

RPA 17 LRTP Draft Plan Update Summary

2022 LRTP GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Promote Economic enhancement throughout the region.

Objective 1.A Improving existing transportation systems support marketing efforts of recreation and tourism throughout the region.

Strategies i: Support rail transportation systems for economic benefit

Action Steps:

- Southern Iowa Railway (formerly APNC) maintenance and/or expansion to ensure longevity of service.
- Continued Amtrak service
- Pursue safety improvements at rail crossings.
- Grade separation structures - Bridge underpass/overpass funding
- Promote use of local short line rail for shipping option

Strategy ii: Research use of the current passenger and short line rail system and proposed expansion of statewide systems.

Action Steps:

- Promote transportation facilities leading up to regional railroad lines.
- Maintain & keep Amtrak service in the region.

Strategy iii: Research each county's needs and capital improvements plans.

Action Steps:

- Develop or improve roadways as needed to enhance economic development.
- Encourage cities to have "site ready" development areas to promote new business growth & current business expansion (IEDA Certified Sites).

Strategy iv: Support local commercial and passenger air services for future growth and needs.

Action Steps:

- Expand runways as needed to promote economic development (Lamoni, Centerville, Chariton)
- Support facility updates and expansions at airport facilities to ensure quality services such as offering jet fuel and onsite personnel.
- Promote access to existing airport facilities such as turning lanes, signage, etc.)

Strategy v. Support Community/County enhancements associated with transportation related projects.

Action Steps:

- Sustain, enhance & expand Historic Hills Scenic Byway and enhancement of Jefferson Highway Heritage Byway
- Environmental mitigation activities such as storm water management and reduced wildlife mortality.
- Preserve historic transportation facilities and promote for economic development
- Construction of highway turnouts, overlooks, or viewing areas.

- Trail development, connectivity & maintenance
- Development and expansion of Safe Routes to School
- Improve wayfinding signs in communities
- Old Amish communities are promoted as tourist attractions and RPA needs to ensure safety of travel with proper signage, reduce obstructions, & roadways capable of “Sharing the road” with buggies and motor vehicles.
- Install new dock & kayak launch at Corydon Lake and explore establishing this lake with DNR water trails.

Objective 1.B Encourage coordination between cities and counties within the region to promote increase of populations, possible growth in commuting labor force, and quality infrastructure in smaller communities.

Strategy i: Send press releases to legislators, county governments, and policy makers regarding priority needs for future projects.

Action Steps:

- Include documentation that RPA 17 is in opposition of mandatory transfer of jurisdictions from state to local without local consultation first.

Strategy ii: Implement outreach information via electronic, print, and video media.

Action Steps:

- Maintain/Develop website with funding information, IDOT, & consultant contact information
- Develop Small city funding brochures/application to roadway development to educate council members on the process and all requirements.
- CVPD website will host links to Farm-to-Market Road maps, major collector routes, small city funding application and describe frequent challenges with expending federal funds.
- Promote walking trails in the region, i.e., maps, brochures

Strategy iii: Partner with small cities to utilize regional funds.

Action Steps:

- Organize an annual “CVTPA Bootcamp Manual” directed at new county/city level officials to inform on the process of transportation funding and development.

Goal 2: Provide adequate, safe, and reliable transportation services.

Objective 2.A: Maximize safety of intersections by monitoring sign size, reflectivity, flashing lights, approaches to intersections, speed zones, and school zones.

Strategy i: Safety Audits

Action Steps:

- All counties in the RPA 17 participate in DOT program.
- All counties in the region should develop & maintain a Local Roads Safety Plan.
- Perform a Road Study diet in Corydon for consideration of making the 4 lanes down to 3 lanes

Strategy ii: Target and prioritize road maintenance of the region including resurfacing, rock, etc.

Action Steps:

- Continue ongoing rehabilitation of existing roads and bridges.
- Additional rumble strips
- Solar powered road signs
- Explore (encourage private individuals) to develop new railway shipping sites or vendors.

Objective 2.B: Consider all funding options (including alternative methods) for infrastructure improvements to replace bridges and approaches.

Strategy i: Explore Federal, State & Local options

Strategy ii: RISE grants

Strategy iii: Highway research board at IDOT

Objective 2.C Prioritize safety measures for modes of transportation.

Strategy i: Perform Road diets & traffic counts for consideration of turning lanes, de-acceleration lanes, etc.

Action Steps:

- Include Highway 34, Highway 2 in Corydon, Bioprocessing Center, Rathbun Lake

Strategy ii: Promote pedestrian safety with sidewalk installation, sidewalk repairs, & Safe Routes to School

Action Steps:

- Sidewalk development and improvements in the region. Possible items may include developing a sidewalk audit of current routes, establishing sidewalk maintenance programs & implementation, requiring sidewalk development with all new construction or rehabilitation, improve connectivity by establishing infill, improve ADA compliance, annual sidewalk inspections with follow-up letters to homeowners, etc.
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Strategy iii: Support trail enhancements that provide increased safety

Action Steps

- such as lighting, mapping, surface condition, signage, accessibility, etc.

Strategy iv: Support statewide efforts to improve to vehicle safety through certified inspections that include passenger vehicles, large ag equipment, etc.

Strategy v: Ensure safe railroad approaches, proper signage, and free from visual obstruction.

Strategy vi: Implement safety measures to reduce animal accidents and running off roadway incidents.

Action Steps

- Fencing, deterrents, etc.
- Chevrons, reflectors, reflectivity testing

Goal 3: To provide accessible and efficient transportation options.

Objective 3.A Encourage alternative modes of transportation throughout the region (i.e., aviation, bike/pedestrian trails, rail and/or transit).

Strategy i: Develop connected trails to increase quality of life.

Action Step:

- Conduct a feasibility study for a regional trails system

Strategy ii: Promote community efforts to repair or construct sidewalks for safety, mobility, and ADA compliance.

Strategy iii: Safe Routes to School

Action Steps:

- Include bike racks and parking at schools
- Annually paint streets to clearly identify high-visible crosswalk zones for kids
- Improve safety near at enhance pedestrian crossings; repair and paint crosswalks, consider “all way stop” intersections, or installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)

Strategy iv: Promote available TAP funds to support projects.

Objective 3.B: Improve transportation links to adjacent regions.

Strategy i: Utilize existing local and regional organizations to implement the five-year goals.

Action Steps:

- Partner with adjacent counties to develop regional projects across multiple counties to create greater “regional projects”.
- Conduct a study for feasibility of regional trails

Strategy ii: Work with local stakeholder committees in all counties & surrounding jurisdictions

- Promote jurisdictions to adopt “Complete Street” policy to include sidewalks, bike lanes, paved shoulders, etc. when possible.

Strategy iii: Identify committee’s needs, concerns, and information regarding regional needs.

Action Steps:

- Gather info at regularly scheduled TAC & Policy meetings.

Strategy iv: Provide alternative mode information to both TAC & Policy committees.

Action Steps:

- Invite presenters from a variety of modes in the region to display successes, challenges, & needs.

Strategy v: Establish a Regional Trails Network

Action Steps:

- Maintain a Regional Trails Plan
- Expand trails to increase quality of life.
- Maintain and promote connection of existing trails.
- Increase safety on RPA 17 trails.

Strategy vi: CVTPA promotion/education of current projects in the region

Action Steps:

- Issue a press release sharing what approved projects will be occurring each calendar year in the RPA 17 region.
- Engineers bring list of projects to March TAC meeting

Objective 3.C: Educate citizens of the options for transportation in rural areas of the region.

Strategy i: Promotion of trails, transit, rails, taxi, aviation, etc.

Action Steps:

- Promote passenger rail opportunities throughout the region.
- Utilize local TV, radio, printed media, social media, & websites
- Improve bike ability through the region & jurisdictions. Possible project recommendations from Wellmark include shared bike lane on Drake Avenue in Centerville, routes in Corydon, evaluate number & locations of bike racks for parking, etc. (*blue font from Healthy Hometown Master Plans)

Objective 3.D: Support efforts to offer affordable and safe public transit services.

Strategy i: Advocate transit facility improvements for 10-15 Transit and Southern Iowa Trolley.

Action Steps:

- Study the feasibility of construction or purchase a fleet maintenance and storage facility for Southern Iowa trolley.

Strategy ii: Promote continued funding of transit capital and operating needs beyond existing levels.

Action Steps:

- Replace or expand Southern Iowa Trolley or 10-15 Transit fleet as needed.
- Upgrade or add equipment such as cameras, lifts, & tablets to monitor ridership and drivers.

Strategy iii: Determine needs of transit systems and convey to stakeholders and public sectors.

Action Step:

- Host regional needs meetings to identify where improvements are needed.

Strategy iv: Provide public informational meetings for transit use, availability & accessibility.

Action Step:

- Promote voucher system for those not able to pay for public transit.

2022 LRTP 1-5 Year Action Steps Identified

- Southern Iowa Railway (formerly APNC) maintenance and/or expansion to ensure longevity of service
- Continued Amtrak service in the region in Osceola
- Pursue safety improvements at rail crossings
- Promote use of local short line rail for shipping option
- Improve grade separation structures - Bridge underpass/overpass funding
- Sustain and improve Historic Hills Scenic Byway & enhancement of Jefferson Heritage Byway
- Environmental mitigation activities such as storm water management and reduced wildlife mortality.
- Historic preservation of transportation facilities
- Construction of highway turnouts, overlooks, or viewing areas
- Promote & Utilize Safe Routes to School development in all communities with local school buildings
- Maintain website with funding information, IDOT, & consultant contact information
- Contract with engineering firm to develop trail connectivity options in the region
- Reduce accidents especially along routes of increased risk
- Implement safety measures to reduce animal accidents and running off roadway incidents.
- Improve bike ability through the region & jurisdictions. Possible project recommendations from Wellmark include shared bike lane on Drake Avenue in Centerville, routes in Corydon, evaluate number & locations of bike racks for parking, etc.
- Sidewalk development and improvements in the region. Possible items may include developing a sidewalk audit of current routes, establishing sidewalk maintenance programs & implementation, requiring sidewalk development with all new construction or rehabilitation, improve connectivity by establishing infill, improve ADA compliance, annual sidewalk inspections with follow-up letters to homeowners, etc.
- Improve safety near at enhance pedestrian crossings; repair and paint crosswalks, consider “all way stop” intersections, or installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)
- Improve wayfinding signs in communities
- Perform a Road Study diet in Corydon for consideration of making the 4 lanes down to a 3 lane
- Promote walking trails in the region, i.e. maps, brochures
- Install new dock & kayak launch at Corydon Lake and explore establishing this lake with DNR water trails.
- Develop or improve roadways as needed to enhance economic development.
- Encourage cities to have “site ready” development areas to promote new business growth & current business expansion (IEDA Certified Sites).
- Expand runways as needed to promote economic development (Lamoni, Centerville, Chariton)
- Support facility updates and expansions at airport facilities to ensure quality services such as offering jet fuel and onsite personnel.
- Old Amish communities are promoted as tourist attractions and RPA needs to ensure safety of travel with proper signage, reduce obstructions, & roadways capable of “Sharing the road” with buggies and motor vehicles.
- Include documentation that RPA 17 is in opposition of mandatory transfer of jurisdictions from state to local without local consultation first.
- Develop Small city funding brochures/application to roadway development to educate council members on the process and all requirements.
- CVPD website will host links to Farm-to-Market Road maps, major collector routes, small city funding application and describe frequent challenges with expending federal funds.
- Organize an annual “CVTPA Bootcamp Manual” directed at county/city level elected officials to inform on the process transportation funds.

- All counties in the region should develop & maintain a Local Roads Safety Plan.
- Continue ongoing rehabilitation of existing roads and bridges.
- Additional rumble strips along hard surface roads
- Solar powered road signs can be an alternative to increase safety at dangerous intersections.
- Partner with adjacent counties to develop regional projects across multiple counties to create greater “regional projects”.
- Promote jurisdictions to adopt “Complete Street” policy to include sidewalks, bike lanes, paved shoulders, etc. when possible.
- Need to preform traffic study for Monroe County Iowa 137 near Iowa Bioprocessing Center to consider the addition of a possible acceleration lane.
- Iowa DOT is evaluating U.S. Highway 34 as a potential candidate for a “Super 2” highway to better accommodate heavy freight traffic due to HyVee Distribution Center in Chariton

Support future legislative strategies that are intended to further safety throughout the state, including RPA 17. Although Iowa has made great strides in passing legislation that supports reducing the number of severe crashes on its roadways, there are still opportunities to improve traffic safety. Initial legislative strategies that the Iowa Strategic Highway Safety Plan Implementation Team will undertake in the coming years include the following:

- Reducing distracted, drowsy, and impaired driving
- Hands-free cell phone requirements
- All-passenger primary seatbelt requirements
- Strengthening or enhancing graduated driver’s license (GDL) requirements
- Requiring drivers to change lanes when passing bicyclists

The results of the SWOT analysis and online survey have been valuable tools used by RPA 17 in developing guidelines for projects in this long-range plan. Additional input has been gathered from elected officials, residents, business leaders, and the public throughout the planning process. Through this process, the following priorities have been established for years 6-20. They are listed by transportation mode and are meant to complement items in the Action Plan and provide direction for planning future projects.

6-20 Year Action Steps Identified in Chapter ____: Goals & Objectives

- Southern Iowa Railway (formerly APNC) maintenance and/or expansion to ensure longevity of service
- Support continued Amtrak service in the region in Osceola.
- Pursue safety improvements at rail crossings
- Grade separation structures - Bridge underpass/overpass funding
- Promote use of local short line rail for shipping option
- Promote transportation facilities leading up to regional railroad lines
- Develop or improve roadways as needed to enhance economic development
- Encourage cities to have “site ready” development areas to promote new business growth & current business expansion (IEDA Certified Sites).
- Expand runways as needed to promote economic development (Lamoni, Centerville, Chariton)
- Support facility updates and expansions at airport facilities to ensure quality services such as offering jet fuel and onsite personnel.
- Promote access to existing airport facilities (such as turning lanes, signage, etc.)
- Sustain and improve Historic Hills Scenic Byway & Jefferson Heritage Byway
- Environmental mitigation activities such as storm water management and reduced wildlife mortality.
- Historic preservation of transportation facilities
- Construction of highway turnouts, overlooks, or viewing areas
- Support local trail’s development & maintenance
- Pursue options of regional trail connectivity between local trails
- Promote & Utilize Safe Routes to School development in all communities with local school building
- Support statewide efforts that would improve vehicle safety by requiring vehicle inspections and address the increasing weight and size of agricultural equipment.
- Reduce accidents especially along routes of increased risk
- Implement safety measures to reduce animal accidents and running off roadway incidents.
- Develop more water trails
- Maintain current website with funding information, IDOT, & consultant contact information
- Improve bike ability through the region & jurisdictions. Possible project recommendations from Wellmark include shared bike lane on Drake Avenue in Centerville, routes in Corydon, evaluate number & locations of bike racks for parking, etc.
- Sidewalk development and improvements in the region. Possible items may include developing a sidewalk audit of current routes, establishing sidewalk maintenance programs & implementation, requiring sidewalk development with all new construction or rehabilitation, improve connectivity by establishing infill, improve ADA compliance, annual sidewalk inspections with follow-up letters to homeowners, etc.
- Improve safety near at enhance pedestrian crossings; repair and paint crosswalks, consider “all way stop” intersections, or installing Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs)

- Improve wayfinding signs in communities

- Promote walking trails in the region, i.e. maps, brochures
- Include documentation that RPA 17 is in opposition of mandatory transfer of jurisdictions from state to local without local consultation first.
- Promote Small city funding brochures/application to roadway development to educate council members on the process and all requirements.
- CVPD website will host links to Farm-to-Market Road maps, major collector routes, small city funding application and describe frequent challenges with expending federal funds.
- Organize an annual “CVTPA Bootcamp Manual” directed at county/city level elected officials to inform on the process transportation funds.
- All counties in the region should develop & maintain a Local Roads Safety Plan.
- Continue ongoing rehabilitation of existing roads and bridges.
- Additional rumble strips along hard surface roads
- Solar powered road signs can be an alternative to increase safety at dangerous intersections.
- Partner with adjacent counties to develop regional projects across multiple counties to create greater “regional projects”.
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Freight Trends and Issues

According to the Federal Highway Administration’s Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) tool, freight transportation in the United States will double by 2040. This growth will be reflected in Iowa and seemingly will not be uniform across all modes. If this develops, it will prove to be a sizeable challenge for the overall freight transportation system.

Although today’s rail network consists of less mileage, the total amount of tonnage handled annually has slowly increased with a few variable years. Since 1985 near when railroads were privatized, the total rail movements have increased by roughly 23 million tons. (Source: *Iowa in Motion-State Freight Plan*) Recent growth in freight demand has impacted rail service and equipment needs yet a variety of issues (including financial constraints) have limited the ability to expand capacity. As a result of this growing demand and changes, rail cars are growing, and trains are getting longer. One specific challenge is 20% of Iowa’s rail miles are not able to carry the industry-standard 286,000-pound cars. This does include the short rail of Iowa Southern Rail located in Appanoose and Monroe Counties. This limits potential growth for this rail.

Low railroad underpasses are responsible for a significant contribution for bottleneck locations in the region. Most notably in Corydon, Chariton and east of Centerville. When alternate routes are required, it can place a burden on local community roadways and budgets. One example is the low railroad underpass on the north side of Corydon. The designated truck route requires trucks to leave State Highway 14 onto municipal roads of Newton Road, Fairground Road and North Lincoln Steet. This route is of great concern as the local manufacturing facility is expanding to add 300 jobs and increased truck traffic.

Identifying current trends and issues and attempt to forecast the changes that will come is challenging. Over the past 30 years, large truck traffic on Iowa’s primary roads showed an increase of 123%, with the highest truck activity on Interstate 80. During the same period, truck traffic on secondary roads also increased substantially, while truck traffic on municipal roads has remained relatively stable. If these trends continue, large truck traffic will grow approximately 66% between now and 2040, which will impact Iowa’s highways through increased congestion and deteriorating pavement conditions. Significant roadway challenges are created by oversized and /or overweight trucks. This may include truck traffic as well as agricultural equipment. This will result in more congestion and faster deterioration of pavement and structures on roadways.

The “Iowa in Motion-State Freight Plan” outlines the overall freight improvement plan. These strategies and improvements align with strategic goals in the document. RPA 17 acknowledges and supports efforts pertaining to our region:

1. Maximize the advantages inherent to Iowa's geographic proximity.
2. Explore/create other funding sources to increase investment in the freight transportation system.
3. Target investment to address mobility issues that impact freight movements.
4. Emphasize the Multimodal Freight Network and utilize designs that are compatible with significant freight movements.
5. Target investment on the interstate system at a level that reflects the importance of this system for moving freight.
6. Right-size the highway system and apply cost effective solutions to locations with existing and anticipated issues.
7. Advance a 21st century Farm-to-Market System that moves products seamlessly across road, rail, and water to global marketplaces.
8. Implement asset management tools and practices and promote their use at the local level.
9. Optimize the freight transportation network to minimize cost and travel time and to improve supply chain efficiency.
10. Optimize the availability and use of freight shipping containers.
11. Explore opportunities for increasing value-added production within the state.
12. Provide real-time information on system conditions to support the movement of freight.
13. Leverage real-time information from users of the system to support advanced decision making and incident avoidance.
14. Provide measured, clear, nontechnical performance results for the freight system.
15. Streamline and align freight-related regulations and minimize unintended consequences.
16. Act as a point of contact and educator for freight transportation options.
17. Explore new truck docking operations to enable greater opportunities to consolidate truck freight for Iowa shippers.
18. Explore a new rail intermodal facility to enable access to lower cost rail services for Iowa businesses.
19. Explore additional transload facilities to provide Iowa businesses with more access to lower cost railroad freight services.
20. Explore opportunities to leverage a barge and rail multimodal solution to provide a cost-effective freight transportation alternative.
21. Collaborate with the railroads to provide Iowa companies with more access and capacity to accommodate additional Iowa freight shipments.
22. Explore and implement strategies to reduce deadhead truck miles.
23. Explore opportunities for railroads to provide additional lower cost freight rail transportation for high volume traffic lanes in Iowa.

A wide variety of freight is moved throughout the region every day, much of which arrives without incident. However, accidents involving freight do occur and must be planned for accordingly. A significant concern is the transport of hazardous materials. Each county in the region is covered by an Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and EMA Coordinator whose emergency management efforts include mitigating future risks from hazards and developing a Hazard Mitigation Plan. This does include manmade and natural disasters that could occur in communities and affect the transportation systems. In the event of a crash, spill, or derailment involving hazardous materials, it is imperative that local jurisdictions be prepared to respond in an expeditious manner.

Local Challenges:

- Need to perform traffic study for Monroe County Iowa 137 near Iowa Bioprocessing Center to consider the addition of a possible acceleration lane.
- Iowa's State Freight Plan indicates that rail freight tonnage is increasing over the years. Rail cars are growing, and trains are getting longer, and improvements are necessary to meet the capacity. ISR is among the 20% of Iowa's rail lines that are not able to carry the industry-standard 286,000-pound cars. This limited capacity can mean limited growth for this short line.
- Iowa is encountering a shrinking pool of qualified drivers and laborer in the commercial trucking industry.
- Iowa DOT is evaluating U.S. Highway 34 as a potential candidate for a "Super 2" highway to better accommodate heavy freight traffic due to HyVee Distribution Center in Chariton.

Regional Roadway Transportation Challenges

The key findings for the RPA 17 transportation region have identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- Maintenance of the existing regional highway network is a critical need. As a complete network, preservation, reconstruction, and rehabilitation and safety improvements are a high priority.
- Obtaining adequate funding to maintain the existing roadways within the region is a great concern. A major surface concern is the lack of funding available in counties to allow for appropriate rock on secondary roadway systems.
- Obtaining funding to construct transportation facilities that enhance economic development or result in job creation or retention is desired.
- Progress of improving roadways in this region are determined by funding availability. The gas tax in 2015 has generated crucial funding for roadways systems, but the challenge are the roads are deteriorating more rapidly than the funds allow to maintain. This region saw a significant decrease in funding in 2002 and the recent gas tax simply returned the region back to those levels. When funding is available the counties are including rebuilding driveway slopes, roadside ditch sloping, and recognizing that heavy rains have caused stream degradation, especially around drain tubes.
- Current funding levels are not adequate to maintain the current system in a serviceable state and will have an impact on the viability of the region. Southern Iowa is very rural and relies on agriculture as the backbone to the economy.
- The Historic Hills Scenic Byway includes a seven mile stretch from the City of Moravia in Appanoose County and extends to the west seven miles to Honey Creek State Park & Resort. Jefferson Highway Heritage Byway is in Clarke and Decatur Counties as a small piece of the national byway extending from Winnipeg to New Orleans. Promoting and maintaining the state and federal Byway status can be challenging with a limited budget.
- Appanoose County engineer indicates a significant increase in traffic around Lake Rathbun since the last AADT in 2018. Local highway J5T now provides access to multiple new campgrounds that have developed in the past couple years. This has developed new challenges with road surface wear, heavy truck traffic and speeding.
- Sundown Lake in Appanoose County is a private residential lake that is expanding rapidly and impacting the amount of traffic on rural roads in the area. The county engineers foresee the need to develop better/more access points into the lake and possibly the need for hard surface roads.
- Significant local roadway challenges develop when the state roads department does repairs to major road systems. The detour routes are often lengthy, and people are more likely to take local roads for a shorter distance. Local county budgets are not prepared to have additional maintenance on such roads. The increase in AADT can have a profound effect on the road surface and develop major deterioration.
- Corydon's major manufacturing employer is in the process of an expansion that will create 350 new jobs and significantly impact the amount of traffic on the roadway systems in the county and region. The Wayne County is

concerned the current “truck route” through Corydon could see more problems. Highway 14 truck traffic is currently diverted around a low railroad underpass (which is already identified as a bottleneck concern) at the north end of the city. The route through city is in very poor condition and trucks are now beginning to travel county rock roads as an alternate route. This heavy truck traffic is greatly impacting the road surface and the amount of rock it will demand.

- Iowa Highway 2 through Decatur, Wayne, Appanoose, and Davis Counties were resurfaced several years ago. The communities of Corydon and Centerville did not receive new surface within their corporate limits. There are questions why that occurred and if road diet studies will occur with it to evaluate reduction of lanes/addition of turning lanes.

Key highway issues identified in *Iowa in Motion 2045*:

- Many high-cost bridge structures have major deficiencies.
- Urban and commuter route congestion is growing.
- Rural and urban interstate congestion is becoming more prevalent.
- Safety needs exist on the system.
- Additional on-road accommodations are needed for bicycle and pedestrian trips.
- Sustainable funding is needed to maintain acceptable condition ratings for roadways and bridge structures.

Action Plan

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years. It is a goal to maintain the existing regional highway network, initiating improvements at the federal, state, county and city level as needed.

Action Steps:

- Sustain Scenic Byways & potential development of additional routes.
- Promote small city funding opportunities application and requirements. May include educating elected officials on the process to receive funds, requirements of federal funding, identify Farm-to-Market routes, major collector roadways, etc.
- Continued rehabilitation of current roads and bridges.
- Explore additional funding options including RISE grants, DOT research boards, and local resources.
- Encourage cities to have “IEDA Certified Sites” ready for development locations with accessible roadways that will promote new business growth/ business expansion.
- Need to preform current traffic count roadways surrounding Lake Rathbun that provide access to new campgrounds.

Regional Transportation Challenges for Bridges

The key findings for the RPA 17 transportation region have identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- The region has an exceptionally high number of bridges. Counties spend considerable time and money maintaining the numerous bridges within their jurisdictions. Additional funds are also needed to help rehabilitate

the many bridges, especially those located on the secondary roads systems. The lack of funds to repair bridges is so severe it has already resulted in a few secondary roads in rural areas being closed.

- Funding restrictions determine the number of bridges that can be repaired throughout the county. The county engineers have begun installing large diameter pipes in places of bridge structures wherever possible.
- A local challenge for bridge replacement/repair is that the Iowa State Plan has identified several of RPA 17's bridge priorities in the "bottom 5% of bridges by condition".

Action Plan

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years. It is a goal to maintain the existing regional highway network, initiating improvements at the federal, state, county and city level as needed. As a complete network, preservation, reconstruction, bridge replacement and rehabilitation and safety improvements are a higher priority than capacity building and new facility construction.

Action Steps

- Continued rehabilitation of existing roads and bridges.
- All counties in RPA 17 region participate in DOT development of "Local Roads Safety Plan".

Regional Railroad Transportation Challenges

The key rail findings for the RPA 17 transportation region have identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- Rail lines see heavy use with considerable amounts of freight passing through the region. Rail access is important for large businesses and industry and should be preserved throughout the region and critical for economic stability or progress.
- Efforts should be made to maintain or improve AMTRAK service within the region.

- Few rail incidents or rail/vehicle crashes have occurred within region in recent years. However, improvements to warning devices should continue to be made on at-grade crossings when feasible, especially along high traffic roads.
- Counties in RPA 17 continue to cooperate with private railroad companies regarding the maintenance of road crossings. UP has replaced three bridges in Wayne County. There are no railroad tracks through Davis and Decatur Counties. BSNF has raised the rail up out of the floodplain in a couple of locations in Monroe County. APNC had tie replacement and bridge rehab/replacement along the line from Moravia to Albia in Monroe & Appanoose Counties. The Osceola Depot has improved its facilities by expanding the parking lot. There are proposals by BNSF to close many railway & roadway intersections in this region.
- UP Bridge in Corydon – large traffic route creates surfacing issues for the city.

Key Rail Issues in the “*Iowa in Motion*” 2045 plan:

- Additional funding is needed to support necessary capital expenditures.
- The network has steadily decreased in miles, and additional rail capacity is needed to meet future demand.
- Rail improvements will be needed to accommodate heavier rail cars.
- Additional rail spurs are needed to accommodate businesses and industries wanting to locate or expand in Iowa.
- There is a need for enhanced rail access throughout Iowa.
- There are operational, regulatory, and infrastructure bottlenecks to be addressed for the rail system.
- Growing highway and rail traffic is increasing delays and conflicts.
- There are safety concerns related to rail infrastructure and highway-railroad crossings.
- Passenger rail service is limited, with no service to Iowa’s larger population centers.
- Energy production and transport is changing.

Action Plan

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years. It is a goal to maintain the existing regional highway network, initiating improvements at the federal, state, county and city level as needed. As a complete network, preservation, reconstruction, bridge replacement and rehabilitation and safety improvements are a higher priority than capacity building and new facility construction.

Action Steps:

- Support growth/expansion of short line railroad Iowa Southern Railway to ensure longevity of service.
- Support continued Amtrak service in the region.
- Pursue safety improvements at all railroad crossings.
- Secure grade separation structures – bridge underpass/overpass funding.
- Explore (encourage private individuals) to develop new railway shipping sites or vendors.
- Promote passenger rail opportunities throughout the region.

Regional Aviation Transportation Challenges

The key findings for the RPA 17 transportation region have identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- Aviation facilities within the region generally meet the needs of business and industry; the only exception being the lack of regularly scheduled passenger air services.

- Regularly scheduled passenger air service must be obtained outside the RPA 17 region. The closest facilities offering the service are in Des Moines, Kansas City, Omaha, or St Louis.
- The Centerville aviation board would like to expand the runway to accommodate small jet travel.
- All “basic service” airports in the region have made improvements over the past five years

Key public transit issues identified in *Iowa in Motion 2045*:

- Additional operational and capital funding is needed.
- Older buses require more maintenance and repairs.
- Transit ridership cost per trip is increasing.
- Seamless transfers are needed between the 35 transit systems and intercity bus service.
- Expanded transit services, including additional hours and weekend service, are needed.
- More coordination is needed between transit systems, human service organizations, and school districts.
- Indoor bus parking facilities are needed.
- The public is generally reluctant to use transit services.

Action Plan

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years. It is a goal to maintain the existing regional highway network, initiating improvements at the federal, state, county and city level as needed. The action of the RPA 17 region is to support facility updates and expansions of the public airports in the region.

Action Steps:

Ensure all airports have updated airport ordinances within the past 5 years. Collaborate with cities, airport commissions and civil engineers to establish new comprehensive aviation zoning ordinance.

Expand runways as needed to promote economic development in Centerville, Chariton & Lamoni.

Support facility upgrades and expansions to ensure quality of service such as offering jet fuel and onsite personnel.

Regional Public Transit Challenges

COVID-19 Pandemic

Iowa Department of Public Health defines COVID-19 as “A global respiratory illness was discovered in late 2019 that causes very severe illness and death in some, and very minor symptoms in others. There is still a lot to learn about the disease for which there is no known cure. The disease is present in all 99 counties in Iowa.” COVID-19 was declared a

United States pandemic in early 2020 and much of the economy was shut down for a period of three months. As a result, public transit use plummeted as people began working from home, staying home, avoiding public places, and not utilizing public transportation systems to limit exposure.

Fully Staffed

Both transit agencies continue to face driver shortages and available for routes. Consistent driver vacancies have caused services to be discontinued and gaps to expand. This challenge may likely continue during the pandemic and as aging drivers retire to create vacancies that are challenging to fill.

In the past it was recognized that 10-15 Transit struggled to maintain full time drivers in several counties in the RPA 17 region. This had a direct impact on the availability of buses to transport residents. There were participants at the TAG meetings who voiced their concerns and frustrations about the difficulty to arrange for transport. 10-15 Transit has altered their approach and now provides service in small passenger vehicles. This change has provided a more economical service and alleviated the challenge of requiring CDL certified drivers. Drivers of passenger vehicles are only required to have a chauffeur's license and is easily attainable for experienced drivers. The number of drivers providing service in the RPA's five counties has doubled from 10 to 20 drivers since this change.

Aging Population

The U.S population is getting older. Based on census data, it is estimated that by 2030 almost 19% of the national population will be 65 years or older. RPA 17 follows this trend with continual senior population increase from 2010 to 2019 for residents above 60 years old. The largest age category for the RPA 17 region with residents 45-54 years old. This indicates that in the next 10-15 years much of the population could be approaching retirement. This has significant implications for tax revenue because as people retire, the workforce participation rate will decline and with it so will income and spending. Transit agencies rely heavily on state, local and federal funds for operations and less taxable income can directly affect budgets. Compounding concerns of potentially less income, is that many senior residents depend on public transportation and an increase in need could occur as the local population ages. This scenario could be extremely challenging with potential lower income and need demands increase. This situation could be magnified when considering the population of RPA 17 have been on a steady decline for many years and is projected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Coordination Issues

There is often confusion about "On Demand" service and that is not currently the capacity of 10-15 Transit's service in those counties. This type of service allows for people to call and arrange a pickup time within a couple hours of the call. In the past, community representatives from the religious community, hospital volunteers and private residents were recruited to help with residents that need transported when 10-15 was not an option. However, given the COVID-19 Pandemic volunteers are no longer willing to provide such support. Public transit providers have now been the best option for residents in the region.

Healthcare providers and the transit service agencies both indicate the need for greater capacity lifts on all vehicles. The motorized scooters/chairs add significant weight to patients beyond the 800lb lift. 10-15 Transit currently has 1,000lb lifts on the full-size buses and can provide services to clients that need it. Both agencies are in the process of ordering new vans that will hold 10-11 passengers and also come with a large capacity lift of 1,000lbs.

Transit providers emphasize how critical public outreach and education are to their agencies. Both 10-15 Transit and Southern Iowa Trolley have re-branded their logos and began new promotional campaigns. The literature and promotional pieces are shared at large community events, on public media, social media and are now available in Spanish as well.

Action Plan

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years.

Action Steps:

- Study the feasibility of constructing or acquiring a new fleet maintenance/office facility of Southern Iowa Trolley that provides secure, covered parking, maintenance and vehicle washing facility and adequate office space with parking.
- Replace the transit fleet as necessary and as funds allow.
- Upgrade or add transit equipment such as cameras, lifts, & tablets to monitor ridership and drivers.
- RPA 17 will continue to host transit outreach meetings to enhance service and educate residents.
- Transit agencies & RPA 17 will continue to develop outreach strategies and educating the public on how to utilize transit services. Meetings may be held to help facilitate new partnerships with local businesses.
- Develop a voucher system/punch card for those not able to pay for public transit.
- Transit agencies will work with area employers to ensure service times meet the needs of any shift workers or personnel needing transportation.

Regional Recreational Trails Transportation Needs & Issues

The key findings for trails and sidewalks for the RPA 17 transportation region have identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- Funding assistance is essential for trails development and more funding is needed. Trails projects often lack the needed local match dollars due to sparse population and the high number of low-income residents in the region.
- Coordination among local jurisdictions, local trails committees, and the Iowa DOT to make further bicycle and pedestrian improvements is encouraged.

- 60% of survey respondents believe that recreational trails are very important/important transportation amenities in the region, however, local committees struggle to get volunteers.

- **APPANOOSE COUNTY**

Appanoose county Trails has now become established as a 501c3 and is eligible for additional funding pools. This group is interested in what other trails have in place for a “Maintenance Plan” and if there would be anything they could consider progressing the trail conditions.

Appanoose County Snowmobilers indicate there are many bridges that are washing out & needing hours of labor to repair. Alan shared that it seems there are just less individuals with machines & equipment to use the trail. Meeting participants talked about the need to promote the group to see if there are additional people in the area that would be interested in helping.

The Rathbun Water Trail is identified in DNR documents. However, the committee believes this would be beneficial to cross-reference them in transportation documents. There are only 2 canoe access points in Appanoose County identified as water facility access points in the RPA 17 region

There has been discussion with the local trails committee and Historic Preservation Committee to deem the Centerville Historic Railroad Depot as a trailhead that would connect to the Lelah Bradley Park trails. This would require placement of a large tunnel tube under a street and development of land under an old railbed for approximately 6 blocks.

- **CLARKE COUNTY**

Osceola trails committee has created the vision of connecting various community amenities with a trails system. The next approved phase would place a sidewalk/trail along West Shaw Street on the north side of the city. This would provide connectivity from Q Pond and Q Pond City Park to the Clarke Community Middle/High School and to the existing sidewalk trail along North Fillmore Street connecting to the Osceola Square. Ultimately, the committee would like to see Q-Pond trails connect to Hembry Pathway, Osceola Family Aquatic Center, schools’ facilities, the historic train depot, multiple city parks and eventually extend to meet the Great Western Trail system to the north of the county. Clarke County Conservation Board (CCCB) maintains the property at East Lake and currently has many walking/hiking trails around the lake and plans are to someday pave them.

- **DAVIS COUNTY**

The Davis County Trails Council project hopes to enhance our community with the addition of a trail system that would provide recreational, educational, health and wellness opportunities for all community members willing to utilize the trail system. A portion of the trail is proposed to provide a safe transportation route to the local school facilities, existing community recreation facilities, including but not limited to, Little League, City Park, City Pool, and the Mutchler Recreation Center. Educational opportunities, specifically related to nature, will be available by utilizing the McGowen Farm County Conservation Park facilities and related programs associated with that existing facility. Future for this trail would be to connect to the fairgrounds, a possible future school sports complex on the west edge of the city, and to Fisher Pond.

There has also been discussion by local committee members about the possibility of including a trail along the Historic Hills Scenic Byway.

- **DECATUR COUNTY**

Multiple abandon rail beds exist in Decatur County and have the potential to connect several local trails and recreation areas. One extensive abandon rail line could connect Lamoni, Davis City, Nine Eagles State Park, Leon, Kobville and Garden Grove. This rail bed also extends out of the northwest corner of the county to Humeston (6.75 miles) in Wayne County. Humeston is a trailhead for the level 2 trail of Cinder Path, which runs 13.5 miles north to the City of Chariton.

The greatest challenge can be with the property ownership of the old railway. The local committee will need to work with property owners for the feasibility of trail development. If the landowners agree to potential development north through Garden Grove, a partnership may need to be formed with the Cinder Path Committee.

The local committee will need to continue fundraising to create matching funds that could be utilized for grant applications.

Nine Eagles State Park would benefit from a regional trail that connects the major parks in the neighboring counties of Adams (Lake Icaria), Taylor County (Lake of Three Fires), Union County (Green Valley Lake State Park), and Ringgold (Fogle Lake).

- **LUCAS COUNTY**

Chariton Trails Committee has worked with Iowa Living Roadways to develop a draft plan of connecting popular pedestrian destinations. There are five phases to complete the proposed project. The first phase would provide 4 miles of sidewalks to connect city parks, schools, and the two community cemeteries. Phase two creates a circuit that extends off two points of Phase I trail and extends the west edge of the city and back to the heart of town. There would also be an access point to Cinder Path Trail from this route. Phase III would provide a long, peaceful trail along the Hy-Vee bypass road north of Chariton. The last phases of IV and V include routes to Red Haw State Park and a link to Lake Ellis & Lake Morris.

Local efforts of city trails need to be combined with the committee for Cinder Path for a partnership to connect trails. Local committees need to determine ways to effectively fundraise that will allow those funds to be used as a cash match for other grants. CVPD discussed the efforts of the RPA to develop a regional trail that would allow for a bigger scope in seven counties and possibly open doors for state funding. It was also explained that the local TAP application is now accepted annually on December 1st so they can consider submitting a new application if

Phase II is shovel ready. They were provided with regional trails maps that could possibly connect local trails throughout the region. One example would be connecting Chariton city trails to near-by Cinder Path.

- **MONROE COUNTY**

The Albia Trails Group has drafted a six phased approach to developing a trails network in the city of Albia. The existing trail of John King Bike Path is 1.48 miles near Kendall Elementary. The city is utilizing Local Option Sales Tax funding and CVTPA regional funds to accomplish Phase I. It will connect multiple public-school facilities, park, hospital, and sports complexes. In the future, the committee hopes to accomplish Phase II that would extend from the sports complex on the north edge of Albia to the Albia Reservoir. Phase III and Phase IV will provide trails from Albia Reservoir south to Old Highway 34 to Welcome Home Solider and finish a loop

back to Old Highway 34. Phase V would offer a spur from Phase IV to Grant Elementary and north to Kendall Elementary along the existing bike path. Phase VI would create a loop from the west end of John King Bike Path to Maxon Reservoir, and Albia County Club.

- **WAYNE COUNTY**

Bob White State Park would like to expand the three-mile hiking trail that is currently offered at the park. Ideally the county would like to extend this trail to connect with Cinder Path in northern Wayne County.

The Iowa State Trails Plan indicates possible trail development from Allerton to Seymour, but no exact route has been identified.

The trails at Bobwhite State Park need general maintenance and repair. The existing bridges are currently not wide enough to accommodate more than one person in single file or any maintenance equipment (mowers etc.). There are multiple trail sections in need of repair, as well as invasive vegetation removal is necessary. Limited funding and volunteers pose a challenge to provided necessary improvements to this trail. The City of Corydon can also work with Parks & Recreation, Wayne County Conservation, and volunteers to develop a water trail at City Lake west of Corydon.

Action Plan

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years.

Action Steps:

Hire a consultant to determine the safest way to develop regional trail connectivity

Develop regional trails to increase the quality of life.

Support Safe Routes to School in the region.

Increase safety on RPA 17 Trails.

Maintain and promote connection of existing RPA 17 trails.

Promote community efforts to repair or construct sidewalks for safety, mobility, and ADA compliance.

Collaborate with any Wellness Initiatives in the region that have interest in expanding trails, bicycle amenities, sidewalk inventory/rehabilitation plan, activity stations along trail routes, etc.

Support development and enhancement of water trails throughout the region.

Regional Transportation Safety Challenges

The key safety and security findings for the RPA 17 transportation region have identified in the Long-Range Transportation Plan:

- Crash rates have generally remained constant or declined over the past few years for both intersection and non-intersection crashes. Incorporating cost effective safety improvements into reconstruction and rehabilitation projects when feasible is desired.
- It is impossible to monitor or secure every mile of road or every mile of rail. Instead, key areas or structures may be checked, and alternative routes planned in the event of a disruption.
- All counties in RPA 17 have FEMA approved Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans in place. The existing plans are multi-Jurisdictional that include incorporated communities and the rural county.
- DOT has implemented “Local Road Safety Plan” to provide a proactive approach for safety improvements on county road systems. It discusses opportunities to implement proven driver-related strategies and prioritize a list of low-cost engineering countermeasures. Currently, five of the seven RPA 17 counties. Appanoose and Clarke Counties plan to enroll soon.
- The state DOT has installed more edge line or “rumble strips” on the roadways throughout the region.
- Evaluation of reflectometry of signs is completed on an informal basis in every county in the region. Appanoose County has begun to chart the location of each sign in GIS and once assigned the location the reflectometry condition will be included as well.
- Old Amish communities are promoted as tourist attractions and RPA needs to ensure safety of travel with proper signage, reduce obstructions, & roadways capable of “Sharing the road” with buggies and motor vehicles.
- New forecasts will need to be developed based on automated vehicles being part of the freight and passenger vehicle fleets. It will be necessary to explore how this change in transportation will impact the rest of the freight system, economy, and land uses. Proactive planning is needed to determine how this will affect Iowa freight movement and how to prepare for it.
- Enhance roadway safety and transportation for all ages, particularly older citizens including larger print on signs, safer turning movements at intersections, more visible pavement markings, better roadway lightning, well-connected pedestrian facilities, improved transit options and coordination between transit providers and human service agencies.
- Approximately one-third of accidents involve animal collisions.
- The accident reason that experienced the most significant increase were “ran off the side of road” and “distracted driver”.

Action Plan

State Safety Legislation Iowa’s traffic safety culture is supported by policy and legislation that is focused on reducing the number and severity of vehicle crashes on Iowa’s roadways. This section provides a brief overview of the legislation related to traffic safety that has been passed in recent years, and future legislative strategies.

Ignition Interlock
 Statewide Sobriety and Drug Monitoring Program
 Use of Electronic Communication
 Homicide-by-vehicle
 Blue and White Lights
 Move Over or Slow Down

There are many safety improvements, techniques, and countermeasures that can be used to mitigate existing safety problems or prevent safety issues from developing. The information on the following pages is from the FHWA (www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures) and outlines techniques that can be used in certain situations to improve safety.

Improved safety measure options may include the following options for consideration:

- Longitudinal Rumble Strips and Stripes
- SafetyEdgeSM
- Roundabouts
- Systemic Application of Multiple Low-Cost Countermeasures at Stop-Controlled Intersections.
- Roadside design
- Road Diet,
- Corridor Access Management-
- Medians and Pedestrian Crossing Islands
- A leading pedestrian interval (LPI)
- walkway
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons
- Roadside Fencing

The following tasks have been identified as possible action steps to accomplish the goals identified in the region. This is not a list of programmed activities and is not project specific. This is a tool to be used as justification for Transportation Improvement Program project development over the next 20 years. It is a goal to maintain the existing regional highway network, initiating improvements at the federal, state, county and city level as needed.

Action Steps:

- All counties in RPA 17 region participate in DOT development of “Local Roads Safety Plan”.
- Additional rumble strips and solar powered road signs.
- Road surfacing maintenance of resurfacing and rock.