

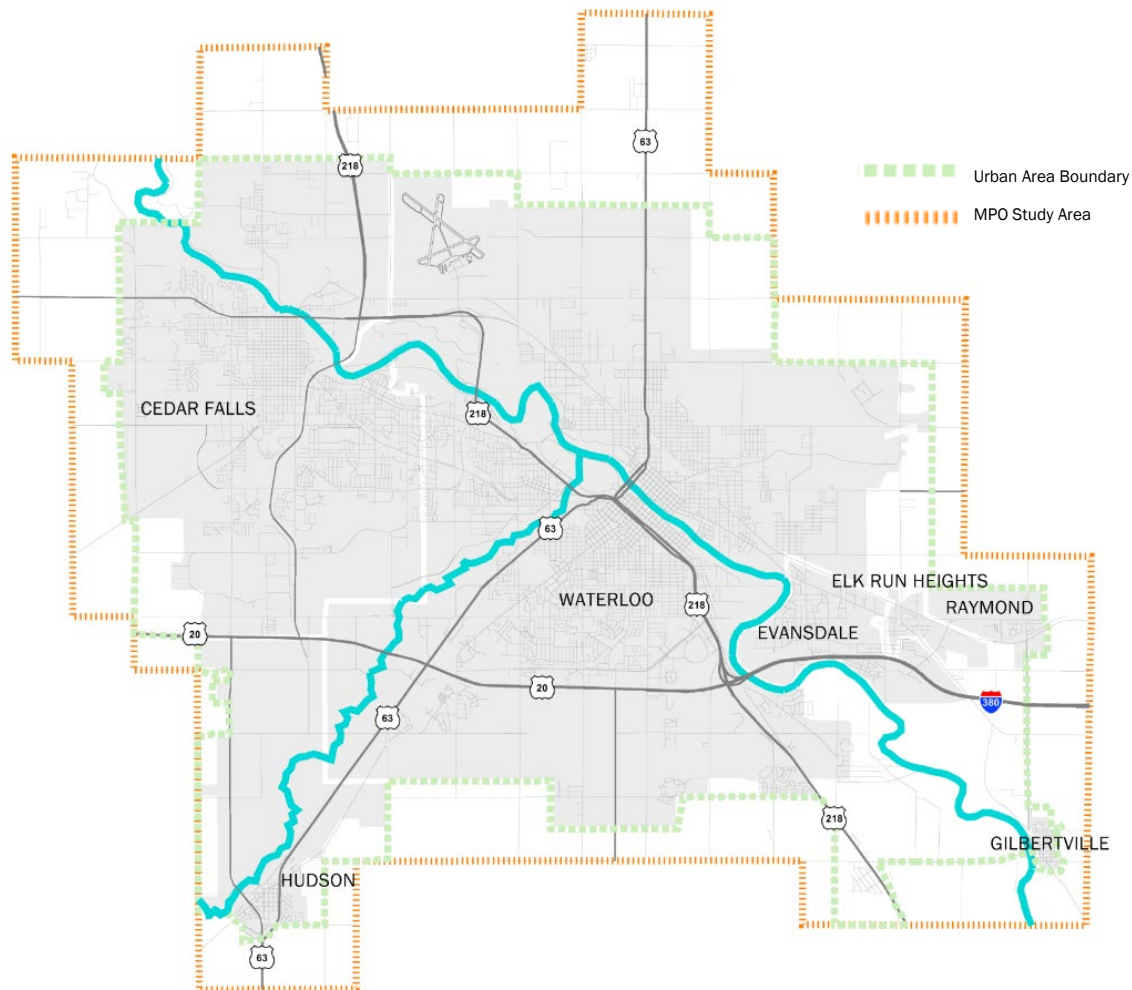


# **Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization Representative Handbook**

## WHAT IS THE BLACK HAWK COUNTY METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD?

Federal law requires the formation of metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) for urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000. The role of an MPO is to oversee multimodal transportation planning, programming, and policy to ensure that existing and future expenditures on transportation projects are based on a **continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive** planning process. The Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board serves as the MPO for the contiguous urbanized area at the center of Black Hawk County.

The MPO has a defined urban area boundary and study area boundary. The **urban area boundary** is a smoothed boundary that captures all census-defined urbanized area. This boundary also defines whether roadways are considered “urban” or “rural” for federal functional classification. The **MPO study area** boundary defines what area is expected to be urbanized over a horizon of 20 years.



## BLACK HAWK COUNTY MPO

### 1 COUNTY

Black Hawk County

### 7 CITIES

Cedar Falls  
Elk Run Heights  
Evansdale  
Gilbertville  
Hudson  
Raymond  
Waterloo

### 2 TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Metropolitan Transit Authority  
Waterloo Regional Airport

## WHAT THE MPO DOES

Conduct transportation planning for the metro area in cooperation with state and federal government

Establish transportation goals and objectives for the metro area

Identify short- and long-range transportation needs

Conduct multimodal transportation planning (bicycle, pedestrian, transit, freight)

Analyze and evaluate transportation improvements

Estimate future traffic volumes

Inform the public about planning activities

Conduct planning studies

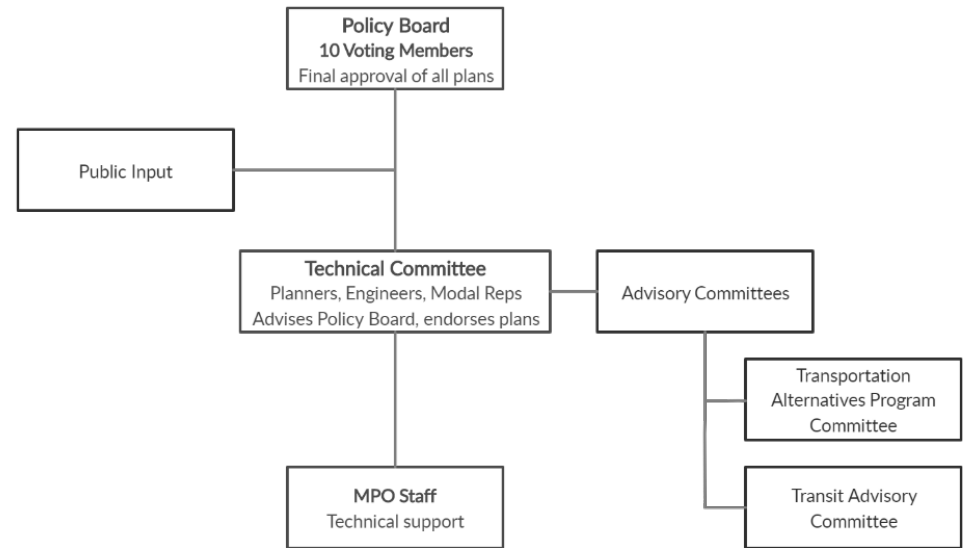
Allocate Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funds

## HOW ARE DECISIONS MADE?

Two designated committees form the structure of the MPO: The **Policy Board**, and the **Technical Committee**. The Policy Board and Technical Committee meet jointly monthly.

The **Policy Board** is the governing body of the MPO. Voting Policy Board members include the Mayor from Cedar Falls, Elk Run Heights, Evansdale, Gilbertville, Hudson, Raymond, and Waterloo, a member of the Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors, and representatives from MET Transit Board and the Waterloo Regional Airport Board.

The **Technical Committee** is comprised of local planners, engineers, and modal representatives. The Technical Committee has extensive knowledge of the area's transportation system. The Technical Committee advises the Policy Board but does not vote on policy issues.



The MPO establishes and supports subcommittees and working groups, as needed. A subcommittee of the Technical Committee is the Transportation Alternatives Program Committee which meets annually to discuss and rank transportation alternatives projects. Another standing committee is the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC). This group meets at least twice annually to discuss passenger transportation and human service agency coordination, and to help develop the Passenger Transportation Plan. The MPO utilizes focus groups as part of the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

## CALENDAR YEAR 2021 MEETING DATES

January 14	February 11	March 11
April 8 (Technical Committee Only)	May 13	June 10
July 8	August 12	September 9
October 14	November 11	December 9

## WHAT ARE THE CORE REQUIREMENTS OF THE MPO?

### Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

Outlines the transportation planning activities MPO staff plan to conduct in the next state fiscal year and sources of funding; updated annually.

### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Includes all projects programmed for federal transportation funding in the MPO in the next four federal fiscal years; updated annually.

### Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Reviews the current condition and future needs of the multimodal transportation system and provides guidance for transportation investment decisions; must include a minimum 20-year planning horizon; updated every five years.

### Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)

Provides coordination between passenger transportation providers and human service agencies and recommends projects to improve passenger transportation; joint document with the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority, a six-county region of Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties; full document every five years.

### Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Details the processes the MPO will follow to involve the public in the transportation planning and programming process; updated as needed.

### Programming of Federal Funds

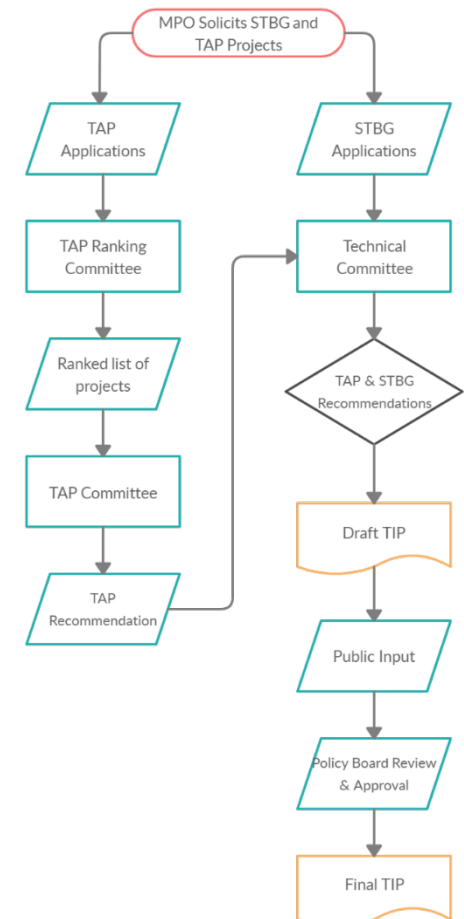
The MPO administers two federal programs that are passed through the Iowa DOT: The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program, and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). STBG provides flexible funding that may be used on any Federal-aid highway, bridge projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects. TAP funds are used to support on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The MPO participates in Iowa's swap program which allows jurisdictions to swap federal STBG funding for state Primary Road Fund dollars. Recent roadway projects funded through STBG include River Forest Rd. in Evansdale, and Greenhill Rd. extension in Cedar Falls.

The MPO receives \$3.3 million in STBG funds annually, and another \$300,000 in TAP funds, both of which are programmed towards transportation projects within the MPO. The process begins with the solicitation of STBG and TAP projects. The Technical Committee prioritizes STBG projects by considering the ability to meet the goals of the current *Long-Range Transportation Plan*. TAP projects are ranked and programmed using a project comparison process.

STBG and TAP projects recommended for funding are incorporated into the draft TIP, distributed to the MPO Policy Board for review, and taken out for public comment. Comments are incorporated into the final document and presented to the MPO Policy Board for adoption.

## CORE DOCUMENTS TIMELINE

	Duration	Update Requirements
TPWP	1 Year	Annually
TIP	4 Years	Annually
LRTP	20 Years	Every 5 Years
PTP	5 Years	Every 5 Years
PPP	---	As needed



## WHAT THE MPO CAN DO FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

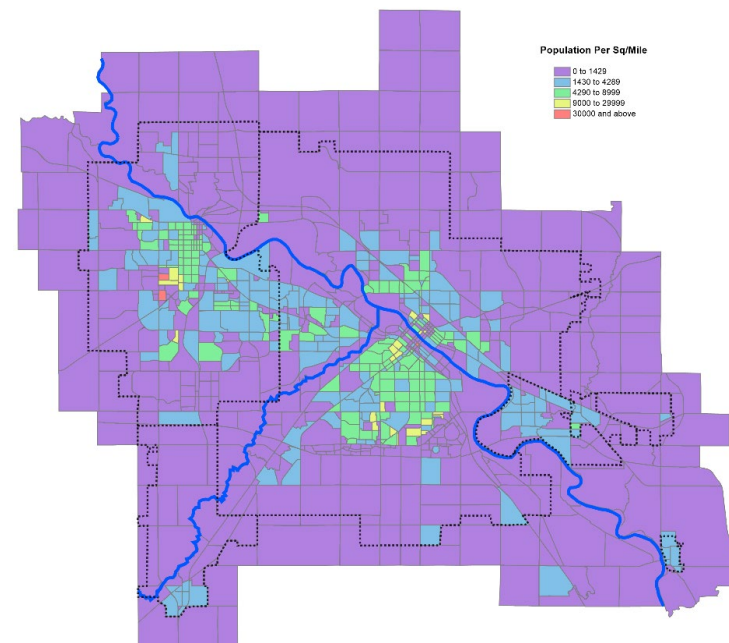
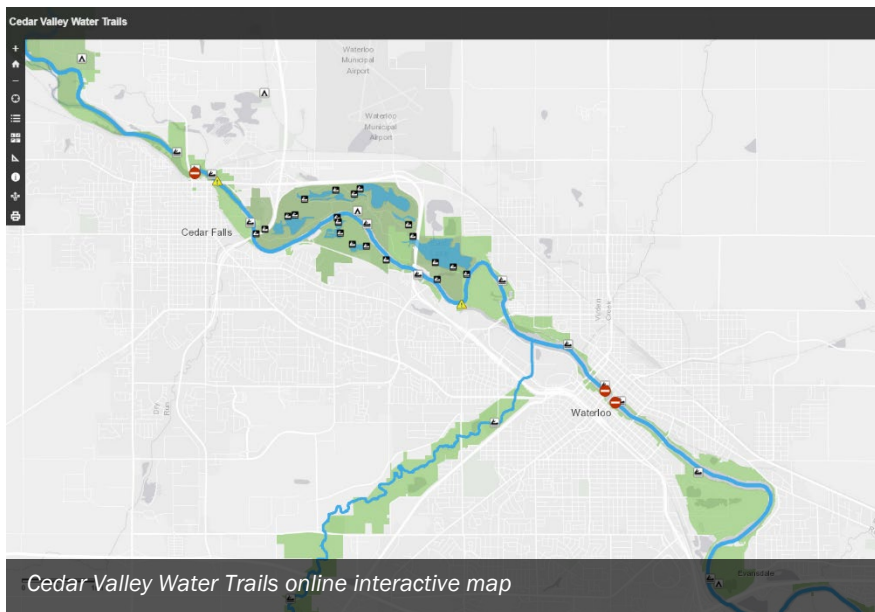
### Staff Liaison

MPO staff conduct transportation planning for the metropolitan area in cooperation with state and federal government. Staff assists the MPO Policy Board by preparing documents, fostering interagency coordination, facilitating public input, and managing the planning process. MPO staff can also provide Policy Board and Technical Committee members with **information** and **technical assistance at any time**. The diverse skills of the staff ensure that your transportation projects and priorities are coordinated with land use, economic development, and regional and statewide plans for all modes of surface transportation.



### Data Services

INRCOG uses a full range of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), mapping, and graphic design tools for development of plans and grant applications. These services are also available externally to MPO members for the creation of specific maps to visualize a variety of data.



## WHAT THE MPO CAN DO FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

### Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School Coordinator works with schools in a six-county region – including the Black Hawk County metropolitan area – to promote and encourage students safely walking and bicycling to and from school. INRCOG has been involved with Safe Routes initiatives since 2014. To date, INRCOG staff have:

- Supported Safe Routes-related education, activities, and events in 20 elementary schools in 12 school districts.
- Maintained three routine Walking School Bus programs, encouraging physical activity and safety for over 90 students.
- Hosted 50 Bike Rodeo safety education events, educating over 4,000 students in bike and pedestrian safety.
- Organized trail rides for two elementary schools
- Piloted in-class Helmets and Hand Signals lesson for second grade classrooms in twelve elementary schools.



### Grant Writing

INRCOG staff can assist your community with the development of your project – from conceptualization to identifying funding opportunities and preparing grant applications. Our staff has extensive experience writing a variety of federal and state grants and is familiar with the complex state and federal regulations and guidelines associated with grant opportunities.

### Transportation Grants

- Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE)
- Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant Program (RRLG)

### Recreation and Natural Resources Grants

- Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- State Recreational Trails (SRT)
- Federal Recreational Trails (FRT)
- Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT)
- Iowa Water Trails



## WHAT THE MPO CAN DO FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

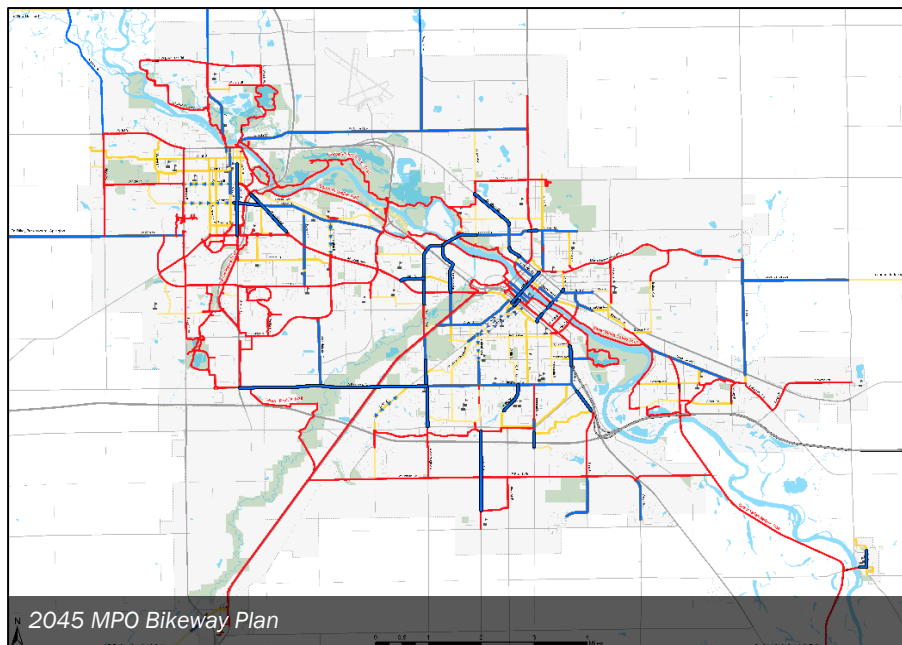
### Bicycle Planning

INRCOG has been working on a variety of bicycle-related projects, including the City of Waterloo's first bike lanes. The Park Avenue bike lanes are protected by a striped buffer and in some locations by parked vehicles also. The development of these protected bike lanes began in 2017. The term protected refers to any sort of vertical protection between a bike lane and driving lane, such as delineator posts, planters, or parked cars. Initially, only parked cars served as the vertical separation, but then the City installed delineator posts in 2018 to prevent through traffic from driving in the parking area.

Development of the Park Avenue bike lanes was spearheaded by the Waterloo Complete Streets Committee. INRCOG helped facilitate discussions between multiple City departments and elected officials, and staff also helped develop the initial planning-level design of the protected bike lane concept.



*Buffered bike lanes on Park Avenue*



*2045 MPO Bikeway Plan*

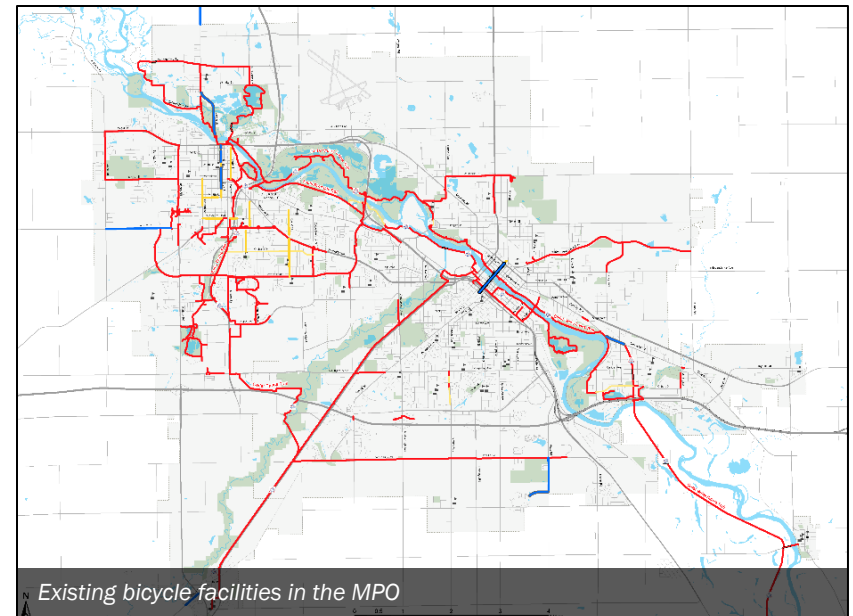
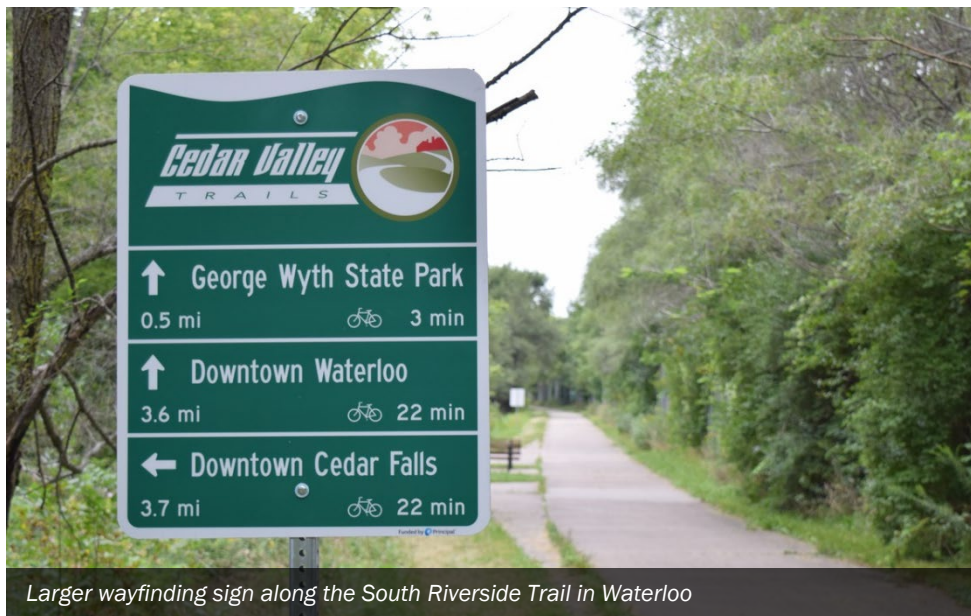
As part of the *2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan*, INRCOG completed the *2045 MPO Bikeway Plan*. This plan defines how each community can expand their on- and off-road bicycle facilities as part of an overall bicycle network. INRCOG staff carefully reviewed roadways in detail to determine feasible planned on-road facility types. Several factors were considered when making these determinations including each road's right-of-way, trees, driveways, drainage areas, traffic volumes, and lane configurations. Connectivity to businesses and educational institutions was also a priority. INRCOG staff also identified low-volume residential streets that can be used by bicyclists without any additional treatments and are suitable as part of a bicycle network.

## WHAT THE MPO CAN DO FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

### Trail Network Wayfinding Signage

The Black Hawk County metropolitan area has upwards of 115 miles of continuous paved trails that connect six cities, one county, and one state park. Over the years, ongoing trail construction has created new loops and connections. This has resulted in an extensive but oftentimes confusing trails network that is hard to navigate. In 2016, INRCOG partnered with the Cedar Trails Partnership to secure a \$20,000 grant from Principal Financial Group to add wayfinding signs on the trails network. INRCOG used federal Metropolitan Planning funds to develop and implement the project – from concept to implementation – in under eight months.

INRCOG identified destinations, calculated route distances, and identified the placement of every customized sign. Most signs included three destinations each with a directional arrow, distance in miles, and distance in minutes by bicycle. The layout is consistent among all signs, and this methodology can be applied to wayfinding projects in other communities. Careful consideration was given to ensure the wayfinding signs function in sequence, so trail users can follow the signs continuously until they reach their destination. INRCOG also produced the graphic design for the signage.



Signs are located at trail intersections, diversion points, and other locations throughout Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Evansdale, Hudson, and George Wyth State Park. The grant funded a total of 159 larger wayfinding signs, 175 small wayfinding signs, and 130 maintenance signs. INRCOG also created marking and public relation materials to spread awareness amongst the region, including flyers, presentations, and outreach to local media.



## COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

### Policy Board

Representing	Name	Title
City of Cedar Falls	Rob Green	Mayor (Chair)
City of Elk Run Heights	Kristi Lundy	Mayor
City of Evansdale	Dick Dewater	Mayor Pro Tem
City of Gilbertville	Mark Thome	Mayor
City of Hudson	George Wessel	Mayor
City of Raymond	Gary Vick	Mayor
City of Waterloo	Quentin Hart	Mayor
Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors	Daniel Trelka	Supervisor (Vice-Chair)
Metropolitan Transit Authority	Rose Middleton	Chair
Waterloo Airport Commission	Arlene Humble	Chair

### Technical Committee

Representing	Name	Title
Black Hawk County	Ryan Brennan	Assistant County Engineer
Black Hawk County	Cathy Nicholas	County Engineer
City of Cedar Falls	Stephanie Houk Sheetz	Director of Community Development
City of Cedar Falls	Thomas Weintraut	City Planner
City of Cedar Falls	David Wicke	City Engineer
City of Elk Run Heights	Lisa Smock	City Council
City of Gilbertville	Rob Werner	Public Works Director
City of Hudson	Chrissi Wiersma	City Clerk, Zoning Administrator
City of Raymond	Jake Huck	Engineer, MSA Professional Services
City of Waterloo	Noel Anderson	Community Planning & Development Director
City of Waterloo	Mohammad Elahi	Traffic Engineer
City of Waterloo	Jamie Knutson	City Engineer
City of Waterloo	Aric Schroeder	City Planner
Cedar Trails Partnership	Larry Buchholz	Vice President
Grow Cedar Valley	Will Frost	Director of Talent Development
MET Transit Authority	David Sturch	General Manager
Waterloo Airport	Keith Kaspari	Director of Aviation
Iowa DOT, District 2	Krista Billhorn	Transportation Planner
University of Northern Iowa	Eric O'Brien	University Sustainability Coordinator
INRCOG	Kevin Blanshan	Executive Director
INRCOG	Kyle Durant	Transportation Planner
INRCOG	Codie Leseman	Transportation Planner

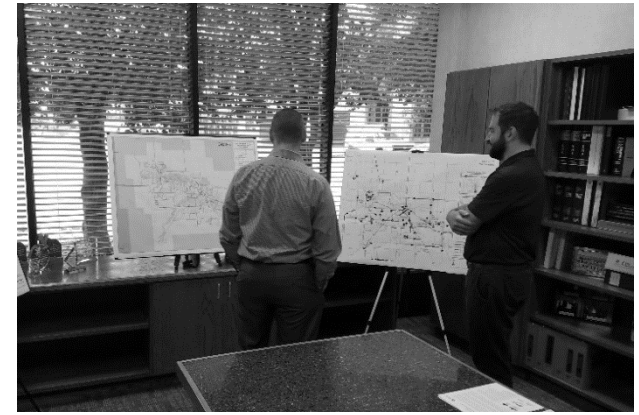
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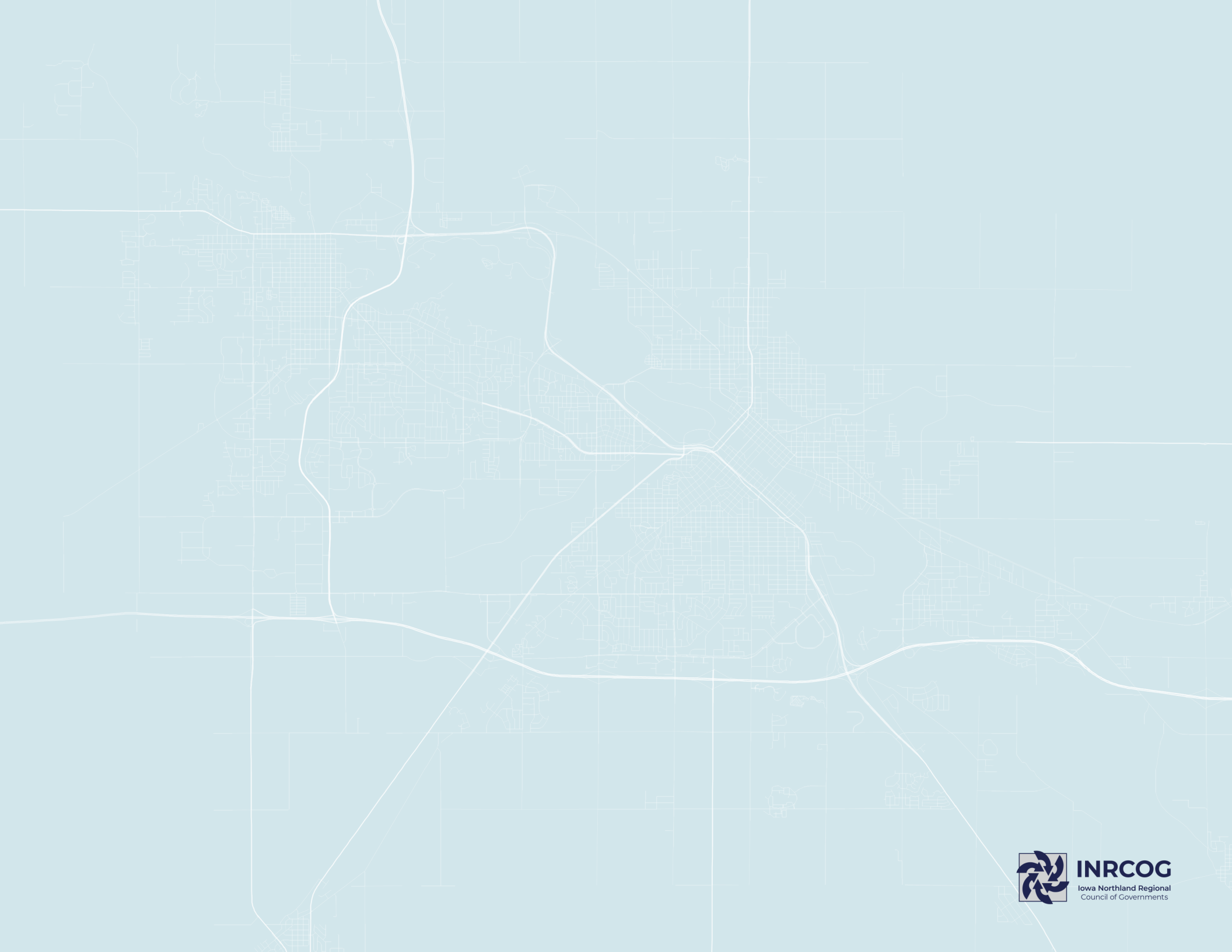


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Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

[www.inrcog.org](http://www.inrcog.org)

## ACRONYMS

AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic	MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials	MTC	Multimodal Transportation Center
ACS	American Community Survey	MUTCD	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
ADA	American's with Disabilities Act	NACTO	National Association of City Transportation Officials
ADT	American Discovery Trail	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ALO	Waterloo Regional Airport	NHFP	National Highway Freight Program
ARRA	American Recovery Reinvestment Act	NHPP	National Highway Performance Program
CAT	Community Attraction and Tourism	NHS	National Highway System
CE	Categorical Exclusion	NHTS	National Household Travel Survey
CIP	Capital Improvement Program	NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality	PCI	Pavement Condition Index
CVAST	Cedar Valley Association for Soft Trails	PL	Planning Program
DMS	Dynamic Message Sign	PPP	Public Participation Plan
DOT	Department of Transportation	PRF	Primary Road Fund
DNR	Department of Natural Resources	PTP	Passenger Transportation Plan
EA	Environmental Assessment	REAP	Resource Enhancement and Protection
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	RISE	Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy
EMA	Emergency Management Agency	RTA	Regional Transportation Authority
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration	RTC	Regional Transit Commission
FAST	Fixing America's Surface Transportation	RUTF	Road Use Tax Fund
FFC	Federal Functional Classification	SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	SICL	Safety Improvement Candidate Location
FM	Farm to Market	SRTS	Safe Routes to School
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact	STBG	Surface Transportation Block Grant
FTA	Federal Transit Administration	SUDAS	Statewide Urban Design and Specifications
FY	Fiscal Year	TAC	Transit Advisory Committee
GIS	Geographic Information Systems	TAMP	Transportation Asset Management Plan
GTSB	Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau	TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program
HMP	Hazard Mitigation Plan	TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program	TDM	Travel Demand Model
ICAAP	Iowa's Clean Air Attainment Program	TEAP	Traffic Engineering Assistance Program
INRCOG	Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments	TIFF	Tax Increment Finance Funding
InTrans	Institute for Transportation	TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
ISMS	Iowa Standardized Model Structure	TPMS	Transportation Program Management System
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System	TPWP	Transportation Planning Work Program
LOS	Level of Service	TSIP	Traffic Safety Improvement Program
LOST	Local Option Sales Tax	TSMO	Transportation System Management and Operations
L RTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan	ULB	Useful Life Benchmark
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund	VHT	Vehicle Hours Traveled
MCO	Managed Care Organization	VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
MET	Metropolitan Transit Authority	YOE	Year of Expenditure



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