

REVISED



MEETING NOTICE

MPOJC Rural Policy Board

~~Wednesday, January 30, 2019 – 6:00 PM~~

Wednesday, February 6, 2019 – 6:00 PM

City of Iowa City – Council Chambers
410 E. Washington Street, Iowa City, IA

AGENDA

1. Call to Order the Rural Policy Board Meeting
 - a. Introduce Board members and recognize alternates
 - b. Consider approval of meeting minutes
2. Public discussion of any item not on the agenda*
3. Administration
 - a. Consider approval of the Rural Policy Board section of the FY20 MPOJC Budget and Two-Year Financial Forecast
 - b. Consider approval of the FY20 Johnson County assessment schedule for the East Central Iowa Council of Governments
4. Availability of East Central Iowa Council of Governments assistance
5. Discuss MPOJC Orientation opportunity for Board Members
6. Discuss potential MPOJC Work Program projects for FY20
7. Update on small community traffic engineering assistance
8. Update on the CRANDIC Passenger Rail & Rail-to-Trail Studies
9. Consider election of calendar year 2019 Rural Policy Board Officers
10. Other Business
11. Adjournment

**Public input is permitted on any agenda item. Please indicate to the Chair if you wish to comment on an agenda item.*

To request any disability-related accommodations or language interpretation, please contact MPOJC staff at 356-5230 or Kent-Ralston@Iowa-City.org 48 hours prior to the meeting.



PRELIMINARY

MPOJC RURAL POLICY BOARD
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2018 – 6:00 pm
City of North Liberty – Council Chambers
1 Quail Creek Circle, North Liberty, IA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Johnson County:	Mike Carberry, Lisa Green-Douglass
Hills:	Tim Kemp
Swisher:	Chris Taylor
Lone Tree:	Jonathan Green
Oxford:	Tim Hennes

STAFF PRESENT: Kent Ralston, Brad Neumann, Emily Bothell,

OTHERS PRESENT: Jennifer Fencl (ECICOG)

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Introduce Board members and recognize alternates

Kemp called the meeting to order.

- b. Consider approval of meeting minutes

Green-Douglass moved to approve the meeting minutes from January 2017; the motion was seconded by Taylor. **The motion carried unanimously.**

2. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

None

3. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Consider approval of the Rural Policy Board section of the FY2019 MPOJC Budget and Two-Year Financial Forecast

Ralston introduced the FY2019 MPOJC Budget and Financial Forecast, noting that the overall budget for FY19 reflects a 12% increase from FY18, primarily due to an increase in benefits, wages, and the 0.5 full-time-equivalent that was approved at the November Board meeting.

Carberry moved to approve the motion. Hennes seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- b. Consider approval of the FY2019 Johnson County assessment schedule for the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)

Ralston informed the Board that the MPO collects the ECICOG dues for Johnson County and forwards them to ECICOG. Ralston stated that ECICOG assesses each county in which they serve on a per-capita basis; the MPO then assesses each municipality within Johnson County. ECICOG proposed a 2% rate increase for all counties it serves for FY19.

Hennes moved to approve the motion; Green-Douglas seconded. **The motion carried unanimously.**

4. Availability of East Central Iowa Council of Governments assistance

Fenci stated that additional commuter transportation services were being provided. The goal is to create regional connectivity that may not have existed in the past. Ride sharing (both public and private) and van pooling will be the first modes implemented.

5. Discuss MPOJC Orientation opportunity for Board Members

Ralston stated that an orientation is available for current and new Board members interested in discussing the role of the MPO.

6. Discuss potential MPOJC Work Program projects for FY2019

Ralston stated that the MPO was putting together Work Program projects for FY19. In the coming weeks, the MPO would be reaching out to entities for potential projects.

7. Update on small community traffic engineering assistance

Neumann updated the Board on traffic engineering studies done for different entities, most of them being average daily traffic counts. The MPO will be reaching out to entities for 2018 traffic engineering study requests.

8. Update on Long-Range Transportation Plan revision process

Ralston informed the members that the Long-Range Transportation Plan was complete and both hard copies and digital copies are available.

9. Update on the CRANDIC Passenger Rail Study & Iowa DOT I-380 Corridor Study

Neumann stated that in September, Phase II of the Iowa City to North Liberty Passenger Rail Feasibility Study was presented to the Urban Policy Board. Phase II indicated that the project would cost between \$30-40 million.

Neumann informed the Board that the Iowa DOT had conducted an additional study in the I-380/CRANDIC corridor looking at alternative transportation options, including passenger rail and autonomous vehicles. The Iowa DOT concluded that the Iowa City to North Liberty section for passenger rail was warranted for further study.

Neumann stated that Phase I, Phase II, and the Iowa DOT studies are complete, but the MPO is seeking more direction for Phase III. The Iowa DOT developed ridership estimates which will allow forecasting for revenue. Phase III would focus on a cost-benefit analysis, a financial plan, securing operating funding, operation oversight, and proposed station

stops. The Iowa DOT and CRANDIC have stated that they are willing to cover a portion of the cost of the Phase III study.

In addition, the MPO met with the City of Iowa City, the Iowa City Area Development Group, the Iowa City/Coralville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Alliant Energy, and the CRANDIC Railroad to discuss ways to preserve the rail corridor if local officials determine not to move forward with passenger rail. The group supported completion of the Phase III passenger rail study and proposed a “rails-to-trails” option.

Neumann stated that this could become part of the Phase III study for passenger rail or it could be done separately and would require additional funding.

Neumann stated the Iowa DOT will not provide funding for any portion of the trail study because they are using federal rail funding. The “rails-to-trails” scope of the study includes rail banking, rail abandonment and conversion processes, CRANDIC liability issues, trail distance, and infrastructure costs.

10. Consider election of calendar year 2018 Rural Policy Board Officers

Tim Kemp and Chris Taylor were nominated for Chair and Vice-Chair for 2018. Carberry moved to approve the motion; Green seconded. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

11. Other Business

None

12. Adjournment

Motion to approve was made by Green; Seconded by Carberry. **The motion was approved unanimously.**



Date: January 23, 2019

To: Rural Policy Board

From: Kent Ralston, Executive Director 

Re: Agenda Item #3(a): Consider approval of the Rural Policy Board section of the FY20 MPOJC Budget and Two-Year Financial Forecast

The FY20 MPOJC Budget and Financial Forecast is attached. The focus of MPOJC continues to be fulfilling state and federal requirements necessary for MPOJC urban communities to be able to receive formula and discretionary state and federal funds, and producing traffic and transportation studies, large and small, for Johnson County communities.

For rural entities (areas outside of the metropolitan area), MPOJC's focus is to provide traffic count, traffic speed and study information, traffic signal studies, traffic sign evaluations, sidewalk and trail planning, general mapping services, and other transportation evaluations. We are also able to assist with grant application preparation for your communities, and review of development proposals at your request.

An ongoing item we conduct on your behalf is annexation notifications to all fire departments in the County, through the fire department mutual aid structure. MPOJC is notified of all proposed and completed annexations, and we in turn provide the notification and maps to your fire departments. This has resulted in more accurate information when emergency responders are responding to calls in recently annexed areas.

The proposed budget reflects an overall increase of approximately 4.5% from FY19. A majority of the budget increase is due to increases in staff wages and benefits. Please be prepared to consider approval of the Rural Policy Board section of the FY20 MPOJC Budget and Financial Forecast.

I will be at your January 30th meeting to answer any questions you may have.



FY20 Budget and Financial Forecast

Adopted January 30, 2019 by the:
MPOJC Urbanized Area Policy Board
MPOJC Rural Policy Board



Date: January 30, 2019

To: MPOJC Urbanized Area Policy Board
MPOJC Rural Policy Board

From: Kent Ralston, Executive Director

Re: FY20 MPOJC Budget and Financial Forecast

The Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) is the designated planning organization for Johnson County, Iowa. Assistance is provided to member agencies in the program areas of transportation planning, administration, and small communities planning assistance by virtue of a 28E agreement. The MPOJC Urbanized Area and Rural Policy Boards have authority over the policies and work programs of the organization. The MPOJC website (www.mpojc.org) provides general information about the organization, published technical reports, agendas, and meeting minutes of all public meetings.

MPOJC is organized administratively under the City of Iowa City and staff members are subject to all rights and benefits afforded to City of Iowa City employees. Non-administrative staff are organized under the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). MPOJC staff also serve as staff in the City of Iowa City Neighborhood and Development Services Department. Because MPOJC is organized as a division of the City of Iowa City, MPOJC follows City of Iowa City administrative and personnel policies. This overall structure allows for cost-effective sharing of expenditures and services.

The focus of MPOJC remains to fulfill federal and state requirements necessary for receiving both formula and discretionary state and federal funds and producing locally-generated transportation studies for member agencies. These studies are intended to result in better information on which to base local policy and project programming decisions.

The proposed FY20 MPOJC Budget and Financial Forecast reflects the program of services, policies, and staffing approved by the Board. The overall FY20 MPOJC budget reflects an approximate 4.5% increase from the FY19 budget and is primarily due to annual increases in staff salaries & benefits. The remaining budget is largely the same as previous years with respect to technical and professional services, travel and education, and software. As in previous years, the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) is scheduled to contribute a large portion of the overall MPO budget in FY20 – the anticipated Iowa DOT contribution is \$230,000. MPOJC normally carries reserve funds to buffer against unexpected budget increases, or potential loss of funding. This continues to be important due to ongoing uncertainty of federal funding.



MPOJC continues to employ 2-3 planning interns funded by the University of Iowa. The University of Iowa's \$23,817 assessment will be used to fund intern expenses throughout the year. If this amount is not fully expended during the year, the balance is available for other MPOJC expenses at the end of the year.

As in the last budget, the FY20 budget is explicit in showing the amount of additional assessments specific to Iowa City due to staff time devoted solely to Iowa City specific duties. These duties include traffic engineering services, administration of the traffic calming program, participation in planning committees, review of rezoning and subdivision applications, and other special projects.

The budget also reflects capital expenses for the replacement of traffic counters, traffic counting software, and GIS software to maintain our mapping and visualization abilities. The traffic counters are used for the traffic analysis data collection program and are subjected to extreme conditions. It is important that there be a regular program of replacement for this equipment. For our traffic forecasting capabilities, we are proposing to continue to upgrade our traffic model software to be consistent with the Iowa DOT state-wide traffic model.

Following is a brief summary of the proposed Budget and Financial Forecast and FY20 assessments.



MPOJC Budget FY20 – FY22

Expenditures	FY19 Budgeted	FY20 Proposed	FY21 Forecast ¹	FY22 Forecast ¹
Salaries and Benefits	\$573,745	\$593,909	\$611,726	\$630,078
Technical and Professional Services & Maintenance, Travel and Education	\$62,205	\$64,461	\$66,395	\$68,387
Operating Costs; including office supplies, traffic counting and mapping equipment/software	\$9,665	\$17,050	\$17,562	\$18,088
Subtotal	\$645,615	\$675,420	\$695,683	\$716,553
University of Iowa Student Interns ²	\$23,817	\$23,817	\$23,817	\$23,817
TOTAL	\$669,432	\$699,237	\$719,500	\$740,370

MPOJC is designated by the Governor of the State of Iowa as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Iowa City Urbanized Area. The MPOJC Transportation Planning Division must fulfill the state and federal requirements of the 3-C transportation planning process. This process is required of all urbanized areas to maintain eligibility for grant programs and transportation operations funds of the United States Department of Transportation and the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The Administration Division consists of a half-time Executive Director, and a .2 FTE Administrative Secretary. The Administration Division provides oversight and support to the staff of MPOJC. The Executive Director supervises all MPOJC personnel. The Executive Director coordinates the budget process and the preparation of division work programs.

As MPOJC staff also serve the City of Iowa City Neighborhood and Development Services Department, this budget reflects Iowa City specific funding for 0.5 FTE Administration and 1.0 FTE Transportation Planning specifically for Iowa City duties.

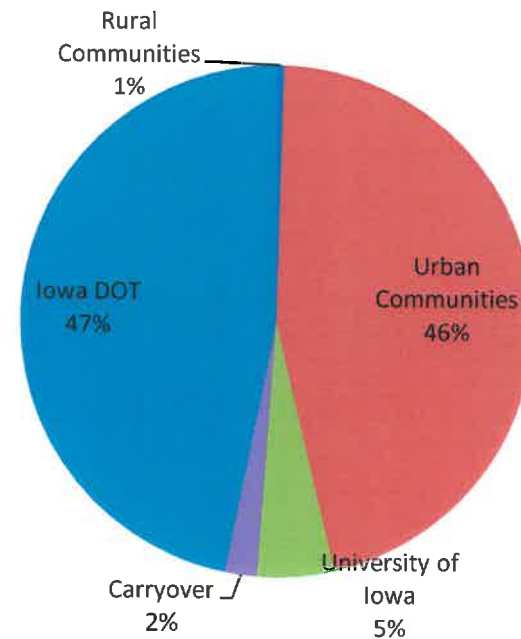
¹Forecasts assume a 3% increase

²Student interns are funded entirely by the University of Iowa

Summary of FY20 Assessments

Urban Communities	
Iowa City	\$118,170
Johnson County	\$37,331
Coralville	\$32,923
North Liberty	\$31,865
Tiffin	\$3,390
University Heights	\$1,830
SubTotal	\$225,509
Rural Communities	
Solon	\$736
Lone Tree	\$470
Swisher	\$318
Oxford	\$292
Hills	\$254
Shueyville	\$209
SubTotal	\$2,278
Other Sources	
Iowa DOT	\$230,000
Carryover	\$10,000
University of Iowa	\$23,817
SubTotal	\$263,817
Total	\$491,604

Percentage of MPO Budget by Source



Note: Figures do not include specific funding for Iowa City Neighborhood & Development Services, equivalent to 0.5 Administration Budget (\$77,556) and 1.0 FTE Transportation Planning (\$130,077).

MPOJC Assessment Explanation



Urban Entity	Population	Population % Urban Board	Total Assessment ⁴	% of Total MPO Budget	% of Total Assessments
Iowa City	67,862	52.40%	\$118,170	24.0%	51.9%
Johnson County	21,438	16.55%	\$37,331	7.6%	16.4%
Coralville	18,907	14.60%	\$32,923	6.7%	14.5%
North Liberty	18,299	14.13%	\$31,865	6.5%	14.0%
Tiffin	1,947	1.50%	\$3,390	0.7%	1.5%
U-Heights	1,051	0.81%	\$1,830	0.4%	0.8%
Subtotal	129,504	100.0%	\$225,509	45.9%	99.0%
Rural Entity ¹	Population	Population % Rural Board	Total Assessment ⁴	% of Total MPO Budget	% of Total Assessments
Solon	2,037	32.32%	\$736	0.1%	0.3%
Lone Tree	1,300	20.63%	\$470	0.1%	0.2%
Swisher	879	13.95%	\$318	0.1%	0.1%
Oxford	807	12.80%	\$292	0.1%	0.1%
Hills	703	11.15%	\$254	0.1%	0.1%
Shueyville	577	9.15%	\$209	0.0%	0.1%
Subtotal	6,303	100.0%	\$2,278	0.5%	1.0%
Total	135,807	100.0%	\$227,787	46.3%	100.0%
Other Funding Sources					
Iowa DOT			\$230,000	46.8%	
Carryover			\$10,000	2.0%	
University of Iowa			\$23,817	4.8%	
		MPO Total	\$491,604	100.00%	
		50% Admin for Iowa City NDS ²	\$77,556		
		1.0 FTE for Iowa City NDS ²	\$130,077		
		Total Budget³	\$699,237		

1. Assessment for Rural entities is 1% of the overall MPO assessment. Rural Board communities utilize MPO planning services but are not eligible for MPO grant funds.
 2. 0.5 FTE of Administration Division and 1.0 FTE of Transportation Planning Division are for Iowa City related functions and are not reflected in assessments to other communities.
 3. This budget does not include East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) assessments.
 4. Assessment figures may not reflect exact population percentages shown due to rounding.



Date: January 23, 2019
To: Rural Policy Board
From: Kent Ralston; Executive Director *KR*
Re: Agenda Item #3(b): Consider approval of the FY20 Johnson County assessment schedule for the East Central Iowa Council of Governments

East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) is the Regional Planning Association for east-central Iowa including Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Tama and Washington Counties. ECICOG provides planning and grant administrative services in the areas of community and economic development, transportation, housing, and solid waste management.

MPOJC collects ECICOG dues for Johnson County entities and forwards the funds to ECICOG. ECICOG assessments are calculated on a per-capita basis for the counties ECICOG serves, and we in turn calculate a per-capita assessment for each governmental entity within Johnson County. For FY20, ECICOG has proposed a 2% increase for the counties they serve. This is reflected in the attached assessment schedule.

A member of the ECICOG staff plans to attend our January 30th meeting to discuss their services and answer any questions you may have. Please be prepared to consider approval of the FY20 ECICOG assessment schedule. With approval, I will forward the assessment schedule to your staff for their records.



East Central Iowa Council of Governments
FY20 Assessment Schedule
For MPOJC Entities

Adopted January 30, 2019 by the:
MPOJC Urbanized Area Policy Board
MPOJC Rural Policy Board



Date: January 30, 2019

To: MPOJC Urbanized Area Policy Board
MPOJC Rural Policy Board

From: Kent Ralston, Executive Director

Re: FY20 ECICOG Assessment Schedule

The East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) is the Regional Planning Association for east-central Iowa, including Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Tama and Washington Counties. ECICOG conducts planning and grant administration services in the areas of community and economic development, housing, transportation, and solid waste management. ECICOG is governed by a policy board including elected officials and citizen representatives.

In 2010, the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) Urbanized Area Policy Board directed that the schedule of ECICOG assessments be considered separately from the annual MPOJC budget. ECICOG assesses counties on a per capita basis. In Johnson County, governmental entities are in turn assessed on a per-capita basis within Johnson County. ECICOG has proposed a 2% rate increase for all the counties it serves for FY20. This assessment schedule reflects 2010 Census figures for each community except for North Liberty which has an updated certified census as of 2016.

East Central Iowa Council of Governments FY20 – FY22

Expenditures	FY19 <u>Actual</u>	FY20 <u>Proposed</u>	FY21 ¹ <u>Forecast</u>	FY22 ¹ <u>Forecast</u>
Payment to ECICOG	<u>\$62,722</u>	<u>\$63,977</u>	<u>\$65,257</u>	<u>\$66,562</u>

Assessments		General Assessment		Small Communities Planning Assistance		Total FY20 ECICOG Assessment	
Community	Population	%	Assessment ²	%	Assessment ²	%	Assessment ²
Iowa City	67,862	49.97%	\$26,407	--	--	41.28%	\$26,407
Johnson County (rural)	21,438	15.79%	\$8,342	--	--	13.04%	\$8,342
Coralville	18,907	13.92%	\$7,357	41.59%	\$4,629	18.74%	\$11,987
North Liberty	18,299	13.47%	\$7,121	40.26%	\$4,481	18.13%	\$11,601
Solon	2,037	1.50%	\$793	4.48%	\$499	2.02%	\$1,291
Tiffin	1,947	1.43%	\$758	4.28%	\$477	1.93%	\$1,234
Lone Tree	1,300	0.96%	\$506	2.86%	\$318	1.29%	\$824
University Heights	1,051	0.77%	\$409	--	--	0.64%	\$409
Swisher	879	0.65%	\$342	1.93%	\$215	0.87%	\$557
Oxford	807	0.59%	\$314	1.78%	\$198	0.80%	\$512
Hills	703	0.52%	\$274	1.55%	\$172	0.70%	\$446
Shueyville	<u>577</u>	<u>0.42%</u>	<u>\$225</u>	<u>1.27%</u>	<u>\$141</u>	<u>0.57%</u>	<u>\$366</u>
	<u>135,807</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$52,847</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$11,130</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$63,977</u>

ECICOG is a multi-county regional planning agency which includes Johnson County. It is Region 10 in the state's system of regional planning agencies. Planning assistance is available through ECICOG to the small communities in Johnson County. All municipalities in Johnson County pay a population-based general assessment for the overall support of ECICOG. An additional planning assistance assessment is made to those communities which use ECICOG's planning services.

¹Assumes a 2% increase

²Assessment figures may not equal exact percentages shown due to rounding



Date: January 23, 2019

To: Rural Policy Board *BR*

From: Kent Ralston, Executive Director

Re: Agenda Item #4: Availability of East Central Iowa Council of Governments Assistance

The East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) is an intergovernmental council established by the Iowa Code. Governed by a Board of Directors comprised of elected officials and private citizens, ECICOG was created to promote regional cooperation and to provide planning services to local governments in Benton, Cedar, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Tama and Washington Counties. A portion of ECICOG services are supported by a per capita assessment.

This memo describes some of the services provided by ECICOG. A member of the ECICOG staff will be at our January 30th meeting to answer any questions you may have.

Transportation: ECICOG transit coordinates transit services in Benton, Iowa, Jones and Washington Counties and the rural areas of Linn and Johnson Counties. ECICOG also administers federal transportation funds. These funds are available to assist in funding qualifying road, bridge, trail and transit projects or for transportation planning activities.


Housing and Community Development: ECICOG offers technical assistance to local governments on land use planning, zoning and subdivision regulation, and local government financing. ECICOG also assists cities in updating their code of ordinances as required by state regulations. ECICOG has had success in securing and administering state and federal funds for local infrastructure improvement and community facility projects. ECICOG is also available to assist with the application for, and administration of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Solid Waste Management & Environmental Services: ECICOG is responsible for preparation of the Regional Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan which includes Benton, Jones, Iowa and Tama Counties, and facilitates cooperation among the landfill facilities in the region including the Cedar Rapids/Linn County Solid Waste Agency and the City of Iowa City. More recently, ECICOG has taken an active role in other environmental issues including assisting with the formation of, and coordinating planning for, water management authorities. ECICOG recently assisted with the formation of the Clear Creek Watershed Coalition and secured a \$100,000 grant to fund the coalition's planning process.

Revolving Loan Fund: A Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) is a loan pool established by the East Central Iowa Council of Governments to assist new and existing businesses within the ECICOG region to develop and expand. Funds are used in conjunction with local lenders to serve as gap financing for proposals, in which the lender serves as the primary source of funding. As loans are repaid into the pool, the fund revolves back out to other candidates for the program.

Visit <http://www.ecicog.org/> for more information on these and other services provided by ECICOG.



Date: January 23, 2019
To: Rural Policy Board
From: Kent Ralston; Executive Director 
Re: Agenda Item #5: Discuss MPOJC Orientation opportunity for Board members

For new Board members, or current Board members who desire a refresher, I'm available to provide a short orientation explaining the designation and role of the MPO, services provided by the MPO, and the structure of the MPO.

Please be prepared to indicate if you are interested and I will identify possible dates that will work for a group orientation. I will be available at your January 30th meeting to answer any questions you have.



Date: January 23, 2019

To: Rural Policy Board

From: Kent Ralston, Executive Director *KR*

Re: Agenda Item #6: Discuss potential MPOJC Work Program projects for FY20

Each year, we put together a work program to schedule our traffic counts, data collection, and other work products. Typical types of work for rural communities include traffic speed and volume counts, traffic control (Stop sign, Yield sign, and warning sign) evaluations, review of proposed development projects, mapping assistance, and grant application assistance.

Examples of recent work include a speed study for the City of Hills, a traffic signal study in Solon, and traffic counts for various communities.

Please be prepared to discuss any projects you have in mind for FY20 for which we can assist. If you have a general project in mind, but don't have the details available, staff is available to discuss potential projects and details at a later date.

I will be at your January 30th meeting to discuss this item and answer any questions you may have.



Date: January 23, 2019

To: Rural Policy Board

From: Brad Neumann, Assistant Transportation Planner

Re: Agenda item #7: Update on small community traffic engineering assistance

Each year, MPOJC conducts several traffic engineering studies for smaller communities in Johnson County. The services include capacity studies, speed studies, traffic signal evaluations, traffic sign and pavement marking evaluations, pedestrian crossing studies, and average daily traffic (ADT) counts. There are no additional charges for these studies. Projects in 2018 included:

HILLS

- o Oakcrest Hill Road – ADT
- o Completed a speed study on Oakcrest Hill Road to reduce speeds coming into Hills

SHUEYVILLE

- o 120th Street (between I-380 and James Avenue) - ADT
- o 120th Street (east city limits) - ADT
- o Club Road (north city limits) - ADT
- o Curtis Bridge Road (south of 120th Street) - ADT
- o Curtis Bridge Road (south of Spring Ridge Court) - ADT

SOLON

- o 5th Street (west of Racine Avenue) - ADT
- o 5th Street (east of Hwy 1) - ADT
- o 5th Street (east city limits) - ADT
- o Highway 1 (south city limits) - ADT
- o Highway 1 (between Sutliff Road and Hwy 1 bridge) - ADT/speeds
- o Iowa Street (south of 5th Street) - ADT
- o Main Street (between West Street and B Street) - ADT
- o Main Street (between Hwy 1 and Cedar Street) - ADT
- o Racine Avenue (at Hwy 382) - ADT
- o Racine Avenue (at 5th Street) - ADT
- o Provided a pedestrian crossing review at Racine Avenue and Hwy 382
- o Provided signage recommendations for warning signs on Hwy 1 regarding a new fire station
- o Updated a signal analysis for the Hwy 1 and 5th Street intersection
- o Provided recommendations for improvements at Hwy 382 and Chabal Street intersection

Each community in Johnson County will soon receive a letter requesting traffic engineering studies for 2019. If anyone has questions or requests please contact me by phone at 356-5235 or by email at brad-neumann@iowa-city.org.

cc: Kent Ralston



Date: January 23, 2019

To: Rural Policy Board

From: Brad Neumann, Assistant Transportation Planner

Re: Agenda Item #8: Update on CRANDIC Passenger Rail and Rails-to-Trails Studies

Phase I - Iowa City to Cedar Rapids Passenger Rail Conceptual Feasibility Study:

This 2015 study was commissioned by MPOJC, the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), and the CRANDIC Railroad (completed by HDR Inc.). The study explored the conceptual feasibility of a passenger rail service operating in the existing 20.5 mile CRANDIC Corridor between Gilbert Street in Iowa City and the Eastern Iowa Airport in Cedar Rapids. The study identified potential types and modes of passenger rail service for the Corridor and identified general capital and operating maintenance costs, service frequencies, service capabilities, environmental regulations, and funding options. Capital costs for this service ranged from \$250 million to \$500 million for the commuter rail service option. Most of this estimated cost was attributed to the rail portion north of North Liberty due to the distance and dealing with rail congestion near Cedar Rapids.

Phase I identified the Iowa City to North Liberty segment as feasible and further study was warranted. Stakeholders agreed to focus a Phase II feasibility study on rail service between Iowa City and North Liberty only.

Phase II - Iowa City to North Liberty Passenger Rail Conceptual Feasibility Study:

Phase II was completed in 2016. This phase explored the feasibility of passenger rail service between Gilbert Street in Iowa City and Forevergreen Road in North Liberty, a distance of 7.1 miles. The Study provided stakeholders with a conceptual assessment of existing corridor conditions, conceptual passenger rail equipment and service plan, probable conceptual capital and operations and maintenance costs, and potential alternatives that could reduce the capital cost to implement the service. The capital cost identified in Phase II was approximately \$40 million.

Again, stakeholders agreed to continue study on the Iowa City to North Liberty segment and focus a Phase III study on ridership, revenue forecasts, financial strategies, project funding, benefits to the community, and conceptual station design.

Iowa DOT's study on impacts of Alternative Modes on Interstate 380:

After it was announced by the Iowa DOT, the MPOJC Policy Board elected to wait for ridership estimates produced in the Iowa DOT's 2017 study that examined the long-term potential for commuter rail and/or automated bus transit as a component of an enhanced multimodal transportation network in the Iowa City-Cedar Rapids Corridor. The study was developed concurrently with the broader Iowa DOT Interstate 380 Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study that evaluated safety, capacity, and infrastructure deficiencies on the principal roadway between the two cities and made recommendations for improvements to increase regional mobility in the near-term horizon. The study also explored alternative

transportation use of the parallel CRANDIC Corridor right-of-way to supplement capacity on I-380 during a longer-term horizon.

Iowa DOT provided favorable ridership estimates for passenger rail service between Iowa City and North Liberty and recommended further study of this segment.

Phase III - Iowa City to North Liberty Passenger Rail Conceptual Feasibility Study:

After reviewing the results of the Phase II Passenger Rail Study, several MPOJC entities chose to move forward with a Phase III study. The intent of the Phase III study is to focus on ridership, revenue forecasts, financial strategies, benefits to the community, and conceptual station design. Funding for this study comes from the City of Iowa City, the City of Coralville, Johnson County, the University of Iowa, CRANDIC Railroad, and the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT).

Currently, MPOJC staff is working with the Iowa DOT, CRANDIC, and HDR Consulting to resolve differences with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regarding the proposed ridership model and methodology used for the study. Accurate ridership projections are essential in developing financial forecasts and preparing future FTA passenger rail development grants. MPO staff hopes to have the issues resolved soon. The Phase III study was scheduled to be completed by December of 2018. However, with the model issues unresolved the completion date of the study is unknown at this point.

Rails-to-Trails Study:

In early 2018, several MPOJC entities directed MPO staff to work with HDR Consulting in developing a scope and a cost estimate for a rails-to-trails study in the CRANDIC corridor between Iowa City and the University of Iowa's Research Park (Oakdale). Iowa City, Coralville, Johnson County, and the University of Iowa are provided funding for this study.

The intent of this study is to provide an additional option that could be used to preserve the existing CRANDIC rail corridor for future use if passenger rail service is not implemented. The study includes:

- A description of the federal regulations and process of railroad abandonment, railbanking, permissible uses, and the potential reactivation of the corridor for future passenger rail service.
- Typical rails-to-trails characteristics and the feasibility of the CRANDIC corridor to accommodate a rails-to-trails conversion.
- A description of the connectivity of a trail in the CRANDIC corridor with existing trails and connections to known future trails.
- A description of potential liability issues that railroads typically consider when converting from rail usage.
- Estimate probable conceptual costs to develop trail infrastructure on the CRANDIC corridor. The cost estimate includes removal of the existing rail infrastructure, bridge and culvert improvements, roadway crossings, trail construction, and professional services.

The draft study has been completed and submitted to the MPO for review. Once finalized, staff will forward the study to stakeholders for reference.

I will be at the January 30 meeting to discuss this item.