

## TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system is vital to Greater Des Moines' (DSM) economy. Businesses and residents depend on a multi-modal network that connects people to jobs, educational opportunities, businesses and services needed to live healthy, productive lives. Additionally, people are driving less with young professionals preferring to walk, bike, use public transit and fly, while the 65 and older population is growing and demanding mobility options.

However, America's transportation network has been stretched beyond capacity and fallen into disrepair. Currently, 35 percent of the region's roads are in poor or very poor condition and 20 percent of the region's bridges are considered functionally obsolete or structurally deficient. Airports Council International – North America has identified an annual need of \$20 billion to simply maintain existing airports. A decaying transportation system costs the economy more than \$78 billion annually in lost time and fuel. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), nearly one-third of the nation's roads are in poor or mediocre condition and one-fourth of its bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

Transportation funding also results in job creation. Each dollar invested in highway construction generates \$1.80 of Gross Domestic Product, and according to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), \$1 billion in federal highway investment plus the state match supports 34,000 jobs, and every dollar invested in public transportation generates roughly \$6 in economic returns. Nationally, airports create 9.6 million jobs. However, increased congestion due to crumbling transportation infrastructure and insufficient capacity disrupts the important connections that businesses rely upon, imposing additional costs on workers and employers.

Accordingly, The Partnership advocates for a comprehensive approach to solving the nation's looming transportation infrastructure crisis. Specifically, The Partnership believes that a multi-modal and intermodal vision must prioritize maintenance of existing facilities, manage capacity, expand alternative modes, reduce congestion and improve the efficient, safe and sustainable movement of goods and people throughout the country and world.

### SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

Investment in the nation's transportation network remains one of the key components of economic recovery and the future. As the demand for transportation increases, the financial resources committed to preserve and to invest in needed capacity and service improvements remain inadequate. Additional long-term and reliable investment levels are necessary for Iowa's economic future.

The Partnership will continue to work with Congress, the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA), local governments and other key partners to strategically

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identify and prioritize regional surface transportation projects. Accordingly, The Partnership supports the following:

- A national transportation authorization program utilizing federal funding that allows states the flexibility to accomplish national goals within state priorities.
- Increased federal transportation funding to Iowa. The Partnership advocates against reductions in federal funding or redirection of funds to larger metropolitan centers outside the state. The Partnership also supports increased flexibility in the use of federal funds by local communities.
- Continued improvements to the existing Highway Trust Fund, which finances roughly one-quarter of all public highway and mass transit spending in the U.S. The Partnership supports the development of a sustainable, dedicated and sufficient funding solution for the Highway Trust Fund to ensure federal resources are adequate for the ongoing needs of transportation infrastructure.
- A \$1.5 trillion infrastructure stimulus package has been proposed by the Administration. The Partnership supports the concept of an infrastructure package to help infuse much-needed funding into the transportation system. However, the infrastructure package should:
  - Not reduce the federal funding role at the expense of state and local government;
  - Make funding available for all modes of transportation including public transportation and critical infrastructure maintenance; and
  - Maintain federal infrastructure programs, such as the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program.
- Designating the U.S. 65/Iowa 5 beltway, also known as the Purple Heart Highway, as part of the U.S. Interstate System. Designating this part of the beltway as an interstate would open up economic development opportunities for communities along the route and help to defer congestion on the existing interstate system in the metro area. Designation must be approved by both the Federal Highway Administration and the Iowa DOT. Although no new construction is necessary, new signage and a minimum speed limit would be required, and future maintenance and upgrade responsibilities will need to occur.

## TECHNOLOGY

The Partnership supports policies and programs that ease the introduction and widespread adoption of emerging transportation technologies. These technologies include, but are not limited to, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, transportation network companies and vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure Smart City technology necessary for autonomous vehicles.

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Additionally, The Partnership supports federal policies and programs that ease the introduction and widespread adoption of electric vehicles, including policies that simplify the establishment of more charging stations nationwide.

## **COMPLETE STREETS**

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act made significant strides in directing states and metros to build safer streets by including Complete Streets policy in federal surface transportation for the first time. The Partnership supports continued federal support for Complete Streets, including increased flexibility to allow multimodal transportation amenities on streets and roadways.

## **MULTI-USE TRAILS**

Multi-use trails are utilized as an alternative mode of transportation and provide significant quality of life enhancements and recreational opportunities for Iowans. To help DSM become the "Trails Capital of the World," The Partnership supports continued investment in the Federal Recreational Trails Program as well as the Surface Transportation Program Block Grant Set Aside program.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

As Congress and the Administration consider a federal infrastructure program, The Partnership encourages the consideration of public transit and mobility options as an essential part of that infrastructure package. One way to improve the public transit infrastructure in Iowa is increased funding to the Bus and Bus Facilities program. This funding is essential for the long-term safety and reliability of public transit systems in DSM and across Iowa. The Bus and Bus Facilities formula program was reduced from \$984 million in FY 2012 to \$422 million in FY 2013 — a cut of more than 57 percent. Federal funding in the recently passed the FAST Act was not restored to FY 2012 levels. The Partnership supports funding of the Bus and Bus Facility Program at or above FY 2012 levels, which is necessary for the overall health of public transit systems in Iowa.

## **AVIATION**

The Partnership supports the Des Moines International Airport's Terminal Concept Plan to create an airport that keeps up with Iowa's growing corporate aviation and commercial passenger demand. The Des Moines International Airport has a \$644 million annual economic impact on the State of Iowa. The Partnership believes that as the current facility comes to the end of its useful economic life that it is imperative to invest in a facility and space that accommodates DSM's economic growth and allows the flexibility that the airport will need in the future.

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The Partnership also supports the efforts of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to work with the Des Moines International Airport and Ankeny Regional Airport to fund capital improvement projects. The Partnership requests the Airport Improvement Program funding be increased to \$3.8 billion from the current \$3.35 billion and encourages Congress to make timely appropriations of the Airport Improvement Program funds necessary for the capital improvement projects.

Specifically, the Ankeny Regional Airport requests \$1,705,000 for land acquisition for the Runway 18 Approach Protection and Future Runway Extension and \$786,000 for Rehabilitation of Runway 18/36.

Accordingly, The Partnership supports:

- Removal of the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) cap allowing airports to set a PFC at levels that maintain individual airports through projects that increase capacity or enhance safety. PFCs are not a tax, but instead a user fee charged to passengers using the airport. PFCs have no impact on the federal budget, as the fees are collected by the airlines and returned directly to the airport for use on projects that are approved by both the FAA and the airlines.
- Privatizing air traffic control towers through the Contract Towers program. The proposed total privatization of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) system is supported only by the airlines. The established Contract Tower program has been proven effective and efficient as demonstrated in the Inspector General's Audit Report. On average, contract towers save \$1.5 million annually with no degradation to safety
- Ensuring the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office fully staffs its office at the Des Moines International Airport by adding staff positions to match staffing levels with other comparable airports in the Midwest, such as Omaha (four full-time employees) and Sioux Falls (two full-time employees). Continue the intermittent processing of Global Entry applications in Des Moines.

## RAIL

The Partnership supports extending passenger service connecting Chicago, the Quad Cities, Iowa City, Des Moines, Council Bluffs and Omaha, studying the extension of passenger rail service from Minneapolis-St. Paul to DSM to Kansas City, and continued enhanced federal investment in passenger rail funding.

The Partnership supports the continuation of the U.S. DOT Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFA) grants for infrastructure projects, including the grant submitted for the Des Moines Transload Facility. Additionally, The Partnership supports the enactment of an infrastructure investment tax credit for, and opposes the re-regulation of, the freight rail industry.

## TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS



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The Partnership annually develops a list of priority transportation projects of importance to the region. This list is intended to keep Iowa's Congressional Delegation and the U.S. Department of Transportation apprised of key transportation investments planned for the region, should additional federal resources become available. The list of transportation projects identified by and approved by The Partnership Policy Committee is included on the following page.

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2018 MPO/Greater Des Moines Partnership Priority Transportation Projects				
ID	Sponsor	Project	Description	Total Cost
1	City of Ankeny	West First Street Widening and Improvements - Phase 1	Reconstruct 4-lane arterial street to a 5-lane street with raised medians, new traffic signals, a transit bus turn-out stop and eight-foot shared-use sidewalk.	\$6,500,000
2	City of Carlisle	Scotch Ridge Road and Highway 5 Improvements	Improvements to Scotch Ridge Road from Highway 5 to Bellflower Drive to add turn lanes and traffic signals at the intersection with Bluestem Drive and a roundabout intersection at the middle school. Improvements to the Highway 5 and Scotch Ridge Road intersection include adding turn lanes and pedestrian crossings to the intersection.	\$3,249,000
3	City of Windsor Heights	University Avenue, 69th to 73rd Street	Narrowing existing street from four to three lanes to slow traffic and include various streetscape improvements.	\$2,550,000
4	City of Des Moines and City of Pleasant Hill	Southeast Connector	Four-lane complete street connecting Downtown Des Moines to U.S.-65.	\$50,000,000
5	Des Moines International Airport	New Terminal	The development of a new 14-gate terminal at the existing airport.	\$500,000,000
6	Iowa Department of Transportation	I-35 in Ankeny from IA 160/Oralabor Road to N.E. 36th Street (4-year project, plus FY 2021 erosion control)	Construct auxiliary lanes from IA 160 to First Street; Reconfigure First Street Interchange; Widen to six lanes from First Street to N.E. 36th Street.	\$13,533,000 (FY 2019)  \$51,304,000 (FY 2017 – 2020)
7	Des Moines Area MPO	Des Moines Transload Facility	The construction of a transload facility on the Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway in Des Moines just west of Southeast 14th Street.	\$12,000,000

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8	Polk County and City of Ankeny	N.W. 26th Street Reconstruction Project	Reconstruction of N.W. 26th Street including widening from a 2-lane rural roadway to a 5-lane urban roadway from N.W. 66th Avenue to Oralabor Road in Ankeny.	\$6,750,000
9	City of West Des Moines	Grand Avenue, 1st Street to 6th Street	Widen existing street to accommodate turn lanes and various street-scape improvements.	\$5,586,440