



DES MOINES AREA MPO

Executive Committee Meeting

October 11, 2023



DES MOINES AREA
MPO
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

October 11, 2023, Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. VOTE: Approval of Agenda
3. VOTE: Approval of Meeting Minutes
4. CONSENT AND VOTE: Approval of Financial Statement
5. REPORT AND VOTE: Public Hearing Date for Downtown Des Moines Dam Mitigation and User Access Project Construction Contract
6. REPORT AND VOTE: Reimbursement Agreement Regarding SS4A Grant Agreement
7. REPORT: Carbon Reduction Program Funding
8. REPORT: EV Charging Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator program
9. REPORT: Purple Heart Highway Update
10. REPORT: Director Report
11. Other Non-Action Items of Interest to the Committee
12. Next Meeting Date – November 8, 2023 – 11:30 a.m.
13. Adjournment

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

Public Hearing Date

- Approve the public hearing date to award the construction contract for the Harriet Street phase of the water trails project

Tentative Schedule

October 11, 2023 – Set Public Hearing Date

12. Take action at December Executive Committee meeting to set public hearing date for November 16, 2023

October 17, 2023 – Letting

November 1, 2023 – Publish Public Hearing Notice

- 1 Publish public hearing notice in the Des Moines Register

November 16, 2023 – Public Hearing at MPO Policy Committee Meeting

- Resolution adopting plans, specifications, form of contract, and estimated project cost;
- Receive and file report of the bids received by deadline;
- Resolution making award of construction contract; and,
- Resolution approving contract and bonds with construction contractor.

REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT REGARDING SS4A GRANT AGREEMENT

Reimbursement Agreement Regarding the SS4A Grant

- Staff has developed an agreement with CIRTPA for the SS4A reimbursement process
- Key points:
 - CIRTPA is responsible for the completion of their plan
 - MPO will be the fiscal agent for both plans
 - CIRTPA will review and approve their invoices before sending to the MPO
 - CIRTPA will pay the MPO their local match upfront
 - MPO will retain all reimbursements from the SS4A funding

CARBON REDUCTION PROGRAM FUNDING

Carbon Reduction Program Funding

- The Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) included the new Carbon Reduction Program
- This program is targeted at transportation projects that reduce carbon related emissions
- The program includes \$6.4 billion in funding from FFY 2023-2027

Carbon Reduction Program Funding

- Carbon Reduction Program Target for MPO:
 - FFY 2023 - \$1,381,465
 - FFY 2024 - \$1,355,778
 - FFY 2025 - \$1,383,000
 - FFY 2026 – \$1,411,000
 - FFY 2027 - \$1,439,000
 - **TOTAL = \$6,970,243**

Carbon Reduction Program Funding

- MPO staff plans to solicit projects for CRP funding during the FFY 2028 STBG funding cycle.
- Eligible projects include:
 - Traffic management
 - Truck stop electrification
 - Public transit
 - Transportation alternatives
 - Congestion management Technologies
 - ITS
 - Travel demand management
 - Alternative fuel vehicles
 - Traffic flow improvement (don't include capacity)

Carbon Reduction Program Funding

- Potential options for awarding CRP funding:
 - Award the first few years and hold off on awarding the rest
 - Award it all out during the FFY 2028 cycle
 - Engage in some planning and strategizing to determine the most impactful use of the funding

EV CHARGING RELIABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability Discretionary Grant

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) released in September 2023
 - \$100 million available
 - No min. Requirement Funding Ask
- Repair and Replace existing, non-operational electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Federal Match Requirement
 - 80% federal / 20% local
 - Anticipated to award all grants submitted to eligible applicants
- Project Merit Criteria
 - Existing EV Infrastructure that is broken and non-operational
 - Publicly Available Level 2 or 3 Charging
- Applications due November 13, 2023

Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability Discretionary Grant

- MPO has contacted Communities with known Defective Chargers
 - Via US Department of Energy Alternative Fuels Data Center
- Discussion today
 - Identify EV Charger Replacement Needs
- Begin Reporting Chargers Needing Repair ASAP
- Ineligible Projects
 - Level 1 or Non-Networked Level 2, unless replaced with Level 2 charging complying with 23 CFR 680



PURPLE HEART HIGHWAY



DES MOINES AREA



DES MOINES AREA
MPO

RECAP: Phases so far

- PHASE 1: Iowa DOT's stakeholder engagement and action plan.
- PHASE 2: Regional engagement of stakeholders regarding Iowa DOT Action Plan.



MET IN NOVEMBER



Iowa Institute
for Cooperatives



Two Rivers
Cooperative

MET IN DECEMBER



MOINES AREA

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

RECAP: Farm Bureau Policy

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.

Checked in with key stakeholders

- Corridor Communities (9)
- Greater Des Moines Partnership
- MPO Executive and Policy Committees
- Two (2) Polk County Farm Bureau members
- Iowa Farm Bureau regional manager
- One (1) state lawmaker

What we heard from supporters

- Unified interest in continuing to pursue designation.
- Unanimous belief to continue cultivating productive, trust-based relationships with ag stakeholders.
- Openness to exploring alternatives.

What we heard from Polk County Farm Bureau members

- Purpose of the meeting: Discuss safety measures on the corridor
 - Explore extension of western termini of minimum speed exemption zone
 - Discuss possible pilot program for beacon system
- Met with Farm Bureau farmer members
 - Both have farmland north and south of bypass
 - Both use the corridor to move farm equipment (tops speeds of 25 to 35 mph)
- Learned:
 - They love the idea of extending the exemption termini westward
 - They guessed maybe 20 farming operations use the corridor, plus co-ops
 - They expressed willingness to participate in beacon pilot program
 - They see the bypass as a short-term solution
 - They would welcome a meaningful exploration of alternative routes

Sentiments confirmed

- Takeaways reaffirmed by Maggie Cannon, the Iowa Farm Bureau regional manager who staffs Polk County
 - She clarified the policy, saying “alternative” means physical alternative.
 - She believed the sentiments expressed by the two farmer members were representative and held widely by farmer members using the corridor.
 - She said that every time the topic of interstate designation comes up, there is always talk of wanting an alternative route.
 - Seemed very pleased that we broached the subject of an alternative seriously.
 - Sidenote: she has been keeping Warren County Farm Bureau briefed on these discussions and didn’t think we needed a separate conversation with them at this time.

Key insights

- An alternative route is desirable among all stakeholders. An alternative route would:
 - Provide safer alternative for farmers
 - Reduce slow-moving vehicles on corridor, increasing safety for general users
 - Ease concerns about interstate designation
- If we assume a professional responsibility to ensure the safest possible transportation system, the cost of an alternative route is unavoidable regardless of designation of the bypass.

PIVOT: Next phases of effort

- PHASE 1 – Iowa DOT's stakeholder engagement and action plan.
- PHASE 2 – Regional engagement of stakeholders regarding Iowa DOT Action Plan.
- **NEW: PHASE 3** –Protect and preserve near-term use of corridor by ag users.
- **NEW: PHASE 4** – Prepare for long-term needs of corridor users and stakeholders by developing a Corridor Master Plan.

PIVOT: PHASE 3

- Complete assessment of minimum-speed exemption zone
 - LEAD: Iowa DOT
 - SUPPORT: MPO
 - Provide assistance in stakeholder engagement, notably corridor communities
- Launch a beacon pilot program
 - LEAD: Iowa DOT
 - SUPPORT: MPO
 - Stakeholder engagement, seek funding opportunities if needed
- Consider protections for near-term continued use of corridor by ag stakeholders
 - LEAD: TBD (e.g., Iowa DOT, Lawmakers)
 - SUPPORT: MPO
 - Stakeholder engagement

PIVOT: PHASE 4

PROPOSED SCOPE

- Alternatives Analysis for slow-moving vehicles
- Development Scenarios
 - Land-use scenarios identifying development potential
 - Assessment of adjacent infrastructure attributes / needs
 - Existing attributes include Airport, Transload Facility, ???
 - Needs include SE Connector, ???
- Target Industry Analysis
- Economic Impact Study
- Marketing Plan

DISCUSSION: Immediate next steps

PHASE 3

- Coordinate with Iowa DOT on beacon pilot program and minimum speed zone exemption.
- Reconnect with ag stakeholder group representatives regarding near- and long-term objectives.

PHASE 4

- Develop outline and sequencing of overall Corridor Master Plan.
- Develop proposed scope, cost, and funding options for Alternatives Analysis.
- Bring proposals back to MPO Exec and Policy in November for consideration.

DIRECTOR REPORT

RECAP: Three key recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1: Strategic Planning in LRTP (What's important to do)

- Consider including strategic planning in Long-Range Transportation Plan.

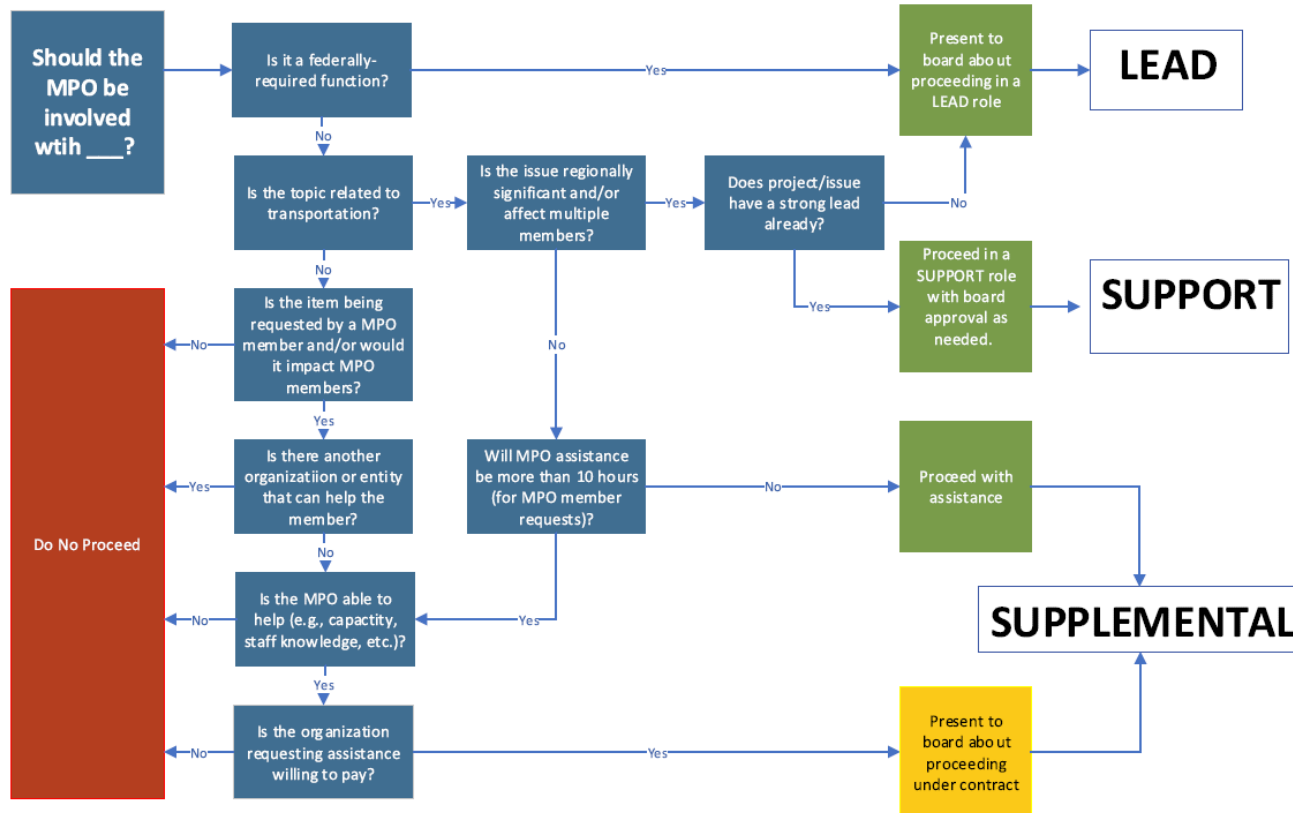
RECOMMENDATION 2: Decision Tree (What MPO focuses on)

- Utilize a “decision tree” so board and staff are aligned on what MPO takes on as part of its workload and in what role (lead vs. support vs. supplemental).

RECOMMENDATION 3: Board Assessment (How we execute)

- Assess how well the committees are functioning, meeting member governments’ expectations, and adjusting processes if needed.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Decision Tree



RECOMMENDATION 2: Decision Tree Definitions

LEAD

MPO is in a leadership position. Activities performed in this role may include the following:

- All federally required activities of the MPO (i.e., LRTP, TIP, UPWP, awarding STBG funds, Public Involvement Plan)
- Project development (i.e., taking project from conception through implementation). * Note: Specific projects that receive this assistance will likely be limited, due to staff capacity, and will be determined by the MPO board. It is not the intent that the MPO will manage actual construction of projects as it does with water trails. This responsibility would be left to a MPO member.
 - Leading facilitation on projects affecting multiple jurisdictions.
 - Project funding which may include:
 - Significant STBG funds for implementation
 - Developing grant applications and grant administration, if necessary
 - Allocating staff time and/or funding for studies/planning; if consultants are used, MPO is the contracting entity.
- Building/maintaining/acquiring tools and data necessary for MPO activities that are otherwise unavailable (e.g., travel demand model, data bike)
- All functions listed in Support role.

Recent Examples:

- Transload Facility
- Safe Streets for All Initiative
- Purple Heart Highway Interstate Designation
- Data Bike

SUPPORT

MPO is in a position of supporting others. Activities performed in this role may include the following:

- Offering letters of support for grant applications.
- Ensuring projects are programmed appropriately in the TIP and Long-Range Transportation Plan
- Including projects in the annual DC list.
- Assembling data collected by others for easy use by MPO members.
- Providing data, modeling support, and other technical analysis for use by MPO members.
- Staff and/or board serving on project committees of MPO members and other regional partners.
- Project funding, which may include:
 - Smaller STBG funds for implementation
 - Allocating funding for studies/planning; if consultants are used, the project sponsor is the contracting entity.

SUPPLEMENTAL

MPO supports other projects outside of its core mission as capacity and board willingness allows. These situations will likely be rare and must have extenuating circumstances for the MPO to be involved (e.g., regional need but no other entities or consultants available to assist)

MPO provides limited planning support to MPO members for non-regional projects (e.g., map making, assistance with DOT grant applications, public input assistance).

Other Items

- Annual audit is underway and starting smoothly thanks to new policies and procedures for financial reporting.
- Notable new Iowa DOT staff:
 - Allison Smyth, P.E., District 1 Engineer
 - Shelby Ebel, District 1 Planner and MPO representative
- New ICON Water Trails director: Stephanie Oppel
- Meetings underway with MPO members
- Thanks to representatives who attended 40th Anniversary Celebration



OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

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