



# Public Participation Plan



**Black Hawk  
Metropolitan Area  
Transportation  
Policy Board**

**September 10, 2009**

**RESOLUTION OF THE  
BLACK HAWK METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD**

WHEREAS, the Black Hawk Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board (MPO) desires to incorporate a public participation process that fosters public involvement throughout the transportation planning and decision making process; and

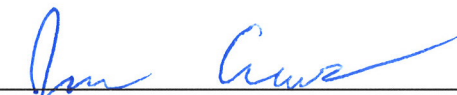
WHEREAS, the MPO's initial Public Involvement Plan was adopted in 1993 and most recently updated in 2007; and

WHEREAS, the MPO has prepared a draft version of the 2009 Public Participation Plan that complies with SAFETEA-LU regulations; and

WHEREAS, the draft Public Participation Plan has been available for public comment for 45 days and the comment period on the draft has now expired.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Policy Board hereby approves the Public Participation Plan.

Passed and adopted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2009.

Signed:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Crews, Chair  
Black Hawk Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Blanshan  
Director of Transportation and Data Services

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The preparation of this Public Participation Plan was financed in part through federal funding provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and/or the Federal Transit Administration.

# Section 1

## Introduction

This document is the Public Participation Plan for the Black Hawk Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board (MPO). The MPO oversees transportation planning and programming of federal transportation funding for the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area. This plan serves to guide public involvement in the planning process for the area, which is a vital component of any governmental endeavor. Without interest and input from the public, ideas will be limited in scope and execution and the planning process will be constrained.

This plan is an update of past public involvement plans, the most recent of which was adopted in 2007. This plan largely builds on the last plan while incorporating new recommendations from the Federal Highway Administration. Improving public participation is always a consideration for the MPO. Input on how to increase public awareness of and participation in the planning process has been sought through many different avenues, from regular MPO meetings to project specific meetings and from surveys to community presentations.

The goal of the Black Hawk Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board is to incorporate a public involvement process that fosters public participation throughout the planning and transportation decision-making process. It is believed that an engaging public process will result in a safe and efficient transportation system for all, with both public and private interests represented.

This plan outlines the ways public involvement is incorporated into MPO activities. The remainder of the plan is organized as follows:

- Section 2 gives an overview of the MPO and its responsibilities, as well as the importance of public participation.
- Section 3 contains federal and state regulations relating to MPO planning.
- Section 4 highlights the major documents that the MPO prepares and lists public involvement efforts for each.
- Section 5 focuses on routine MPO activities and includes a table outlining how the MPO addresses SAFETEA-LU requirements.
- Section 6 has contact information for persons wishing to communicate with the MPO.
- Section 7 lists the membership of several transportation committees important in MPO planning.

## **Section 2**

### **Overview**

#### **Background**

Federal law requires the formation of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) for urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000. The role of an MPO is to oversee transportation planning and programming to ensure that current and future expenditures on transportation projects are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process. The MPO brings together cities and counties in an urban area to ensure that planning reflects the region's shared vision of the future. The Black Hawk MPO represents the urbanized area of Black Hawk County, Iowa (see map at the end of this document). This includes the cities of Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Elk Run Heights, Evansdale, Gilbertville, Hudson, and Raymond, and a portion of the unincorporated area of Black Hawk County. The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) provides staffing and support for the MPO. INRCOG is a regional planning agency serving Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties.

The MPO oversees the programming of certain federal funding programs, including the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Enhancement Program. STP funds are used for major new construction or reconstruction of roads that are part of the federal functional classification system. This system contains high volume roads and those that serve as important connectors; it does not include local residential streets. Enhancement funds are allocated primarily for trails and transportation-related improvements with historic or scenic value. The MPO annually evaluates projects submitted by member jurisdictions and maintains a Transportation Improvement Program, which lists projects funded by these and other federal programs over the next four years.

#### **MPO Organization**

The MPO has two branches. The decision-making and programming authority of the MPO exists in its Policy Board. Voting members of the Policy Board include elected officials or their designee from each member city and Black Hawk County, as well as representatives of the Waterloo Airport Commission and the Metropolitan Transit Authority. The Policy Board receives guidance from the MPO Technical Committee, which consists of local planning and engineering personnel. A list of Policy Board and Technical Committee members, as well as other key participants in MPO planning, is available in Section 7 of this document.

To assist in transportation decision-making, the MPO conducts an open and ongoing transportation planning and programming process. Public involvement has been evidenced by the extensive participation of local citizens on transportation issues through the MPO and numerous location and design public hearings conducted by local jurisdictions and the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT). The MPO strives to incorporate the public into its decision-making process by notifying citizens of regular MPO meetings, focus group

meetings, open houses, and public hearings on current projects and documents. Transportation updates are also regularly posted on the INRCOG website. Public involvement and information has been further enhanced by the active participation of the local media, including newspaper articles and radio and television interviews.

### **Major Documents**

There are five major documents that the MPO is responsible for, and public input is an important component of each one.

- The **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** is the largest and most extensive document the MPO produces. This plan has a minimum 20 year horizon and covers all pertinent modes of transportation as well as their relationships with development and land use. The LRTP focuses on a broad range of issues in the metropolitan area, including improving the area's economic vitality, safety, security, accessibility, and connectivity. The LRTP is updated every five years.
- The **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** is a four year document that outlines ongoing and planned federal aid projects, their costs and funding sources, and project priorities. The TIP details the MPO Surface Transportation and Enhancement Programs, other Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding programs, and transit projects funded through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), including projects funded through the Special Needs, New Freedom, and Job Access and Reverse Commute programs. The TIP is updated annually.
- The **Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)** outlines work elements for the transportation planning program that MPO staff will be responsible for in the coming year. Within each of the work elements specific tasks are identified by the objective, previous work performed, a description of the task, the desired outcome, and measurement tools.
- The **Public Participation Plan (PPP)** is a guide outlining public involvement in the transportation planning process. The PPP is designed to inform the public of the roles and responsibilities of the MPO and outline the ways public involvement is sought in the creation and updates of transportation planning documents.
- The **Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)** is aimed at bringing passenger transportation providers and human service agencies in the region together to better understand available transportation services and result in more effectiveness and coordination among providers. The PTP provides a basis for efficient and effective passenger transportation resource allocation for operations, maintenance, and service development. This document also serves as a guidance mechanism for future transit project and programming decisions.

These documents all have established public involvement procedures, as detailed in this plan. In cases of unanticipated federal funding or programs, such as the economic stimulus funding provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the MPO will utilize established public involvement procedures in the most applicable way to ensure public awareness of and involvement in the decision-making process.

## **Importance of Public Participation**

Past experience has shown that substantial benefits accrue from the participation of the public in issues ranging from the LRTP and TIP to specific considerations on street, highway, bicycle/pedestrian, and transit projects. During discussion regarding the development of the initial public involvement plan in 1993, and subsequent updates in 2001 and 2007, the Transportation Policy Board directed that the process be built upon past practices and refined to carry out not only the requirements, but the spirit and intent of the beneficial involvement of the public as reflected in the original federal legislation mandating public participation in the transportation planning process. This plan has been developed to inform the public of key transportation issues and decisions, and to provide an open process for effective public participation in making prudent planning and programming decisions.

This Public Participation Plan will allow for a comprehensive and accountable process for providing public access to the transportation planning process. All interested persons and organizations are urged to give input on the public participation process and individual documents, and all views will be considered. Public participation is a crucial element of transportation planning, and increasing public input is an important goal of the MPO.



*Focus Group session for the MPO*



*Public Open House for the MPO*

## **Section 3**

### **Regulations and Requirements**

Federal transportation legislation of recent years included the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). Both placed a significant emphasis on public participation in the transportation planning and programming process. The current federal legislation, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) expands this emphasis. SAFETEA-LU was signed into law in 2005 and governs federal surface transportation spending through 2009. SAFETEA-LU includes guidelines for the major documents required by the MPO, including the Public Participation Plan. The MPO is required to create and periodically review and update the PPP and other documents to ensure early and continued public awareness of and access to the transportation decision-making process.

#### **SAFETEA-LU**

The MPO adheres to SAFETEA-LU guidelines (23 CFR, Part 450.316(a)) for public participation. These include that the public involvement process is to be proactive and provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement. The process must meet the following requirements:

- Develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties.
- Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including opportunities to comment on the LRTP and TIP.
- Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.
- Employ visualization techniques in the LRTP and TIP.
- Make public information such as technical information and meeting notices available through electronically accessible means and formats, such as the World Wide Web.
- Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.
- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the LRTP and TIP.
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households.
- Provide an additional opportunity for public comment if the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was originally made available for public comment.
- Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes.

- Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.
- Include a summary of significant comments received on the draft LRTP and TIP as part of the final LRTP and TIP.
- Have a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO.

Specific ways the MPO meets these requirements are outlined in Section 5.

### **Title VI, ADA, and Environmental Justice**

MPO plans are required to be consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which ensures that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or religion. MPO plans also comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This is a civil rights law that protects individuals from discrimination based on disabilities.

MPO plans must also observe Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. This requires that programs, policies, and activities that affect human health or the environment should identify and avoid disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. Environmental Justice aims to ensure that no racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group bears a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from governmental programs and policies.

### **Open Meeting Law**

The Iowa Open Meeting Law (Iowa Code, Ch. 21) is designed to facilitate public access to government decisions. It applies to government bodies, including boards, councils, commissions, and task forces created by the state or its political subdivisions. The law defines what constitutes a meeting and lists requirements for public notices, agendas, meeting procedures, and minutes, as well as regulations concerning closed meetings.

The MPO operates in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend MPO meetings. Regular meetings of the MPO Technical Committee and Policy Board occur on the second Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at the INRCOG Center in Waterloo. (Meeting times and locations are subject to change.) MPO meeting notices and agendas are mailed to all media serving the metropolitan area which request notification. Information about MPO meetings, including minutes and agendas, is also available at the INRCOG Center and online on the INRCOG website ([www.inrcog.org](http://www.inrcog.org)).

### **Public Records Law**

The Iowa Public Records Law (Iowa Code, Ch. 22) provides for openness from government agencies with regard to public records. With the exception of certain confidential records, every person has the right to examine and copy public records. The MPO complies with the Public Records Law, and public documents are available for review at the INRCOG Center. Documents may be viewed during normal office hours, with a nominal fee for copies.

## Section 4

### Public Participation during MPO Document Development

This section details the way public involvement is sought in the creation and updates of each of the five major documents the MPO is responsible for.

#### Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The LRTP guides transportation decisions for the next 20-30 years. The LRTP is updated every five years and serves as a conduit for public input on a broad range of transportation issues. The LRTP considers all modes of transportation, as well as freight issues, safety issues, environmental issues, financial feasibility, and system operations and maintenance. The LRTP also contains a chapter that discusses public involvement efforts and public comments on the document. The following actions will be undertaken to ensure that all sectors of the public are involved in LRTP development.



#### 1. Draft LRTP

- Input will be sought from citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties.
- Focus groups will be utilized to represent all pertinent modes of transportation and issues. Focus groups used have included transit, highway, land use, intermodal, bike/pedestrian, safety/security, and environmental resources. Focus groups will be charged with identifying issues and potential solutions and reviewing draft LRTP chapters.
- The draft LRTP will be developed by MPO staff, with further input from jurisdiction representatives and the Iowa DOT and oversight by the MPO Policy Board and Technical Committee.

## 2. Notices and Public Meetings

- A minimum of three public input sessions will be held regarding the draft LRTP.
- At least one public input session will be held in an area identified as being a low-income or minority neighborhood. All meetings will be held in accessible facilities.
- Notices for public input sessions will be advertised through local media sources. Notices may be posted at governmental offices, public libraries, post offices, on transit buses, at the INRCOG Center, and online on the INRCOG website. Notices may also be sent to organizations serving traditionally underserved populations, such as minority, low-income, and elderly populations. LRTP draft copies will be available at the INRCOG Center, on the INRCOG website, and upon request.
- Any person with sight, reading, or language barriers should contact the MPO at least 48 hours prior to a session and arrangements will be made for accommodation.

## 3. Public Comment Period

- Written and oral comments will be solicited during the public input sessions. The public will also have at least a 15 day comment period following the final public input session to submit comments via fax, letter, or email.
- A public hearing will be held at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting following the public input sessions to summarize public comments and responses. A notice of the public hearing will be published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the date of the hearing.

## 4. Final LRTP

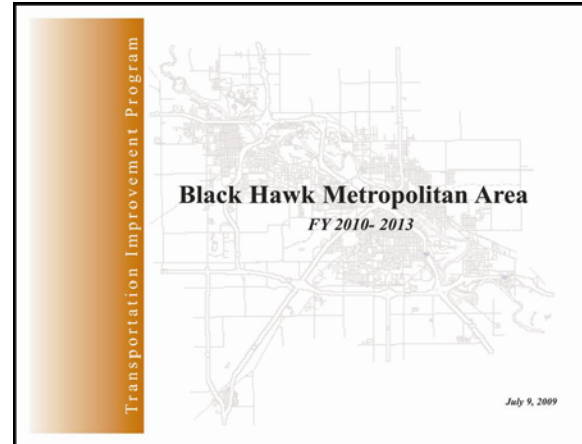
- Following the public hearing, the MPO will adopt a final version of the LRTP, including a summary of comments and responses.
- A final version of the LRTP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT and the FHWA.
- The final LRTP will be available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.
- The public participation process associated with the LRTP will be evaluated and updated as needed.

## 5. Revisions

- The LRTP is a long range planning document, and all projects in the TIP must first be included in the LRTP. The TIP is updated annually, and projects in it may be moved forward or backward in time or change in cost or scope. Therefore, the LRTP may be revised between full document updates to reflect current project information.
- Other amendments to the LRTP will be made as needed.
- Amendments will require a public hearing to be held at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting. A notice of the public hearing will be published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the date of the hearing.

## **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

The TIP includes a four year street and highway improvement program, the urban transit capital and operating programs, the transportation enhancement program, and information on other Federal funding programs. It provides details on all significant transportation projects in the metropolitan area that are receiving federal aid, including their costs, aid received, and stage of completion. The following actions will be undertaken annually to ensure full public participation.



### **1. Draft TIP**

- The draft TIP will be developed by the Technical Committee with input from the Enhancement Committee and its advisory committees. MPO meetings are open to the public.

### **2. Notices and Public Meetings**

- Following development of the draft TIP, at least two open houses will be held, with at least one located in an area identified as being a low-income or minority neighborhood. Information may be presented by INRCOG, the Iowa DOT, member cities, Black Hawk County, and MET Transit.
- The TIP content and public open houses will be advertised through local media sources. Notices may be posted at governmental offices, public libraries, post offices, on transit buses, at the INRCOG Center, and online on the INRCOG website. Notices may also be sent to organizations serving traditionally underserved populations, such as minority, low-income, and elderly populations. TIP draft copies will be available at the INRCOG Center, on the INRCOG website, and upon request.
- Any person with sight, reading, or language barriers should contact the MPO at least 48 hours prior to an open house and arrangements will be made for accommodation.

### **3. Public Comment Period**

- Written and oral comments will be solicited during open houses. At least a 15 day comment period will follow the last open house, during which comments will be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- A public hearing will be held at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting following the open houses to summarize public comments and responses. A notice of the public hearing will be published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the date of the hearing.

#### 4. Final TIP

- Following the public hearing, the MPO will adopt a final version of the TIP, including a summary of comments and responses.
- The final TIP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, the FHWA, and the FTA.
- The final TIP will be available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.
- The public participation process associated with the TIP will be evaluated and updated as needed.

#### 5. Revisions

The TIP is a dynamic document, and may need to be revised in between annual updates. There are two types of revisions – administrative modifications and amendments.

- Minor revisions may be made to the TIP as necessary throughout the year. These are considered administrative modifications, and may be made by MPO staff without public review and comment or re-demonstration of fiscal constraint. MPO staff will discuss administrative modifications with the Policy Board and Technical Committee, but formal action will not be required.
- Major revisions may also be made to the TIP as necessary throughout the year. These are considered amendments, and require public review and comment and Policy Board approval. A public hearing will be held at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting to consider and approve TIP amendments. A notice of the public hearing will be published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the date of the hearing.

The following table provides guidelines for determining whether a revision is an administrative modification or an amendment.

	Administrative Modification	Amendment
<b>Project Cost</b>	Federal aid changed by less than 30% and total federal aid increases less than \$2,000,000.	Federal aid changed by more than 30% or total federal aid increases by more than \$2,000,000.
<b>Schedule Changes</b>	Changes in schedule for projects in the first four years of the TIP.	Adding or deleting a project from the first four years of the TIP.
<b>Funding Sources</b>	Changing amounts of existing funding sources.	Adding other federal funding sources to a project.
<b>Scope Changes</b>	Moving funding between existing stages of project scope, such as from design to construction.	Changing project termini, number of lanes, or significant changes in project type, such as changing an overlay to reconstruction.

## Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

The TPWP outlines work elements for the transportation planning program for the coming year. Within each of the work elements specific tasks are identified by the objective, previous work performed, a description of the task, the desired outcome, and measurement tools. Examples of items included in the TPWP include MPO administration and coordination, TIP and LRTP development and updates, and involvement in evaluation, planning, and research aspects of various transportation initiatives.



### 1. Draft TPWP

- The draft document will be prepared by MPO staff with input from jurisdiction representatives and the Iowa DOT and oversight by the MPO Policy Board and Technical Committee.
- The draft will be available for public review on the INRCOG website and at the INRCOG Center.

### 2. Public Comment Period

- The public may comment on the draft TPWP during at least a 15 day comment period following completion of the TPWP draft and at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting where adoption of the TPWP will be considered. Comments will be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- Notices and agendas of MPO meetings will be available through local media, at the INRCOG Center, and on the INRCOG website.

### 3. Final TPWP

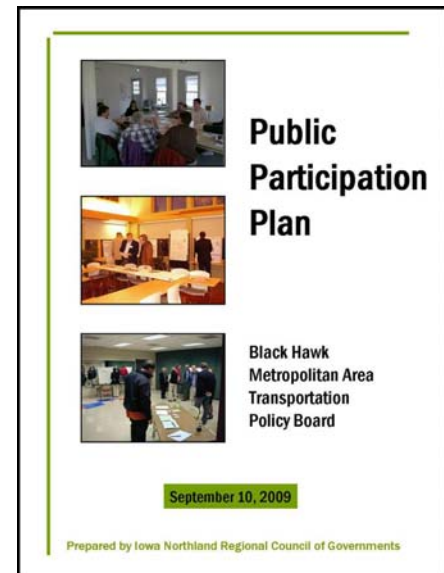
- The MPO Policy Board will consider a summary of comments and appropriate responses and adopt a final version of the TPWP.
- The TPWP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, the FHWA, and the FTA and made available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.

### 4. Revisions

- Revisions to the TPWP will be made as needed.
- Amendments will require a public hearing to be held at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting. A notice of the public hearing will be published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the date of the hearing.

## Public Participation Plan (PPP)

The PPP (this document) outlines processes for involving the public in MPO document development and decision-making. It covers regulations concerning public involvement, the five major documents produced by the MPO (LRTP, TIP, TPWP, PPP, PTP), and ways the MPO will attempt to solicit public participation in transportation planning.



### 1. Draft PPP

- Input for the draft document will be sought from all interested parties. Input may be sought through regular MPO meetings, public meetings, surveys, focus groups, and any other effective means of communicating with the public. The draft document will then be prepared by MPO staff with further input from jurisdiction representatives and the Iowa DOT and oversight by the MPO Policy Board and Technical Committee.
- Notice of draft availability will be distributed to local media. Draft copies and comment forms may be sent to local public libraries and governmental offices. The draft will also be available for public review on the INRCOG website and at the INRCOG Center.

### 2. Public Comment Period

- The public may comment on the draft PPP during at least a 45 day comment period following completion of the PPP draft and at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting where adoption of the PPP will be considered. Comments will also be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- Notices and agendas of MPO meetings will be available through local media, at the INRCOG Center, and on the INRCOG website.

### 3. Final PPP

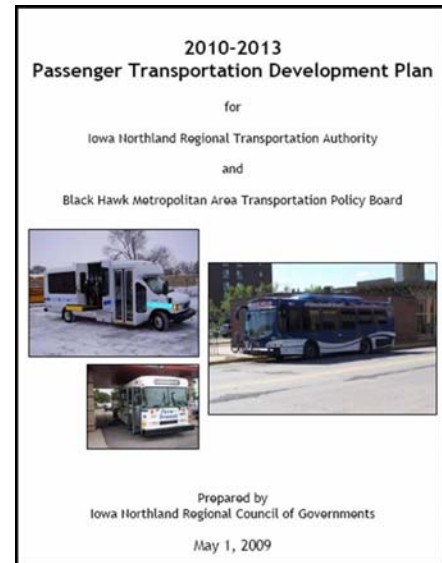
- The MPO Policy Board will consider a summary of comments and appropriate responses and adopt a final version of the PPP.
- The PPP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, the FHWA, and the FTA and made available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.

### 4. Revisions

- The PPP will be updated as needed. Minor revisions will be made in consultation with the Policy Board. Major revisions will be considered an update and follow the process outlined above.

## Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)

The PTP is the outcome of an effort to bring passenger transportation providers and human service agencies in the region together to better understand available transportation services and result in more effectiveness and coordination among providers. The PTP includes a description of past and current passenger transportation services, strategies for enhancing service and coordination, and a five year sketch plan of projects. Public transit system projects are included in both the TIP and PTP. Transit projects submitted for funding through the Special Needs, New Freedom, or Job Access and Reverse Commute programs are derived from the PTP.



### 1. Draft PTP

- The draft document will be prepared by MPO staff with input from the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), which consists of human service agencies, passenger transportation providers, and users and advocates of transportation services.
- The draft will be available for public review on the INRCOG website and at the INRCOG office.

### 2. Public Comment Period

- The TAC and public may comment on the draft PTP during at least a 15 day comment period following completion of the PTP draft and at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting where adoption of the PTP will be considered. Comments will be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- Notices and agendas of MPO meetings will be available through local media, at the INRCOG Center, and on the INRCOG website.

### 3. Final PTP

- The MPO Policy Board will consider a summary of comments and appropriate responses and adopt a final version of the PTP.
- The PTP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT and the FTA and made available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.

### 4. Revisions

- The PTP will be revised as necessary. A full document will be prepared every five years, with annual updates of progress and projects provided in between full updates, as specified by the Iowa DOT. Revisions to specific projects will follow the same process and guidelines as administrative modifications and amendments for the TIP.

## Summary of MPO Document Development

Plan	Updated	Draft Development*	Public Meetings/Draft Availability*	Public Comment Period*	Adoption*	Availability
<b>Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)</b>	Every five years	Draft developed by MPO staff with input from interested parties and focus groups.	Minimum of three public input sessions; draft available on INRCOG website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request.	At least 15 days following final public input session.	Public hearing during regularly scheduled MPO meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
<b>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</b>	Annually	Draft developed by Technical Committee and Enhancement Committee with input from interested parties.	Minimum of two public open houses; draft available on INRCOG website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request.	At least 15 days following final public open house.	Public hearing during regularly scheduled MPO meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
<b>Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)</b>	Annually	Draft developed by MPO staff with input from interested parties.	Draft available on INRCOG website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request.	At least 15 days following draft completion.	Adopted at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
<b>Public Participation Plan (PPP)</b>	As needed	Draft developed by MPO staff with input from interested parties.	Draft available on INRCOG website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request.	At least 45 days following draft completion.	Adopted at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
<b>Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)</b>	Full document every five years, with annual updates	Draft developed by MPO staff with input from Transit Advisory Committee and interested parties.	Draft available on INRCOG website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request.	At least 15 days following draft completion.	Adopted at a regularly scheduled MPO meeting.	INRCOG Center, website.

\*Input from the public is always welcome during draft development, at public meetings and open houses, during public comment periods, and at MPO meetings prior to document adoption. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend MPO meetings, held at 10 a.m. on the second Thursday of the month at the INRCOG Center, 229 E. Park Ave., in Waterloo, Iowa. Meeting agendas and minutes, as well as draft and final MPO documents, can be found on the INRCOG website: [www.inrcog.org](http://www.inrcog.org).

## **Section 5**

### **Regular MPO Activities**

#### **Routine/Ongoing Activities**

In addition to public participation efforts related to specific documents, there are several ongoing initiatives that form the basis for MPO activities and interaction with the public. These include:

- Monthly meetings, open to the public.
- Work sessions, focus groups, open houses, public input sessions, and public hearings (as applicable) during the development of major documents.
- Publication of transportation articles in the bi-monthly INRCOG newsletter (distributed to 400+ local officials and citizens in the six county area).
- Provision of information and interviews with area media as requested.
- Presentations to city councils, planning commissions and county supervisors as needed (either through MPO staff and/or that jurisdiction's Technical Committee representative).
- Presentations to local service clubs and other groups and organizations.
- Information and transportation plans available on INRCOG's website.

#### **Major Actions**

Documentation and provision of information for the development and revisions of the LRTP and TIP will be accomplished through distribution of major action documents and public presentations, including the following:

- Report distribution and public access availability may occur through: media distribution; governmental office access at INRCOG, city halls, and the Black Hawk County Courthouse; and access at public library and post office locations in the metropolitan area. Major reports will be available on the INRCOG website.
- Public presentations on major actions and projects will be made annually, or as required, to the city councils and planning and zoning commissions of metropolitan cities, the County Board of Supervisors, and the Metropolitan Transit Authority.
- Additionally, every reasonable effort will be made to provide presentations to groups or organizations with a civic, modal, or geographical interest in the transportation plan, program, or major resultant projects.

#### **Addressing SAFETEA-LU**

As discussed in Section 3, the MPO adheres to federal planning guidelines outlined in SAFETEA-LU. The table on the next page outlines ways the MPO addresses SAFETEA-LU regulations during daily activities, meetings, and document development.

SAFETEA-LU requirement	Ways the MPO addresses the requirement
Develop the participation plan in consultation with all interested parties.	Input for the draft document is sought from all interested parties. Input may be sought through regular MPO meetings, public meetings, surveys, focus groups, and any other effective means of communicating with the public.
Provide adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including opportunities to comment on the LRTP and TIP.	Public hearings are held for the LRTP and TIP, and, at a minimum, a notice of the public hearing is published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the hearing. The LRTP and TIP also utilize public open houses/input sessions, with notices of times and locations published and posted. LRTP development also utilizes several focus groups which include interested members of the public.
Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes.	As mentioned above, notices for public hearings are published no more than twenty days and no less than four days before the hearing. Major transportation documents, as well as information on current events and studies, are available on the INRCOG website: <a href="http://www.inrcog.org">www.inrcog.org</a> . Information is also available for review and copying at the INRCOG Center.
Employ visualization techniques in the LRTP and TIP.	A large amount of graphs, charts, maps, and photographs are used in the LRTP and TIP to enhance understanding of the information being presented. INRCOG utilizes a Geographic Information System (GIS) for analysis and presentation of data.
Make public information such as technical information and meeting notices available through electronically accessible means and formats, such as the World Wide Web.	Meeting notices, agendas, and minutes, as well as major documents and information on current projects and studies are available on INRCOG's website, <a href="http://www.inrcog.org">www.inrcog.org</a> .
Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.	Regular MPO meetings are held at the INRCOG Center, 229 E. Park Ave. in Waterloo, which is accessible and located one block from MET Transit's Central Transfer Station. Public open houses and input sessions are held at accessible locations and at different times of day to attract a wider audience.
Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the LRTP and TIP.	Comments received for either document are distributed to and discussed by the Policy Board prior to document adoption.
Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households.	Notices of meetings and input sessions are sent to organizations serving these populations. MET Transit posts notices of public input sessions on its buses. Sight, reading, and language assistance will be provided at public input sessions, open houses, and public hearings for individuals who request it at least 48 hours in advance.
Provide an additional opportunity for public comment if the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was originally made available for public comment.	If the final LRTP or TIP differs significantly from the version that was originally made available for public comment, an additional public comment period will be held.
Coordinate with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes.	The Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA receive draft documents and are invited to comment on them. MPO procedures follow guidelines set forth by these agencies.
Periodically review the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.	The PPP is reviewed regularly and updated as needed.
Include a summary of significant comments received on the draft LRTP and TIP as part of the final LRTP and TIP.	The documents include a listing of relevant comments and responses. The LRTP includes a chapter on public involvement efforts and comments.
Have a minimum public comment period of 45 days before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO.	There is a 45 day public comment period for the PPP following completion of the draft PPP.

## Section 6

### How to Get Involved

The public is encouraged to discuss transportation concerns at any time with local officials and planners. Specific contact with the MPO can be made through INRCOG staff.

#### INRCOG Transportation Department

- Kevin Blanshan, Director of Transportation and Data Services: [kblanshan@inrcog.org](mailto:kblanshan@inrcog.org)
- Andrea White, Transportation Planner: [awhite@inrcog.org](mailto:awhite@inrcog.org)
- Laura Hutzell, Transportation Planner: [lhutzell@inrcog.org](mailto:lhutzell@inrcog.org)
- Dan Schlichtmann, Data Services Coordinator: [dschlichtmann@inrcog.org](mailto:dschlichtmann@inrcog.org)

Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG)

229 E. Park Ave.

Waterloo, Iowa 50703

Phone (319) 235-0311

Fax (319) 235-2891

[www.inrcog.org](http://www.inrcog.org)

-For meeting schedules, use Calendar link

-For transportation documents, use Publications link

Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday



*INRCOG Center, 229 E. Park Ave. in Waterloo*

## **Section 7**

### **Participants in the Transportation Planning Process**

The attached lists represent, at a minimum, those committees and/or organizations involved in the transportation planning process. Others interested in participating in the transportation decision-making process shall be added as requested, under the direction of the Policy Board.

- Transportation Committees
  - MPO Policy Board
  - MPO Technical Committee
  - Metropolitan Enhancement Subcommittee
- Enhancement Standing Subcommittees
  - Cultural Resources (Historic)
  - Bike/Pedestrian (Trails)
  - Natural Resources (Environmental)
- Multi-Disciplinary Safety Team
- Transit Advisory Committee
- Media Contacts

## Transportation Committees

### **MPO Policy Board**

- Mayor, City of Cedar Falls
- Mayor, City of Elk Run Heights
- Mayor, City of Evansdale
- Mayor, City of Gilbertville
- Mayor, City of Hudson
- Mayor, City of Raymond
- Mayor, City of Waterloo
- Representative, Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors
- Chair, MET Transit Board
- Director, Waterloo Airport Commission
- Executive Director, INRCOG (non-voting)
- FHWA, Iowa Division (non-voting)
- Iowa DOT (non-voting)

### **MPO Technical Committee**

- Engineer's Office, Black Hawk County
- Community Planning and Development, City of Waterloo
- Engineering Department, City of Waterloo
- Developmental Services, City of Cedar Falls
- Engineering Department, City of Cedar Falls
- City of Elk Run Heights
- City of Evansdale
- City of Hudson
- City of Raymond
- City of Gilbertville
- MET Transit
- Cedar Trails Partnership
- University of Northern Iowa
- Iowa DOT
- INRCOG
- Consulting Engineers

### **Metropolitan Enhancement Subcommittee**

- Parks Division, City of Cedar Falls
- Cedar Falls Historical Society
- University of Northern Iowa
- City of Evansdale
- City of Hudson
- Waterloo Leisure Services
- Developmental Services, City of Cedar Falls
- Black Hawk County Conservation Board
- Grout Museum of Science and Technology
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Community Planning and Development, City of Waterloo
- Engineer's Office, Black Hawk County
- Hawkeye Community College
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Cedar Trails Partnership
- Silos & Smokestacks
- Iowa DOT

## Enhancement Standing Subcommittees

### **Cultural Resources (Historic)**

- Community Planning and Development, City of Waterloo
- Cedar Falls Historical Society
- Hearst Center for the Arts
- Waterloo Center for the Arts
- Waterloo Historical Society
- Waterloo Historical Commission
- Grout Museum of Science and Technology
- African American Museum
- Silos and Smokestacks
- Cedar Falls Community Main Street
- Waterloo Community Main Street
- UNI Museum
- City of Raymond

### **Natural Resources (Environmental)**

- Hawkeye Community College
- University of Northern Iowa
- Engineer's Office, Black Hawk County
- Leisure Services, City of Waterloo
- Parks Division, City of Cedar Falls
- Developmental Services, City of Cedar Falls
- City of Hudson
- City of Elk Run Heights
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Sierra Club
- Cedar Valley Wetlands Association
- Green Scene
- Nature Conservancy
- Iowa Association of Naturalists

### **Bike/Pedestrian (Trails)**

- Community Planning and Development, City of Waterloo
- City of Waterloo Leisure Services
- City of Cedar Falls Parks Division
- Developmental Services, City of Cedar Falls
- Cedar Trails Partnership
- Black Hawk County Conservation Board
- Iowa DOT
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- City of Evansdale
- University of Northern Iowa
- Cedar Falls Community Schools
- Waterloo Community Schools
- Cedar Valley Nordic Ski Club
- BMX Club
- Iowa Snowmobile Association
- Rainbow Cyclists

**Multi-Disciplinary Safety Team**

- Iowa State Patrol
- City of Waterloo- Planning
- City of Waterloo- Engineering
- City of Waterloo- Sign and Traffic
- City of Waterloo Police and Fire
- Waterloo Community Schools
- Black Hawk County Arrive Alive
- Black Hawk County Emergency Management
- Black Hawk County Engineering
- Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office
- Black Hawk County Health Department
- Ament Engineering (Representing Raymond and Elk Run Heights)
- AECOM (University Avenue and SRTS)
- Hellman (Drive Safe Cedar Valley Campaign)
- City of Gilbertville-Engineer
- City of Evansdale-Engineer
- City of Evansdale- Police
- City of Hudson-Police
- Hudson Community Schools
- City of Cedar Falls- Planning
- City of Cedar Falls- Engineering
- City of Cedar Falls- Traffic
- City of Cedar Falls Police and Fire
- Cedar Falls Community Schools
- Iowa DOT-District 2
- Iowa DOT-Traffic and Safety
- Iowa DOT-Systems Planning
- FHWA-Planning
- FHWA-Safety
- Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau
- University of Northern Iowa-Transportation Scholars Program
- University of Northern Iowa Public Safety
- CRTE
- University of Iowa
- Representative-Insurance Business
- Covenant Hospital
- Allen Hospital
- Representative-Older Drivers
- Representative-Younger Drivers

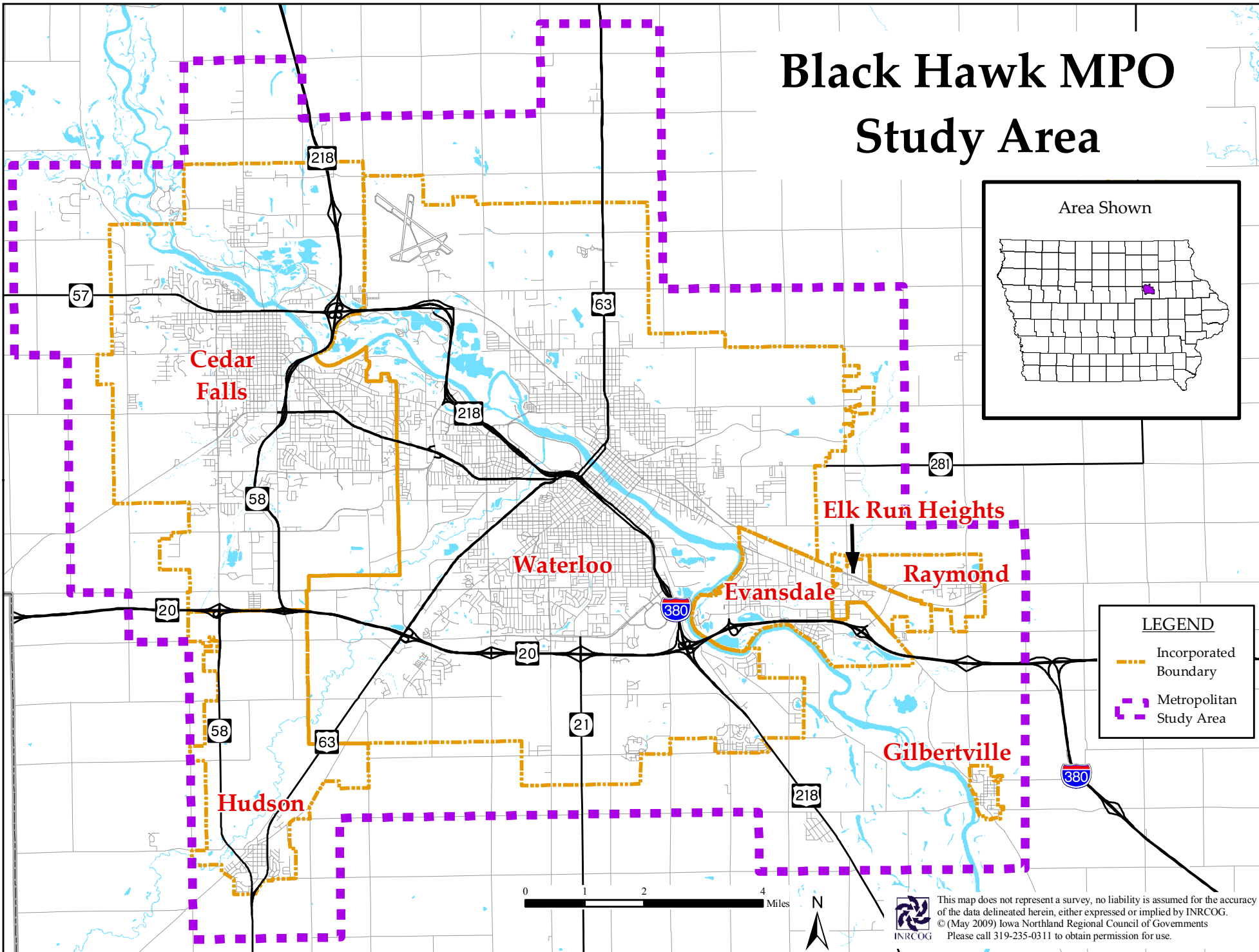
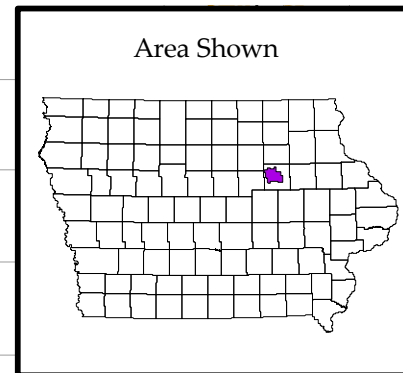
**Transit Advisory Committee**

- MET Transit
- Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission (RTC)
- University of Northern Iowa
- Cedar Valley United Way
- Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging
- Iowa DOT
- Iowa Workforce Development
- The Arc of Cedar Valley
- Black Hawk County Health Department
- Butler County Auditor
- Butler County Public Health
- City of Reinbeck
- Black Hawk County EMA Coordinator
- Friendship Village Retirement Community
- Exceptional Persons, Inc.
- Black Hawk Center for Independent Living
- RTC Advisory Committee Chair
- Goodwill Industries of NE Iowa
- North Star Community Services
- Comprehensive Systems, Inc.
- Greater Cedar Valley Alliance
- The Larrabee Center
- West Village Care Center

**Media Contacts**

- Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier
- Des Moines Register
- Hudson Herald
- KHKE-KUNI
- KCRS
- KOEL
- KCVM
- KXEL
- KOKZ
- KNWS
- KWLO-KFMW
- KBBG
- KWAY
- KCNZ
- KCRR
- KGAN
- KCRG
- KWWL

# Black Hawk MPO Study Area



**LEGEND**

- Incorporated Boundary
- Metropolitan Study Area



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