

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee

—
4:00 p.m., January 18, 2024
Des Moines Area MPO Burnham Conference Room
—

TENTATIVE AGENDA

1. **Call To Order**
2. **VOTE: Approval of Agenda**
3. **VOTE: FFY Approval of the Meeting Minutes** Page 3
 - Approve the minutes for the November 16, 2023, and December 14, 2023, meetings.
4. **CONSENT and VOTE: Approval of the Financial Statement** Page 10
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT on MPO Actions** Page 11
6. **PRESENTATION: Transportation for America** Page 12
 - A representative from Transportation for America will give a presentation on strategies for regions to be competitive for federal funding.
7. **PRESENTATION: Executive Director Search Process**..... Page 13
 - The consultants leading the MPO's search for the next executive director will provide an update on progress to date.
8. **PRESENTATION and VOTE: FY 2023 Audit** Page 14
 - Presentation from the auditor and discussion of the draft *FY 2023 Audit*; consider approval.
9. **REPORT and VOTE: Filling of Officer Vacancies** Page 15
 - Discussion regarding the need to fill current vacancies in the Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer positions; consider approval.
10. **REPORT and VOTE: Loan transfer request to Iowa DOT** Page 16
 - Report and discussion regarding a proposal to transfer an Iowa DOT loan for the transload facility from the MPO to the private operator; consider approval.
11. **REPORT and VOTE: Planning Area Boundary Update** Page 17
 - Report and discussion regarding the update to the MPO's Planning Area Boundary; consider approval.
12. **REPORT and VOTE: Mobilizing Tomorrow Funding Projections** Page 18
 - Update regarding the funding projections for the development of *Mobilizing Tomorrow*, the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan; consider approval.
13. **REPORT: Mobilizing Tomorrow Project Solicitation** Page 19
 - Update regarding project solicitation for the development of *Mobilizing Tomorrow*, the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan.
14. **REPORT: Norfolk Southern Rail Spur Track Assessment**Page 20
 - Report and discussion regarding an early step in determining feasibility of a proposal for passenger rail service on the Norfolk Southern rail spur.

The established protocol for minutes of this meeting will be to list all attendees, and with each item on which a vote is conducted in the ordinary course in order to take formal action, those voting nay or abstaining will be identified by name. Any member who is absent from the meeting for any period of time during which a vote of the body is taken, is expected to notify the recording secretary at the conclusion of the meeting so that the absence can be duly noted in the minutes. Roll Call votes will be taken as required by law or upon the request of any member that is approved by the chair, and the vote of each member for or against the proposition, or abstention, will be incorporated in the minutes or recorded on a separate sheet attached to the minutes.

The MPO receives federal funding and may not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, or national origin, according to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For more information or to obtain a Title VI Complaint form, visit www.dmampo.org/title-vi/ or call 515-334-0075.

15. **REPORT FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program and Budget Development**..... Page 22
 - Discussion on the process to develop the upcoming work program and budget for FY 2025.
16. **REPORT: Iowa DOT 2020-2024 Safety Performance Targets (PM1)** Page 23
 - Report on the Iowa DOT's 2020-2024 safety performance targets.
17. **REPORT: 2023 Regional Trails Pavement Condition Report** Page 24
 - Report and discussion regarding updated regional trail pavement conditions.
18. **REPORT: Purple Heart Highway Update**.....Page 25
 - Update regarding the process to redesignate Iowa Highway 5 / US Highway 65 Freeway Corridor to an Interstate.
19. **REPORT: Director's Report**.....Page 26
 - Update by the Interim Executive Director on MPO activities.
20. **Other Non-Action Items of Interest to the Committee**
21. **Next Meeting Date – February 15, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.**
22. **Adjournment**

January 2024
Item No. 3

ISSUE: Approval of Meeting Minutes

VOTE: Consider approval of the November 16, 2023, and December 14, 2023, MPO Policy Committee meeting minutes.

BACKGROUND:

The minutes of the November 16, 2023, and December 14, 2023, MPO Policy Committee meetings are included on the following pages.

RECOMMENDATION:

STAFF CONTACT:

Tracey Deckard, tdeckard@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

Meeting Minutes
Policy Committee Meeting
Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
4:00 p.m., November 16, 2023

The MPO held a Policy hybrid in-person/ virtual meeting at 4:00 p.m., November 16, 2023. The MPO staff emailed agenda packets to the MPO's representatives and posted the agenda at the MPO office on November 10, 2023. **In addition to these published tentative minutes, there also may be additional Meeting Notes on file with the MPO staff that are public records and available upon request as provided by law. These tentative minutes reflect all action taken at the meeting.**

MPO Representatives Present:

Mark Holm | City of Ankeny
David Jones | City of Ankeny
Ted Weaver | City of Clive
Kathie Hungerford | City of Cumming**
Mark Hanson | Dallas County
Luis Montoya | DART
Frank Cownie | City of Des Moines
Connie Boesen | City of Des Moines
Carl Voss | City of Des Moines
Matt Anderson | City of Des Moines
Stephanie Riva | City of Norwalk
Mark Konrad | City of Pleasant Hill
Jeff Walters | Polk City
Tom Hockensmith | Polk County
Robert Andeweg | City of Urbandale
Mark Snell | Warren County
Courtney Clarke | City of Waukee
Jamie Letzring | City of West Des Moines
Mike Jones | City of Windsor Heights
Shelby Ebel | IDOT *

MPO Representatives Absent

Dean O'Connor | City of Altoona
Doug Elrod | City of Bondurant
Ruth Randleman | City of Carlisle
Joe Gatto | City of Des Moines
Colton Fors | City of Elkhart**
Scott Mikkelsen | City of Grimes
Stephanie Erickson | City of Indianola**
Jim Evans | City of Johnston
Tom Leners | Madison County**
Matt McKinney | City of West Des Moines

Kevin Foley | Des Moines International Airport*
Julia Castillo | HIRTA*

MPO Representatives Absent continued:

Tammi Dillavou | City of Mitchellville
Tom Hockensmith | Polk County
Travis Brott | Van Meter**
Johnnie Gibson | FHWA*
Daniel Nguyen | FTA*
Eva Steinman | FTA*
* Advisory/Non-Voting Representatives
** Associate/Non-Voting Representative

Others Present:

Clifford Leonard | Public
Stephanie Oppel | ICON Water Trails
Monica Converse | ICON Water Trails
Gabe Nelson | Snyder & Associates

MPO Staff Present:

Scott Brennan | MPO General Counsel
Dylan Mullenix | Interim Executive Director
Zach Young | Planning Manager
Andrew Collings | Principal Planner
Gunnar Olson | Public Affairs Manager
Tracey Deckard | Office Manager
Carl Saxon | Senior Planner
Rhonda Miller | Accountant

1. Call To Order

Chair Andeweg recognized a quorum and called the November Policy Meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: A motion was made by Voss and seconded by Riva to approve the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization November 16, 2023, meeting agenda.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

MOTION: A motion was made by Cownie and seconded by Voss to approve the October Policy meeting minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Approval of the Financial Statements

Ted Weaver presented. The Finance Committee approved the Financial Statements.

MOTION: A motion was made by Riva and seconded by Jones to approve the Financial Statements.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Contracts and Expenses

Interim Executive Director presented. The Executive Committee recommended approval of the contract amendment for InTrans in the amount of \$25,000. The Executive Committee recommended against the five-year Greater Des Moines Partnership investment in the amount of \$12,500.

MOTION: A motion was made by Weaver and seconded by Riva to approve the Executive Committees recommendation.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Public Comment

None.

7. Public Hearing: Downtown Des Moines Dam Mitigation and User Access Project Construction Contract.

Planning Manager presented. Public Hearing to discuss the construction contract for the Harriet Street access phase of the Downtown Des Moines Dam Mitigation and User Access Project.

Gabe Nelson from Snyder & Associates appeared. No one from the public appeared for comment or questions.

8. Plans, Specifications, Form of Contract and Estimate of Costs

Planning Manager introduced Gabe Nelson from Snyder & Associates. Nelson provided information regarding the contract and project.

Ted Weaver presented. The Finance Committee approved the Financial Statements.

MOTION: A motion was made by Riva and seconded by Holm to approve the Plan Specifics

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. Contract for the Harriet Street Phase of the Dam Mitigation and User Access Project.

Gabe Nelson from Snyder & Associates and Scott Brennan, MPO Legal Counsel presented. Recommend approval of the contract for the Harriet Street Phase of the Dam Mitigation and User Access Point.

MOTION: A motion was made by Voss and seconded by Riva to approve the contract for the Harriet Street Phase of the Dam Mitigation and User Access Point.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Presentation by the Iowa Department of Transportation

Shelby Ebel of the Iowa Department of Transportation presented. Update on current and future projects happening in the Greater Des Moines region.
Presentation and discussion only.

11. Calendar Year 2024 Meeting Dates

Interim Executive Director presented. Consider approval of the Policy Committee meeting dates for Calendar Year 2024.

MOTION: A motion was made by Jones and seconded by Voss to approve the contract for the Harriet Street Phase of the Dam Mitigation and User Access Point.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Executive Director Search Update

Chair Andeweg presented. The Executive Director Search Committee met and recommended an internal managed process in the interest of saving money. Mark Konrad of Pleasant Hill read a statement into the record regarding the process to date and disagreement with an internal managed process for hiring an Executive Director and raised several questions and concerns with this process. Discussion ensued. Mayor Clarke from the City of Waukee also voiced disagreement with the internal process and indicated that a search firm, while expensive, is necessary. Mark Snell of Warren County agreed. Tom Hockensmith of Polk County indicated success previous by hiring internally but has also used a search firm with success. Mayor Clarke pointed out that hiring internally and doing a search are two very different topics and that no discussion has been ensued by the committee regarding this issue. Chair Andeweg asked for a restated motion to obtain the assistance of a search firm to find a new Executive Director.

MOTION: A motion was made by Riva and seconded by Jones to approve the hiring of a search firm to conduct a search for candidates to fill the Executive Director vacancy. Roll call was taken for the vote. 12 Policy Committee members voted in favor of hiring a search firm; 5 Policy Committee members voted in favor of doing an internal search.

MOTION CARRIED TO HIRE A SEARCH FIRM AND HOLDING A SPECIAL POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING IN DECEMBER TO APPOINT A SEARCH FIRM.

13. Planning Manager Remote Work Agreement

Interim Executive Director presented. The Executive Committee discussed options for moving forward at the conclusion of the planning Manager's existing remote work agreement which expires at the end of this year. The Committee acknowledged that the planning Manager is leading several critical projects that will not be concluded when the agreement expires. The Committee members discussed the possibility of the Planning Manager becoming a contracted position. Recommend Policy Committee act on this matter.

MOTION: A motion was made by Hockensmith and seconded by Voss to prepare a contract for the Planning Manager to run through 2024.

MOTION CARRIED

14. Decision Making Tree

Interim Executive Director presented. Recommend approval of a decision tree to help the MPO determine when it should be involved with various projects and at what level.

MOTION: A motion was made by Weaver and seconded by Riva to approve the decision tree.

MOTION CARRIED

15. MPO Representative Selection Process

Interim Executive Director presented. Review of the process for MPO members to appoint representatives and for the MPO to select officers for 2024.
Report and discussion only.

16. Planning Area Boundary Update

Planning Manger presented. Discussion regarding an update to the MPO's Planning Area Boundary.
Report and discussion only.

17. Mobilizing Tomorrow Update

Planning Manager presented. Update regarding the development of the region's long-range transportation plan.
Report and discussion only.

18. FFY 2028 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program Schedule

Planning Manager presented. Report on the Federal Fiscal Year 2028 Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program Schedule.
Report and discussion only.

19. Director's Report

20. Other Non-Action Items of Interest to the Committee

None

21. Next Meeting Date- November 16, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

22. Adjournment

Hearing no objection to the contrary, The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

Meeting Minutes
Special Policy Committee Meeting
Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
4:00 p.m., December 14, 2023

The MPO held a Special Policy hybrid in-person/ virtual meeting at 4:00 p.m., December 16, 2023. The MPO staff emailed agenda packets to the MPO's representatives and posted the agenda at the MPO office on December 8, 2023. **In addition to these published tentative minutes, there also may be additional Meeting Notes on file with the MPO staff that are public records and available upon request as provided by law. These tentative minutes reflect all action taken at the meeting.**

MPO Representatives Present:

Mark Holm | City of Ankeny
David Jones | City of Ankeny
Doug Elrod | City of Bondurant
Ruth Randleman | City of Carlisle
Ted Weaver | City of Clive
Rita Connor | City of Cumming**
Luis Montoya | DART
Connie Boesen | City of Des Moines
Carl Voss | City of Des Moines
Joe Gatto | City of Des Moines
Josh Mandelbaum | City of Des Moines
Heather Stancil | Madison County**
Stephanie Riva | City of Norwalk
Len Murray | City of Pleasant Hill
Jeff Walters | Polk City
Tom Hockensmith | Polk County
Robert Andeweg | City of Urbandale
Mark Snell | Warren County
Courtney Clarke | City of Waukee
Tom Hadden | City of West Des Moines
Mike Jones | City of Windsor Heights
Shelby Ebel | IDOT *
Kevin Foley | Des Moines International Airport*

MPO Representatives Absent

Dean O'Connor | City of Altoona
Mark Hanson | Dallas County
Frank Cownie | City of Des Moines
Colton Fors | City of Elkhart**
Scott Mikkelsen | City of Grimes
Stephanie Erickson | City of Indianola**

Jim Evans | City of Johnston

MPO Representatives Absent continued:

Matt McKinney | City of West Des Moines
Julia Castillo | HIRTA*

Tom Hockensmith | Polk County

Travis Brott | Van Meter**

Johnnie Gibson | FHWA*

Daniel Nguyen | FTA*

Eva Steinman | FTA*

* Advisory/Non-Voting Representatives

** Associate/Non-Voting Representative

Others Present:

Clifford Leonard | Public

Cassandra Hall | 2 The Top

Diana Deibler | Deibler & Company

MPO Staff Present:

Scott Brennan | MPO General Counsel
Dylan Mullenix | Interim Executive Director
Zach Young | Planning Manager
Andrew Collings | Principal Planner
Gunnar Olson | Public Affairs Manager
Tracey Deckard | Office Manager
Carl Saxon | Senior Planner
Rhonda Miller | Accountant

1. Call To Order

Chair Andeweg recognized a quorum and called the November Policy Meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: A motion was made by Hockensmith and seconded by Gatto to approve the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization November 16, 2023, meeting agenda.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Executive Director Search Consultants Contract

Chair, Bob Andeweg presented. Recommend approval of the contract with 2 The Top to manage the search and hiring process for a new MPO Executive Director.

MOTION: A motion was made by Gatto and seconded by Hockensmith to approve the contract with 2 The Top to manage the search and hiring process for a new MPO Executive Director

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Search Committee Decision Making Authority

Cass Hall from 2 The Top presented. Recommend approval of a search process that is aggressive in timeline as recommended by the Search Committee and approve certain decision-making authority to enable the process to be completed on the recommended timeline.

MOTION: A motion was made by Hockensmith and seconded by Gatto to approve search process that is aggressive in timeline as recommended by the Search Committee and Executive Committee to approve certain decision-making authority to enable the process to be completed on the recommended timeline.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Employee Remote Work Arrangement Update

Interim Executive Director presented. Report on feedback from the Iowa Department of Transportation and the US Department of Transportation regarding the board's direction to convert the Planning Manager to a contract employee as well as discuss options for moving forward including a possible Unified Work Program and Budget amendment. Discussion ensued. Recommend Option 1 as outlined, to continue with the original plan to retain the Planning Manager as a contractor but do so only using local funds. Recommend making amendments to the UPWP to reflect this change.

MOTION: A motion was made by Hockensmith and seconded by Gatto to approve retaining the Planning Manager as a contractor at the end of his remote agreement of December 31, 2023. Funding for this contract position will come from local funds only. The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization also approves amending the *Fiscal Year 2024 Unified Planning Work Program* and Budget to reflect this change.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Other Non-Action Items of Interest to the Committee

None

8. Next Meeting Date- January 18, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

Hearing no objection to the contrary, The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

January 2024
Item No. 4

ISSUE: December Financial Statement

REPORT and VOTE: Consider approving the December Financial Statement.

BACKGROUND:

The December 2023 Financial Statement consists of documents at the following links:

- [Statement of Financial Position](#)
- [Budget vs. Actuals](#)
- [Transaction List by Vendor](#)
- [Water Trails Account Balance Detail](#)
- [Water Trails DOT Grant Fund Balance](#)

Both the Finance Subcommittee and Executive Committee have reviewed the documents and recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommend approval of the December Financial Statement.

STAFF CONTACT:

Rhonda Miller, rmiller@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 5

ISSUE: Public Comment of MPO Actions

PUBLIC COMMENT: Opportunity for public comment on actions taken by the MPO Policy Committee.

BACKGROUND:

The MPO's *Public Participation Plan* provides an opportunity for the public to comment on items on the agenda.

RECOMMENDATION:

None. Public comment only.

STAFF CONTACTS:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 6**ISSUE: Transportation for America**

PRESENTATION: Beth Osborne, Director of Transportation for America, will present to the Policy Committee about strategies to be competitive with federal funding.

BACKGROUND:

Transportation for America is an advocacy organization made up of local, regional, and state leaders who envision a transportation system that safely, affordably, and conveniently connects people of all means and ability to jobs, services, and opportunity through multiple modes of travel. Additional information can be found at www.t4america.org.

Beth Osborne, Transportation for America's Director, will attend the January 18 meeting virtually to share insights on how the MPO and its members can be strategic and successful in its pursuit of discretionary federal funding and in how it uses formula funding from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program and Carbon Reduction Program.

Prior to her time at Transportation for America, Beth was at the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), where she served as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy since 2009. At DOT, Beth managed the TIGER Discretionary Grant program, the Secretary's livability initiative, the development of the Administration's surface transportation authorization proposal, and the implementation of MAP-21. Before joining DOT, Beth worked for Sen. Tom Carper (DE) as an advisor for transportation, trade and labor policy; as the policy director for Smart Growth America; and as legislative director for environmental policy at the Southern Governors' Association. She began her career in Washington, DC, in the House of Representatives working as a legislative assistant for Rep. Ron Klink (PA-04) and as legislative director for Rep. Brian Baird (WA-03).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Presentation and discussion only.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 7

ISSUE: Executive Director Search Process

PRESENTATION: Update from the search consultants regarding the search and hiring process for the next MPO Executive Director.

BACKGROUND:

The Policy Committee in December entered into a contract with *2 The Top*, in partnership with *Deibler & Company*, to conduct the search for the next MPO Executive Director.

Representatives from the search firm will be at the January 18 meeting to provide an update on progress to date.

[A progress report with additional details can be found on the MPO website \(click here to access\).](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Presentation and discussion only.

STAFF CONTACT:

Tracey Deckard, tdeckard@dmampo.org;
(515) 334-0075.

January 2024
Item No. 8

ISSUE: *Fiscal Year 2023 Audit*

PRESENTATION and VOTE: Presentation of the *FY 2023 Audit* document from the auditor.

BACKGROUND:

Denman & Company has completed the *Fiscal Year 2023 Audit* of the MPO's finances. The MPO staff has reviewed the initial findings of the report, which found no instances of noncompliance with federal requirements.

[The *FY 2023 Audit* is available to view on the MPO's website \(click to access\).](#)

Both the Finance Subcommittee and Executive Committee have reviewed the audit and recommend approval.

Future Actions

- The *Fiscal Year 2023 Audit* will be filed with the State of Iowa by the April 1, 2024, deadline.
- The *Fiscal Year 2023 Audit* will be filed with the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the *Fiscal Year 2023 Audit*.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 9**ISSUE: Filling of Officer Vacancies**

REPORT and VOTE: Consider action to fill current vacancies in the Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer positions.

BACKGROUND:

Recent appointments to the MPO by member communities have resulted in vacancies in MPO officer positions. The Vice-Chair position was most recently held by Stephanie Riva, City of Norwalk, who did not seek reelection and has been replaced on the MPO Policy Committee. The Secretary/Treasurer position is held by Ted Weaver, City of Clive, representing the Southwest Subarea on the Executive Committee. While Mr. Weaver is still on the Policy Committee, the Southwest Subarea communities chose different representatives for the Executive Committee.

The MPO's bylaws state that the annual officer elections shall occur in February, with new officers beginning their service in March. The bylaws also note that any vacancies occurring in an office shall be filled for the un-expired portion of that office's term by election from among the remaining Executive Committee members.

At the January 10th Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Committee proposed naming Ted Weaver as the MPO's temporary Vice Chair in addition to him remaining Secretary/Treasurer through the end of February. This solution is consistent with the MPO bylaws which state that the Secretary/Treasurer position shall exercise the powers and duties of the Chair in the absence of Chair and Vice-Chair. Once new officers are elected in February and assume their positions in March, Mr. Weaver will step down as the Southwest Subarea representative on the Executive Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend naming Ted Weaver as the temporary Vice-Chair to the MPO through the end of February 2024.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 10**ISSUE: Loan Transfer Request to the Iowa Department of Transportation**

REPORT and VOTE: Consider action to request that the Iowa Department of Transportation transfer the Railroad Revolving Loan for the Transload Facility from the MPO to Des Moines Industrial.

BACKGROUND:

In 2014, the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) awarded the MPO with a \$1,700,000 loan through the Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant (RRLG) program to aid in the development of the transload facility. The MPO provided these funds to Des Moines Industrial, which repays the Iowa DOT, via the MPO, for the loan over a period of years.

Des Moines Industrial, the MPO, and the Iowa DOT have discussed the desire for the loan to be transferred from being awarded to the MPO to being awarded directly to Des Moines Industrial. Doing so would remove the MPO from any involvement with the loan repayment. The Iowa DOT asked that the MPO send a letter requesting this change to set the transfer process in motion.

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize staff to send a letter to the Iowa DOT requesting that the RRLG loan for the transload facility be transferred from the MPO to Des Moines Industrial.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 11**ISSUE: Planning Area Boundary Update**

REPORT and VOTE: Consider approval of the update to the MPO's Planning Area Boundary.

BACKGROUND:

The MPO staff periodically reviews and updates the MPO's Planning Area Boundary. This process usually coincides with the update to the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan. The Planning Area Boundary is required to encompass all future growth anticipated to occur within the next 20 year. Staff has reviewed future land-use maps to determine areas along the Planning Area Boundary that need updating. A draft Planning Area Boundary was presented in November, and staff collected comments through November 27, 2023. A key change from the initial draft is that all Polk County is now shown in the MPO's Planning Area Boundary.

[A map of the proposed Planning Area Boundary updates is available on the MPO website \(click to access\).](#)

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the updated Planning Area Boundary.

STAFF CONTACTS:

Zach Young, zyoung@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 12

ISSUE: *Mobilizing Tomorrow* Funding Projections

REPORT and VOTE: Consider approval of the funding projections for the development of *Mobilizing Tomorrow*, the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Staff has developed funding projections to use to determine the fiscal capacity for the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Staff looked at a variety of funding sources, including federal, state, and local sources. Historical funding data was used to determine historical growth rates and to develop the annual growth rate to use in the planning process. These growth rates were reviewed by the Finance Subcommittee at their November meeting and the draft projections were shared with the Policy Committee in November.

[A summary of the funding projections is available on the MPO website \(click to access\).](#)

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the *Mobilizing Tomorrow* funding projections.

STAFF CONTACTS:

Zach Young, zyoung@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 13

ISSUE: *Mobilizing Tomorrow* Project Solicitation

REPORT: Update regarding project solicitation for the development of *Mobilizing Tomorrow*, the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The MPO is beginning the process of soliciting projects for the update to *Mobilizing Tomorrow*. Staff has developed a Google form to collect project information. The form will be made available in mid-January and member governments will have approximately one month to submit their projects.

Staff will provide an overview of the project submittal process at the January meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

None. Report and discussion only.

STAFF CONTACTS:

Zach Young, zyoung@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 14**ISSUE: Norfolk Southern Rail Spur Track Assessment**

REPORT: Discussion regarding a proposal for passenger rail services on the Norfolk Southern rail spur.

BACKGROUND:

An opportunity exists to explore the introduction of passenger rail service within the MPO planning area, specifically on the rail spur running from just west of downtown Des Moines northwest before terminating in Grimes. A map is included on the following page. The line is owned by the Norfolk Southern Railway, with Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) being the primary operator.

IAIS is owned by Railroad Development Corporation. Railroad Development Corporation also owns Pop-Up Metro, a passenger rail company that utilizes existing low-density freight lines. Pop-Up Metro is interested in introducing passenger rail on the rail spur. Under Pop-Up Metro's business model, a community can lease all the capital necessary for the operation for a trial period of 1-3 years, which would enable the community to understand the feasibility and ridership levels before making permanent investments. Any upgrades necessary to tracks and crossings would be included in the lease fee.

The MPO and the Iowa Department of Transportation have met with Pop-Up Metro several times over the last two years to discuss this concept. To move forward with obtaining an accurate estimate of operating costs, an assessment must be made on the existing track to determine necessary upgrades. Pop-Up Metro estimates this could be done for approximately \$25,000.

Staff utilized the recently adopted Decision Tree to assess what level, if any, role the MPO should play. Staff determined that the initial track assessment would warrant the MPO taking a Lead Role if desired by the Policy Committee. MPO staff has had preliminary discussions about the proposal with most communities along the rail line as well as a few developers and businesses with interests along the route. These discussions have been positive, with private-sector stakeholders expressing a willingness to contribute to the cost of a track assessment.

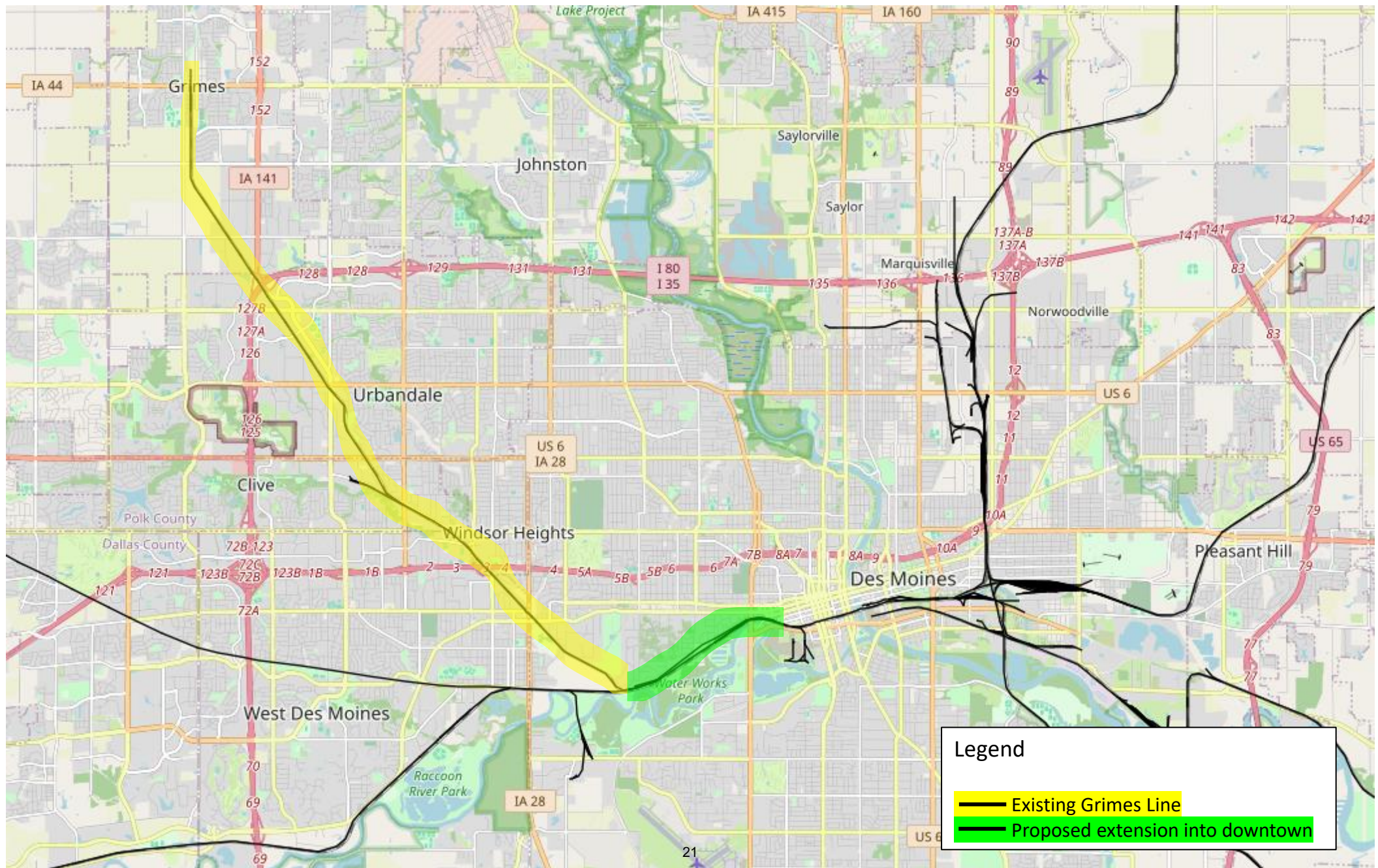
MPO staff will provide additional information to the Policy Committee at the January 18th meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Report and discussion only.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075



January 2024
Item No. 15**ISSUE: *Fiscal Year 2025 Unified Planning Work Program* and Budget Development**

REPORT: Discussion of the process to develop the next work program and budget.

BACKGROUND:

MPO staff is beginning to develop the *Fiscal Year 2025 Unified Planning Work Program* (FY 2025 UPWP) and budget, which will document all planning activities the MPO will perform from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) requires the UPWP to describe the MPO's proposed planning activities – including task objectives, previous work, project descriptions, and work products – as well as the budget and funding sources to carry out the planning activities. The Iowa DOT requires the MPO to submit a draft UPWP by April 1, 2024, and a final UPWP by June 1, 2024.

The MPO staff asks for input from member governments and participating agencies on planning tasks for FY 2025 throughout the development of the UPWP. In particular, MPO staff would welcome any proposals for special studies, plans, or other activities, as well as requests for local planning assistance.

RECOMMENDATION:

None. Report and discussion only.

STAFF CONTACT:

Dylan Mullenix, dmullenix@dmampo.org
(515) 334-0075

January 2024
Item No. 16

ISSUE: Iowa DOT 2020-2024 Safety Performance Targets (PM1)

REPORT: Report on the Iowa DOT's 2020-2024 safety performance targets.

BACKGROUND:

Each year, as part of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), MPOs can either (1) support their state department of transportation's (DOT) safety targets or (2) establish their own safety targets for their planning area. In August 2023, the Iowa DOT established statewide safety performance targets for the 2020-2024 period. The Des Moines Area MPO has 180 days, or until February 27, 2024, to either support the Iowa DOT's statewide targets or set its own regional targets. There are no penalties for MPOs that do not meet or make significant progress toward the safety performance targets.

[An Iowa DOT memo summarizing their targets and target setting methodology is available on the MPO website \(click to access\).](#)

For the previous performance reporting period, the Des Moines Area MPO adopted the Iowa DOT's statewide safety performance targets.

Iowa DOT's 2020-2024 Safety Performance Targets

Performance Measure	Five-year Rolling Averages	
	2018-2022 Baseline	2020-2024 Target
Number of Fatalities	338.6	352.6
Fatality Rate*	1.036	1.080
Number of Serious Injuries	1,363.2	1,419.8
Serious Injury Rate*	4.166	4.344
Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	136.4	138.2

**Rates are per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT)*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Report and discussion only.

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January 2024
Item No. 17**ISSUE: 2023 Regional Trail Pavement Condition Report**

REPORT: Discussion regarding updated regional trail pavement conditions.

BACKGROUND:

Since the beginning of the Iowa Data Bike program in 2017, the MPO has collected pavement conditions for the regional and local trails on an alternating annual basis. In 2023 MPO staff collected new data along the regional trail network and have that data ready to share.

This data includes surface roughness via an accelerometer smartphone application; pavement photos via a GoPro camera aimed at the pavement collecting photos every 2 seconds, and then analyzed visually to detect stress and damage; and 360-degree imagery collected and displayed on Google Street View.

[MPO staff has published this data on the MPO website via an ESRI Online Story Map.](#) The data includes roughness by trail segment as well as pavement photos containing distressed pavement. These distressed photos will be displayed in a heatmap to identify problem areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Report and discussion only.

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January 2024
Item No. 18**REPORT: Purple Heart Highway**

REPORT: Update regarding the process to redesignate Iowa Highway 5 / US Highway 65 Corridor to an Interstate.

BACKGROUND:

Staff are continuing to work with the Greater Des Moines Partnership and other stakeholders to promote the Highway 5/US Highway 65 interstate designation. Notably, staff has engaged ag stakeholders in a conversation about an alternatives analysis, the aim of which would be to find an alternative route for slow-moving ag vehicles to cross the river.

Recently, Rep. Brian Lohse has indicated that he may introduce a bill this legislative session addressing the minimum speed limit exemption in the event of interstate designation – one of the “action steps” outlined in the Iowa DOT’s action plan. Related, the proposed legislation would also include funding for an alternatives analysis.

Staff will provide additional updates at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Report and discussion only.

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January 2024
Item No. 19

ISSUE: Director Report

REPORT: Update by the Interim Executive Director on MPO activities.

BACKGROUND:

The Interim Executive Director will provide an update on MPO activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

None. Report and discussion only.

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