

Public Participation Plan

Iowa Northland
Regional
Transportation
Authority



November 24, 2009

Prepared by Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

RESOLUTION OF THE
IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) desires to incorporate a public participation process that fosters public involvement throughout the transportation planning and decision making process; and

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

WHEREAS, the RTA 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 24th day of November, 2009.

Signed: 
Ralph Kremer, Chair
Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority

Attest: 
Andrea White
Transportation Planner

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Section 1

Introduction

This document is the Public Participation Plan for the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). The RTA oversees transportation planning and programming for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties. This plan outlines the ways public involvement is incorporated into RTA activities. Public input 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. It is the sincere goal of the RTA to actively involve the public in decision-making and increase public awareness of and interest in the planning process.

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 RTA. Input on how to increase public awareness of and participation in the planning process has been sought through many different avenues, from regular RTA meetings to project specific meetings and from surveys to community presentations.

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

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

Section 2

Overview

Background

The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) is responsible for transportation planning and programming of federal funding for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties (see map at the end of this document). The RTA does not include the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area; its transportation planning is conducted by the Black Hawk Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board. These six counties are served by the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) for a variety of planning initiatives, including transportation. INRCOG provides staffing and support for the RTA.

Recent transportation legislation in the United States has been governed by three major acts. The first, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was passed in 1991. ISTEA provided an encompassing intermodal approach to highway and transit funding that focused on collaborative planning requirements. Following ISTEA, the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) divided the state into 18 Regional Planning Affiliations (RPAs) for transportation planning and the administration of many ISTEA programs (see map at the end of this document). The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority is the transportation planning agency for RPA VII.

Transportation planning in the RTA region is aimed at fulfilling federal requirements and goals specific to the region. Maintaining the balance between local need and regional enhancement is a critical component of the RTA's planning process. RTA projects are a mix of local and regional initiatives, and are evaluated in part on their connection to and impact on other counties in the region.

ISTEA and its subsequent legislation, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) both placed a significant emphasis on public involvement in transportation planning and programming. The most recent federal transportation legislation, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), expands the importance of the public participation process. The federal guidelines for public participation apply specifically to states and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). However, the RTA Policy Board has chosen to parallel its public participation process with the guidelines to ensure effective public involvement. The RTA's goal is to fully include the public in the transportation planning process.

RTA Organization

The RTA has a Policy Board, which maintains decision-making and programming authority, and Technical and Enhancement Committees, which advise the Policy Board. The voting membership of the RTA includes a member of the Board of Supervisors, or other elected

official designee, for each county. Voting membership also includes a mayor, council member, or other elected official designee from two cities in each county. City representation is determined by a convention of cities in that county or through selection by the County Board of Supervisors. To ensure representation of the region's small urban areas, one representative from Bremer County represents the City of Waverly, and one representative from Buchanan County represents the City of Independence. Non-voting, ex-officio members of the Policy Board include representatives from INRCOG, the Iowa DOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration.

Major Documents

There are five major documents that the RTA 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 RTA 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 region, 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 RTA 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 RTA 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 RTA 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 RTA 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. Several recent regional transportation issues have included various degrees of public involvement. Examples include the development of regional and individual community comprehensive land-use plans, regional corridor development studies (i.e. U.S. 63, Avenue of the Saints, U.S. 20, I-380), rural community development, and RISE (Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy) project proposals.

This Public Participation Plan will allow for a comprehensive and accountable process for providing public access to the transportation planning process. Public participation should be built on past practices and refined to carry out not only the requirements, but also the spirit and intent of SAFETEA-LU. The RTA encourages public involvement in its meetings, planning documents, and programming decisions. Increasing public participation is an important goal of the RTA.



RTA meeting



Public Open House for the RTA

Section 3

Regulations and Requirements

Federal transportation legislation of recent years has included ISTEA, TEA-21, and SAFETEA-LU. All three place a significant emphasis on public participation in the transportation planning process. The current federal legislation, SAFETEA-LU, was signed into law in 2005 and governs federal surface transportation spending through 2009. SAFETEA-LU sets specific requirements for state-level and metropolitan-level planning. The RTA is modeling its public participation plan after the metropolitan requirements for public involvement included in SAFETEA-LU. This section discusses SAFETEA-LU guidelines, as well as other legislation the RTA adheres to.

SAFETEA-LU

The RTA 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 RTA.

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

Title VI, ADA, and Environmental Justice

RTA 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. RTA 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.

RTA 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 RTA operates in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend RTA meetings. Regular meetings of the RTA Technical Committee and Policy Board occur on the third Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at the INRCOG Center in Waterloo. (Meeting times and locations are subject to change.) RTA meeting notices and agendas are mailed to all media serving the region which request notification. Information about RTA meetings, including minutes and agendas, is also available at the INRCOG Center and online on the INRCOG website (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 RTA 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 RTA Document Development

This section details the way public involvement is sought in the creation and updates of each of the five major documents the RTA 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 chapters.
- The draft LRTP will be developed by RTA 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 RTA 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 RTA 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

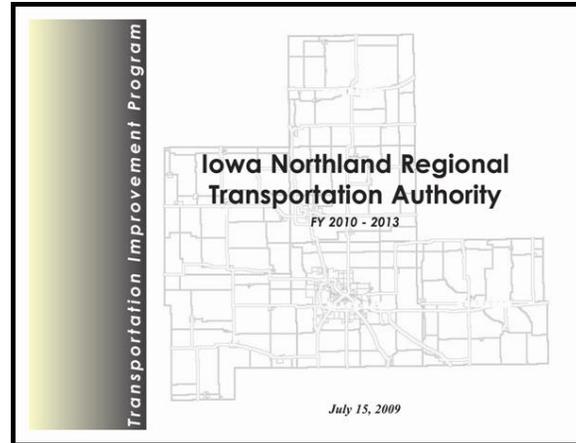
- Following the public hearing, the RTA will adopt a final version of the LRTP, including a summary of comments and responses.
- A final version of the LRTP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT and the FHWA.
- The final LRTP will be available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.
- 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 should 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 RTA 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. RTA 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 and counties, and the Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission.
- 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 RTA 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 RTA 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 RTA 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 RTA staff without public review and comment or re-demonstration of fiscal constraint. RTA 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 RTA 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
Project Cost	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.
Schedule Changes	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.
Funding Sources	Changing amounts of existing funding sources.	Adding other federal funding sources to a project.
Scope Changes	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 RTA 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 RTA staff with input from jurisdiction representatives and the Iowa DOT and oversight by the RTA 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 RTA meeting where adoption of the TPWP will be considered. Comments will be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- Notices and agendas of RTA meetings will be available through local media, at the INRCOG Center, and on the INRCOG website.

3. Final TPWP

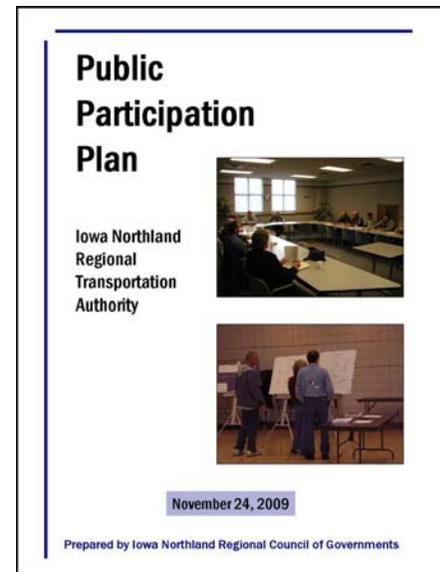
- The RTA Policy Board will consider a summary of comments and appropriate responses and adopt a final version of the TPWP.
- The TPWP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, the FHWA, and the FTA and made available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.

4. Revisions

- Revisions to the TPWP will be made as needed.
- Amendments will require a public hearing to be held at a regularly scheduled RTA 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 RTA document development and decision-making. It covers regulations concerning public involvement, the five major documents produced by the RTA (LRTP, TIP, TPWP, PPP, PTP), and ways the RTA 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 RTA meetings, public meetings, surveys, focus groups, and any other effective means of communicating with the public. The draft document will then be prepared by RTA staff with input from jurisdiction representatives and the Iowa DOT and oversight by the RTA 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 RTA meeting where adoption of the PPP will be considered. Comments will also be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- Notices and agendas of RTA meetings will be available through local media, at the INRCOG Center, and on the INRCOG website.

3. Final PPP

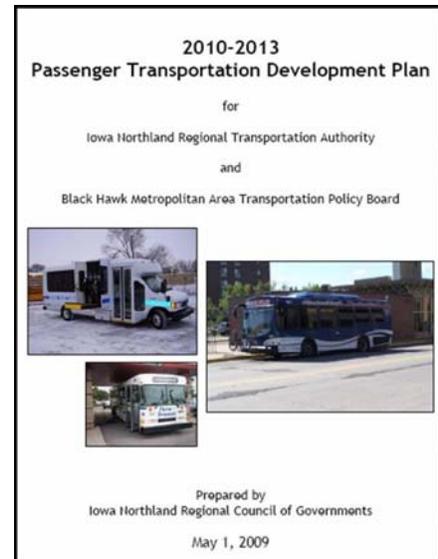
- The RTA Policy Board will consider a summary of comments and appropriate responses and adopt a final version of the PPP.
- The PPP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, the FHWA, and the FTA and made available on the INRCOG website, at the INRCOG Center, and upon request.

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 RTA 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 RTA meeting where adoption of the PTP will be considered. Comments will be accepted via fax, letter, or email.
- Notices and agendas of RTA meetings will be available through local media, at the INRCOG Center, and on the INRCOG website.

3. Final PTP

- The RTA 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 RTA Document Development

Plan	Updated	Draft Development*	Public Meetings/Draft Availability*	Public Comment Period*	Adoption*	Availability
Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	Every five years	Draft developed by RTA 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 RTA meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	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 RTA meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)	Annually	Draft developed by RTA 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 RTA meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
Public Participation Plan (PPP)	As needed	Draft developed by RTA 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 RTA meeting.	INRCOG Center, website
Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)	Full document every five years, with annual updates	Draft developed by RTA 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 RTA 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 RTA meetings prior to document adoption. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend RTA meetings, held at 1:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month at the INRCOG Center, 229 E. Park Ave., in Waterloo, Iowa. Meeting agendas and minutes, as well as draft and final RTA documents, can be found on the INRCOG website: www.inrcog.org.

Section 5

Regular RTA Activities

Routine/Ongoing Activities

In addition to public participation efforts related to specific documents, there are several ongoing initiatives that form the basis for RTA 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 RTA 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 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 county courthouses; and access at public library and post office locations in the region. Major reports will be available on the INRCOG website.
- Public presentations on major actions and projects will be made annually, or as required, to City Councils, Planning and Zoning Commissions, Boards of Supervisors, and the INRCOG Board.
- 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 RTA adheres to federal planning guidelines outlined in SAFETEA-LU. The table on the next page outlines ways the RTA addresses SAFETEA-LU regulations during daily activities, meetings, and document development.

SAFETEA-LU requirement	Ways the RTA 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 RTA 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: www.inrcog.org . 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 information.
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, www.inrcog.org .
Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times.	Regular RTA meetings are held at the INRCOG Center, 229 E. Park Ave. in Waterloo, which is accessible and located centrally in the region. 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. 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. RTA 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 RTA.	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 RTA can be made through INRCOG staff.

INRCOG Transportation Department

- Kevin Blanshan, Director of Transportation and Data Services: kblanshan@inrcog.org
- Andrea White, Transportation Planner: awhite@inrcog.org
- Dan Schlichtmann, Data Services Coordinator: 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

-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. Note that committee membership is as of the date of this document.

- RTA Policy Board
- RTA Technical Committee
- RTA Enhancement Committee
- Transit Advisory Committee
- Media Contacts

RTA Policy Board

- Mark Schildroth, Grundy County Supervisor
- Ralph Kremer, Buchanan County Supervisor
- Ken Oldenburger, Butler County Supervisor
- Maurice Welsh, Mayor of Fairbank
- Steve Reuter, Bremer County Supervisor
- Ivan Ackerman, Mayor of Waverly
- Frank Brimmer, Mayor of Independence
- Donald Knudsen, Mayor of Dike
- Jack Stumberg, Mayor of Grundy Center
- Robert Clites, City of New Hampton
- Harlan Johnson, City of Parkersburg
- Rick Lubben, Mayor of La Porte City
- Larry Young, Mayor of Shell Rock
- Sherry Mattke, Chickasaw County Supervisor
- John Miller, Black Hawk County Supervisor
- Mike Isaacson, Mayor of Denver
- Jim Mackay, Mayor of Janesville
- Representative, INRCOG (non-voting, ex-officio)
- Representative, Iowa DOT (non-voting)
- Representative, FHWA (non-voting, ex-officio)
- Representative, FTA (non-voting)

RTA Technical Committee

- Brian Keierleber, Buchanan County
- Dusten Rolando, Chickasaw County
- Cathy Nicholas, Black Hawk County
- Gary Mauer, Grundy County
- Todd Fonkert, Bremer County
- John Riherd, Butler County
- Dan Bangasser, City of Grundy Center
- Larry Farley, City of Denver
- Lynn Klobberdanz, Black Hawk County
- Alan Johnson, City of Independence
- Julie Peterson, City of La Porte City
- Representative, City of Nashua
- Stan Perkins, City of New Hampton
- Mike Cherry, City of Waverly
- Mike Tellinghuisen, City of Shell Rock
- Christine Murley, City of Janesville
- Phil Thomas, Waterloo
- Krista Rostad, Iowa DOT
- Kevin Blanshan, INRCOG
- Andrea White, INRCOG

RTA Enhancement Committee

- Vern Fish, Black Hawk County Conservation Board
- Frank Frederick, Bremer County Conservation Board
- Dan Cohen, Buchanan County Conservation Board
- Steve Brunsmas, Butler County Conservation Board
- Brian Moore, Chickasaw County Conservation Board
- Kevin Williams, Grundy County Conservation Board
- Cathy Nicholas, Black Hawk County Engineer
- Todd Fonkert, Bremer County Engineer
- John Riherd, Butler County Engineer
- Brian Keierleber, Buchanan County Engineer
- Dusten Rolando, Chickasaw County Engineer
- Gary Mauer, Grundy County Engineer
- Sandy Harms, City of Allison
- Kirk Henderson, Native Roadside Vegetation Center
- Maurice Welsh, City of Fairbank
- Christine Murley, City of Janesville
- Julie Petersen, City of La Porte City
- Quentin Mayberry, City of Reinbeck
- Lisa Oberbroeckling, City of Sumner
- Candy Streed, Silos and Smokestacks
- Tab Ray, Waverly Parks Department
- Jeff Kolb, Butler County Development
- Melanie Kirkpatrick, Grundy County Development Alliance
- Rich Riesberg, City of Grundy Center
- Alan Johnson, City of Independence
- Suellen Kolbet, City of New Hampton
- Robert Soukup, New Hampton Economic Development
- Virgil Goodrich, Parkersburg Economic Development
- Linda Laylin, Greater Cedar Valley Alliance

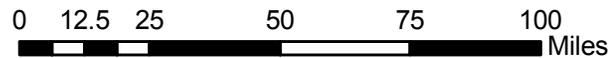
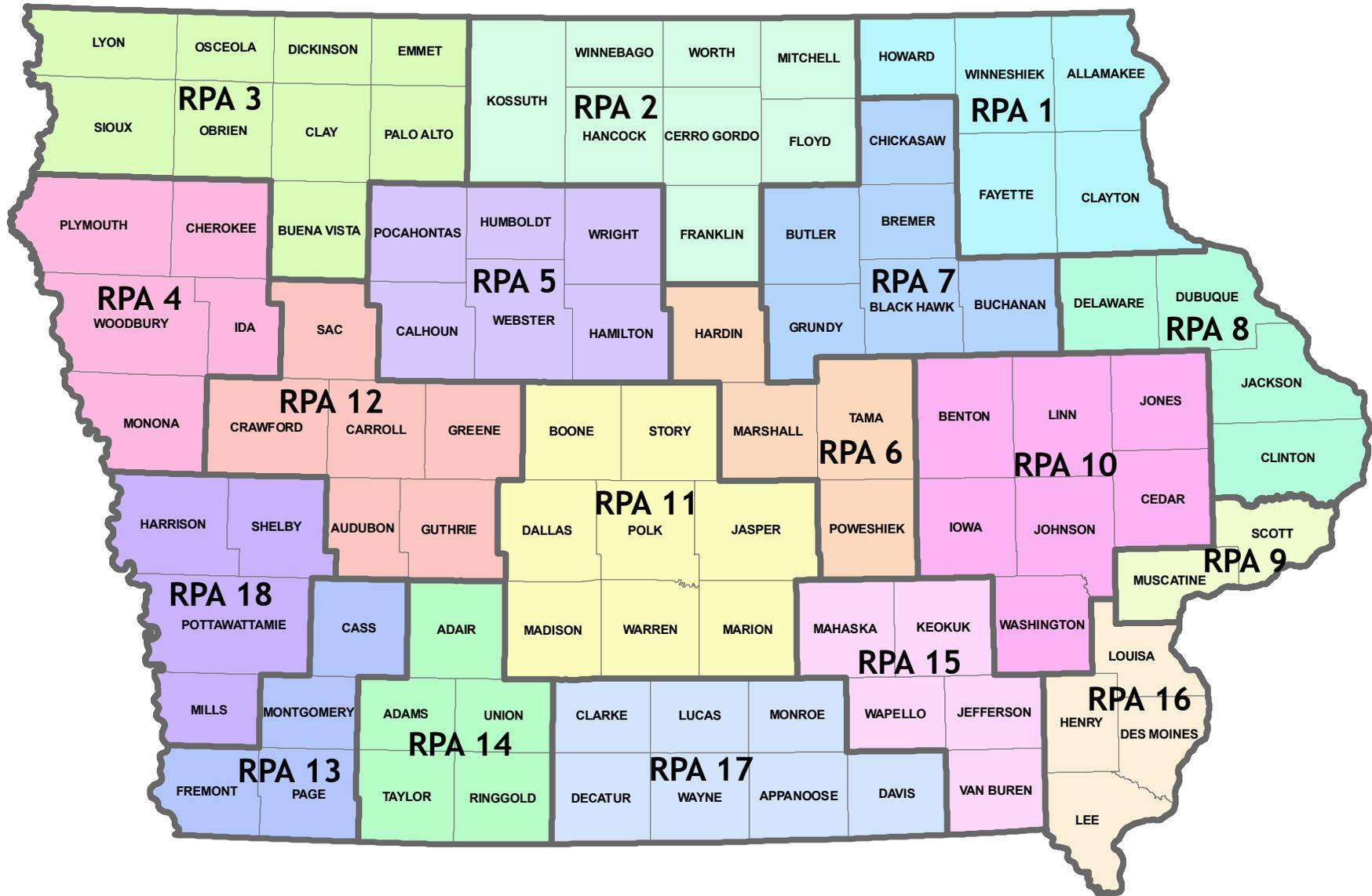
Transit Advisory Committee

- 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

Regional Media Contacts

- Bremer County Independent & Waverly Democrat
- Butler County Tribune Journal
- Conrad Record
- Cumulus Communications
- Denver Forum
- Fredericksburg Review
- Greene Recorder
- Grundy Register
- Hudson Herald
- Independence Newspapers
- Jesup Citizen Herald
- KBBG
- KCNZ
- KCRG TV9
- KCRS
- KGAN-TV
- KHAK
- KNWS
- KQMG LITE 95.3
- KUNI-KHKE
- KWLO-KFMW-KXEL-KOKZ
- KWOE Radio
- KWLL-TV
- La Porte City Progress Review
- Nashua Reporter
- Parkersburg Eclipse News Review
- Reinbeck Courier
- Sumner Gazette
- The New Hampton Tribune
- Tripoli Leader
- Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier

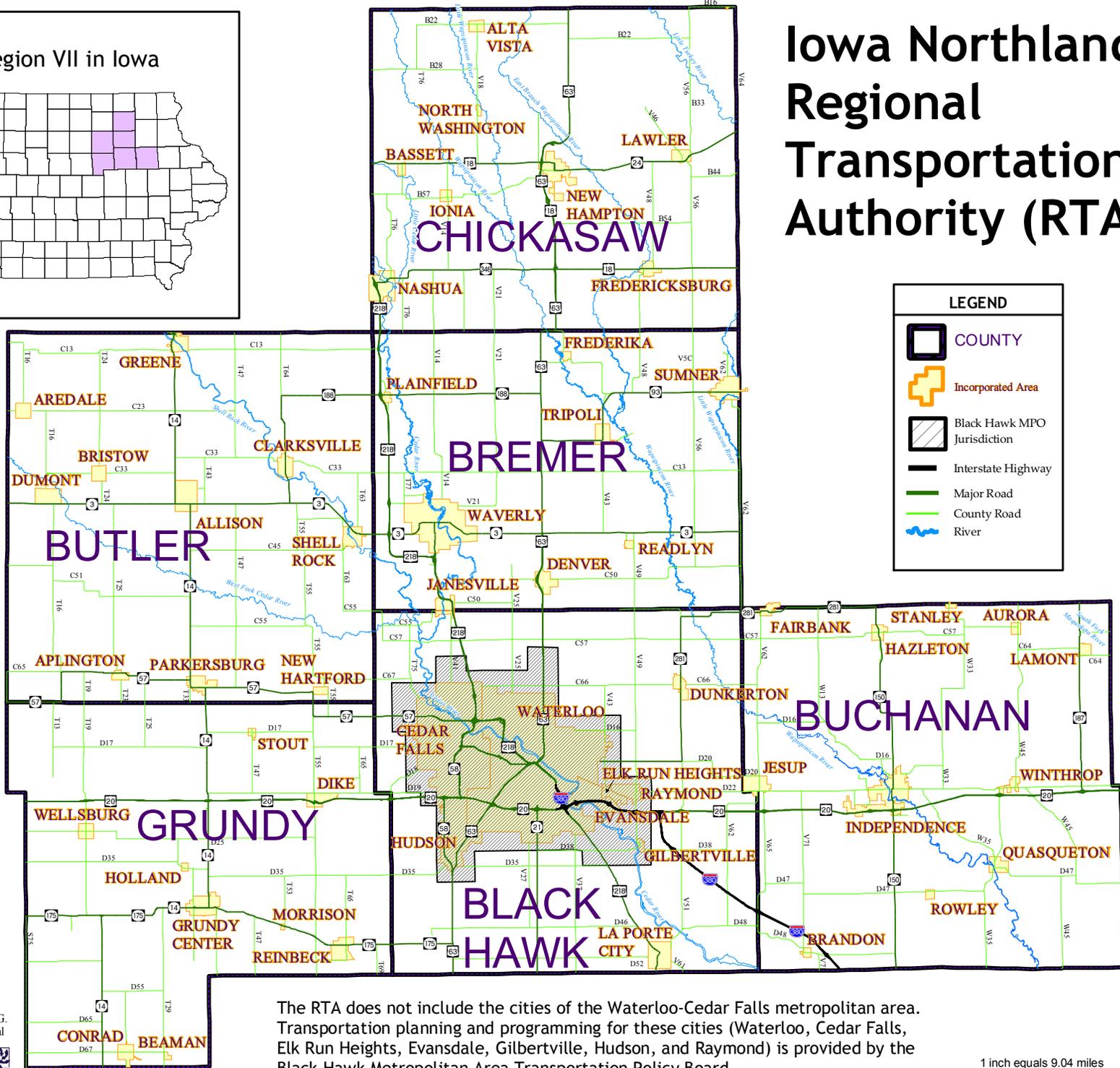
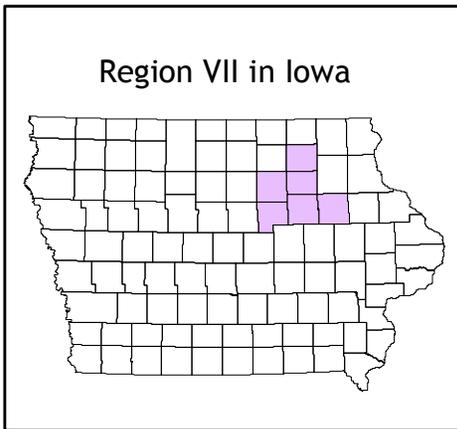
Iowa Regional Planning Affiliations



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Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)

Region VII in Iowa



LEGEND

- COUNTY
- Incorporated Area
- Black Hawk MPO Jurisdiction
- Interstate Highway
- Major Road
- County Road
- River

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The RTA does not include the cities of the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area. Transportation planning and programming for these cities (Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Elk Run Heights, Evansdale, Gilbertville, Hudson, and Raymond) is provided by the Black Hawk Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board.

1 inch equals 9.04 miles