



Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County

## **MEETING AGENDA**

### **MPO Regional Trails & Bicycling Committee Tuesday, March 10, 1:00PM**

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MPO Offices,  
Lower Level, Iowa City City Hall  
410 East Washington Street  
Iowa City

1. Call to order; recognize alternates; consider approval of minutes
2. Public discussion\*
3. Updates from communities on adoption of the Metro Bicycle Plan
4. Report on opportunities for MPO communities/entities to coordinate on bicycle education & encouragement
  - a. Bicycle Basics Translation
  - b. Bike Etiquette Signs
  - c. Bike Bell / Light Giveaway
  - d. People Friendly Driver Program
5. Bike to Work Week/Month—Preliminary Planning
6. Update on Trail Count Program
  - a. Completed Counts for 2019
  - b. Proposed Locations for 2020
7. Update on Metro Area Trails Map
8. Other Business –
9. Adjournment

*\*Public input is permitted on any agenda item during discussion of the item.  
Please indicate to Sarah Walz if you wish to comment.*

*To request any disability-related accommodations, please contact MPOJC staff at least 48 hours in advance at 319.356.5239 or email [Sarah-Walz@iowa-city.org](mailto:Sarah-Walz@iowa-city.org).*



Date: March 6, 2020  
To: MPO Regional Trails and Bicycle Committee  
From: Sarah Walz, Assistant Transportation Planner  
Re: March 10 Agenda Items:

**Item #4: Report on opportunities for MPO communities/entities to coordinate on bicycle education & encouragement.**

The Metro Area Bicycle Master Plan included a list of projects for which the Regional Trails and Bicycling Committee (RTBC) is uniquely suited (see page 57 attached). Working collectively, MPO entities may have more impact with these efforts.

Since drafting the plan, MPO staff have been working on a number of these items for possible implementation in 2020. We have focused in particular on educational and encouragement goals.

**a. Bicycle Basics Translation**

The Metro Area is home to a large immigrant population and the University of Iowa's student body has, in recent years, become more international as well. Just as the rules of the road may be different for motorists from other countries, the expectations for bicyclists in the U.S. may also be different.

The attached brochure is intended to provide people with limited English language proficiency a concise explanation of the basic rules of the road and those habits or behaviors that will help them be more visible and their movements more predictable to other road users. The brochure can be provided as a PDF to MPO entities and well as bicycle organizations and community groups who work with immigrant populations or international students and visitors. By posting it on community web sites and with links on social media it can be widely disseminated and serve as a resource year after year.

The MPO has funds to pay for translation of the brochure into Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, French, and Swahili—five of the most commonly spoke foreign languages in the Metro Area. We would like to get your feedback on the brochure and whether/how your organization can make use of it. The MPO would use the translated brochure as the basis for a set of translated "Bicycle Shorts" videos that could also be shared with MPO entities and community organizations.

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# REGIONAL TRAILS AND BICYCLING COMMITTEE

The Regional Trails and Bicycling Committee (RTBC) is an advisory committee made up of representatives from each MPO community/entity (including the University of Iowa) in addition to representatives of local bicycling groups. The RTBC may be ideally suited to work on projects or policies that require or benefit from coordination between communities. The following is a list of projects for which the RTBC may be uniquely suited to assist.

## Education

- Coordinate the translation of basic bicycle safety information in multiple languages: Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, French, etc.
- Provide bike etiquette signs for placement along trails at the discretion of MPO entities. Signs would be intended for those trail sections that receive heavy use and where there may be conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Introduce Iowa City's *People Friendly Driver* program to MPO entities for eventual use by area businesses and organizations.
- Provide public outreach on bike safety issues such as safe passing and Hand Signals through online media and other avenues.

## Encouragement

- Pursue a branding effort for our regional trail system to promote bicycle tourism.
- Review bicycle ordinances to ensure consistency across the metro. As part of this effort we would look at ordinances for electrical-assist bikes as well as passing laws and other recommendations of the Iowa Bicycle Coalition and League of American Bicyclists. This review would involve local law enforcement.
- Encourage local bicycle groups to lead at least 1 ride for adults and 1 ride for families/children in each MPO community as well as at least 1 bicycle rodeo in each community.
- Plan a MPO/County official ride across metro/county Iowa City to Tiffin; Coralville to Solon.

## Enforcement

- Assist with identifying a funding source for purchase of tail lights and coordinate a metro-wide bike light promotion with local law enforcement.

## Evaluation

- Help organize an annual listening session for the RTBC to hear from the public regarding the progress on the plan.



# RULES OF THE ROAD

OBEY all traffic signs.



2

6

RIGHT hand signal.



STOP

2

STOP hand signal.

6

LOOK before changing lanes or turning.

LEFT hand signal.

6

5



1

3

3 ft  
1 M

Maintain distance from parked cars.

4



7

LIGHTS and REFLECTORS at night.

Ride in the correct lane WITH THE FLOW of traffic.

## Ride your bike as if you were driving a car:

1. Ride on the right side of the road moving in the same direction as other traffic.
2. Obey all traffic signs and signals, including STOP signs and traffic signals.
3. Do not weave in and out between parked or moving cars.
4. Leave space between yourself and parked cars to avoid being struck by an opening door.
5. Check over your shoulder for approaching vehicles before changing lanes or turning.
6. Use hand signals before changing lanes, turning, or stopping.
7. Bike lights and reflectors are required for riding after dark.

Adults should avoid riding on sidewalks except where wide (8- to 10-foot) sidewalks are provided. NOTE: in Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty bicycling on the sidewalk is prohibited in some commercial shopping areas.

Recommended for your safety: wearing a bike helmet at all times and light colored or reflective clothes at night.

Do NOT use earbuds or headphones while riding.

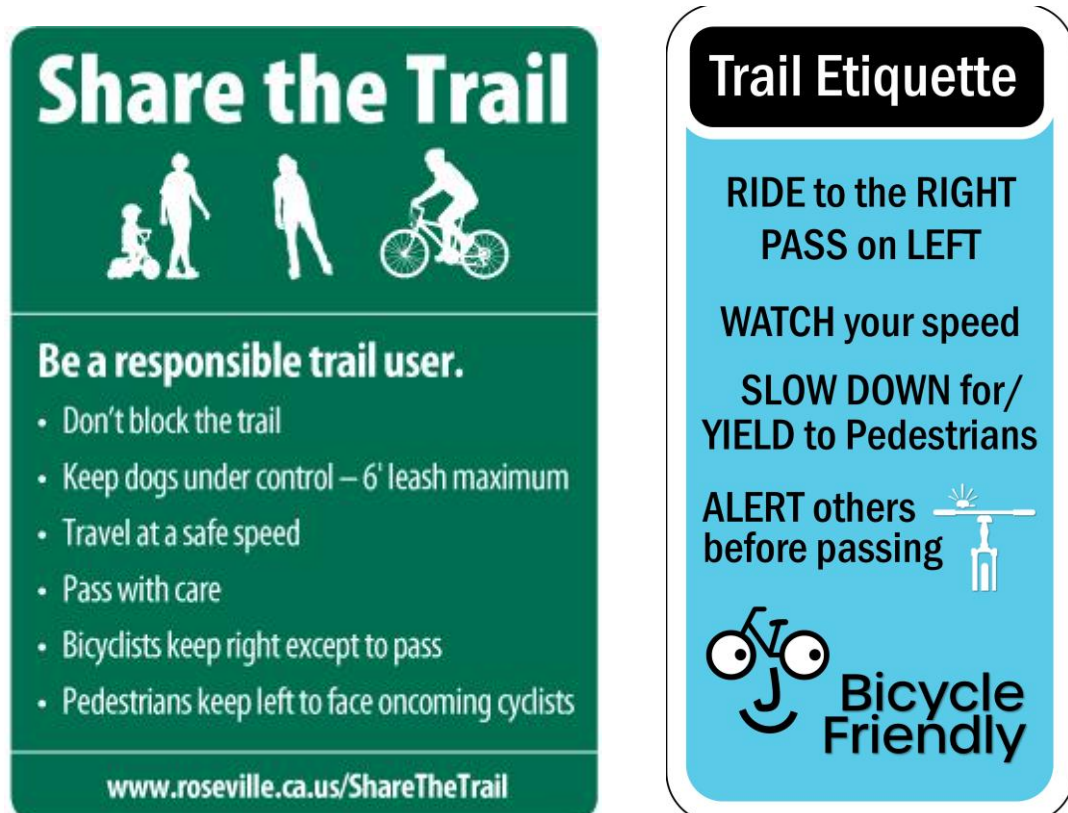
Ring a bike bell or say "on your left" when passing other bicyclists or pedestrians.



## SAME RIGHTS SAME RULES

## b. Trail Etiquette Signs

Conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians are a concern along popular metro trails and sidepaths. A sign with consistent messaging may encourage awareness among trail users, especially along heavily used trail sections. The location of such signs would be at the discretion of local entities. Below is an example of a standard trail etiquette sign along with a design reinforcing “Bicycle Friendly” as a concept that applies to the behaviors of bicyclists. We would like to explore whether MPO communities are interested in coordinated bicycle etiquette signs and, if so, desired messaging or design.



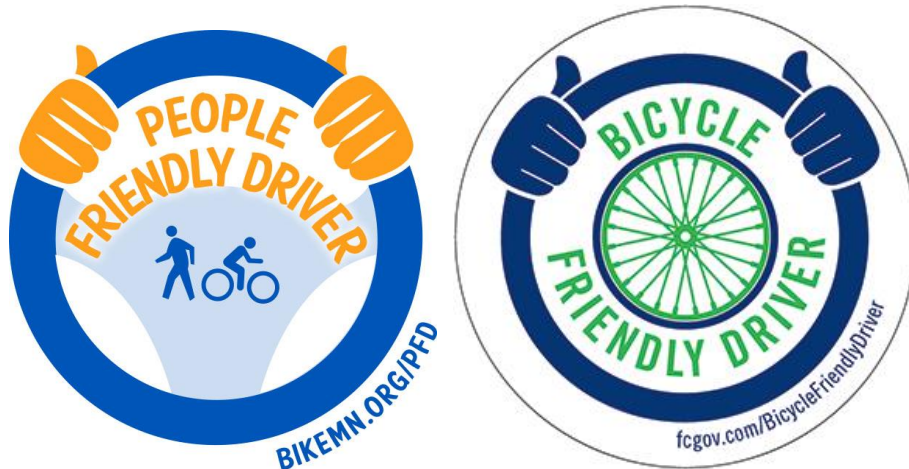
- c. **Bike Bell/Light Giveaway:** Bicyclists are encouraged to use bells in areas where there is heavy traffic to alert pedestrians as well as motorists and other bikers that they are present or about to pass. The MPO has funding to provide free bicycle bells during Bike Month (May). RTBC members may want to coordinate the types of events where bell giveaways would have the greatest impact—adult and family rides, bike breakfasts, bike rodeos, etc. Iowa City will put together very short videos to promote the use of bicycle bells to enhance safety and bicycle friendliness.

Bike light promotions are encouraged in the fall, when daylight hours are shorter. If MPO entities are interested in coordinating such an effort with local law enforcement, MPO can research costs and best practices as well as joint promotion for a program.



- d. **Bike Friendly/People Friendly Driver Program:** The Bike Friendly Driver Program was designed by bicycle advocates in Fort Collins, CO. The curriculum aims to educate drivers about how and why bicyclists travel the roadways in the ways they do with the objective of developing a shared understanding for all road users. The program has been endorsed by the League of American Bicyclists, which also promotes its use.

Fort Collins makes available all their materials and content for other communities to copy or adapt for local use. In Spring, 2019, Iowa City Transit drivers completed an adapted version of the program called "People Friendly Driver". The MPO is offering to bring the program to other communities. The program takes about an hour and is particularly appropriate for employees who drive as part of their work. We will arrange to provide training to staff of MPO entities who are interested.



#### **Item#5: Bike Month/ Bike to Work Week—Preliminary Planning**

Each year, the MPO assists with the coordination and promotion of Bike Month and Bike to Work Week. Local businesses and bicycle advocacy groups along with governments, schools, and neighborhood groups organize most of the events. The MPO assists with promotion of events by placing posters on public transit and distributing them for posting in public facilities. The MPO also assists communities with local proclamations for Bike to Work Week and Bike Month. In the past the MPO has also helped Think Bicycles with the "Bike, Bus, Car Race" for local elected officials. That event was discontinued last year.

Think Bicycles held a brainstorming session on February 24th with the theme of "20 Things We Can do in 2020." Liz Hubing provided the following summary of ideas generated at the event:

#### **Ideas from the Bike Month Brainstorm session:**

##### Themed Weeks

We have identified four "themed weeks." While we'll encourage any and all events, we hope to have events more targeted towards that week's theme.

May 3–10: Kids Week

May 11–17: Commuter Week (Bike to Work Week)

May 18–24: Climate + Community Week

## May 25–31: Curiosity Week

### Ideas for Events

- 14-ers of biking
- All-inclusive ride through metro with stops along the way
- After party Saturday
- Sip N' Swap
- Used bike sale/swap- accessories
- Fueling stations/commutes meals at lunchtime or later in the day
- The smoothie bicycle- bring it to Johnson County, downtown or other
- Log miles - all Johnson county riders
- Sub 48 bike packing event in may
- Fiesta
- Comprehensive bike fest/conference
- Ped mall party-leverage
- Creating and identify and aligning it
- Master community ride list and pump it out there 2020
- Advertising by bike- pedal power online
- Basic bike maintenance- all repair stations on a Saturday in May
- Books-partner with library and bikes
- Summer of the arts type festival
- Bicycle gallery (downtown)
- Bike bag building/making
- Bike hacks
- Partner with law enforcement and new chief in Iowa City
- Winter/Indoor bike rally
- Create bike education for drivers
- Create bike ambassador volunteer
- Kids Bike Race
- A comprehensive website local "bike Iowa"
- Make more effective advisory committee and city/county connection
- Bike outreach to low income and minority
- Bike List giveaway- esp for people who really need and affix for them to bike
- Donation of bikers to at risk teens
- Bike ride followed by bike film showing
- Gravel curious ride
- Largest night ride per capita
- Car free open streets day
- Largest commute to work day per capita

Think Bicycles is officially accepting applications for Bike Month grants-- **up to \$200 per event. Applications are due Friday, April 17th.** Grant applications are available on their website at [ThinkBicycles.org](http://ThinkBicycles.org).

**If you wish to have your event listed on the poster for Bike Month calendar, have your event and/or application submitted to Think Bicycles by April 1st.**

## Item# 6: Update on Trail Count Program

### a. Completed Counts for 2019

Between May and October each year, the MPO collects bicycle and pedestrian counts along the regional network of trails and sidepaths (wide sidewalks) and other off-street facilities. Data is collected using an infrared device; the device does not differentiate between bicycles and pedestrians. Each count lasts one week.

A number of factors influence the counts: the month or week the count was taken, weather, nearby trail or road construction or closures, the opening of additional trail access points, or increased development in the area. These variables make it difficult to draw conclusions based on year-over-year comparisons, though it may be possible to see trends over longer periods of time. All counts represent daily averages based on weeklong counts.

Count locations are based on requests from the RTBC representatives. Because we have more locations than we can count in a single year, we rotate locations to ensure that points are measured every 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year. For your reference, counts taken in 2019 are shown below.

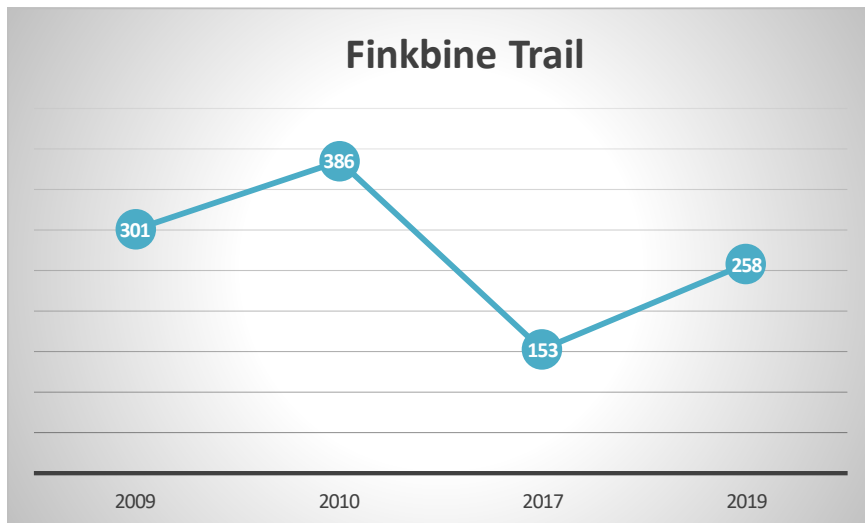
First-time counts were taken at the following locations. The counts represent average daily trips measured during a one-week period.

- Woodpecker Single Track Course in Coralville— 54
- IRC Trail near the I-80 Pedestrian Bridge on North Dubuque St.— 89

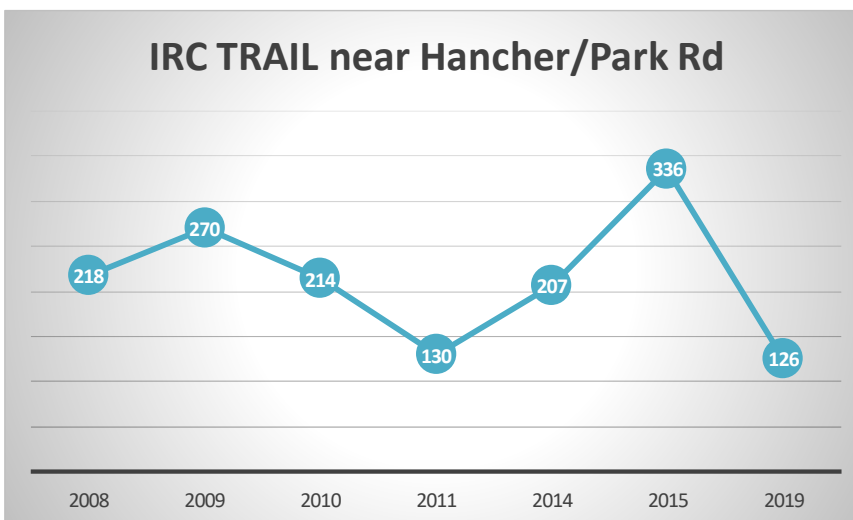
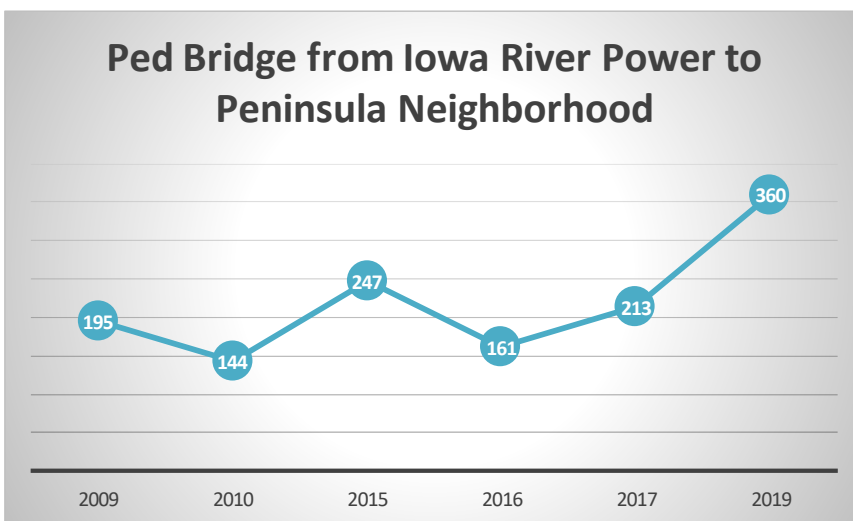
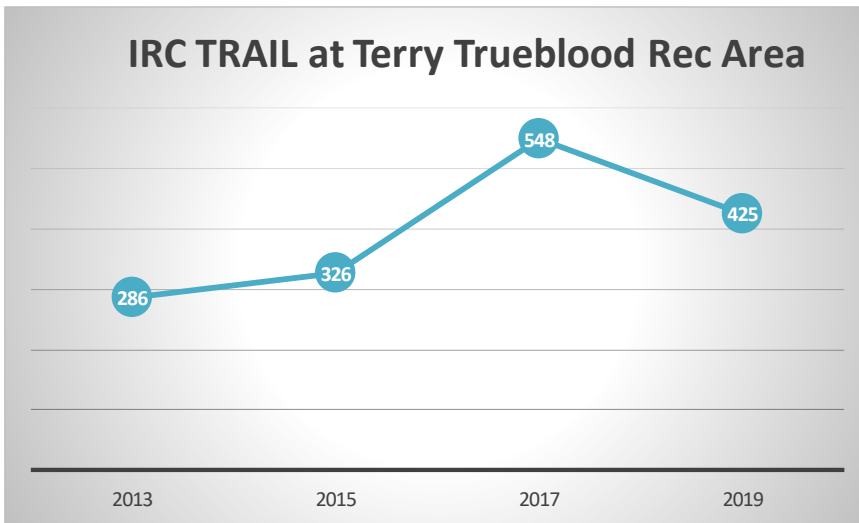
Second year counts were taken at the following locations:

- Clear Creek Trail at the railroad underpass to Hwy 6 in Coralville 94 (2016); 101 (2019)
- IRC Trail near Liberty High School 130 (2017); 155 (2019)
- The North Ridge Trail at Holiday Road, east of Park Ridge Dr. 83 (2015); 61 (2019)
- Court Hill Trail, east of Scott Blvd. 81 (2016); 225 (2019)

The following charts show data for those locations that have more than 2 years of data:

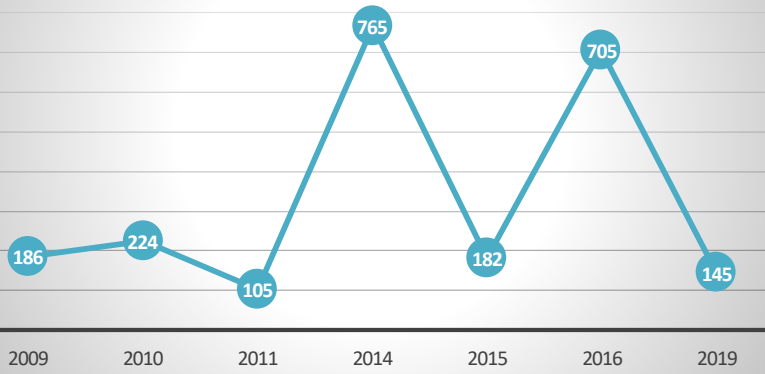




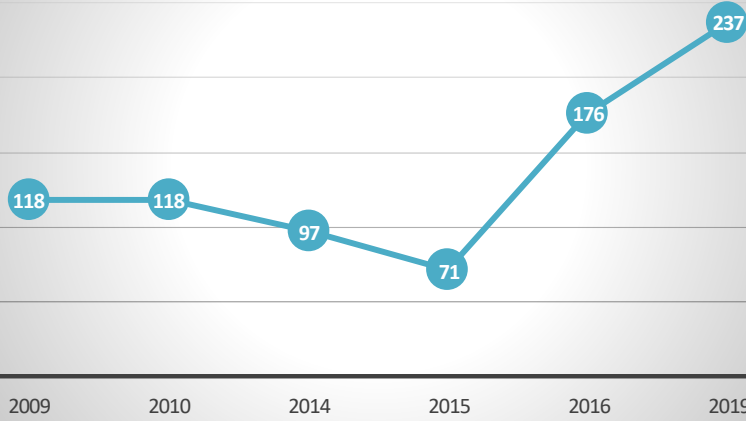


Some variation in activity along areas of the IRC Trail may be attributed to construction along North Dubuque Street and Park Road as part of the Gateway project.

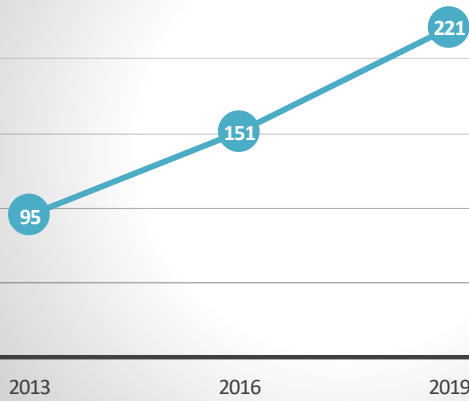
### IRC TRAIL near Taft Speedway



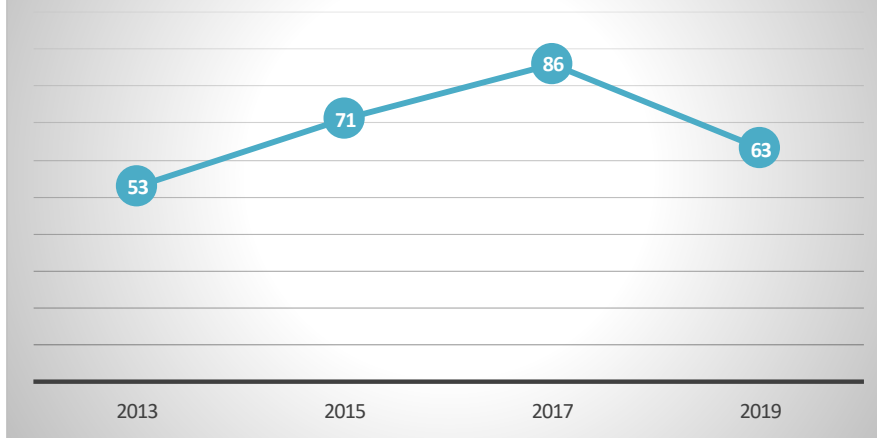
### IRC TRAIL near West Overlook



### IRC Trail at Penn Meadows

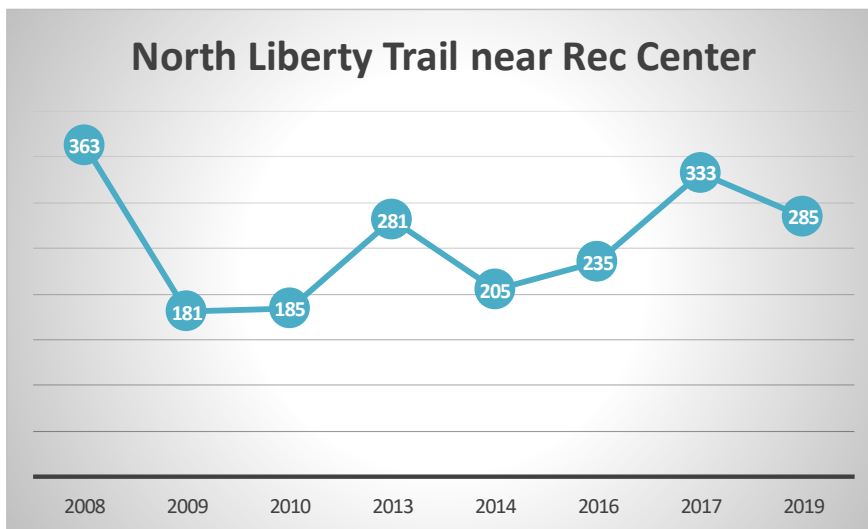


### IRL Trail near Marriott Hotel

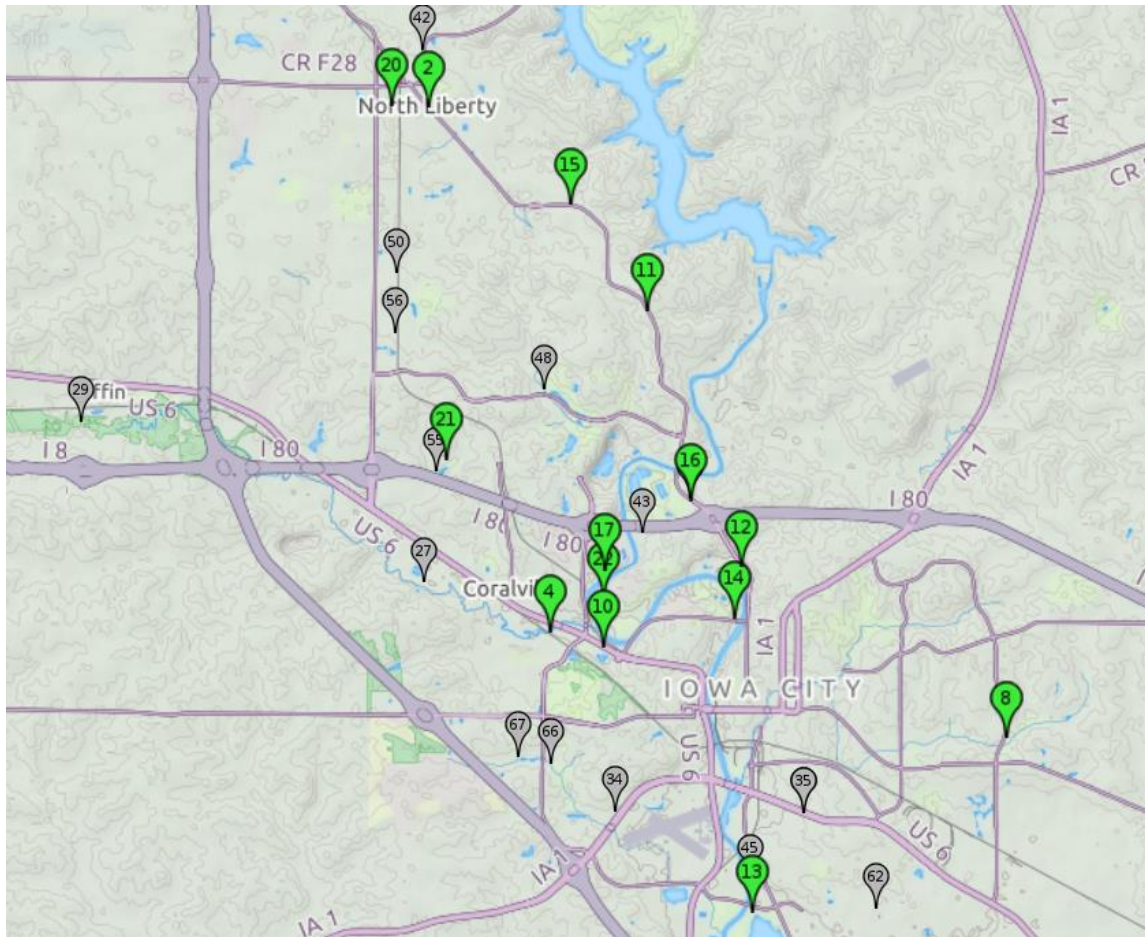


Use of the trail may be affected by ongoing construction projects in the area and the lack of a trail connection across Clear Creek. We anticipate use to increase after reconstruction of the bridge in 2020 and with continued residential development along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

### North Liberty Trail near Rec Center



### Map of 2019 Count Locations:



### b. Proposed Locations for 2020

In preparation for the 2020 trail count season, MPO staff developed a list of locations we're asking the committee to review. As shown in the tables below, the trail locations we anticipate counting in 2020 are shown in grey. In addition, there are a few trail locations we're asking the committee to reevaluate given that the regional trail network continues to expand.

Please be prepared to discuss the locations for calendar year 2020 keeping in mind there are a limited number of weeks available between May and October.



**Item #7: Update on Metro Area Bicycle Maps**

MPO staff have begun to update the maps for 2020. We would like to have all updates or suggestions from MPO entities by April 1 in order to have maps printed by early May. Please let us know of projects that are planned for completion during the 2020 construction season. Also, if you have added any special bicycle facilities, such as fix-it stations or special bicycle storage, please forward these locations to us for inclusion on the map.