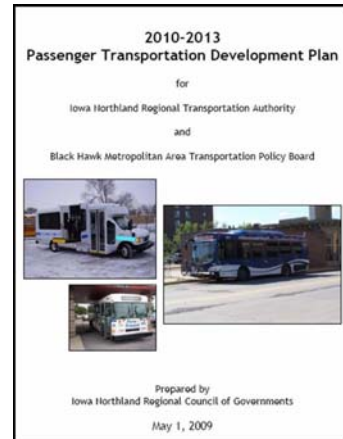


Passenger Transportation Plan

FY 2011 Annual Update



Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority

Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area
Transportation Policy Board

Prepared by the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

~~May 1, 2010~~

AMENDED

May 13, 2010

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

WHEREAS, the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board has been designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Black Hawk County urbanized area, and

WHEREAS, the Policy Board in cooperation with the state is conducting a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process pursuant to 23 CFR 450.114 (c), and

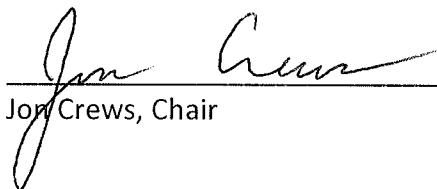
WHEREAS, the FY 2011 Annual Update of the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) is a product of this on-going planning process, and

WHEREAS, the Policy Board has included the open participation of the general public in the development of the PTP in conformance with the Board's approved Public Participation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the PTP was developed as a result of, and in accordance with, the passenger transportation planning process set forth by the Iowa Department of Transportation,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board hereby approves the final FY 2011 Annual Update to the Passenger Transportation Plan.

Passed and adopted this 11th day of March, 2010.



Jon Crews, Chair

ATTEST:



Kevin Blanshan, INRCOG Director of Transportation & Data Services

**RESOLUTION OF THE
IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

WHEREAS, the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) has been designated as the Regional Planning Affiliation for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties, and

WHEREAS, the RTA in cooperation with the state is conducting a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process pursuant to 23 CFR 450.114 (c), and

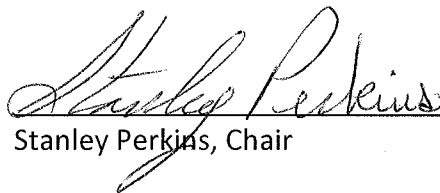
WHEREAS, the FY 2011 Annual Update of the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) is a product of this on-going planning process, and

WHEREAS, the RTA has included the open participation of the general public in the development of the PTP in conformance with the RTA's approved Public Participation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the PTP was developed as a result of, and in accordance with, the passenger transportation planning process set forth by the Iowa Department of Transportation,


NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority hereby approves the final FY 2011 Annual Update to the Passenger Transportation Plan.

Passed and adopted this 21st day of April, 2010.



Stanley Perkins, Chair

ATTEST:



Kevin Blanshan, INRCOG Director of Transportation & Data Services

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The preparation of this document 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.

Background

This document is the Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 update to the *2010-2013 Passenger Transportation Development Plan* (PTP), which was finalized on May 1, 2009. The PTP will be referenced throughout the document. It can be viewed online at http://www.inrcog.org/pdf/Final_10-13_PTDP.pdf.

As discussed on page 2 of the PTP, this planning process has been required by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) as a method to incorporate federal regulations for coordinated planning with local decisions regarding passenger transportation. As such, it has been a work in progress, as guidelines have evolved over the past few years. Presently, the word 'development' has been dropped from the document title, changing the name of the plan to the *Passenger Transportation Plan*. Also, the structure of the document has been changed. Providing that a planning agency's PTP meets the criteria outlined in the Iowa DOT's guidance, a full update of the document is only required every five years. In between full updates, an annual update of coordination efforts and the status of projects is required. The PTP for the Iowa Northland Region met the Iowa DOT's criteria, thus an annual update for FY 2011 has been prepared. This annual update will outline coordination and public input from the past year, the status of projects recommended in the PTP, and an update of projects recommended in the next four fiscal years.

Process

This section briefly reviews prior public input and results of that input. These topics are outlined fully in the PTP. This section also discusses public input from the past year, specific meetings that involved discussions of the PTP and coordination, and recent developments related to coordination.

Review of Prior Public Input

Public input regarding passenger transportation has been gathered in a variety of ways in the past few years. Since 2006, a Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) has met to discuss projects and issues. As discussed on page 5 of the PTP, the TAC consists of transit users, human service organizations, representatives of local governments, and transportation providers. The TAC is the main sounding board for passenger transportation planning issues, and has played an integral role in the development of the PTP. In addition to the TAC, a Transit Providers group, which includes the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of Black Hawk County (MET), the Regional Transit Commission (RTC), and Exceptional Persons, Inc. (EPI) meets monthly to discuss coordination issues. Also, MET and RTC each have Advisory Committees that meet regularly.

Input from throughout the region has been received through provider fact sheets, which have been sent out each year from 2007-2009 in an attempt to gather information from potential service providers such as hours of operation and types of vehicles used. Pages 8-21 of the PTP

discuss these efforts. The data gathered through the fact sheets showed that there are many agencies in the region that are involved with passenger transportation in some manner, from providing service to helping fund it to advocating for it. Service needs that were emphasized in survey results include a lack of service on weekends and the difficulty of many agencies in providing affordable transportation services.

Surveys and public meetings have also been utilized to obtain public input on transit services, as discussed on pages 29-30 of the PTP. In 2006, students from Wartburg College in Waverly conducted a survey of residents and businesses, which resulted in recommendations to fund new transit service in Waverly. In 2008, three public meetings were held in conjunction with the update of the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area's *Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP). While these meetings dealt with all modes of transportation, the most comments were received regarding MET's service. Comments focused on the need for increased evening and weekend service, bike racks on buses, and more bus shelters. An online survey conducted for the LRTP also resulted in many comments related to public transit.

Results of Prior Public Input

In response to public input and identified needs, several initiatives have occurred in the past couple years. With the high demand for weekend service, MET extended its Saturday service to start two hours earlier. MET also installed bike racks on all of its buses to help meet rider demand. In response to the Waverly study, RTC has attempted to utilize New Freedom funding to expand the service available in Waverly. Unfortunately, this service has not been successful to-date, but it remains a recognized need. Another service that was identified as a need but was not successful was an RTC route from Hudson into the metropolitan area. This route was attempted in early 2009, but had few riders. RTC would still try to offer the service if requested.

Public Input and Coordination Efforts in FY 2010

The majority of public input in the past year has come through meetings of the groups discussed above, as well as instances where MET or RTC met with local governments or human service agencies. Provider fact sheets were not sent out again as they have been distributed three years in a row with mostly the same organizations responding each year.

A unique form of public input in FY 2010 came through the *Iowa Passenger Transportation Funding Study* that was completed in 2009. This study gathered input through public meetings around the state, including one in Waterloo. There were a variety of needs identified through these meetings, including inadequate funding, the need for more service in terms of hours, frequency, and routes, the need for more intercity service, and the need for more education and marketing of passenger transportation services. These are all needs that have been echoed through local public input.

Most recently, several key meetings have been utilized to discuss the PTP process and coordination efforts. On December 17, 2009, members of the TAC met with the RTC Advisory Committee and spent a portion of the meeting discussing coordination efforts. A

recommendation by the Advisory Committee was to try to hold a meeting specifically with the administrators of each County's Central Point of Coordination (CPC). While the CPCs have been included on mailings and surveys in the past, response has varied. A meeting of the CPCs will be attempted in the future.

The TAC met on January 20, 2010 to discuss coordination efforts and projects (meeting minutes are attached at the end of this document). Representatives from the following organizations were present: MET, RTC, INRCOG, Northeast Iowa Center for Independent Living, and the Cedar Valley United Way. While icy weather resulted in a low turnout for the meeting, there was good discussion of the projects from the PTP and what resulted in them being successful or unsuccessful. TAC members that were unable to attend were invited to submit input via email. The TAC ultimately affirmed the projects to be included in this annual update. Most projects from the PTP were recommended to continue, one project was removed, and one new project was added.

The Transit Providers group has had a series of meetings where the PTP and coordination issues have been discussed, including meetings on December 22, 2009; January 29, 2010; February 18, 2010; and March 26, 2010. These meetings have primarily focused on a major coordination issue. RTC and EPI have long coordinated service, with EPI contracting through RTC and RTC handling the waivers and billing for EPI. The issue is that some of EPI's buses are yellow school buses. The Iowa DOT requires that RTC signage be on all contracted buses. The Iowa Department of Education (DOE) does not allow such signage on yellow school buses. To resolve this issue, RTC has asked for, and received, a Special Projects grant for the painting of EPI's buses to match RTC's color scheme. The contract for the bus painting was signed on April 26, 2010. This should ensure that RTC and EPI are able to continue their coordination.

Other Recent Developments

The needs identified in the PTP have largely remained the same over the past year. There have not been significant demographic shifts or changes in the locations and user groups most in need of transportation services. There have, however, been two large coordination challenges that have emerged, as well as one potential future opportunity for expanded coordination. Also, new buses funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 proved to be of great benefit to MET and RTC.

In April, 2009, a Special Projects grant request was made to the Iowa DOT's Office of Public Transit (OPT) to help fund a mobility manager/marketing position, which was a top priority for the TAC, as outlined in the PTP (pages 41-42, 68). The grant was anticipated to pay 80 percent of the cost of the position for the first year, with a 20 percent local match. The application was approved, however, the OPT would not allow grant funds to be used for administrative costs, making the local match of the grant approximately 50 percent of the cost. This amount of funding was not available in MET and RTC's budgets. As a result, this position has not been created. It remains a critical need for the region. The second major coordination issue of the past year has been the school bus issue with EPI, which was discussed previously. The Transit

Providers group has been able to resolve this issue, which ensures continued coordination between RTC and EPI.

A potential opportunity for expanded coordination has come to light in the past two months. The Chickasaw County Council on Aging (CCCA) owns the Chickasaw Centre, which houses the majority of the county's services for seniors. The CCCA is discussing deeding the building to the County, which could potentially turn it into a human service campus. A decision is expected sometime in 2010. If the Chickasaw Centre does become a central point for human services, there will certainly be great potential for coordination with RTC to ensure adequate transportation. RTC has met with Chickasaw County and will continue to work with them regarding this issue.

An additional development this past year was the 'stimulus' bill – the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This bill was signed in February, 2009, and included funding for transit. Both MET and RTC benefited greatly from this bill, as MET received five new buses and RTC received nine. This was very helpful in improving the average age and condition of both MET and RTC's fleets.

Current Projects

Projects that were recommended by the PTP (pages 66-74) are discussed below. Please refer to the PTP for original project descriptions. This section will detail what has happened with each project in the past year and whether it remains a need. A summary table is provided at the end of this section.

The projects listed below were recommended for FY 2010.

- ◆ **MET JARC Route** – This project was funded for FY 2010. MET has applied annually for JARC funding for Route 9, which is in Cedar Falls. This route connects many residential and employment areas and the University of Northern Iowa. This route has continued to see large increases in ridership, and remains one of MET's top performing routes. MET will be reapplying for JARC funding for FY 2011 in order to keep this important service going.
- ◆ **Prime Time Pass – JARC** – This project was funded for FY 2010. Prime Time Pass remains an important service in the metropolitan area, as it enables people to get to and from work outside of MET's service hours. MET will be reapplying for JARC funding for FY 2011 to ensure that this program continues to serve workers of second and third shifts.
- ◆ **MET Ambassador Program** – MET and the Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging (HVAAA) had planned to develop this program, which would involve training seniors on how to ride MET's system. For now the project is on hold; it was thought that the new

marketing person could spearhead this, but that position was not funded. There were also plans to utilize RTC's Hudson route as an opportunity for this type of training, but that route did not get off the ground. This will remain as a potential project for the future, as education for riders who are new to transit is a recognized need.

- ◆ **RTC Expanded Service in Waverly and Independence – New Freedom** – RTC has asked for and received New Freedom funding for the past three years, but has had trouble getting the service going and thus has utilized little of the funding. The service that was implemented in Independence in FY 2009 seemed to spread ridership out over more hours, but not increase ridership itself. RTC has not been able to get the service going in FY 2010. While there are still needs related to Waverly and Independence, RTC is uncertain whether it will reapply for this funding. It will remain in the recommended program.
- ◆ **Mobility Manager/Marketing Person** – This has been an issue discussed at previous TAC meetings and Transit Providers meetings, and recognized as one of the region's greatest needs. As discussed previously, INRCOG submitted an application to the OPT for a Special Project grant to fund a mobility manager/marketing person to work for both RTC and MET. However, the OPT would not allow the grant to pay for administrative costs, which made the local match too expensive for RTC and MET. This is still identified as a critical need, but funding for the position has not been identified. MET and RTC will continue to seek a way to fund this position.
- ◆ **University of Northern Iowa Multimodal Facility** – The Multimodal Facility (MMF), which was funded with an earmark, is complete and open. MET's Cedar Falls routes shifted to include a stop at the facility. A component of the project includes Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL) on all of MET's buses, and installation of those began in January 2010. A digital message board will be located at the MMF to inform riders of when buses are expected. MET has also ordered one of these for its Central Transfer Station in downtown Waterloo, and is considering purchasing one for its facility as well. UNI has also gone out for bid for electronic fareboxes for the buses, which will provide a wealth of information and allow for more fare options, such as one day unlimited passes and monthly passes that do not go into effect until the user takes his/her first ride. The AVL and electronic fareboxes are being procured with grants through UNI, with MET paying a 20 percent local match.
- ◆ **Driver Recruitment and Retention** – This is an ongoing issue at both transit agencies. While MET has noticed an improvement in its recent hires, this remains one of RTC's largest issues. One of the challenges for RTC is that the service area is large and spread over several counties, with some routes based in smaller communities. This, combined with down time in the middle of the day, leads to difficulties in finding drivers. RTC has tried to have a utility driver position with a guaranteed number of hours each week that functions as a substitute driver or does other tasks as needed. This position began last

January, and has since gone through three different drivers and is currently vacant. RTC still hopes to fill this position.

- ♦ **Vehicle Replacement** – Funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided a boost to bus replacement. RTC received nine new buses through the bill, and all are in service. Roughly half of RTC's fleet was replaced through ARRA funding and FY 2009 replacements. MET received five new buses through ARRA, which are still on order and anticipated to arrive in August. MET's newest buses, which are the same model as the ARRA-funded ones on order, are the best they have had in terms of maintenance. A second round of transportation stimulus funding has been discussed in the legislature, and could contain additional funding for transit. While the bill appears unlikely to pass in the near future, it could further improve the average age and condition of MET and RTC's fleets. MET is considering switching to biodiesel in the future. RTC has switched from diesel to gasoline on its new buses.

The remaining projects were not anticipated to occur in FY 2010, but were included in the four year sketch plan of the PTP.

- ♦ **An Additional MET JARC Route in the Metropolitan Area** – Another JARC route is possible in the future, but nothing definite is planned at this time. Growth in the north industrial park area and around Highway 63 may increase demand in those areas. There is difficulty in finding the funding source for the local match, as JARC funding requires 50 percent. While this project is not anticipated to move forward in the next fiscal year, it remains a future potential initiative.
- ♦ **A Special Needs Route in Waterloo** – A route in southern Waterloo that connects hospitals, senior living centers, grocery stores, etc. has been discussed for some time, but demand is currently being met by other services. This does not seem likely to happen in the foreseeable future, and the TAC felt it was appropriate to remove it from the project list.
- ♦ **Vanpools to the Metropolitan Area** – This is a potential future project as it is believed that the demand for such service exists. It will take some time to develop a vanpool program, and it is not anticipated to get going in the next fiscal year.
- ♦ **Possible RTC Expansion in Western Butler County, Grundy County, and Chickasaw County** – These are all potential expansion areas. Issues with expansion include timing, as many facilities do not allow clients to be dropped off early or stay late, and duplication of service, as private organizations or individuals may already be providing some services and may not want RTC to begin offering the same service. Chickasaw County seems the most likely place for service expansion in the near future. As discussed previously, the County may reestablish community-based services at its senior center, and transportation would be a need if these services are established. RTC has discussed service options with the County and will be working with them in the future.

- ♦ **MET Extended Service Hours** – Additional evening hours are still a need for MET, but funding them is a challenge.

The table below provides a summary of the projects that were included in the 2010-2013 PTP, including those in FY 2010 and those in the four year sketch plan.

Table 1: Summary of the projects that were included in the FY 2010-2013 PTP

Page in PTP	Project	Status in FY 2010	Recommended to continue or stay in program?
66	MET JARC Route	Funded	Yes
66	Prime Time Pass – JARC	Funded	Yes
67	MET Ambassador Program	On hold	Yes
67	RTC Expanded Service in Waverly and Independence	Funded but not utilized	Yes
68	Mobility Manager/Marketing Person	Special Project Application not funded at full amount; position was not created	Yes
68	University of Northern Iowa Multimodal Facility	Complete and open	Yes, as ITS elements are still being completed
69	Driver Recruitment and Retention	Ongoing challenge	Yes
69	Vehicle Replacement	Ongoing challenge	Yes
70	Additional MET JARC Route	Potential future project	Yes
70	A Special Needs Route in Waterloo	No longer likely – demand is being met	No
70	Vanpools to the Metro Area	Potential future project	Yes
70	Expanded Service in W. Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties	Potential future project	Yes
70	Expanded MET Service Hours	Potential future project	Yes

New Projects

- ♦ **Painting EPI Buses** – The only new project discussed by the TAC was the possibility of a Special Projects grant to help fund the painting of EPI’s yellow school buses to match RTC’s color scheme. Due to the critical nature of the issue, a Special Projects grant was applied for in the spring of 2010, and RTC recently awarded a contract for the bus painting. This should resolve the issue of conflict between Iowa DOT and Iowa DOE regulations discussed earlier. This will enable RTC and EPI to continue their coordination efforts, which results in service for many of the area’s individuals with disabilities.

- ♦ [MET New Freedom Project](#) – An opportunity for MET to utilize New Freedom funding to help address mobility needs came to light in April, 2010. MET has a contract for the purchase of five 29' buses, with delivery expected in August, 2010. As ordered, each bus would be equipped with two securement locations for persons with disabilities who travel with a mobility aid. As discussed on pages 11-12, 28, 37, and 43 of the PTP, the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area has a high number of persons with disabilities, and providing service for these individuals is a key concern for MET. MET has experienced an increase of riders who use mobility aids, and capacity has become an issue. There have been several instances that service has been denied due to both securement locations being occupied. For this reason, MET has determined that three securement locations are needed on certain routes. In addition to an extra securement location, a ramp rated at 950 pounds, which exceeds the ADA requirement of 600 pounds, is desired to further accommodate MET riders. With the current bus order, adding an additional securement location is not an option on 29' coaches due to the loss of seating capacity. Therefore, MET is requesting to utilize New Freedom funding to upgrade two of the 29' coaches to 35' coaches with three securement locations each and the upgraded wheelchair ramp.

Program of Recommended Projects

Pages 72-74 of the PTP display the Program of Recommended Projects as approved in 2009. The ~~only~~ additions to the projects in the PTP discussed by the TAC ~~is~~ are the projects to paint EPI buses and upgrade two of MET's ordered buses to have an extra securement location and upgraded wheelchair ramps. The only deletion was the potential Special Needs route in Waterloo, as it seems unlikely to happen in the next few years. Other than these ~~two~~ changes, the TAC felt the project list should stay the same for FY 2011, with updated costs and information as appropriate.

Projects anticipated to receive federal funding in the next four years correlate with the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) that both MET and RTC submit to INRCOG. While the projects in the TIPs have not changed since last year, the TIPs are updated annually with new targets and projected costs. The draft TIPs for both MET and RTC have been attached to this document. Projects that are not included in the TIPs but which may be considered in the near future are outlined below. While the timing, costs, and funding sources of these initiatives are mostly unknown at this point, they are important projects to try to implement in the future to meet the needs of the region. The projects included in the both draft TIPs and the table below were approved by the TAC at its January 20, 2010 meeting. The MPO and RTA Policy Boards approved the projects and a final version of this document at their March and April 2010 meetings. [The amended version of this document, which includes MET's anticipated FY'10 New Freedom project as discussed above, was approved by the MPO Policy Board on May 13, 2010.](#)

Table 2: Potential Coordination Projects for the Iowa Northland Region

Provider Name	Project Description	Type*	Total Estimated Cost	Estimated Fiscal Year	Recommended Funding Source(s)
MET	Upgrading two 29' coaches to 35' and adding an extra securement location and upgraded wheelchair ramp	C	\$19,114	2010	New Freedom
RTC/EPI	Painting of EPI Buses	O/C	\$62,800	2010	Special Projects Grant
RTC/MET	Marketing Position	O	\$80,000	Undetermined	Undetermined
MET	Additional MET JARC Route	O/C	Undetermined	Undetermined	JARC
MET	Expanded MET Service Hours	O	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined
MET/HVAAA	Ambassador Program	O	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined
RTC	Expanded Service in W. Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties	O/C	Undetermined	Undetermined	New Freedom
RTC	Vanpools to the Metro Area	O/C	Undetermined	Undetermined	Undetermined

*O = Operations; C = Capital

DRAFT FY 2011 - FY 2014 Transportation Improvement Program

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY of BLACK HAWK COUNTY

Fund Type Codes	Type of Project
5303 - Metropolitan Planning Program	Rep - Replacement
5307 - Urbanized Area Formula Program	Con-Continuation
5309 - Capital Program	Exp - Expansion
5310 - Elderly & Persons with Disabilities Program	Reh - Rehabilitation
5311 - Nonurbanized Area Formula Program	
5313/5314 - State Planning & Research	
5316 - Job Access and Reverse Commute	
5317 - New Freedom	

Project	Recipient	Source of Funds	Vehicle ID	TOTAL COST				FEDERAL ASSISTANCE				STATE ASSISTANCE			
				FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014
General Operations	MET Transit	5307		\$3,800,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,200,000	\$4,400,000	\$1,900,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,200,000	\$250,000	\$255,000	\$265,000	\$275,000
JARC	MET Transit	5316		\$341,250	\$350,000	\$375,000	\$400,000	\$170,600	\$175,000	\$187,500	\$200,000				
Bus Shelters/ADA Enhancements	MET Transit	5310		\$65,000				\$52,000							
(1) Minivan	MET Transit	5309	501	\$42,000				\$34,860							
(9) 30' HD Buses w/Surveillance Cameras	MET Transit	5309	9205,971 922, 974,9901 973, 937, 9206, 2003	\$3,303,000				\$2,741,490							
(6) 28' MD Diesel Buses w/Surveillance Cameras	MET Transit	5309	2005, 2006, 2004, 2007,2008, 2009	\$894,000				\$742,020							
(5) 30' HD Buses w/Surveillance Cameras	MET Transit	5309	923,933,303,302,301		\$1,890,050				\$1,568,742						
(4) 176" LD Bus w/Surveillance Cameras	MET Transit	5309	709,708,710,711			\$344,000				\$285,520					
(2) 30' HD Buses w/Surveillance Cameras	MET Transit	5309	975,101				\$778,702				\$646,323				
Planning	INRCOG	5303		\$50,661	\$52,181	\$53,747	\$55,359	\$40,529	\$41,745	\$42,997	\$44,287				

**Regional Transit Commission
Draft FY 2011 - 2014
Transportation Improvement Program**

STATE OF IOWA
Transportation Improvement Program
Transit Element

Fund Type Codes
5304 - Statewide Planning Program
5310 - Special Needs
5317 New Freedom
5309 - Capital Program
5311 - Nonurbanized Area Formula

O - Operating
C - Capital
P - Planning

Type of Project
Rep- Replacement
Exp - Expansion
Reh - Rehabilitaton

	Fund	Recipient	Description of Project	Type	Type	TOTAL ESTIMATED COST				FEDERAL AID				2011** STA	Vehicle ID/ Remarks
						Exp	Proj	2011	2012	2013	2014	2011*	2012*		
Region 7															
	5310/5311	RTC	General Operations/Maintenance/Admin	O		\$1,542,229	\$1,588,496	\$1,636,151	\$1,685,235	\$288,839	\$297,504	\$306,429	\$315,622	\$282,238	
	5309	RTC	Two 176" LD Buses	C	Rep	\$164,000				\$136,120					9711, 9712 - diesel
	5309	RTC	Three 176" LD Buses	C	Rep	\$246,000				\$204,180					0301, 0302, 0303 - diesel
	5309	RTC	Three 176" LD Buses	C	Rep		\$253,380				\$210,305				0501, 0502, 0503 - diesel
	5309	RTC	Two 176" LD Buses	C	Rep			\$173,988				\$144,410			0601, 0801 - diesel
	5309	RTC	Three 176" LD Buses	C	Rep				\$268,811				\$223,113		0901, 0902, 0903 - diesel
	5317	RTC	New Freedom	O		\$33,808	\$34,822	\$35,867	\$36,943	\$16,904	\$17,411	\$17,933	\$18,471		
	5304	INRCOG	RPA Transportation Planning	P		\$32,316	\$33,285	\$34,284	\$35,313	\$25,853	\$26,629	\$27,427	\$28,250		

Note: Unless otherwise specified, all vehicle replacements are programmed to have diesel engines and be ADA accessible.

** Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Operating, Capital, and Planning Funds.*

*** State Transit Assistance (STA) Operating Funds.*

**PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FOR
THE IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2010

MINUTES

Present were:	Sheila Baird	Cedar Valley United Way
	Mark Little	MET Transit
	Ken Schuman	Northeast Iowa Center for Independent Living
	Brian Schoon	INRCOG/RTC
	Ed Holm	INRCOG/RTC
	Andrea White	INRCOG
	Brock Grenis	INRCOG

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. White welcomed the group and explained the timeline for the development of the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP). The draft document is due to the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) by February 1. The Iowa DOT will return comments by March 1, and the final document is due to the Iowa DOT by May 1. The TAC may meet again in March or April.

The next item on the agenda was a summary of recent transit providers meetings. White explained that MET Transit, RTC, and Exceptional Persons, Inc. (EPI) meet monthly to discuss transit operations and coordination issues. Schoon discussed the major issue from recent meetings, which involves buses that EPI contracts with RTC for. Some of EPI's buses are yellow school buses. The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) requires that RTC signage be on all contracted buses. The Iowa Department of Education (DOE) does not allow such signage on yellow school buses. The Iowa DOE has issued a 30-day fix notice to EPI. It has yet to be determined how this situation will be resolved. Painting the buses to match RTC's color scheme would solve the problem, and there could be the possibility of applying for a Special Project grant to help fund the painting, but it is unclear whether EPI will be willing to do this. Ultimately this may affect the coordination between RTC and EPI.

Next was an update regarding the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). RTC received nine new buses through the bill, and all are in service. There is an issue with the exterior mirrors and they will be changed out in the near future. MET received five new buses through ARRA, which are still on order and anticipated to arrive in August. A second round of transportation stimulus funding is currently being discussed in the legislature, and could contain additional funding for transit. Little noted that the funding may be used for additional capital projects beyond bus replacement. Baird asked whether the new buses were more environmentally-friendly, and Little responded that they are as they have to meet new EPA regulations. MET is considering switching to biodiesel in the future. RTC has switched from diesel to gasoline on its new buses.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss the projects included in the FY'10 – FY'13 PTDP. Projects included:

- **RTC Expanded Service in Waverly and Independence:** RTC has asked for New Freedom funding for the past three years for this service but has had trouble getting the service going, and thus has utilized little of the funding. The service that was implemented seemed to spread ridership out over more hours, but not increase ridership itself. While there are still needs related to Waverly and Independence, RTC is uncertain whether it will reapply for this funding.
- **RTC Route to Hudson:** This route was established last winter, but had very few riders. The City asked for the service and RTC worked with the City to promote it, which included visits to the senior center, advertisements through flyers in the water bills, and articles on the service in the Hudson and Waterloo newspapers. The route is no longer on RTC's schedule, though they would try to accommodate it if requested.
- **MET JARC Services – Route 9 and Prime Time Pass:** MET will be reapplying for JARC funding for both services. Route 9 in Cedar Falls has seen significant increases every year since it began in 2004, and remains one of MET's top performing routes. Prime Time Pass remains an important service in the metropolitan area, as it enables people to get to and from work outside of MET's service hours.

- **Marketing** – This has been an issue discussed at previous TAC meetings and transit providers meetings. INRCOG submitted an application to the Office of Public Transit (OPT) for a Special Project grant to fund a mobility manager/marketing person to work for both RTC and MET. However, the OPT would not allow the grant to pay for administrative costs, which made the local match too expensive for RTC and MET. This is still identified as a critical need, but funding for the position has not been identified.
- **University of Northern Iowa Multimodal Facility:** The Multimodal Facility (MMF) is complete and open. MET's Cedar Falls routes shifted to include a stop at the facility. A component of the project includes Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL) on all of MET's buses, and installation of those is beginning this week. A digital message board will be located at the MMF to inform riders of when buses are expected. MET has also ordered one of these for its Central Transfer Station in downtown Waterloo, and is considering purchasing one for its facility as well. UNI has also gone out for bid for electronic fareboxes for the buses, which will provide a wealth of information and allow for more fare options, such as one day unlimited passes and monthly passes that do not go into effect until the user takes their first ride. The AVL and electronic fareboxes are being procured with grants through UNI, with MET paying a 20% local match. Separate from the MMF, another technology component discussed was security cameras. MET has them on all buses, and has found them very useful for investigating incidents. RTC does not have security cameras on its buses but may consider them in the future.
- **Ambassador Program:** MET and the Hawkeye Valley Area Agency on Aging had planned to develop this program, which would involve training seniors on how to ride MET's system. For now the project is on hold; it was thought that the new marketing person could spearhead this, but that position was not funded. There were also plans to utilize RTC's Hudson route as an opportunity for this type of training, but that route did not get off the ground.
- **Driver Recruitment and Retention:** This is an ongoing issue at both transit agencies. While MET has noticed an improvement in its recent hires, this remains one of RTC's largest issues. One of the challenges for RTC is that the service area is large and spread over several counties, with some routes based in smaller communities. This, combined with down time in the middle of the day, leads to difficulties in finding drivers. RTC has tried to have a utility driver position with a guaranteed number of hours each week that functions as a substitute driver or does other tasks as needed. This position began last January, and has since gone through three different drivers and is currently vacant.
- **Funding Sources:** This is also an ongoing issue at both transit agencies.
- **Vehicle Replacement:** ARRA funding was a boost to bus replacement. Roughly half of RTC's fleet was replaced through ARRA funding and FY'09 replacements. MET's newest buses, which are the same model as the ARRA-funded ones on order, are the best they have had in terms of maintenance.
- **Vanpools to the Metropolitan Area:** This is a potential future project as it is believed that the demand for such service may exist. It will take some time to develop a vanpool program.
- **Additional MET JARC Route:** Another JARC route is possible in the future, but nothing definite is planned at this time. Growth in the north industrial park area and around Highway 63 may increase demand in those areas. There is difficulty in finding the funding source for the local match, as JARC requires 50%.
- **MET Extended Service Hours:** Additional evening hours are still a need for MET Transit, but funding them is a challenge.
- **Waterloo Special Needs Route:** A route in southern Waterloo that connects hospitals, senior living centers, grocery stores, etc. has been discussed for some time, but the demand is currently being met by other services. This does not seem likely to happen in the foreseeable future, and the group felt it was appropriate to remove it from the project list.
- **RTC Expansion in Western Butler County, Grundy County, and Chickasaw County:** These are all potential expansion areas. Issues with expansion include timing, as many facilities do not allow clients to be dropped off early or stay late, and duplication of service, as private organizations or individuals may already be providing some services and may not want RTC to begin offering the same service. Chickasaw County seems the most likely place for service expansion in the near future. The County is working to reestablish community-based services at its senior center, and transportation will be a need once these services are established. A major issue is that there is no dialysis service located within the County. RTC has discussed service options with the County and will be working with them in the future.

The final agenda item was to discuss new projects for the PTP update, but there were none suggested beyond the continuation of those previously discussed and the painting of EPI's buses. It was moved by Baird, seconded by Schuman to approve the projects for the FY 2011 PTP update as discussed. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.