



DES MOINES AREA MPO

Policy Committee Meeting

January 18, 2024



DES MOINES AREA
MPO
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

January 18, 2024, Agenda

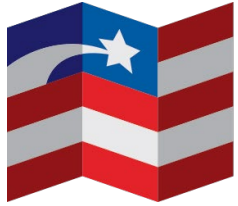
1. Call to Order
2. VOTE: Approval of Agenda
3. VOTE: Approval of Meeting Minutes
4. CONSENT and VOTE: Approval of the Financial Statement
5. PUBLIC COMMENT on MPO Actions
6. PRESENTATION: Transportation for America
7. PRESENTATION: MPO Executive Director Search Process
8. PRESENTATION and VOTE: FY 2023 Audit
9. REPORT and VOTE: Filling of Officer Vacancies
10. REPORT and VOTE: Loan Transfer Request to Iowa DOT
11. REPORT and VOTE: Planning Area Boundary Update
12. REPORT and VOTE: *Mobilizing Tomorrow* Funding Projections
13. REPORT: *Mobilizing Tomorrow* Project Solicitation
14. REPORT: Norfolk Southern Rail Spur Track Assessment
15. REPORT: *FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program* and Budget Development
16. REPORT: Iowa DOT 2020-2024 Safety Performance Targets
17. REPORT: 2023 Regional Trails Pavement Condition Report
18. REPORT: Purple Heart Highway Update
19. REPORT: Director's Report
20. Other Non-Action Items of Interest to the Committee
21. Next Meeting Date – February 15, 2024 – 4:00 p.m.
22. Adjournment

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT ON MPO ACTIONS

PRESENTATION: TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA



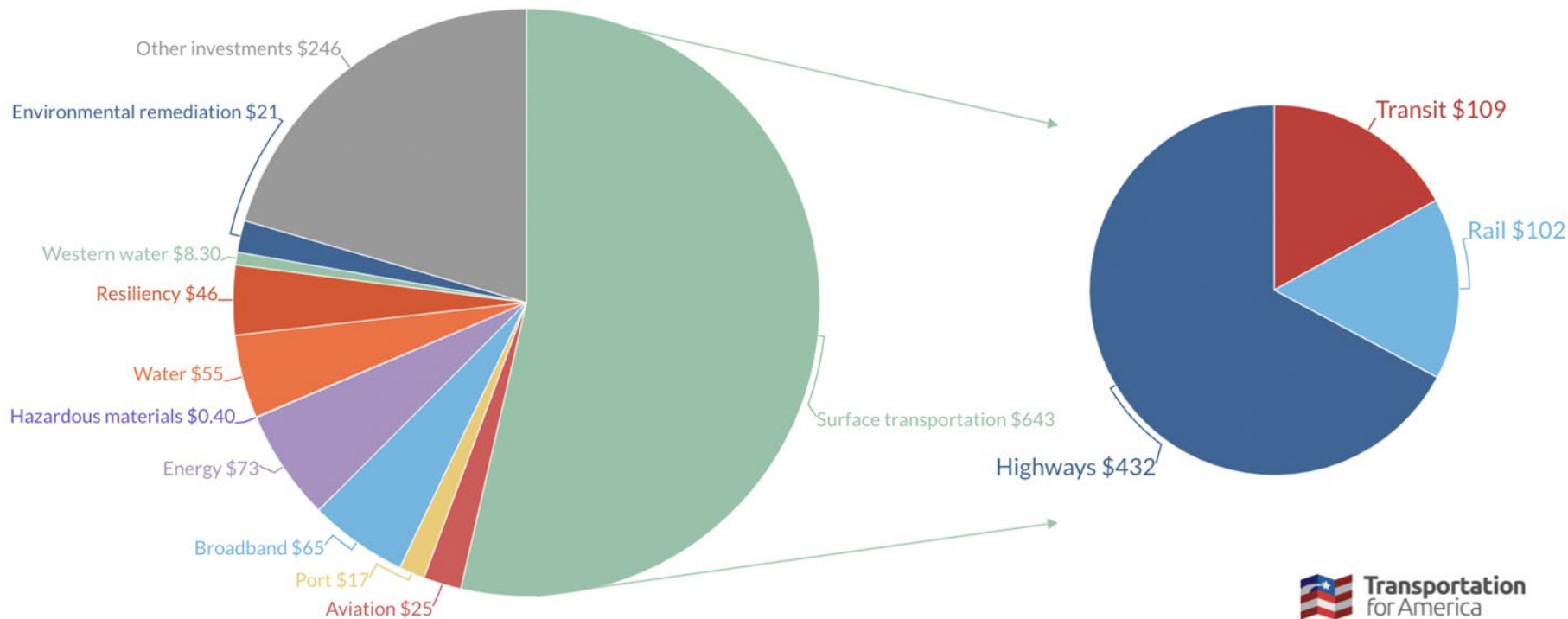
Transportation for America



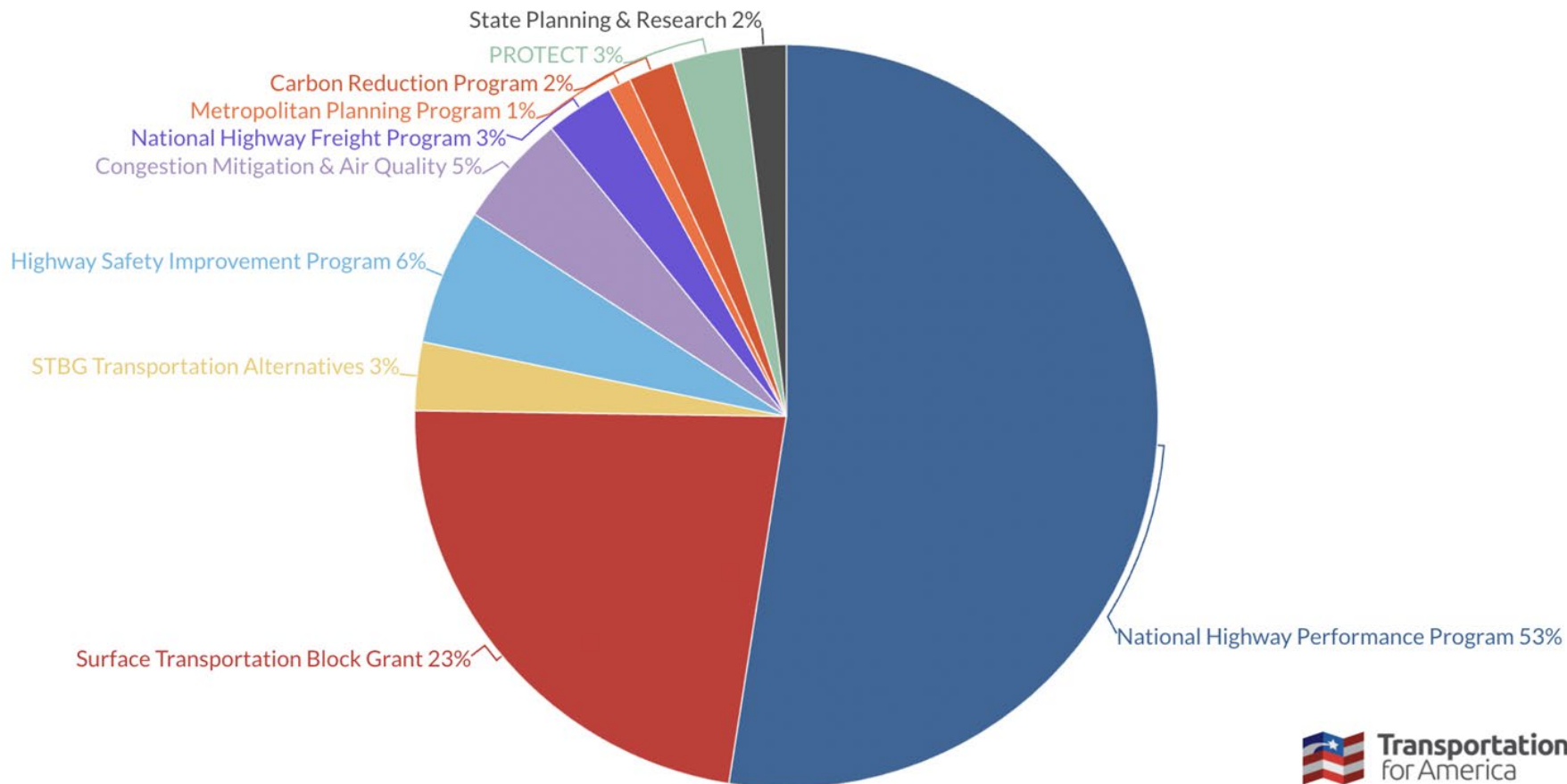
Des Moines Area MPO

Beth Osborne, Director
January 18, 2024

Where is the infrastructure bill money going? (in billions)



Highway trust fund formula programs (by percentage)



USDOT controls \$200+ billion in competitive grants for states and metros

18 Jan 2022 | Posted by [Benito Pérez](#) | [1 Comment](#) | [competitive grants](#), [IIJA](#), [infrastructure bill](#), [usdot](#)

While the bulk of the \$643 billion for surface transportation in the infrastructure bill goes out to state DOTs, more than \$200 billion stays with USDOT to be awarded via competitive grants to states, metro areas, and tribal governments—through dozens of newly created, updated, and existing competitive grant programs.

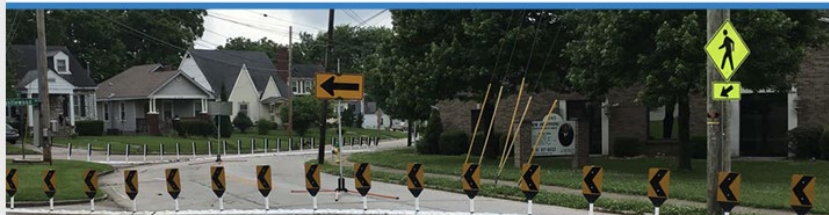


Competitive Grant Programs—streets and roads

- RAISE grants (\$30 billion)
- National Significant Freight and Highway Projects (\$4.8 billion)
- Bridge Investment Program (\$3.265 billion)
- Charging and Refueling Grants (\$2.5 billion)
- PROTECT Grants (\$1.4 billion)
- Reconnecting Communities (\$1 billion)/Neighborhood Equity and Access (\$4 billion)
- Safe Streets and Roads for all (\$5 billion)—**OPPORTUNITY**

Safety Demonstration Projects

Case studies from Orlando, FL, Lexington, KY, and South Bend, IN



Safety Demonstration Projects

Washington State Complete Streets Leadership Academy
Airway Heights, Arlington, and Wenatchee



Competitive Grant Programs—transit and rail

- Transit
 - Capital Investment Grants (\$23 billion)
 - Bus and bus facilities grants (\$2 billion)
 - Ferry grants
- Rail
 - Consolidated Railroad Infrastructure Safety Improvement (\$10 billion)
 - Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (\$43.5 billion)
 - Restoration and Enhancement grants (\$250 million)

Positioning Application for Success—project centered

- Start from project and building funding
 - Use federal competitive, formula, financing and state funds.
 - Denver Union Station (\$487.7 million):
 - Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act - \$145.6 million;
 - Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing - \$155.0 million;
 - FHWA formula funds - \$45.3 million;
 - FTA CIG funding - \$9.5 million;
 - ARRA Stimulus Grant - \$28.4 million;
 - Homeland Security - \$353 thousand;
 - Transit agency contribution - \$65.1 million;
 - Other state and local funds - \$19.9 million; and
 - Land sales - \$18.4 million.

Positioning Application for Success—competing well

1. Prioritize applications from region
2. Match project objectives to the program criteria
 - a. Don't have to hit all criteria but should fit 2-3 really well
 - b. Eligibility criteria in terms of project and applicant, time limitations, etc.
 - c. Remove uncertainty on cost, timing, etc.
3. Tell story clearly enough that someone not from your community and not familiar with your project can understand.
 - a. Clear description of projects, current conditions and expected outcomes.
 - b. Use lots of maps and pictures.
4. Build a strong, broad coalition of support
 - a. Partners on project
 - b. Supporters in delegation

Non-political staff review

- 3 career staffers from different agencies
- Review criteria and rank as highly recommended, recommended, accepted, not recommended
- Send highly recommended to next review
- Pull recommended applications for states or types of projects with no highly recommended options to forward

Political review

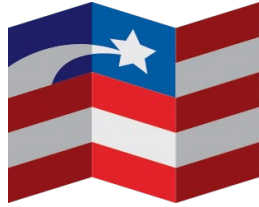
- Reviewed by head of operating administrations (FHWA, FTA, MARAD, FRA), assistant secretaries, under secretary and deputy secretary
- Considers BCA and risk in terms of regulatory review, timeline, grantee.
- Review for best projects and urban/rural, modal, and geographic balance.

Secretary review

- Reviews slate of 1.5 times as much funding as have to distribute.
- Considers number of applications from any state or jurisdiction.
- Tie breakers: support/partnership, innovation, risk/experience with applicant.

Things that set you apart

1. Strategic approach to how you use your funding.
2. Have limited, clear regional goals that you measure and can explain. Connect them to local trends.
3. Submit regional priorities, not the thing you couldn't get to. Have federal funding be the final funding, not first in.
4. Good track record of delivering projects and achieving outcomes.



Transportation for America

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[@t4america](https://twitter.com/t4america)



www.t4america.org

MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH PROCESS

FY 2023 AUDIT

Fiscal Year 2023 Audit

- FY 2023 Audit prepared by Denman CPA LLP.
- Link to audit included in agenda packet
- Finance Subcommittee and Executive Committee reviewed audit at their January meetings and recommend MPO approval

Fiscal Year 2023 Audit

- Highlights
 - Current assets and liabilities went up, both due to Water Trails project funding (page 8)
 - Operating grant revenue decreased due to switch from Transload project grant to Water Trails project grant (page 9)
 - ~\$69,000 increase in net position from last year (pages 8/9)

Fiscal Year 2023 Audit

- Findings
 - No findings of noncompliance (page 40)
 - Material weaknesses in internal control, as in previous years (page 43)
 - Segregation of Duties (page 44)
 - Financial Reporting -significant year-end adjustments related to Water Trails (page 45)
- Corrective Actions
 - Policies and procedures adopted in August 2023, if followed, should result in Segregation of Duties removed as a finding in next audit
 - Staff training and improved procedures on year-end adjustments should result in Financial Reporting removed as finding in next audit

OFFICER VACANCIES

Officer Vacancies

- Executive Committee will have two officer vacancies before CY 2024 officers are elected in February and take positions in March
 - Vice-Chair: formerly held by Stephanie Riva, City of Norwalk (did not seek reelection and has been replaced on Policy Committee)
 - Secretary/Treasurer: currently held by Ted Weaver, City of Clive (will not be the SW Subarea representative to the Executive Committee after January)
- Bylaws state any officer vacancies shall be filled for the un-expired portion of that office's term from among remaining Executive Committee members

Officer Vacancies

- Options presented to Executive Committee:
 - Acknowledge vacancies and leave unfilled until March when new officers take over
 - Appoint temporary Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer to serve until
 - Other proposals?
- Recommendation from Executive Committee:
 - Temporarily appoint Ted Weaver, City of Clive, to Vice Chair and Secretary Treasurer for a one-month period.
 - (Holding two officer positions is not in conflict with MPO bylaws)

LOAN TRANSFER REQUEST TO IOWA DOT

Loan Transfer Request

- In 2014, the Iowa DOT awarded the MPO with a \$1.7 million 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.
- Recommended by staff and Executive Committee.

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY UPDATE

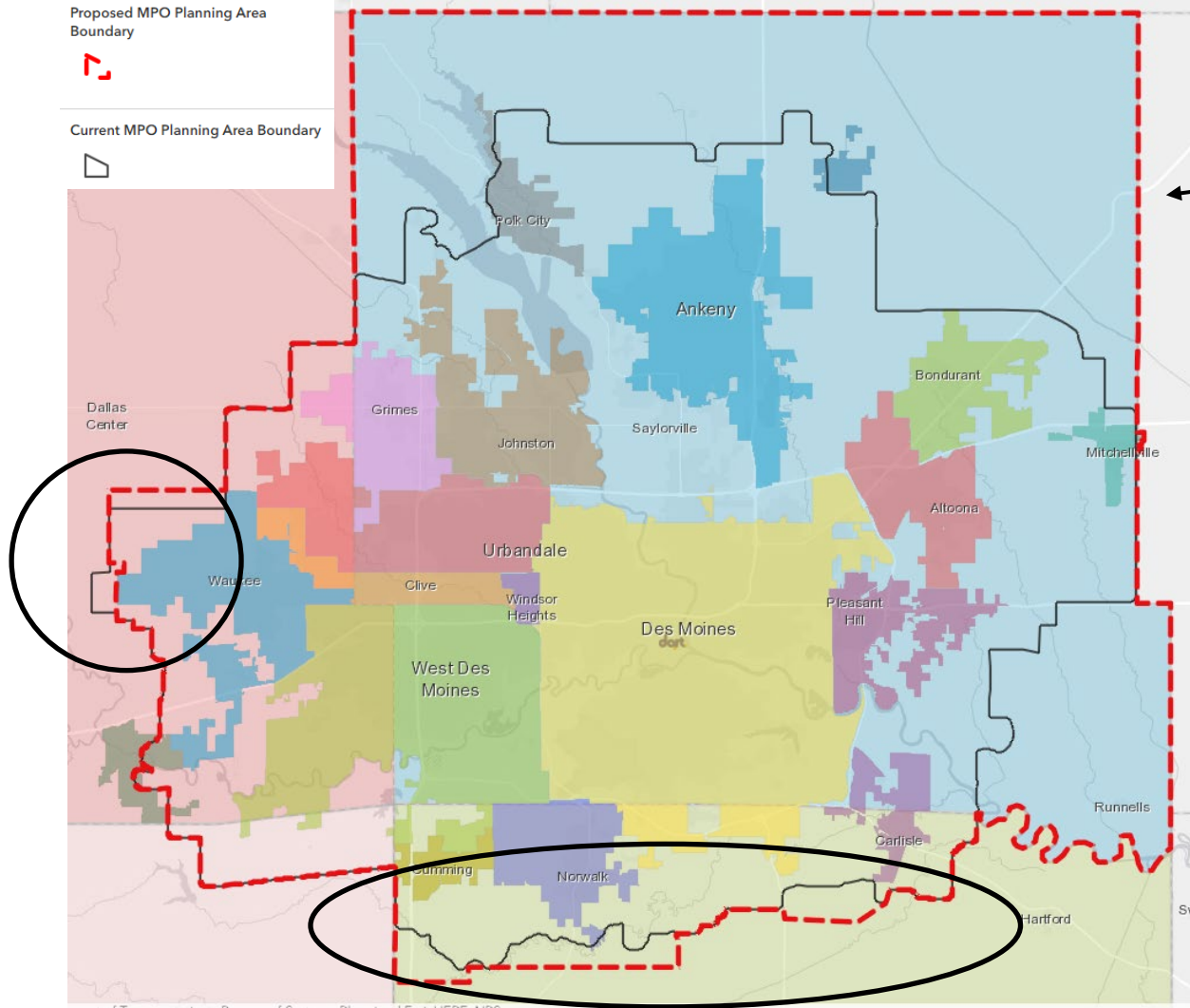
Planning Area Boundary Update

- Boundary is being updated in conjunction with the long-range transportation plan update
- Boundary is required to include the Urban Area Boundary (approved in September 2023) as well as future growth anticipated within the next 20 years
- Staff presented the draft PAB at the November meetings. Since that meeting Polk County has decided to included all of the county in the MPO PAB.
- No other comments were received.

Proposed MPO Planning Area Boundary



Current MPO Planning Area Boundary



All of Polk County

MOBILIZING TOMORROW: FUNDING PROJECTIONS

Mobilizing Tomorrow Update



- Funding Projections
 - New federal guidance now only requires fiscal constraint to cover the first 10-years of the LRTP
 - Therefore, staff has developed preliminary funding projections for 2025-2034
 - Staff has developed projections for the following funding sources:
 - Federal – STBG, TAP, CRP
 - State – RUTF
 - Local – property taxes and bonds

Mobilizing Tomorrow Update



- Annual Growth Rates
 - STBG and TAP – 2.5%
 - CRP – 0.5%
 - RUTF – 2.5%
 - Local – 0.0%
- The Finance Subcommittee approved these growth rates at their November 6th meeting.
- Growth rates have also been reviewed and signed off on by the DOT

Mobilizing Tomorrow Update

■ Funding Projections – 2025-2034

- Used annual growth rate to determine an annual funding increase which was added to each year to create a straight-line projection
- Historically, approximately 40 percent of local funding has been used for construction projects

Funding Type	2025-2029	2030-2034	Total
Federal	\$94.6	\$108.6	\$203.1
RUTF	\$388.9	\$434.1	\$823.0
Local	\$1,934.6	\$1,934.6	\$3,869.3
Available Funding for Construction	\$773.9	\$773.9	\$1,547.7
Total	\$1,257.3	\$1,316.5	\$2,573.8

*Amounts shown in millions

Mobilizing Tomorrow Update

- Iowa DOT Funding Projections – 2025-2034
 - Staff used a 2 percent growth rate to project future funding for the Iowa DOT.

Funding	2025-2029	2030-2034	Total
Road Expenditures	\$192.1	\$210.3	\$402.4
Bridge Expenditures	\$86.8	\$95.0	\$181.8
Total	\$278.9	\$305.3	\$584.2

*Amounts shown in millions

Mobilizing Tomorrow Update



- Next Steps
 - Staff will work with DART staff to develop projections for transit funding

MOBILIZING TOMORROW: PROJECT SOLICITATION

Mobilizing Tomorrow – Project Solicitation

- Staff has developed a Google form for soliciting projects for the LRTP update.
- Projects will be collected for the 2025-2034 period and will fall under the following categories:
 - System Capacity, Major Reconstruction, System Optimization, Bridges, Transit, and Bicycle/Pedestrian
- Staff is requesting that all planned projects in these categories that fall on the eligible network during this time period be submitted.
- Staff is targeting the week of January 22 to release the google form and will expect all responses back by February 23, 2024.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAIL SPUR TRACK ASSESSMENT

Norfolk Southern Rail Spur – Track Assessment

- Railroad Development Corporation (RDC), owner of Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS), approached Iowa DOT and MPO about interest in introducing passenger rail on a line from downtown Des Moines to Grimes. IAIS operator of the line; minimal usage today.
- RDC also owns Pop-Up Metro passenger rail company. Business model is to offer “kits” on a lease basis that include rolling stock, platforms, etc.
 - Uses existing low-density freight rail to demonstrate feasibility
 - Minimal permitting
 - Allows testing/evaluating over 1-3 years vs. consultant study. Ridership is measured not estimated.



RDC

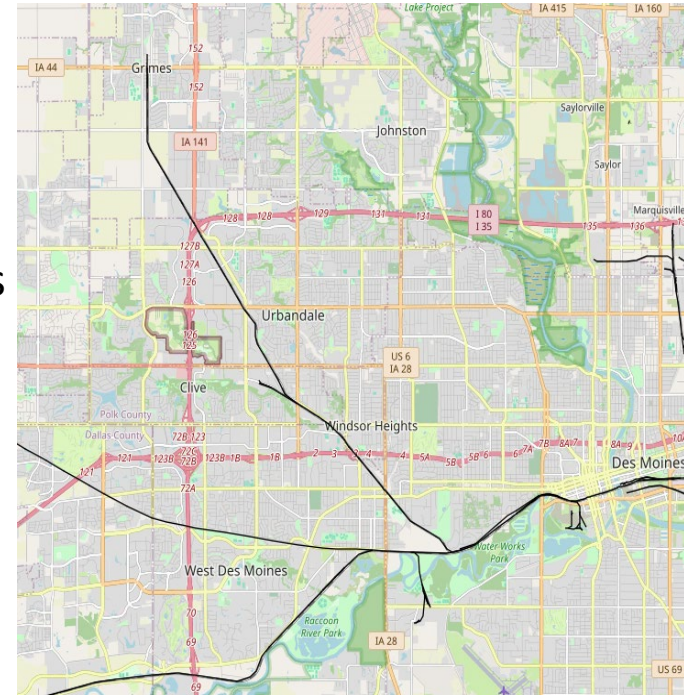


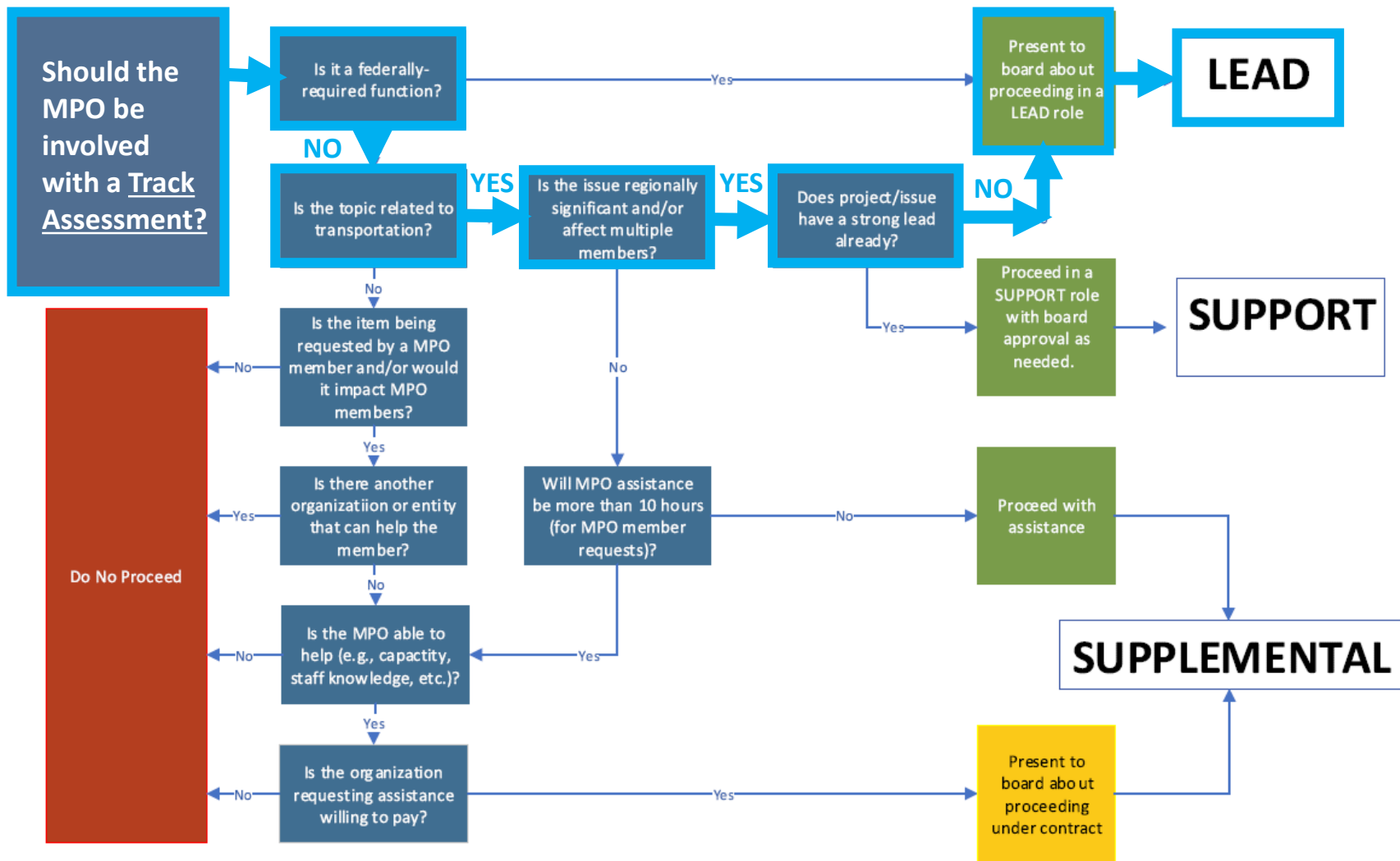
POP-UP
METRO



Norfolk Southern Rail Spur – Track Assessment

- Capital improvements necessary:
 - ~ 2.5 miles of track needed parallel to IAIS mainline into downtown (shown in green in map)
 - Restoration/upgrade to existing track and crossings likely to achieve suitable speeds and safety
 - Platforms, parking, lighting, signage
 - Operations & maintenance building
- Assessment of existing tracks, crossings, etc., necessary before full scope of needs and costs can be known. Assessment estimated by Pop-Up Metro to cost \$25,000.





Proposed Funding Strategy

- Executive Committee wanted this discussed at the Policy Committee level and authorized staff to develop a potential funding strategy for the track assessment.
- Staff spoke with potential private-sector funders and found a receptive audience.
- The Iowa DOT showed strong interest in helping funding the track assessment.
- If funds are secured, MPO would form a steering committee of stakeholders.

Party	Proposed Funding Targets
Iowa DOT	\$12,500
Private Party	\$7,500
Corridor Communities	\$5,000
MPO	Up to \$2,500 as if needed

FY2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

FY 2025 UPWP and Budget Development

- MPO's scope of work for next fiscal year
 - Work elements and activities
 - Committees
 - Costs
- Proposed work activities are tied to the MPO's federal requirements
- Draft due April 1st - Final due June 1st

FY 2025 UPWP and Budget Development

- MPO Requirements per US Code
 - Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
 - Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
 - Public Participation Plan (PPP)
 - Congestion Management Process (required of TMAs)
 - Must have decision making bodies (e.g., MPO Policy Committee)
 - Administer STBG funding process

FY 2025 UPWP and Budget Development

- FHWA/FTA Planning Emphasis Areas:
 - Climate Change
 - Equity and Justice in Transportation Planning
 - Complete Streets
 - Virtual Public Involvement
 - Planning & Environmental Linkages
 - Data in Transportation Planning

FY 2025 UPWP and Budget Development

- MPO staff soliciting input on additional tasks for FY 2025
 - Plans
 - Studies
 - Research
 - Technical assistance to communities
- Please send any requests/ideas to MPO staff by end of January

FY 2025 UPWP and Budget Development

- Draft budget anticipated in February
 - Staff salaries contingent upon Executive Director decision and staff salary survey results
 - MIPA and CIRTPA contracts will not be in FY 2025 budget
 - Budget adjustments based on approved Policies and Procedures Manual (e.g., budget for board recognition and staff teambuilding events)
 - Updates to benefits based on switch to Connectify HR

IOWA DOT 2020-2024 SAFETY PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Iowa DOT 2020-2024 Safety Targets

As part of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)'s Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), State DOTs and MPOs are required to annually report safety performance measures (PM1).

MPOs can either (1) support statewide targets or (2) develop their own regional targets.

Previously, the MPO adopted the Iowa DOT's statewide safety performance targets.

- The MPO still monitors regional safety performance.

There are no penalties for MPOs for not meeting or making significant progress towards targets.

Iowa DOT Statewide 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)*

Iowa DOT 2020-2024 Safety Targets

Statewide and Regional Safety Performance

Iowa	2018-2022 (Five-year Average)	2023
Number of Fatalities	338.6	373
Number of Serious Injuries	1,363.2	1,366
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	136.4	133
Des Moines MPO Area	2018-2022 (Five-year Average)	2023
Number of Fatalities	36.6	37
Number of Serious Injuries	176.8	179
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	31.4	29

Last Updated on January 16, 2024

IOWA DATA BIKE REGIONAL TRAILS PAVEMENT CONDITION REPORT

Data Bike

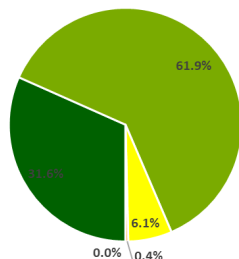


- 2023 Overview
 - E-bike equipped with data capture equipment to measure pavement condition
 - Over 250 miles of Central Iowa Regional Trails were covered in 2023
 - Improved 360 Imagery for enhanced Google Street View
 - Improved rear camera for pavement photos
 - ISU intern assisted capturing most of the data.

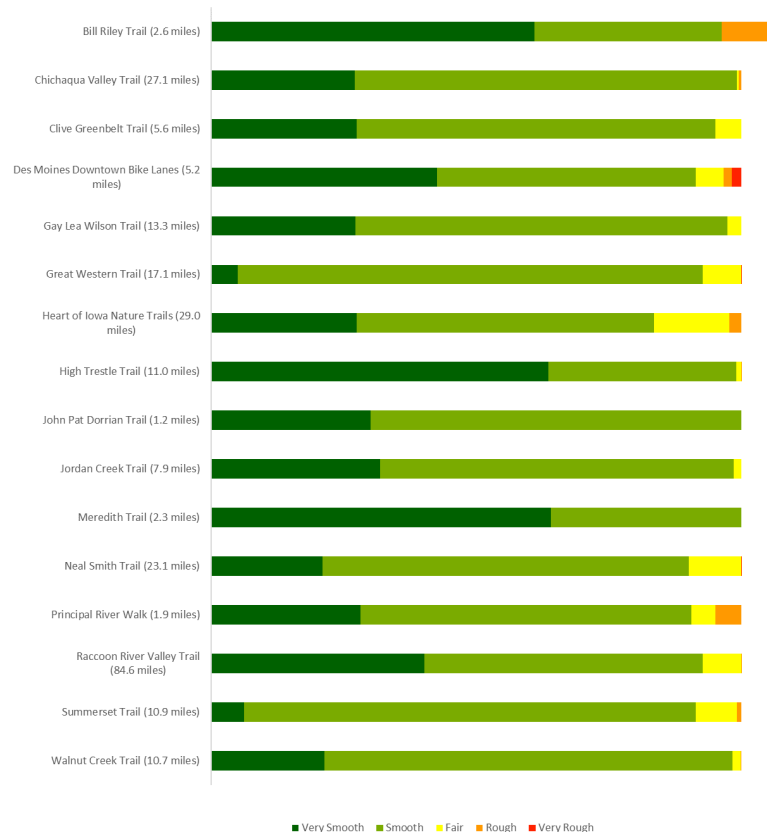
Data Bike

- Staff published an online story map to display the results in an interactive format.
- [Data Bike Story Map](#)

Trail Mileage by Condition



31.6% (82.8 miles) Very Smooth 61.9% (161.9 miles) Smooth 6.1% (15.9 miles) Fair 0.4% (1.0 miles) Rough 0.0% (0.0 miles) Very Rough



Very Smooth Smooth Fair Rough Very Rough

PURPLE HEART HIGHWAY

RECAP: Implementation

Iowa DOT Action Plan

- State Exemption for Speed
- Federal Exemption for Weight
- Technical Analysis
- Designation Application

Implementation Status

- **COMPLETE:** Iowa DOT's stakeholder engagement resulting in an Action Plan.
- **ONGOING:** Regional implementation of Iowa DOT Action Plan.
- **NEW: Corridor Preservation** – Preserve use of corridor by ag users by increasing safety measures for slow-moving vehicles.
- **NEW: Alternatives Analysis** – Start process of identifying alternative routes for farm equipment.

UPDATE: Alternatives Analysis

AG STAKEHOLDERS FEEDBACK

- Strong agreement from ag stakeholders that an alternatives analysis would be worthwhile.
- No acute urgency from ag stakeholders.
- They shared numerous thoughts on scope of analysis and stakeholder engagement.
 - Likely need to look east of bypass
 - Bypass may end up being best alternative

FUNDING STRATEGY

- Executive Committee guidance: Pursue state funding with local match

Corridor Master Plan

An Alternatives Analysis could become part of a larger planning effort that could include:

- Alternatives Analysis
- Development Scenarios
- Target Industry Analysis
- Economic Impact Study
- Marketing Plan



DISCUSSION: Proposed bill

- Rep. Brian Lohse has followed this project for years and has received regular updates on recent efforts.
- He has discussed the issue with numerous stakeholders including members of the Iowa Farm Bureau.
- He is planning to introduce a bill this session with two aims:
 - Provide exemption to minimum speed limit IF the corridor is designated as an interstate.
 - MPO and Iowa DOT have reviewed draft language.
 - Consistent with proposed language previously shared with ag stakeholders.
 - Provide funding for an alternatives analysis.
 - Ask is for \$250,000, or roughly half of the funding need.

NEXT STEPS: Engagement

- Need bench of support from Policy Committee representatives who would be willing to participate in meeting to educate lawmakers.
 - Would you be willing to participate?
- Former Vice Chair Stephanie Riva served as a point person to provide guidance to staff. With her retiring from elected office, it would be helpful for staff to have a point person on this effort.

DIRECTOR REPORT

MPO Member Updates									
	Contacted	Scheduled	Complete	Waiting		Contacted	Scheduled	Complete	Waiting
Altoona			✓		Mitchellville			✓	
Ankeny	✓				Norwalk			✓	
Bondurant			✓		Pleasant Hill				✓
Carlisle			✓		Polk City			✓	
Clive			✓		Polk County			✓	
Dallas County	✓				Urbandale	✓			
DART				✓	Warren County			✓	
Des Moines			✓		Waukee		✓		
Grimes		✓			West Des Moines	✓			
Johnston	✓				Windsor Heights			✓	

UPDATE: Steps on Three Key Recommendations

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

- This approach is being built into the long-range plan process.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Decision Tree (What MPO focuses on)

- Approved in November.
- Staff is actively using for proposed projects and will use it for work program.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Board Assessment (How we execute)

- Chair will make appointments to a committee to evaluate and recommend any changes.

Misc. Items

- Funding Updates:
 - MPO's Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant unsuccessful
 - City of Grimes awarded \$400,000 in Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant for IA 141 corridor.
- Transportation Safety Committee to meet in February for MPO SS4A project
- Successfully transitioned Zach Young to contract employee.
 - For public appearances, continuing to show as an employee; updated title to Project Manager.
- Virtual attendance policy.
- Planning to register staff (Dylan and Gunnar) as a lobbyist at state.

Connectify HR

- Des Moines-based Professional Employer Organization (PEO) company that provides payroll services, benefits administration, risk management, workers compensation, and human resources consulting.
 - Recommended by Bravo Greater Des Moines and Invest DSM
- Staff recommended switching to Connectify HR from current payroll provider following numerous issues with current provider.
- Staff also recommends switching deferred compensation providers to the State of Iowa's Retirement Investment Club.
- Savings from these changes would be ~\$10,000 annually
- Finance Subcommittee and Executive Committee reviewed in December, with Executive Committee approving budget expense for administration fee, after which staff signed a service agreement and began onboarding process.

Connectify HR

- Council Member Len Murray of Pleasant Hill raised questions and concerns at January Executive Committee meeting and asked to review the service agreement.
 - MPO staff provided agreement following the meeting.
- Murray provided list of questions/concerns late Wednesday, Jan. 17, based on his review of the agreement.
 - MPO staff has pulled together responses to these questions, which it will share with board members.
- Staff is open to further board direction on the process of entering administrative-oriented agreements.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

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