

SOUTHWEST IOWA PLANNING COUNCIL

REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATE 13

Transportation Planning Work Program FY 2026

FOR THE COUNTIES OF:

CASS • FREMONT • MONTGOMERY • PAGE

Approved May 28, 2025



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RESOLUTION

Adoption of Final FY2026 Transportation Planning Work Program

WHEREAS, The RPA-13 Transportation Planning Affiliation is organized to provide transportation planning services for Region Planning Affiliation 13 (Cass, Fremont, Montgomery and Page Counties), and;

WHEREAS, the RPA-13 Policy Board has reviewed and approved the FY 2026 Transportation Planning Work Program;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the RPA-13 Transportation Planning Affiliation adopts the FY2026 Transportation Planning Work Program.

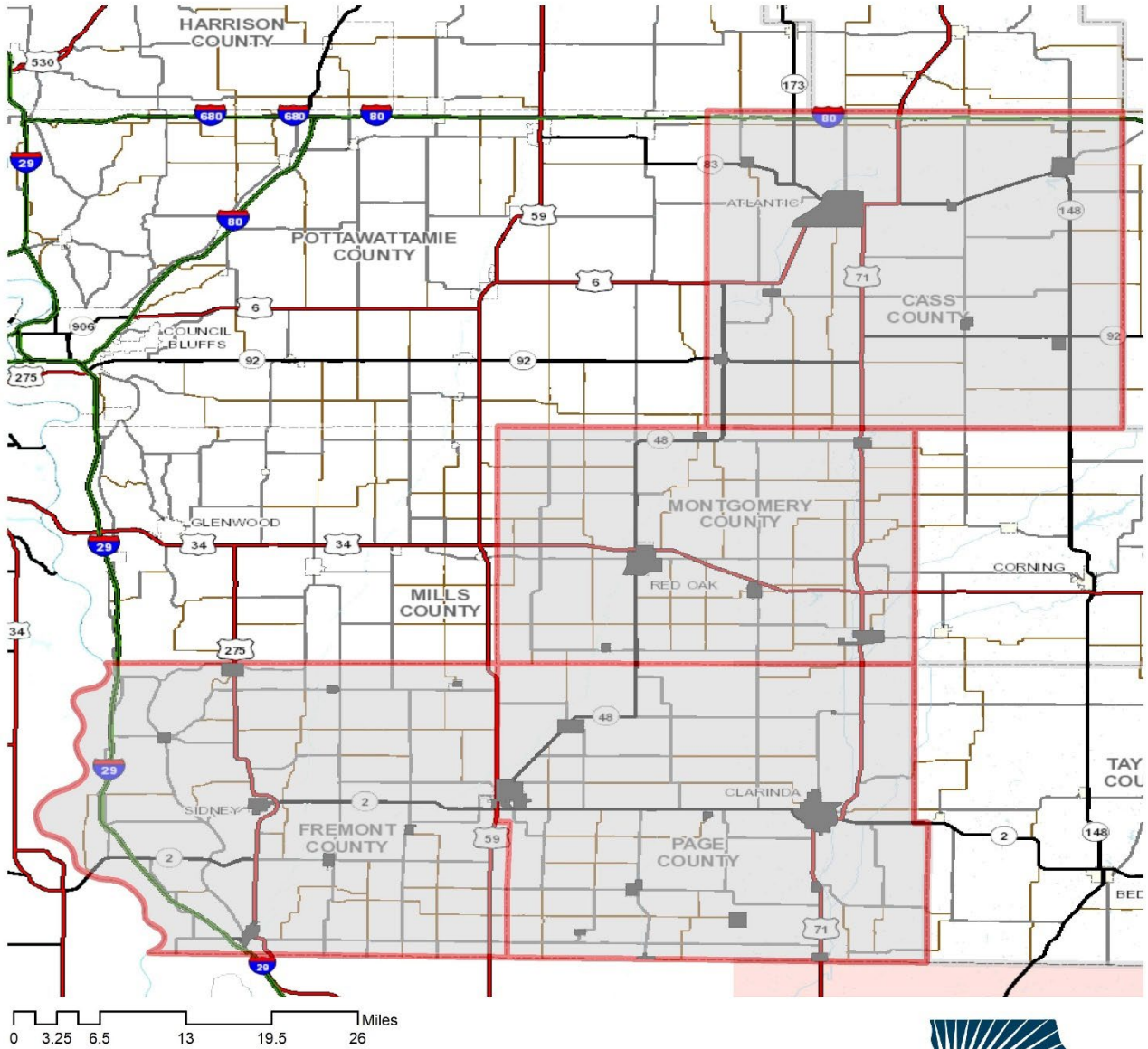
Adopted by the RPA-13 Policy Board on May 28, 2025.

RPA-13 POLICY BOARD

Signed: 
Shawna Silvius, Chairman

Attest: 
Tammy DeBord, Recording Secretary

RPA-13 Area



Legend

- RPA 13 Cities
- RPA 13 Counties



1. TPWP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Region is responsible for the creation of the **Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)** utilizing budget information distributed by IDOT. A public meeting is held with the Region's Transportation Technical Committee (TTC) and Policy Board in March to review the draft. Information of this public meeting is distributed throughout the Region by the Southwest Iowa Planning Council website and newsletter. Any appropriate comment received at the TTC public meeting is considered and then incorporated into the plan prior to submission of the draft to IDOT, FTA, and FHWA. Comments are then received from the IDOT, FTA, and FHWA and incorporated into the plan for final approval and adoption at a public meeting of the Policy Board and Technical Committee joint meeting.

INTRODUCTION

The Southwest Iowa Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA 13) has developed a TPWP for the Southwest Iowa planning area (herein after referred to as the “Region”) consisting of the counties of Cass, Fremont, Montgomery, and Page. This TPWP was put together under the direction of the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) as a requirement of the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)*. IIJA was signed into law November 21, 2021. The Act uses a mix of funding determined by a formula, and money that will be available only through competitive grants. IIJA replaces the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST). IIJA provides \$550 billion over fiscal years 2022 through 2026 in new Federal investment in infrastructure, including in roads, bridges, and mass transit, water infrastructure, resilience, and broadband.¹

It is the purpose of the Southwest Iowa Transportation Planning Work Program to provide the citizens of the Region, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Iowa Department of Transportation with the Region’s multimodal and intermodal transportation planning work program, including RPA 13’s schedule and budget. RPA 13 is responsible for the preparation of this TPWP, with guidance from city and county officials, the TTC, the Policy Board, and citizens. The purpose of a TPWP is to serve as a guiding document of information addressing current and projected transportation needs for the Region from a planning perspective. This TPWP will be used to identify areas of need and develop a means to address them. Additionally, this document outlines other work elements that RPA 13 will accomplish through the administrative and planning staff. The Public Participation Plan is reviewed annually. The Long-Range Transportation Plan is fully updated every 5 years. It was updated in FY2025. The Public Participation Plan is fully updated every 5 years and was updated in FY2025. The Passenger Transportation Plan is also updated every 5 years and was updated in 2022. The Transportation Improvement Program is updated every year. Every year, RPA 13 works on special projects that are requested or identified.

The information contained in the following pages will provide a better understanding of the Region's transportation planning work program as it is today. Decisions made with this planning process utilize current transportation network characteristics; current and projected social, physical, environmental, and economic characteristics; as well as various local and county citizen participation, and local official

¹ A Summary of Funding Provisions. (2021, November 21) Retrieved March 23, 2022, from <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>

involvement. Several public meetings were held throughout the development of the RPA's planning process to encourage and receive diverse information and participation.

The scope of RPA's 13 planning process is in line with 23 CFR § 450.306 and shall be continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive, and provide for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will address the following factors:

- (1) Support the economic vitality of the non-metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- (2) Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (3) Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- (4) Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
- (5) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- (6) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- (7) Promote efficient system management and operation;
- (8) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
- (9) Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and
- (10) Enhance travel and tourism.

PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

As communities evolve and change a need to monitor commuting trends and patterns are essential in providing the necessary infrastructure to the region that is safe and reliable. The ability to adapt and change can allow communities to use their existing infrastructure more efficiently and expand in areas that would provide growth and development to the community.

Budgets for all transportation modes are tight, and it is crucial to ensure those dollars are being spent on high-priority projects. The Long-Range Transportation Plan provides the planning framework by establishing goals and priorities for all modes of transportation. Priorities are constantly changing so maintaining and updating this plan to reflect current priorities ensures money is spent where it is most useful. Going together with this plan in the Transportation Improvement Program. This plan requires constant updates as plans and projects change throughout the region. This plan allows flexibility in project planning as new funding sources become available to address the highest need areas.

As noted in the appendix, the dispersed population in the region poses many complications related to transportation and transportation planning. The Public Participation Plan works to minimize the disconnect with communication by establishing the best practices regarding public communication for transportation planning. This ensures that all avenues are taken to reach the largest number of residents. An even bigger threat caused by the dispersed population is the toll it has on public transportation services. Completion of the Passenger Transportation Plan works to address this threat by actively working with neighboring areas to identify the needs of residents. This allows for limited resources to be used where they are most needed.

The rural nature of the region poses many unique challenges that other regions may not face. Several miles of infrastructure are required to adequately transport people and goods. This combined with the limited budgets for transportation infrastructure requires that an extensive amount of planning goes into all activities.

2. POLICY BOARD AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND STAFF

POLICY BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Name	Title	County, City or Agency
Bernard Pettinger	County Supervisor	Cass County
Jeff Shearer	County Supervisor	Fremont County
Alex Burton	County Supervisor	Montgomery County
Todd Maher	County Supervisor	Page County
Grace Garrett	Mayor	City of Atlantic
Gary McClarnon – Vice Chair	City Manager	City of Clarinda
Shawnna Silvius – Chair	Mayor	City of Red Oak
AJ Lyman	City Administrator	City of Shenandoah

TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Name	Title	County, City or Agency
Trent Wolken – Chair	County Engineer	Cass County
Daniel R. Davis – Vice Chair	County Engineer	Fremont County
Karen Albert	County Engineer	Montgomery County
JD King	County Engineer	Page County
John Lund	City Administrator	City of Atlantic
Gary McClarnon	City Manager	City of Clarinda
Shawnna Silvius	Mayor	City of Red Oak
AJ Lyman	City Administrator	City of Shenandoah
Mark Lander- non-voting	Transit Director	SWITA

Scott Suhr – non-voting	District Planner	IDOT
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ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Name	Title
John McCurdy	Executive Director
Mark Lander	Transit Director
Tammy DeBord	Grants Specialist III/RPA Administrator
Danielle Briggs	Lead Planner (Transportation Planner)
Ashley Hayes	Community Development Specialist II
Holly Jackson	Community Development Specialist I
Chris Parks	Communications Coordinator

3. PLANNING ACTIVITIES/WORK ELEMENTS

A breakdown describing the activities taking place under the Transportation Planning Work Program is as follows:

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Task Objective: The Executive Director and staff complete a Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) for the following fiscal year. The TPWP identifies previous and future work completed by the RPA-13 staff and outlines the budget under which such work will be completed.

Previous Work: Completion of the TPWP is an annual task. A Draft TPWP was forwarded to the Iowa DOT, Federal Transit Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration on or before April 1, 2025, for their review and comments. This input was incorporated into the document. The Draft FY2026 TPWP was also presented to the Technical Committee and Policy Board for review, comments, and a recommendation of approval before June 1, 2025. The TPWP is a document incorporating a description of the transportation issues to be addressed, planning and programming activities, schedules, and the products that will be produced. The Policy Board and Technical Committee also held a joint Public Hearing prior to adopting a Resolution approving the Final FY2026 TPWP.

Project Description: The Executive Director and staff write the document and conduct public meetings. An open public meeting is held in a county seat city within the region for review of the document draft with the Technical Committee and Policy Board. Notice of the meeting is facilitated by the Communication Coordinator and is dispersed to all cities, counties, media outlets, and other public agencies through the process outlined in the PPP. A summary of the document and public participation process are described in the monthly newsletters and dispersed through the regular mailing. Comment is received over the following month. Review and adoption of the document by the Policy Board and Technical Committee takes place following the public comment period. Assistant staff completes all mailing and disbursement of notices, agendas, minutes, and newsletters and assists with copying and other administrative duties.

Budget: \$9,235

Product: The Final FY 2026 TPWP will incorporate comments received and will be submitted to the Policy Board for their adoption and approval before submission to the Iowa DOT on or before May 30, 2025. The estimated time of completing a draft TPWP is April 1, 2025, with final completion May 30, 2025. The plan will be effective for SFY2026.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Task Objective: The Transportation Planner along with the Communication Coordinator and other staff updates the Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the region at a minimum every five years, and FY2025 was the last major update, with FY2030 the next major update. The PPP outlines how the RPA will involve the public in the planning process and explains the way in which RPA staff should inform the communities of updates and new information that is relevant to them. Greater emphasis was placed, within the new plan, on online outreach and social media.

Previous Work: The PPP was reviewed annually. This review included making changes to the media outlets used for distribution of information and frequency of distribution. The last major update was FY2025.

Project Description: The Transportation Planner and Communications Coordinator will review the document for administrative updates and evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures and outreach strategies. These include changes in dates, demographics, and media outlets. Measuring participation and revising techniques as appropriate will also be included in the evaluation. Public engagement will be undertaken to identify the best ways to reach the public, since these strategies have evolved over time.

The Transportation Planner and administrative staff update the document and conduct public meetings. An open public meeting is held in a county seat city within the region for review of the document draft with the Technical Committee. Notice of the meeting is dispersed to all cities, counties, media outlets, and other public agencies through the process outlined in the previous PPP. A summary of the document and public participation process is described in the monthly newsletters and dispersed through the regular mailing. Comment is received on the draft over the following month. Review and adoption of the document by the Policy Board takes place following the public comment period. Administrative staff completes all mailing and disbursement of notices, agendas, minutes, and newsletters, and assists with copying and other administrative duties. At the December Policy Board meeting, the Policy Board reviews the previous PPP for any necessary updates or improvements. Other activities include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employment of visualization techniques to describe its plans and TIPs, making sure public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the participation plan.

Budget: \$5,120

Product: The final product is a new and more effective PPP. The PPP is reviewed with the Policy Board and Technical Committee in December with an estimated time of completion June 30, 2026. The plan review and any amendments will be effective for SFY2027.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Task Objective: The RPA Administrator, Transportation Planner, Executive Director, Communications Coordinator, and Transit Director will utilize the LRTP to assist with initiation and prioritization of projects in the area. This is a comprehensive transportation planning effort that will involve stakeholders in the RPA 13 Region. It will identify priorities and opportunities in the region as well as challenges.

Previous Work: Data was reviewed and collected as new information became available. Data analysis was conducted by staff. The LRTP was completed and approved in FY25.

Project Description: The project is a major update and a new 5-year LRTP was completed in FY25. Special attention was paid to integrating the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) into the LRTP, along with county level hazard mitigation plans.

Budget: \$5,120

Product: Long Range Transportation Plan elements will include, but may not be limited to:

1. Analysis of how LRTP is being implemented in region.
2. Increased coordination efforts with identified partners.
3. Coordinate transit deployment for regional transit system.
4. Staff regional planning affiliation meetings.

The Long-Range Transportation Plan is considered by SWIPCO planners as they work on multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans, comprehensive plans, and the economic development plan for the region to gain a better understanding of current and future transportation needs, and to incorporate elements from the LRTP into the other plans. A major update was in FY2025, and it will be reviewed every year for the next five years until the next major update in five years.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Task Objective: The RPA Grant Administrator updates the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the region.

Previous Work: Updating the TIP is an annual task. A draft FY 2026-2029 TIP was presented to the Technical Committee and Policy Board in May 2025, and a recommendation of final TIP approval in July 2025. In addition, maintenance/amendments of FFY 2026-2029 TIP are made throughout the year to the plan based on changes in projects or additions.

Project Description: The RPA Administrator updates the document and conducts public meetings with the assistance of other staff, including the Communication Coordinator. An open public meeting is held in a county seat city within the region for review of the document draft with the TC and PB. Notice of the meeting is dispersed to all cities, counties, media outlets, and other public agencies through the process outlined in the PPP. A summary of the document and public participation process is described in the monthly newsletters and dispersed through the regular mailing. Comment is received on the draft over the following month. Review and adoption of the document by the Policy Board and technical committee takes place following the public comment period. Assistant staff completes all mailing and disbursement of notices, agendas, minutes, and newsletters and assists with copying and other administrative duties. TPMS is used to develop the TIP. Additionally, the RPA administrator manages the STBG and TAP applications and awards.

Budget: \$19,694

Product: The final product is a complete TIP to be included with the STIP. TAP applications were due February 14, 2025, and none were received for FY26. Normally, applications are sent to IOWA DOT for comment, then sent for review and approval by the Technical Committee and Policy Board in June. The estimated time of completion for a draft TIP is June 15, 2025, with final completion July 15, 2025. Product is final approval and maintenance of FY 2026-2029 TIP: development of FFY 2026-2029 TIP. The plan will be effective for FFY2025. Development of the FFY2027-2030 TIP. The FY 2026-2029 plan will be effective for FFY2026. Development of the FFY2027-2030 TIP will commence in February 2026 and be completed in July 2026.

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Task Objective: The Passenger Transportation Plan is the result of a process to inventory the available transportation services, assess the transportation needs of the residents, explore the effectiveness and shortcomings of current services, and explore options to better meet the needs of the citizens of the Iowa Regional Planning Affiliation 13 & 18, and SWITA Service Area. The Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) is designed to promote joint, coordinated passenger transportation planning programs that further the development of the local and regional public transportation systems.

Task Objectives of the Passenger Transportation Plan

1. Improve transportation services to Iowans.
2. Increase passenger transportation coordination.
3. Create awareness of unmet needs
4. Develop new working partnerships.
5. Assist decision-makers, advocates, and consumers in understanding the range of transportation options available.
6. Develop justification for future passenger transportation investments.

7. Save dollars and eliminate overlapping of services.
8. Coordination efforts with health and human service agencies. (At least semi-annually)

Previous Work: A major update of the PTP was completed in 2022 through a joint effort with RPA 18 and SWITA.

Project Description: The RPA Administrator and Transportation Planner, in conjunction with the Transit Director, will work to maintain and amend the PTP document and implement outlined opportunities and improve deficiencies in the region with the task objectives listed above in mind. RPA 13 will continue to meet with the Transportation Advisory Group (Human Services Advisory Council) and discuss what is being done for transit services. Meetings will be conducted at a minimum semiannually to present information and gain feedback on the rural transit system.

Budget: \$2,254

Product: RPA 13 will submit semiannual meeting minutes to IDOT for review. Minutes will be retained to show progress of the PTP implementation.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Special Project Objective: The objective is to maintain the most efficient, safe, and reliable transportation system for southwest Iowa.

Previous Work: Creation of an online GIS map usable by the public to access information on existing trails such as location, surface type, difficulty level, and amenities as well as proposed trails. Completion of this will require some footwork to gather information related to amenities and difficulty level. Project also includes 360-degree imaging of all trails and incorporation into Google Maps Street View.

Project Description: This project will be a transportation study and action plan for the communities of RPA 13 region regarding reducing barriers to health services caused by gaps in the transportation system. This study will explore potential transportation needs for individuals regarding health-related appointments at hospitals or clinics in the region. Are appointments cancelled, no-call/no-showed due to lack of transportation—and if so, what is the magnitude and impact? What are the adverse health outcomes from missed appointments and what are the impacts locally to health, quality of life, and economic vitality? We will explore all forms of transportation in the RPA 13 area that are potential possibilities and if they meet any needs. The study will include a public survey component and will also incorporate extensive interviews with health care providers who themselves conduct regular assessments of what barriers to health services that they provide.

Objective: Individuals who have appointments in rural areas may not have transportation to medical care appointments. This is a barrier to accessing medical care. The goal of this study and action plan is to partner with providers in the health care industry and with the public to gather and assess data regarding appointments, missed and cancelled. Additionally, it will gather

information about any other transportation options in the RPA13 area. We want to develop partnerships, especially with medical care facilities, to provide transportation options for individuals in RPA 13 communities. We will answer the question of how to align public and private transportation options in the region to reduce to the greatest extent possible any barriers to health care access created by gaps in transportation services. A major objective is to reach and gather input for those without reliable access to personal transportation, especially the elderly, disabled, and those with limited English proficiency.

Budget: \$46,633

Product: A comprehensive report and action plan that aggregates the needs of various populations within RPA-13 that are at risk of poorer health outcomes due to not scheduling healthcare or missing appointments because of barriers to transportation. Special emphasis will be placed on connecting the areas of weakness identified by the public as well as health care providers with the public transit providers in the region and other options, such as volunteer programs or for-profit transportation providers. This of course includes Southwest Iowa Transit Agency, but also other providers such as Faith in Action and Clarinda Area Volunteers. An anticipated outcome will be to identify areas where transit capacity can be shifted to better align with healthcare provider schedules, and vice versa. Another anticipated outcome is a joint scheduling regime that will align transit services with days that hospitals and clinics in the region have specialists in the office, which are key dates for appointments that if missed can often put someone's healthcare plan behind for months. We anticipate that this study and action plan will be able to be replicated by other RPAs and MPOs and public transit providers, especially in rural areas.

ADMINISTRATION

Task Objective: The objective is to administer the RPA-13 to maintain the most efficient, safe, and reliable transportation system for southwest Iowa.

Previous Work: Previous administrative services include:

1. Attending state RPA quarterly meetings,
2. Attending pertinent conferences,
3. Managing regional RPA meetings,
4. Preparation of quarterly reimbursement requests.

Project Description: Administration will include:

1. Assistance to counties and cities on a need basis for transportation and transit related projects and grant applications that have been increasing in availability and the need for technical assistance from our office increased from previous years,

2. Attending state RPA quarterly meetings,
3. Managing regional RPA Policy Board quarterly meetings and quarterly RPA Technical Committee meetings,
4. Attending conferences,
5. Preparation of quarterly reimbursement requests,
6. Engagement in administrative duties for SS4A in collaboration with RPA 18.

Administration work will largely be the responsibility of the RPA Administrator. All RPA staff participate and attend RPA quarterly meetings.

Budget: \$30,099

Product: The product will be an RPA program that facilitates and administers funding for an efficient, safe, and reliable transportation system that meets the needs of southwest Iowa. Administrative work will be ongoing throughout the year.

4. BUDGET AND FUNDING SOURCES

WORK HOURS ELEMENT SUMMARY

Work Element	Exec. Dir.	Transit Dir.	Lead Planner	Comm. Dev. Spec.	RPA Admin	Comm. Coord.	Total
TPWP	30	5	25	10	50	0	120
PPP	10	10	15	0	15	20	70
L RTP	10	10	20	0	20	10	70
TIP	15	15	40	0	220	20	310
PTP	5	5	5	0	5	10	30
Special Projects	50	100	55	490	30	30	755
Administration	40	0	70	0	300	30	440
Totals	160	145	230	475	640	120	1795

BUDGET SUMMARY

Work Element	% of Time	new FTA 5311	FHWA SPR	FHWA SPR Carryover	FTA 5311 Carry Over	RPA Total	Local Match	Total
TPWP	6.68%	\$0	\$0	\$5,172	\$2,216	\$7,388	\$1,847	\$9,235
PPP	3.90%	\$0	\$2,048	\$819	\$1,229	\$4,096	\$1,024	\$5,120
L RTP	3.90%	\$0	\$2,048	\$819	\$1,229	\$4,096	\$1,024	\$5,120
TIP	17.27%	\$4,726	\$4,727	\$4,726	\$1,576	\$15,755	\$3,939	\$19,694
PTP	1.67%	\$0	\$0	\$1,803	\$0	\$1,803	\$451	\$2,254
Special Projects	42.06%	\$15,416	\$8,832	\$11,192	\$1,867	\$37,307	\$9,327	\$46,634
Administration	24.51%	\$6,038	\$8,525	\$1,184	\$8,690	\$24,437	\$6,020	\$30,457
Totals	100%	\$26,180	\$26,180	\$25,715	\$16,807	\$94,882	\$23,632	\$118,514

FHWA Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) Program funding is transferred to FTA 5305e in a consolidated planning application.

5. COST ALLOCATION PLAN

Southwest Iowa Planning Council allocates project costs through a cost-based system, which is allowed by Circular A-87, in the following manner:

Total Claim = Allowable Direct Costs + Allocable Portion of Allowable Indirect Costs - Applicable Credits.

RPA-13 planning services are accounted for as account #1997 in SWIPCO's annual accounting procedures. Long Range Transportation Services is accounted for as account #1952, Transportation Planning Work Program is accounted for as account #1950. Public Participation Plan is accounted for as account #1951, and Transportation Improvement Plan is accounted for as account #1953. Passenger Transportation Plan is accounted for as account # 1954 and Special Projects is accounted for as account #1955.

Direct Costs - Are those costs attributable to salary, employee benefits, employee withholdings, use of a vehicle, postage, printing, and contracts or miscellaneous directly attributable to IJJA planning. These costs are verified by individual journals or reports signed monthly.

Indirect Costs - Are those costs that cannot readily be assigned to a particular cost objective without effort disproportionate to the benefits received. Southwest Iowa Planning Council determines indirect costs each month, for each planning activity or contracted service, as a proportion of each activity item based on the amount of time spent on that activity in relation to the overall amount of time spent agency wide.

Indirect costs include but are not limited to; building operation and maintenance, depreciation, insurance premiums, general office supplies, utilities, assurance bonds, car insurance, consulting fees, and similar miscellaneous costs that apply agency wide as opposed to specific activities.

Applicable Credits - Are receipts or reductions of expenditure that offset or reduce costs allocable to Federal awards as direct or indirect costs. These are to be credited to the cost objective or the award, or refunded to the awarding agency, depending upon the circumstances and the timing of their accrual or receipt. SWIPCO credits account for any rebates, alternative funds or returns received during the awarded project.

The budgets prepared for this plan on the previous page are estimates of the proposed activities covered by this plan. Actual costs replace budgeted figures as the various elements are completed. The various work elements above are not accounted for separately in SWIPCO's accounting scheme but fall under the general cost account #1997. Cost deviations more than the total award will not be funded without amendment to this plan, and approval of the STIP.

Cost Allocation Plan For State and Local Governments

Southwest Iowa Planning Council (EIN: 42-1046043)

1501 SW 7th Street, Atlantic IA 50022

Tel. (712)243-4196, Fax (712)243-3458

Contact Person(s): John McCurdy, Executive Director Email: john.mccurdy@swipco.org
Rhonda Brown, Finance Manager Email: rhonda.brown@swipco.org

A. INTRODUCTION

Southwest Iowa Planning Council is a state/local government located in Atlantic, Iowa. The Organization administers a variety of programs funded by Federal, State, and Local agencies. These programs include Community Development Planning and Technical Assistance, Economic Development, Public Transit (Southwest Iowa Transit Agency), and Housing Assistance (Southwest Iowa Housing Trust Fund).

B. COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY

This proposal is for a Cost Allocation Plan (Plan) to cover the period beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023. This proposal is based on the Organization's actual costs reconcilable to the audited financial statements for its fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. The status of our cost allocation plan is (please select one):

☐

(a) This is our initial request for the approval of our cost allocation plan. None of the federal agencies have ever officially approved of our cost allocation plan.

☐

(b) We have received an official written approval of our cost allocation plan from Department of XYZ Federal funding agency (other than National Business Center, Department of Interior).

☐

(c) We have received written approval of our cost allocation plan from National Iowa Department of Transportation multiple times. However, we have been unable to obtain formal Federal Cognizant approval of our Indirect Cost Proposal.

☒

(d) We have not received a Federal official written approval of our cost allocation plan. We have only received approval from the Iowa Department of Transportation in prior years. This proposal addresses all elements of cost incurred by the Organization and identifies shared costs that require allocation. The Organization treats all costs as direct costs except general administration and general expenses. Joint costs are prorated individually as direct costs to each category and to each award using a base most appropriate to the particular cost being prorated. Therefore, the direct allocation method has been used in allocating indirect costs. Organization maintains adequate internal controls to insure that no cost is charged both directly and indirectly to Federal contracts or grants.

C. DIRECT COSTS

Direct costs are costs that can be identified specifically with a project and therefore are charged to that project. The accounting system records these costs as they are incurred within the series of accounts assigned for that purpose. Further distribution is not required.

D. INDIRECT COSTS

Indirect costs are costs incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be readily and specifically identified with a particular project or activity. Indirect costs are (please select one)

☐

(a) direct charged to all programs and grants, or

☒

(b) grouped into common pool(s) and then distributed to benefiting activities by a cost allocation process.

☐

(c) none of the above. Indirect costs are (fill in the blank)

E. COST POOL AND BASE FOR DISTRIBUTION

The Organization has created an Administrative Services (Indirect) Pool consisting of salaries, fringe benefits, and other costs. The Administrative Services (Indirect) Pool is charged with all the indirect costs as defined above. The pool is distributed to the various program activities on the basis direct base of hours/miles. Each category of non-salary expenditures has been analyzed based on the facts, and the **Elements of Cost (Schedule A)** explains the allocation between Direct and Administrative Services (Indirect) Costs.

F. SUPPORTING FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, SUMMARY SCHEDULE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS

The **Schedule of Total Expenditures (Schedule B)** contained in this proposal agrees with the Organization's audit report and/or Statement of Functional Expenses. Any differences must be explained.

Unallowable and Excludable Costs – The following costs have been excluded from the allocation process: capital expenses, entertainment, fines and penalties, and food costs, etc.

G. DESCRIPTION OF ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

SWIPCO uses a modified accrual system of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual (i.e. when they become both measureable and available). "Measurable" means the amount of the transaction can be determined, and "available" means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to be used to pay liabilities of the current period. A one-year availability period is used for revenue recognition for all federally-funded revenue. Expenditures are recorded when the related liability is incurred.

We have not made any significant changes during the proposal fiscal year (1) to our accounting system, or (2) to the definition or to the accounting treatment of any expense category.

H. INDIRECT SALARIES

Listed below are the positions, functions, and annual salaries for the people who comprise the Administrative Services Pool. These positions are charged the applicable percentage to Administrative Services.

Position and % Indirect *	Function	Salary
Executive Director	General Management	129,185
Administrative Services Director	Administrative and related activities	91,990
Finance Manager	Accounting and related activities	85,087
Human Resources Coordinator	Hiring, retention, recruiting, compliance	65,465
Administrative Assistant	Reception and clerical	44,721
Communications Coordinator	Communication and related activities	52,500
Finance Specialist	Accounting and related activities	64,865
Safety Coordinator	Safety programs and related activities	45,000
Human Resources Specialist	Hiring, retention, recruiting, compliance	50,000
Total Administrative Services Pool Salaries	\$628,814	

I. INDIRECT FRINGE BENEFITS

Fringe benefits associated with the positions within the Administrative Services (Indirect) Pool are as follows:

Payroll taxes:	
FICA	43,504
State Unemployment	289
Health, Life, AD&D, and LTD Insurance	87,151
Retirement Plan (IPERS)	59,360
Vacation Accrual	39,886
Work Comp	942
Total	231,132

J. SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

See Audit SEFA

K. COST ALLOCATION PLAN CERTIFICATION

See Schedule B

L. ORGANIZATION CHART

See Schedule C

SCHEDULE A – Elements of Cost

Elements of Cost (must match Schedule B)

Elements of Cost	Allocation Methodology	Item Description
Salaries		
Accrual Vac Exp		
FICA/Medicare		
SUTA		
Health Insurance		
Life Ins & LTD		
IPERS		
Workers' Comp Ins		
Flex Plan Admin Fee	Indirect	Cost necessary to operate benefit plan
Contract Labor	Direct	Negotiated cost for specific project
Taxi Support	Direct	Support for taxi services via tickets
Bad Debt Write Off		Uncollectable accounts receivable
Board Mileage	Indirect	Compensation for mileage by Board
Build & Equip Repairs	Indirect	Necessary repairs
Furn & Equip	Indirect	Necessary furniture & equipment purchases
Cleaning Service	Indirect	Based on square footage cleaned
Depr Expense - Vehicle	Indirect	Depreciation of vehicles
Depr Expense - Bldg	Indirect	Depreciation of building
Human Resources	Indirect	Hiring expenses, tests, background checks
Fuel	Direct	Fuel, billed to specific codes
Grant Expense	Direct	Services outside of normal grant contract
Insurance - Property/Liability	Indirect	Property & liability insurance
Insurance - Auto	Indirect	Auto liability & collision insurance
Mobile Data Units	Indirect	Rental fee for in-vehicle tablets
Internet	Indirect	Internet services
Lawn Care/Snow Removal	Indirect	Mowing, fertilizing, clearing snow
Sanitizing Expense	Indirect	Sanitizing, due to COVID-19
Maintenance/Repair Vehicles	Direct	Vehicle repairs other than capital expenses
LBP Expenses	Direct	Cost of conducting lead tests on homes
M Dues & Subscript	Indirect	Memberships and dues
Misc Expense	Indirect	Approved but uncategorized expenses
Office Supplies	Indirect	Supplies for entire office
Postage	Direct	Postage, directly billed via meter
Professional Fees	Indirect	Auditor, attorney, IT
Promotions-Ads-Public Notice	Indirect	Advertising
Recording Fees	Direct	Recording mortgages in housing programs
Software/Support/Maint	Indirect	Transit/project management/accounting software
SWIPCO Annual Meeting	Indirect	Annual business meeting expenses
Telephone	Indirect	Telephone service
Radio Fee	Direct	Radio tower fee
Tires	Direct	Replacement tires
Training - Workshops	Indirect	General training
Mileage	Direct	Miles not covered by fuel or depreciation expense
Utilities	Indirect	Water, sewer, electric, gas
Printing	Planning-Direct; Transit-Indirect	Planning-Direct; Transit-Indirect

**SCHEDULE B --
Elements of Cost**

	FY 24	Anticipated Direct	Anticipated Indirect	Anticipated Direct	Anticipated Indirect
	Comm. Develop.				
Salaries	955,622	747,959.72	207,662.25	78%	22%
Accrual Vac Exp	53,013	38,963.56	14,049.33	73%	27%
FICA/Medicare	71,082	55,636.22	15,445.41	78%	22%
SUTA	557	474.29	83.04	85%	15%
Health Insurance	171,415	149,978.46	21,436.11	87%	13%
Life Ins & LTD	5,532	4,545.30	986.91	82%	18%
IPERS	90,211	70,607.39	19,603.32	78%	22%
Workers' Comp Ins	3,394	3,031.59	362.37	89%	11%
Flex Plan Admin Fee	1,120	-	1,120.00	0%	100%
Contract Labor	50,000	50,000.00	-	100%	0%
Purchased Transportation		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bad Debt Write Off	25,000	25,000.00		100%	0%
Board Mileage	1,750	-	1,750.00	0%	100%
Build & Equip Repairs	1,000	-	1,000.00	0%	100%
Furn & Equip	25,000	-	25,000.00	0%	100%
Cleaning Service	3,500	-	3,500.00	0%	100%
Depr Expense - Vehicle	13,000	-	13,000.00	0%	100%
Depr Expense - Bldg	10,000	-	10,000.00	0%	100%
Fuel	9,000	9,000.00	-	100%	0%
Grant Expense	2,000	2,000.00	-	100%	0%
Insurance - Property/Liability	7,224	-	7,223.72	0%	100%
Insurance - Auto	2,891	-	2,891.00	0%	100%

	FY 24	Anticipated Direct	Anticipated Indirect	Anticipated Direct	Anticipated Indirect
	Transit				
	2,914,033	2,492,880.51	421,152.10	86%	14%
	89,910	64,073.31	25,836.60	71%	29%
	223,005	191,803.72	31,201.54	86%	14%
	2,434	2,191.83	241.88	90%	10%
	175,000	97,344.47	77,655.53	56%	44%
	12,058	9,624.46	2,433.85	80%	20%
	277,688	237,930.90	39,756.76	86%	14%
	62,800	62,220.34	579.66	99%	1%
	1,000	-	1,000.00	0%	100%
	5,000	5,000.00	-	100%	0%
	195,000	195,000.00	-	100%	0%
	1,000	1,000.00	-	100%	0%
	1,750	-	1,750.00	0%	100%
	12,000	-	12,000.00	0%	100%
	6,250	-	6,250.00	0%	100%
	6,250	-	6,250.00	0%	100%
	580,000	-	580,000.00	0%	100%
	70,000	-	70,000.00	0%	100%
	760,000	-	760,000.00	0%	100%
		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	32,393	-	32,393.28	0%	100%
	419,854	-	419,854.00	0%	100%

Mobile Data Units		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Internet	6,000	-	6,000.00	0%	100%
Lawn Care/Snow Removal	1,500	-	1,500.00	0%	100%
LBP Expenses	-	-	-	100%	0%
Vehicle Cleaning Expense	-	-	-	0%	100%
M Dues & Subscript	14,500	-	14,500.00	0%	100%
Misc Expense	17,500	-	17,500.00	0%	100%
Office Supplies	9,000	-	9,000.00	0%	100%
Postage	3,500	3,500.00	-	100%	0%
Printing	8,500	-	8,500.00	0%	100%
Professional Fees	36,853	-	36,852.50	0%	100%
Legal Expense	2,500	-	2,500.00	0%	100%
Recording Fees	-	-	-	0%	100%
Software/Support/Maint	15,000	-	15,000.00	0%	100%
SWIPCO Annual Meeting	1,250	-	1,250.00	0%	100%
Telephone	8,000	-	8,000.00	0%	100%
Tires	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Training - Workshops	45,000	22,500.00	22,500.00	50%	50%
Mileage	2,500	2,500.00	-	100%	0%
Utilities	4,500	-	4,500.00	0%	100%
Human Resources	2,000	-	2,000.00	0%	100%
Promotions-Ads-Public Notice	10,000	10,000.00	-	100%	0%
Maintenance/Repair	2,000	-	2,000.00	0%	100%
Total Expenditures	1,692,412	1,195,697	496,716	71%	29%

46,000	-	46,000.00	0%	100%
5,250	-	5,250.00	0%	100%
3,750	-	3,750.00	0%	100%
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
20,000	-	20,000.00	0%	100%
10,000	-	10,000.00	0%	100%
10,000	-	10,000.00	0%	100%
17,000	-	17,000.00	0%	100%
3,000	-	3,000.00	0%	100%
6,750	-	6,750.00	0%	100%
29,085	-	29,084.50	0%	100%
15,000	-	15,000.00	0%	100%
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
24,000	-	24,000.00	0%	100%
1,500	-	1,500.00	0%	100%
14,500	-	14,500.00	0%	100%
52,500	-	52,500.00	0%	100%
15,000	-	15,000.00	0%	100%
500	-	500.00	0%	100%
38,000	-	38,000.00	0%	100%
40,000	-	40,000.00	0%	100%
35,000	-	35,000.00	0%	100%
150,000	-	150,000.00	0%	100%
6,384,259	3,359,070	3,025,190	53%	47%

VII. AMENDMENTS AND REVIEWS

TPWP REVISIONS

OVERVIEW

2 CFR 200 describes the uniform administrative rules for Federal grants and cooperative agreements and subawards to State, local and Indian tribal governments. These requirements apply to metropolitan planning (PL) and State Planning and Research (SPR) grants. FTA has similar requirements documented in FTA Circular 5010.1C, which apply to FTA metropolitan planning grants. Iowa uses a Consolidated Planning Grant where FHWA and FTA planning funds are combined into a single fund managed through FTA's TRAMS system. The uses of these funds are documented in the work programs of the Iowa DOT, MPOs, and RPAs.

WAIVER OF APPROVALS

All work program changes require prior written Federal approval, unless waived by the awarding agency. 2 CFR 200.308 outlines different types of revisions for budget and program plans, and this FHWA memo on prior approvals summarizes revisions that require prior Federal approval, as well as other miscellaneous actions and allowable costs that require prior Federal approval.

Types of TPWP revisions that require Federal approval include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Request for additional Federal funding.
- Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity.
- The transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense.
- Change in the scope or objective of the project or program.
- Transfers of funds between direct cost categories or programs, functions, or activities, which exceed 10% of the total work program budget as last approved.
- Change in a key person specified in the application of the federal award.

Types of revisions that require Iowa DOT approval include:

- Transfers of funds between categories, projects, functions, or activities which do not exceed 10% of the total work program budget, or when the Federal share of the budget is less than \$150,000.

Types of revisions that require MPO/RPA approval include:

- Revisions related to work that does not involve federal funding.

REVISION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURES

All revision requests from MPOs and RPAs should be submitted electronically to the Iowa DOT Systems Planning Bureau and the agency's District Planner. If all necessary information is provided, the request will then be forwarded to the FHWA and FTA for review and any necessary approvals.

Revision requests shall, at a minimum, include:

- A letter detailing the work program revision(s)
- A resolution or meeting minutes showing the revision's approval.
- Budget summary table with changes highlighted/noted.
- Modified section(s) of the plan's work elements with changes highlighted/noted.
- Revisions where FHWA/FTA is the designated approving agency shall require written approval by FHWA/FTA prior to commencement of activity, purchasing of equipment, or request for reimbursement.
- Revisions where the Iowa DOT Systems Planning Bureau is the designated approving agency shall require written approval by the Iowa DOT Systems Planning Bureau prior to commencement of activity or request for reimbursement.
- Revisions where the MPO or RPA is the approving agency shall be approved by the Policy Board.
- Notification by the approving agency will be in writing.

NOTE: All necessary TPWP approvals shall be in place prior to the commencement of activity, purchasing of equipment, or request for reimbursement. More specifically regarding the procurement of equipment and services, there should be no notification of award, signed contract, placement of an order, or agreement with a contractor prior to receiving the necessary TPWP approvals.

VIII. SUMMARY

The Southwest Iowa Regional Planning Affiliation has developed this TPWP utilizing cooperative involvement with various local, regional, state, and national transportation interests throughout the development. The TPWP expresses the Southwest Iowa planning area's objectives for achieving efficient transportation planning in the Region. The document is multimodal and intermodal in its composition and will enable the transportation interests in the Region to utilize it as a guide for future transportation planning and programming.

APPENDIX. PLANNING PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

ROADS, HIGHWAYS AND BRIDGES

Weakness

The region has a dispersed population.

Within four counties, RPA-13 has 34 incorporated communities with populations ranging from approximately 20 to 6,700 with only 4 communities having a population of approximately 5,000 or above. This dispersed population raises problems for the transportation system including higher transit miles, more miles of roads and necessary roads with lower usage.

High costs associated with maintaining a rural network.

More roads will be needed to reach the dispersed population in RPA-13 which will lead to an increase in roads to maintain. Iowa sees all four seasons throughout a year from frigid snowy winters to hot summers. These weather changes bring snow removal, road repairs, pavement repairs and gravel road maintenance. Along with the typical weather, cities and those involved with transportation must be prepared for natural disasters that could impair roadways.

Several highways in poor condition

Being in a rural location with a smaller, dispersed population means that roads will see a lot of traffic from those commuting to work, farm equipment moving fields and trucks moving goods. Along with this heavy traffic, funding for rural areas can be lacking especially when spread over the large road system within the region and the state. This lack of funding can mean that smaller less utilized roads may fall to the bottom of the project list, often ending up in poor condition before they are repaired.

Opportunities

Economic development can be created along interstate and major highways.

With multiple major highway systems and interstates running through the region, there is an opportunity for economic development to take place along these networks. These road networks connect with two close-by metropolitan areas that could also add to the appeal for development in the RPA-13 region.

Rural areas can capitalize on housing developments for commuters working in surrounding metropolitan areas.

Many residents live in the RPA-13 region and commute to metropolitan areas for work due to lower housing costs here and more employment opportunities there. Cities within RPA-13 could capitalize on the idea of being a bedroom community (a place where people live and sleep but work elsewhere) by initializing housing developments. This would increase regional population and the tax base.

The highway system allows for increased freight movement throughout the region.

The location of major road networks throughout the region and connecting to surrounding regions and states is appealing for freight movement. The ease to move items between regions mixed with the proximity to metropolitan areas would be very appealing to manufacturing businesses.

New funding sources such as gas taxes or other fees to maintain and develop network infrastructure.

Road departments have very tight budgets for a never-ending list of projects. All new funding sources make a huge difference in how much road can be repaired each year or new road for a connection that needs to be made.

TRANSIT

WEAKNESS

The region is very rural with highly dispersed communities.

By nature, the region is a very rural setting with only four of the thirty-four cities considered urban areas. This rural setting produces a population that is very dispersed throughout the region requiring more miles to be driven to reach the residents, which increases the cost of operation and the cost to riders.

No fixed route services.

Within RPA-13, the largest city is Atlantic with around 6,700 residents. The low population levels of incorporated cities in the region prevent public transit from having non-stop fixed routes to all communities. The lack of these routes produces uncertainty in the public about what services are available and when.

The traditional concept of fixed route bus or light rail services is not possible because of the low population density in the region.

Lack of replacement vehicles.

The local public transit fleet should replace 15-20 vehicles per year in order to maintain the overall efficiency and safety of the fleet, but in the past 5 years only 5 new vehicles have been available for purchase by the local public transit agency because of a national shortage of vehicles, partially due to pandemic disruptions.

OPPORTUNITIES

Increased population of residents who do not drive.

The number and proportion of residents within the region who either cannot/do not drive their own vehicles because of age, impairment, financial resources, or through choice has increased leading to increased demand. A growing immigrant population, particularly Pacific Islanders, has greatly increased demand for transit services.

Potential funding opportunities through new contracts, better services, and outside grants

With a smaller population and limited ridership, it becomes difficult to fund the transit system. New and growing services such as workforce and student routes, better vehicles and grant funding allow for expanded and continued services. As new funding becomes available, transit services in the area will continue to improve and grow.

Economic development throughout the Region provides opportunities for employee shuttles and commuter routes.

As economic development throughout the region continues, the demand for transportation will increase. Large employers can find the idea of employee shuttles and work route beneficial to their company productivity and success rate. By offering designated routes to large employers, public transit can aid in additional economic development within the region while ensuring employees have reliable access to work transportation to maintain an income.

Opportunities to increase efficiency within the public transit system.

As new technology is developed and released, efficiency within the transit system will continue to increase. Better dispatching equipment, tracking programs and communication devices will free up valuable staff time that can be used on other transit projects within the office.

RAIL

WEAKNESS

Large cities without rail

Not every large community within the region has access to a rail line such as Clarinda and Sidney. This can deter development of businesses that would depend on the freight transportation provided by rail.

No Amtrak stops within the region.

Amtrak currently has a line that runs through southern Iowa entering the state from Nebraska in Council Bluffs and continuing through Burlington into Illinois. Although the line runs through RPA 13, there are currently no stops which means those wishing to utilize this service must travel to the nearest stop in either Omaha or Creston.

OPPORTUNITIES

Increased freight movement

Having multiple rail systems, one of which is a national line, running through the region increases freight movement in and out of the region. This allows for more resources coming in and the potential for more products going out.

Economic development can be used existing rail transportation infrastructure.

When looking to expand or relocate, certain businesses will look for locations near rail lines for easier access to freight movement. Having multiple lines through the region creates more spots that are appealing to these businesses.

Amtrak route runs through the region.

Amtrak currently has one line that runs across southern Iowa and through RPA 13. Although there are currently no stops within the region, the line runs through several towns with Red Oak being the largest, opening the opportunity for a future stop.

AVIATION

WEAKNESS

No commercial passenger services located within the region

There are currently no commercial passenger services within the region which limits citizens from utilizing airports. The lack of citizen involvement and awareness in the region's airports hinders the knowledge of why the airports are critical for the area.

Limited capacity in airport services

By nature, airports located within RPA 13 are smaller in capacity due to the rural environment. The limited capacity (available hangers, runway size, staff, etc.) can severely hinder the airports and deter potential users who are accustomed to larger, more equipped facilities.

Not all airports are staffed

Due to funding constraints and limited capacity and use, not all airports within the region are staffed. Currently, Anita and Clarinda airports do have staff available at the airports during certain hours. This lack of staff can severely limit the use of the facilities by those interested.

OPPORTUNITIES

Runway capacity to assist in economic development

Four out of the five airports in the region listed potential projects to improve their runways by expanding, constructing, resurfacing or widening. Increasing runway capacity would allow for more and larger aircraft to be able to utilize the facilities in turn bringing more goods, services and potential companies to the area.

Development of facilities to accommodate aircraft

In the Individual Airport Reports for the region's airports, three airports has planned projects to increase hanger capacity to accommodate more aircraft. Hanger expansions would allow for more temporary or permanent storage of aircraft for personal or economic purposes.

Provide services such as fuel stations, staff, etc. to accommodate aircraft

While most of the airports in the region provide fuel and staffed hours, two of them don't. By providing these services, more aircraft would be able to utilize the facilities and bring more of an economic impact to the area.

Creation of a regional airport

With declining population and tighter budgets, the region may wish to explore the possibility of consolidating airports in smaller communities to create a regional one. This could consist of a detailed report exploring budgets, expenses, and various scenarios such as leaving the airports as they are, combining them with an existing location or building a centrally located facility.

TRAILS

WEAKNESS

Many unconnected or incomplete trails

There are many trails missing connections scattered throughout the region. More often than not, these trails fail to make connections to their intended points due to lack of landowners willing to sell their land or grant easements.

Many trails have to share existing network infrastructure with other types of transportation rather than having a dedicated route

When connections can't be made off road, often the connections are made via shared roadways. Shared roadways are also utilized because of the appeal of lower costs to construction. These shared networks can be hazardous to those utilizing them as a trail. Roads can be very busy, and drivers can be distracted, leading to dangerous conditions.

Possible conflicting use and safety issues of routes with having to share road or path infrastructure such as bicycles having to share roads with vehicles

If proper safety studies aren't completed prior to designating a roadway for shared use between vehicles and bicycles, it can lead to hazardous conditions ending in injury or fatality.

Minimal local advertisement of trails

A lack of local advertisement of trails leads to many residents not knowing they exist. These residents then drive farther away to utilize trails that are more recognized instead of the ones that are within their home county. Very few of the trails have much public information on accessible websites such as Google maps. The public is unaware/unsure of trail conditions.

Funding

Funding can be difficult to acquire at a local level. Trails are expensive to develop, and donations typically won't cover the construction costs. Local funding often must be combined with state and federal funding to make up the difference. If communities are lacking on state and federal funding, local fundraising can become a burden on locals who have already donated.

Difficulty getting new people involved

Trails groups and boards have discussed the difficulty of succession planning and getting new people involved in trail development within the region. This lack of involvement puts a strain on those already committing time and leaves an uncertainty of what will happen in the future.

Lack of paved shoulders

An overall lack of paved shoulders within the region provides dangerous riding conditions for bicyclists wanting to share the highways with automobiles as not all locations are accessible by trails alone. Riding among cars on the highway greatly increases the risk of accidents between bicyclists and distracted drivers.

OPPORTUNITIES

Improved quality of life in communities due to increased recreational opportunities

By providing better connections between the existing trails, the region has the chance to put trails near a large number of residents. Nearby trails would increase the likelihood that residents would utilize them, increasing their physical and mental health and overall quality of life.

Increased tourist opportunities and tourism development opportunities

By having several larger trails and trail connections within the region, the possibility for tourist draws increases. The Wabash Trace, T-Bone Trail, Lewis and Clark Trail and American Discovery Trail all have the possibility to draw large numbers of users from around the state with the right connections.

Opportunities to create or show scenic routes in the region

From state parks to the rolling Loess Hills, the region has a range of natural beauty to be experienced. By connecting these places by trails, it would create beautiful scenic routes that would draw in people from around the state.

Development of county boards that can coordinate and plan trails within the region

The establishment of county trail boards will allow better coordination between counties and the development of countywide trail plans. Increased discussion and planning will lead to better routes spanning throughout the region.

Frontier Iowa Trail (FIT) Network

The Frontier Iowa Trail (FIT) Network is a multi-county group of trail advocates and planners who actively work throughout Western Iowa to establish trails. This network acts as a catalyst to bring people together to discuss ideas for trail development and connections across county and state lines.

People embracing the fact that trails are an economic driver

As more trails have been developed within the region and throughout the state, people are beginning to see the positive effects they have on the towns they traverse. A good local example would be the Wabash Trace that travels through eight different towns. People who ride the entire trail often stop in each town to rest, eat and explore, often spending money while they're there.

Potential permanent funding through Iowa Water and Land Legacy

The Iowa Water and Land Legacy established the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund in 2010. This trust fund would be used to enhance water quality, productive agricultural soils, wildlife habitats and outdoor recreational opportunities. However, this trust fund would be funded by a sales tax increase of 3/8ths of a cent, which has not yet been passed.