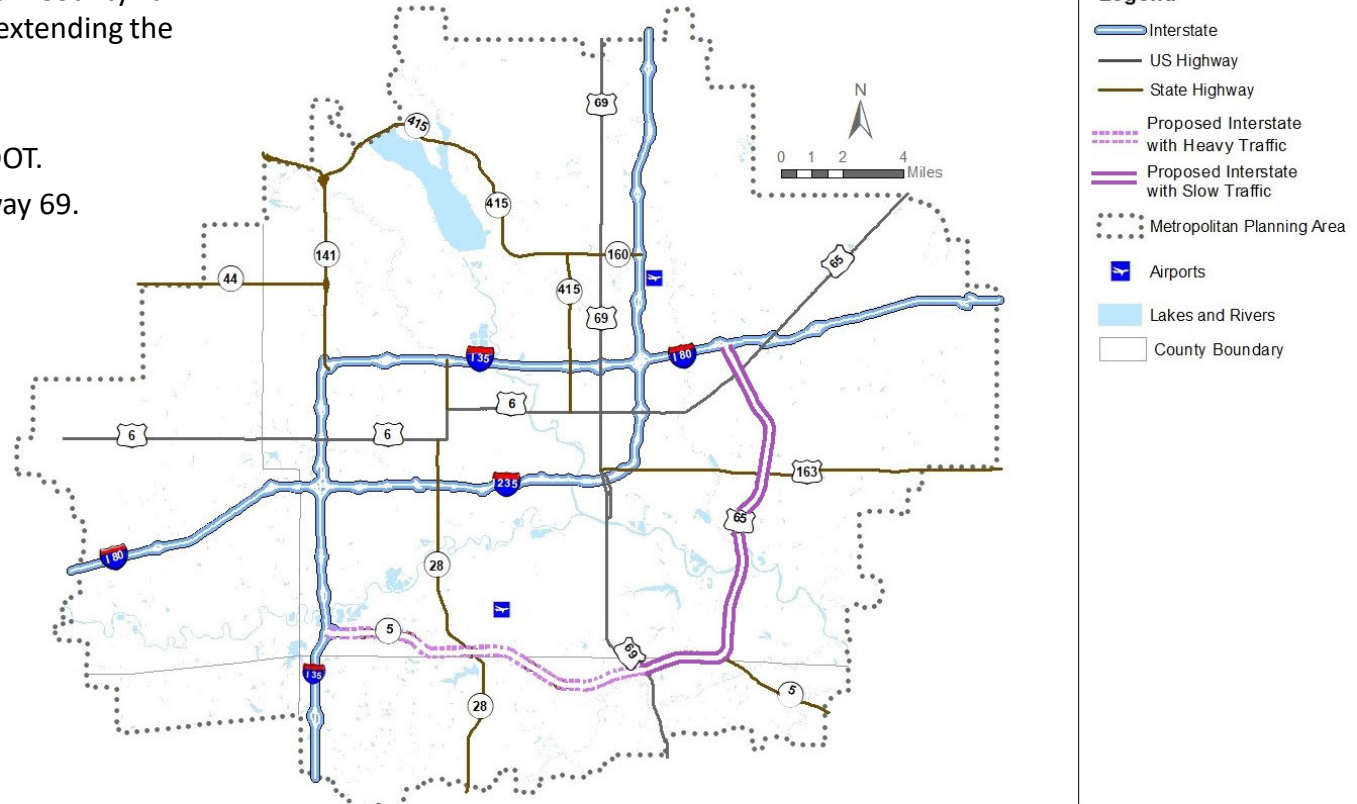
- Improved overall relations with ag community.
- Door remains open to continue dialogue.
- Select state lawmakers were open to this exemption.
- Partnership remains interested in pursuit of designation.

## NEXT STEPS

- Iowa DOT and MPO are meeting with Polk County Farm Bureau later this month to better understand their position.
- Continue discussion regarding proposal from a farmer.

# Proposal: Extend minimum speed exemption

- Through a representative, a Polk County Farm Bureau member asked about extending the minimum speed exemption.
- The exemption is granted administratively by the Iowa DOT.
- Currently: Highway 6 to Highway 69.
- Proposal: extend western termini further westward, to SW 9<sup>th</sup> or Fleur Drive.
- The farmer suggested that SW 9<sup>th</sup> or Fleur would be a calmer exit off the bypass than the Hwy 69 interchange.
- Iowa DOT and MPO began exploring the feasibility of doing so to show good-faith effort to work together.
- Early preference for SW 9<sup>th</sup>.
- This is an ongoing discussion.





# Options to proceed

	OPTION	PROS	CONS
Option 1	Move forward despite opposition.	Keeps objective alive.	Risks damaging relationships. Decreases likelihood of support at state, federal levels.
Option 2	Quit completely.	Saves staff time for other endeavors.	Objective fails.
Option 3	Try again another time.	Leaves door open. Saves near-term staff time.	Objective delayed. Could lose key relationships to turnover.
Option 4	Pivot conversation to alternatives.	Continue pursuit of objective.	More staff time. Effort could fail.

# Discussion with Corridor Communities

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- Staff met with all corridor communities, plus MPO Chair and Mayor Holm (who is a Polk County Farm Bureau member).
- Consensus to continue exploring options
- Additional steps
  - Increase engagement of elected officials
  - Collect additional intel from ag stakeholders, landowners
  - Seek potential champions in ag sector, elsewhere
  - Check with Mid-American re hypothetical bridge at SE 45<sup>th</sup>
  - IDEA: Economic-impact study

## OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST



#### Events Calendar

Public events, meetings, and training opportunities for members and public.

#### Agendas & Minutes

Access all MPO meeting agendas, minutes, and resources here.

#### Public Participation

Review and comment on MPO regional plans and projects today.

#### About Us

Get to know who we are

#### Our Work

Regional plans and projects

#### Resources

Minutes, maps and more

#### Updates

The latest news and events

## MPO EV SERIES: Electric Vehicles for Emergency Response

Hear how Madison Fire Department, Bellevue Police Department, and Newton Police Department are leading the Midwest (and the nation) in using the first electric fire pumper truck, electric police cruiser, and electric police motorcycle for their operations.

Your participation matters to us! [Get involved](#)

# Website Updates

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- Last update was more than a decade ago.
- An update was recommended by Federal Highway to improve navigation.
- New logo that is easier to scale.
- THANK YOU! Photos provided by member governments.
- Same URL
- Old links will likely be broken. If you're trying to find a document using an old link, please contact staff.

# Coming soon: GovDelivery



- Launching a new program this month for managing contacts and distributing agendas.
- Landed on GovDelivery, by Granicus.
- Used by Iowa DOT and some member governments.
- Big benefit: constituents can sign up directly to receive agendas, newsletters, project-specific updates, etc.
- You will be getting a message saying you've been signed up.
- **Please stay subscribed! Otherwise, you won't get agendas.**



# Save the Date: MPO 40<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Celebration

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- 2-4 p.m. Friday, September 29
- Smash Park, West Des Moines
- Venue and hors d'oeuvres to be provided
- Buy your own drinks
- Invitees: Policy, Tech, Staff

**VOTE TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION**



This meeting is in closed session.

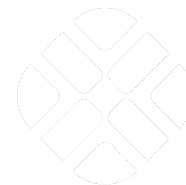
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**OPTIONAL VOTE**

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