

## TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system is vital to Central Iowa's 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, 18 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, \$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. Unfortunately, the Highway Trust Fund is expected to reach a shortfall by 2021 and aviation Passenger Facility Charges (PFC) remain at the FY 2000 cap of \$4.50 per passenger. Increasing 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, 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, Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance (CIRTPA), local governments and other key partners to strategically 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 United States. 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 federal infrastructure stimulus package has been proposed and likely will be considered by the new administration and new Congress. The Partnership supports a stimulus package to help infuse much-needed funding into the transportation system. The Partnership encourages that any stimulus program be well-planned, that funding be made available for all modes of transportation with a primary focus on critical infrastructure maintenance and that steps be taken to limit wasteful spending.
- 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.

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 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 Central Iowa 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 Des Moines 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. Formal funding in the recently passed Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (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 is necessary for the overall health of public transit systems in Iowa.

The Partnership also supports ongoing local efforts to improve transit service in the region, including:

- Updating the DART Forward 2035 plan, providing the vision for future transit service in the region.
- Sustainable, long-term dedicated funding for public transit in the region.
- The Transit Future Work Group's efforts to collaborate across sectors to ensure transportation choices for current and future generations.

## **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 Central Iowa's economic growth and allows the flexibility that the airport will need in the future.

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 and requests Congress to make timely appropriations of the Airport Improvement Program funds necessary for the capital improvement projects.

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.
- Eliminating the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) penalty on all airport revenue bonds.
- 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). Allow for the processing of Global Entry applications in Des Moines. Applicants currently have to travel to Omaha, Moline, Minneapolis or other cities to complete applications.
- The Ankeny Regional Airport request of \$536,000 to construct a south hangar apron to accommodate 40-plus aircraft on a hangar waiting list, constructed by the Polk County Aviation Authority and partners and \$992,130 to construct a wildlife fence to reduce or eliminate deer incursions.

## **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 Des Moines to Kansas City, and continued enhanced federal investment in passenger rail funding.

The Partnership supports the continuation of the FAST Lane grants for infrastructure projects, included 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**

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.

The Partnership supports a modification to the FAST Act, restoring the MAP-21 method of allocation to regional planning areas so those with the most knowledge of

transportation needs can prioritize which project warrant funding and eliminate additional statewide competition for these funds.

Government/Agency	Project Name	Project Description	Total Project Cost
Surface Transportation Projects			
City of Ankeny	West First Street Reconstruction Project	Full reconstruction of the existing deteriorated four-lane facility into a five-lane roadway with curb-and-gutter, storm sewers, dedicated left turn lanes, traffic signals, a shared-use trail, lighting, landscaping, and associated improvements.	\$ 9,100,000
City of Carlisle	Scotch Ridge Road Intersection Improvements	Add turn lanes and intersection improvements along the Scotch Ridge Road corridor from Bellflower to Highway 5 to improve pedestrian safety and ease increasing congestion.	\$ 1,500,000
City of Des Moines	Bridges to Opportunity: Des Moines Community Connections	Replacement of Locust Street Bridge, historic renovation of Court Avenue Bridge, rehabilitation of Scott Avenue Bridge and rehabilitation of the SW 1st Street Bridge.	\$ 22,000,000
City of Des Moines and City of Pleasant Hill	Southeast Connector	Four-lane complete street connecting Downtown Des Moines to US-65.	\$ 50,000,000
Polk County and City of Johnston	NW 66th Avenue Reconstruction and Kempton Bridge Replacement	Reconstruction of NW 66th Avenue and the Des Moines River Bridge from NW 26th Street to NW Beaver Drive.	\$ 24,992,000
Iowa Department of Transportation	NE 22nd Street/Delaware Avenue Bridge Replacement	This project is the next phase of the multi-year, multi-phase reconfiguration of the Northeast Mixmaster (East junction of I-35/80/235, which will take place over a number of years. Approximately \$230 million of remaining interchange reconfiguration work is identified in Mobilizing Tomorrow.	\$ 5,200,000
City of Urbandale	100th Street Interchange at I-80/35	Construction of a bridge and interchange at 100th Street over I-80/35.	\$ 9,500,000
City of West Des Moines	South 50th Street Widening	Widen the South 50th Street from E.P. True Parkway to Mills Civic Parkway from two lanes to five lanes.	\$ 5,000,000
City of Windsor Heights	University Avenue Multi-Purpose Transportation Improvements	The project will establish a safe, integrated transportation system by providing more productivity out of the existing roadway that promotes the safety and mobility for all roadway users of all ages and travel modes. The roadway would be rehabilitated from 4-lanes to a 2-lane drive lane with a center turn lane, protected bicycle lanes, and on-street parking. University Avenue currently has 4 foot sidewalks on both the north and south side, with plans for widening both sides and adding streetscape amenities.	\$ 1,520,000

