

# Iowa Northland

Regional Transportation Authority

# Public Participation Plan

Adopted December 19, 2024



**INRCOG**  
Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

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**RESOLUTION OF THE  
IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

**WHEREAS**, the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority Policy Board has been designated as the Regional Planning Affiliation for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties, excluding the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area; and

**WHEREAS**, the Policy Board in cooperation with the state is conducting a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) transportation planning process pursuant to 23 CFR 450 (b); and

**WHEREAS**, the Policy Board desires to incorporate a public participation process that fosters public involvement through the transportation planning and decision-making process; and

**WHEREAS**, the Policy Board has prepared a draft version of the 2024 Public Participation Plan that complies with federal and state requirements and regulations; and

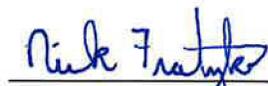
**WHEREAS**, the draft 2024 Public Participation Plan has been made available for public comment for 45 calendar days, and the comment period on the draft document has not expired.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority Policy Board hereby approves the 2024 Public Participation Plan.

Passed and adopted this 19<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Greg Barnett, Chair

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nick Fratzke, Director of Transportation  
INRCOG

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## HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING?



**Come learn about transportation.** All Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) Policy Board, Transportation Technical Committee, and Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. We also occasionally hold public input meetings to discuss certain plans or projects.



**Let us know if you need help to participate.** The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority will make accommodations at no cost for persons with disabilities, persons requiring alternative language services, or any other special communication or accommodation needs who desire to participate in an event held by the organization. People wanting to arrange accommodation should call (319) 235-0311 at least 48 hours prior to the event.



**Voice your opinion.** Every meeting has time set aside for public comments, and staff members can assist with the procedure for speaking during those times. When we have significant plan changes or are introducing new plans or projects, we have extended public comment periods. You can also call, email, or write to RTA staff at any time to provide comments and opinions.

The **Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority Policy Board & Transportation Technical Committee** meet jointly on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM in the Third Floor Board Room, located in the INRCOG Center at 229 East Park Avenue, Waterloo, IA 50703. All meetings are open to the public and **your participation is encouraged**. For more information about the RTA's meetings, please visit our website at [www.bhcmpo.org/rta](http://www.bhcmpo.org/rta).



**Subscribe to our electronic newsletter.** The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments distributes a monthly electronic newsletter on all activities – including RTA transportation planning projects. This newsletter is available to anyone. To sign up, call (319) 235-0311.



**Follow us on our website.** The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority provides posts and project updates at [www.bhcmpo.org/rta](http://www.bhcmpo.org/rta).

# PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

## OVERVIEW

Public Participation is a vital component of good transportation policies, programs, and projects. Without meaningful public involvement, there is a risk of making poor transportation decisions or decisions that have unintended negative consequences. The 2024 Public Participation Plan (PPP) outlines ways meaningful public involvement is incorporated into activities for the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). This document describes the RTA’s proactive strategies, techniques, and desired outcomes to inform and engage all community members in the transportation planning and decision-making process. Exemplary public participation begins early in the planning process and continues throughout each of the planning stages, helping to avoid, minimize, and mitigate project impacts while providing the best solutions.

## GOALS

The goals of the RTA’s Public Participation are to:

- **Inform** the public of transportation meetings, issues, and other relevant events. The public needs to be aware of their role in the transportation planning and decision-making process.
- **Involve** the public by providing opportunities throughout the transportation planning and decision-making process.
- **Include** all community members in the planning area to inform and involve, with special emphasis on those persons who have been underrepresented and/or underserved.
- **Improve** the public participation process by identifying and incorporating new strategies, techniques, and tools.



## PLAN REVIEW AND APPROVAL

To ensure that its public participation strategies are in line with the current demographic characteristics and community vision, the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority reviews and updates the Public Participation Plan every five years. The review and adoption process has adhered to the following key milestones:

- **October 17, 2024:** Draft provided to the RTA Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee, Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for review and comment.
- **November 4, 2024:** Draft provided to the public for a 45-calendar-day review and comment period.
- **December 19, 2024:** Final revised plan approved by the RTA Policy Board. The final plan was forwarded to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA for their records.

All public comments and RTA responses can be found in the Appendix.

## HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS

The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority prefers comments in writing to accurately document and respond to public concerns, comments, and input. Comments can be submitted using the following methods:



**Mail:**  
INRCOG,  
229 East Park Ave,  
Waterloo, IA 50703



**Email** RTA Staff (see contact information below)



**Participate In person** at Policy Board, Transportation Technical Committee, or Advisory Committing meetings (all meetings are open to the public)



**Call Us:** If assistance is needed to submit a comment, contact RTA Staff at (319) 235-0311

## HOW YOUR COMMENTS WILL BE USED

The RTA values public input from all individuals, and all comments received will be considered as part of the transportation planning and decision-making process. RTA staff will document all comments and forward them to the RTA Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee. All individuals or organizations who submit a comment in writing and include their contact information will receive a response to their comment. Every effort will be made to respond to comments before a final vote on any actionable item. Comments received are documented as part of the public record.



## RTA CONTACT INFORMATION

Kyle Durant  
Transportation Planner II  
[kdurant@inrcog.org](mailto:kdurant@inrcog.org)

Nick Fratzke  
Director of Transportation  
[nfratzke@inrcog.org](mailto:nfratzke@inrcog.org)



**INRCOG**  
Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

229 East Park Ave  
Waterloo, IA 50703  
(319) 235-0311  
Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–4:00 PM  
[www.bhcmpo.org/rtta](http://www.bhcmpo.org/rtta)



# AGENCY OVERVIEW

## WHAT IS THE RTA?

The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) was established in 1993 to conduct transportation planning and programming for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties, excluding the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area (Figure 1). The RTA was established under the umbrella of the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) which has been a regional planning agency serving those same counties since 1973. INRCOG is also designated by the State of Iowa as the MPO for the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area. The role of the RTA is to oversee transportation planning and programming to ensure that existing and future federal expenditures on transportation projects are based on a **continuing**, **cooperative**, and **comprehensive** (3-C) planning process.

### IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

**6 COUNTIES**  
Black Hawk, Bremer Buchanan,  
Butler, Chickasaw, & Grundy

**46 CITIES**  
Allison, Alta Vista, Aplington,  
Aredale, Aurora, Beaman, Brandon,  
Bristow, Clarksville, Conrad, Denver,  
Dike, Dumont, Dunkerton, Fairbank,  
Fredericksburg, Frederika, Greene,  
Grundy Center, Hazleton, Holland,  
Independence, Ionia, Janesville,  
Jesup, La Porte City, Lamont,  
Lawler, Morrison, Nashua, New  
Hampton, New Hartford, North  
Washington, Parkersburg, Plainfield,  
Quasqueton, Readlyn, Reinbeck,  
Rowley, Shell Rock, Stanley, Stout,  
Sumner, Tripoli, Waverly, Wellsburg,  
& Winthrop

## STRUCTURE OF THE RTA

Three designated committees form the structure of the RTA: The **Policy Board**, the **Transportation Technical Committee** (TTC), and the **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee** (BPAC). The Policy Board and TTC meet jointly, monthly.

The Policy Board is the governing body of the RTA. Voting members include a member of the Board of Supervisors for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties; a representative from Waverly and Independence, as designated by their respective mayor and/or city council; and a representative from four cities at-large.

The Transportation Technical Committee consists of local engineers, planners, modal representatives, and interested parties. The TTC advises the Policy Board but does not vote on policy issues.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee directly reports to the Policy Board to provide guidance and strategies on the planning and implementation of transportation projects related to bicycle and pedestrian travel. The BPAC meets annually to discuss, rank, and program transportation alternatives projects.

The RTA establishes and supports subcommittees and working groups as needed. A standing subcommittee of the Transportation Technical 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 develop the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP).

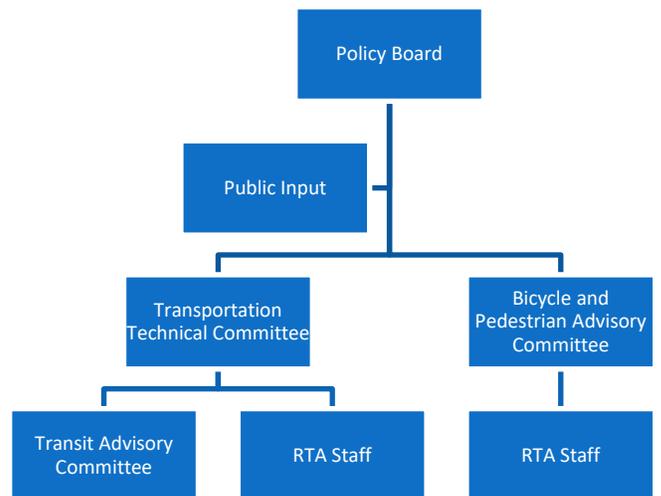
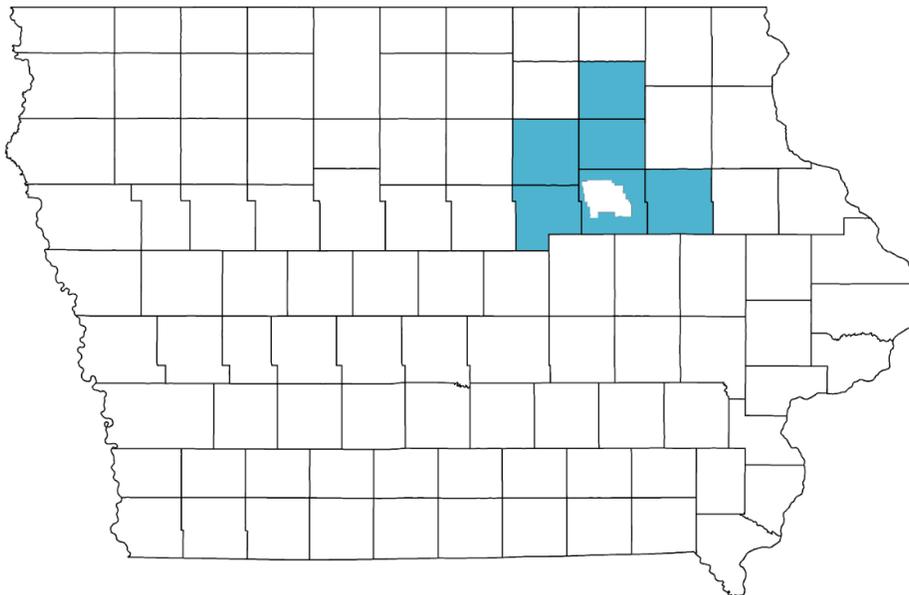
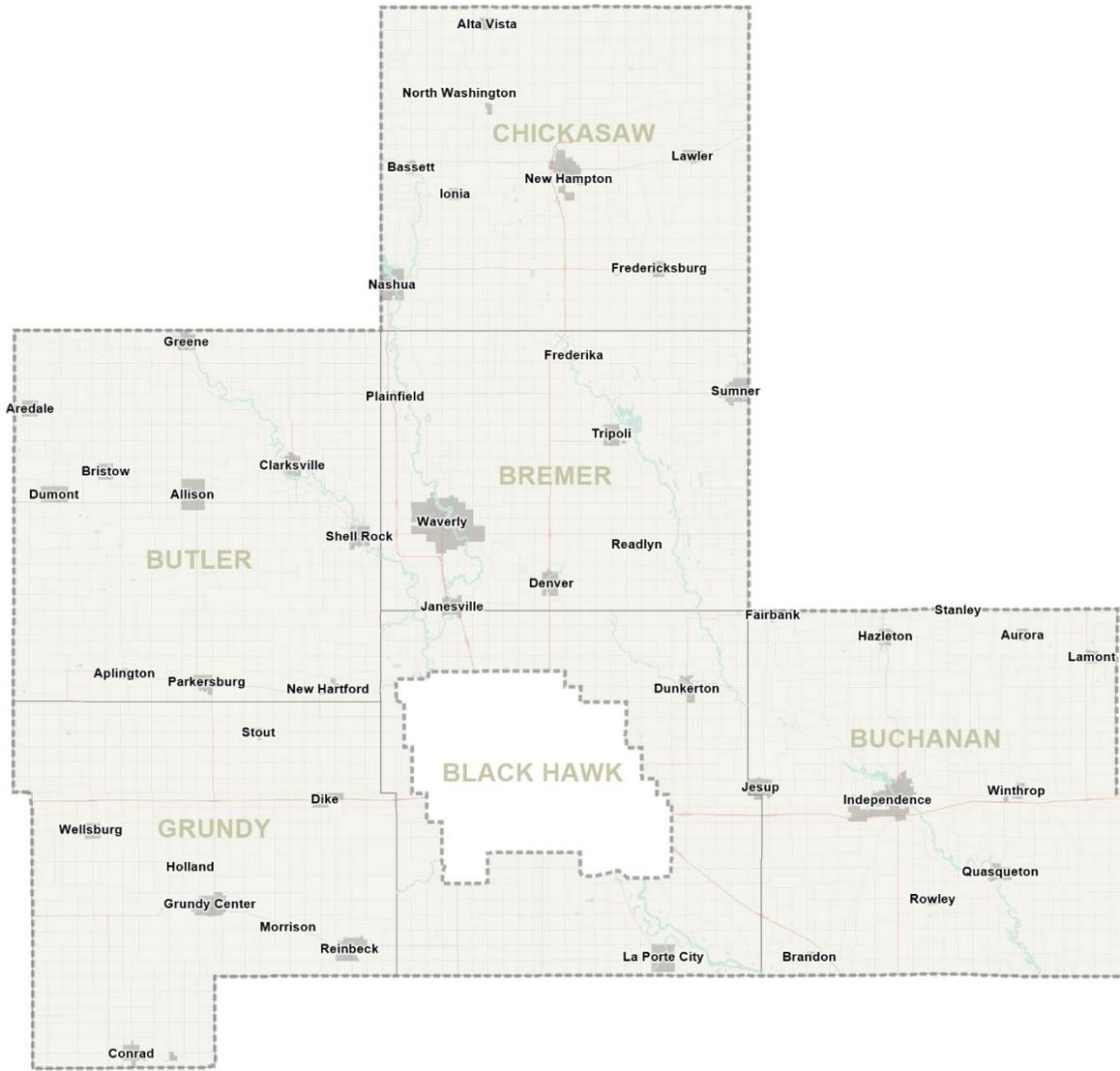


Figure 1: Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority



## STAKEHOLDERS

To fulfill federal requirements and ensure that its planning products reflect the needs of the region, the RTA employs a variety of outreach strategies designed to involve the public and various stakeholders. The RTA will continue to engage and consult with public agencies, public transportation agencies, private transportation providers, public transportation users, pedestrian walkway users, bicycle facility users, disability community, freight shippers and transportation service providers, and individuals and other parties.



# REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

## BACKGROUND ON PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Many movements and events for civil rights, social, environmental, and economic justice have occurred over the past half century that still have an impact on how transportation agencies handle decision making and involving the public. These movements and events have ultimately led to early and continuous public involvement requirements through legislation, regulations, executive orders, and guidance. The following sections describe legislation, federal regulations, executive orders, and state laws that relate to public involvement for the RTA.



## LEGISLATION

### **Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI**

Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI specifically prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. State Departments of Transportation, MPOs, and other recipients of federal-aid funds must ensure compliance with Title VI in their transportation public involvement process.

### **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969**

NEPA requires Federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. This process includes specific requirements for public involvement.

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Section 504 prohibits discrimination based on disability by recipients of federal-aid funds. This Act requires recipients to ensure that public involvement meetings are accessible to individuals with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) later extended protections for individuals with disabilities to the activities of public agencies regardless of whether the agency receives federal-aid funds.

### **Age Discrimination Act of 1975**

This Act prohibits discrimination based on age in programs or activities received federal-aid funds. Public involvement should be open to people of all ages for full compliance with this Act.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits public entities from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in their programs and activities, such as public involvement activities. For example, public entities must ensure that public meeting facilities are accessible and must provide auxiliary aids and services to individuals with vision or hearing disabilities.

### **United States Code Title 23 Section 109(h)**

U.S.C. Title 23 Section 109(h) requires U.S. DOT to ensure transportation investment decisions are made in the best interest of the public good. Engaging community stakeholders is critical to effective compliance with these requirements.

## FEDERAL REGULATIONS

The most recent transportation bill, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), supersedes the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and reauthorizes federal funding for surface transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2026. As a recipient of funding from surface transportation programs, RTAs are subject to the legislation and regulations set forth under IIJA and preceding federal transportation bills, and are specifically subject to the regulations outlined under 23 U.S.C Section 134, 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450, 49 U.S.C. Section 5303, and 49 CFR Part 613.

To meet the requirements of these federal regulations, RTAs must develop a participation plan that defines a process for providing various individuals, agencies, organizations, and interested parties, as defined under 23 CFR 450.316, with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the regional transportation planning process.

## EXECUTIVE ORDERS

The topics of public involvement and nondiscrimination are closely related, for allowing the full and fair participation of the public means ensuring that no individuals or groups are discriminated against. The nondiscrimination executive orders with specific public involvement implications include Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice and Executive Order 13166 on Limited English Proficiency. These directives help implement federal regulations noted previously.



**Environmental Justice** (EJ) is a separate but overlapping nondiscrimination policy similar to Title VI. Executive Order 12898 directs each federal agency to develop an EJ strategy to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Public involvement requirements related to EJ include engaging low income and minority persons equitably in all aspects of the decision-making process.

Executive Order 13166 on **Limited English Proficiency** (LEP) is a separate policy that provides guidance on how to implement nondiscrimination based on national origin under Title VI. It compels transportation agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency, and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. Public involvement requirements for LEP include conducting a Four Factor Analysis of LEP populations, providing materials in a variety of formats including alternative languages and visualizations.

There are other nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protections, such as federal and state laws that prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination based on age, color, creed, disability, gender identify, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran's status.

Transportation agencies are tasked with ensuring that decisions are made in consideration of, and to benefit, public needs and preferences. This important task in transportation planning is supported by gathering diverse viewpoints and values through public participation and nondiscrimination practices.

## STATE LAW

There are two state laws that relate to an agency's responsibilities for public access – the Official Meetings Open to Public (Open Meetings) Law ([Iowa Code Chapter 21](#)) and the Examination of Public Records (Open Records) Law ([Iowa Code Chapter 22](#)).

The **Iowa Open Meetings Law** is designed to facilitate easy public access to government decisions. The law applies to government bodies, including boards, councils, commissions, and task forces created by the state or its political subdivisions. The law defines what constitutes a meeting and lists requirements for public notices, agendas, meeting procedures, and minutes, as well as regulations concerning closed meetings. Key points related to the Public Participation Plan include:

- Requiring public notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting, and the tentative agenda.
- Holding each meeting at a place reasonably accessible to the public and at a time reasonably convenient to the public.
- Holding each meeting in open session, unless closed sessions are expressly permitted by law.
- Keeping minutes of all meetings showing the date, time, place, members present, and action take at each meeting.
- Electronic meetings may be conducted in circumstances where such a meeting in person is impossible or impractical. The agency still needs to make the meeting accessible to the public and keep minutes of the meeting.

The **Iowa Public Records Law** provides for openness from government agencies regarding public records. Except for certain confidential records, every person has the right to examine and copy public records. Key points related to the Public Participation Plan include:

- Every person has the right to examine and copy public record, and to publish or otherwise disseminate a public record or the information contained in a public record of the agency.
- The agency, as the lawful custodian, may adopt and enforce reasonable rules regarding the examination and copying of the records.
- A person's right to examine a public record shall include the right to examine a public record without charge while the public record is in the physical possession of the agency.
- The agency may charge a reasonable fee for time and expense required for supervising examination and copying the records, not to exceed the actual cost of providing the service.
- There are several records that an agency can keep confidential and are not subject to public release in the absence of a court order.

# ROUTINE ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES

Legislation, federal regulations, executive orders, and state laws require the metropolitan transportation planning process to include proactive public participation that provides complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to key decisions. The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority maintains public participation opportunities for transportation plans and projects through a wide range of activities and procedures including but not limited to public meetings, advisory committees, continuous public comment opportunities at RTA meetings, press releases, monthly electronic newsletter, website content, and public input surveys. The following sections describe various RTA activities to provide a better understanding of how the public can be involved in the transportation planning and decision-making process.

## POLICY BOARD AND TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Policy Board is the governing body of the RTA. Voting members include a member of the Board of Supervisors for Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties; a representative from Waverly and Independence, as designated by their respective mayor and/or city council; and a representative from four cities at-large.

The Transportation Technical Committee consists of local engineers, planners, modal representatives, and interested parties. The TTC advises the Policy Board but does not vote on policy issues. The Transportation Technical Committee serves as the advisory body to the Policy Board on technical matters pertaining to the development of transportation planning documents and comprehensive long- and short-range transportation planning. The goal of this planning process is to lead to the development, maintenance, and operation of an integrated system that considers all modes of transportation for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

The **Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority Policy Board & Transportation Technical Committee** meet jointly on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM in the Third Floor Board Room, located in the INRCOG Center at 229 East Park Avenue, Waterloo, IA 50703. All meetings are open to the public and **your participation is encouraged**. For more information about the RTA's meetings, please visit our website at [www.bhcmpo.org/rta](http://www.bhcmpo.org/rta).

The Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee meet jointly on the third Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM in the Third Floor Board Room at the INRCOG Center, 229 East Park Avenue, Waterloo, IA 50703. All RTA meetings are open to the public. The INRCOG Center is an accessible facility and located on a MET Transit fixed route. Meeting notices are distributed to the public through local media sources and the RTA website seven days prior to the meeting. The meeting agenda is posted to the outside of the INRCOG Center at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Any person with special communication or accommodation needs (i.e., sight, reading, or language barriers, request for online or phone participation, etc.) can contact the RTA (minimum 48 hours prior to the meeting) and arrangements will be made. Upon request, the RTA will provide courtesy transportation to and from public hearings.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee directly reports to the Policy Board to provide guidance and strategies on the planning and implementation of transportation projects related to bicycle and pedestrian travel. The BPAC meets annually to discuss, rank, and program transportation alternatives projects.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A standing subcommittee of the Transportation Technical 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 develop the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP). Unless noted otherwise, TAC meetings are held in the Third Floor Board Room at the INRCOG Center. All RTA meetings are open to the public. Meeting notices are distributed to the public through local media sources and the RTA website seven days prior to the meeting. The meeting agenda is posted to the outside of the INRCOG Center at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Any person with special communication or accommodation needs (i.e., sight, reading, or language barriers, request for online or phone participation, etc.) can contact the MPO (minimum 48 hours prior to the meeting) and arrangements will be made.

## LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) ANALYSIS

The purpose of the LEP Analysis is to outline how the RTA identifies persons who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The analysis provides a more detailed analysis of the LEP population in the INRCOG six-county region – including the Black Hawk County metropolitan area – and ways to assist that population. The LEP analysis is included in the appendices of the [Iowa Northland Region Passenger Transportation Plan](#).

The LEP analysis utilizes the U.S. DOT’s four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following elements:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the region who may be served by public transportation or are likely to encounter a public transportation program, activity, or service.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons encounter public transportation programs, activities, or services.
3. The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided by public transportation providers to the LEP population.
4. The resources available to public transportation providers and overall costs to provide LEP assistance.

## ADVERTISING PUBLIC MEETINGS

RTA meeting agendas are sent to local media sources seven days prior to the meeting. Public hearing notices are sent to local media to be published no more than 20 calendar days and no less than four calendar days before the date of the hearing. The primary media outlet for the RTA is the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier. The meeting agenda is posted to the outside of the INRCOG Center at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Relevant information is also made available at the INRCOG Center during business hours.

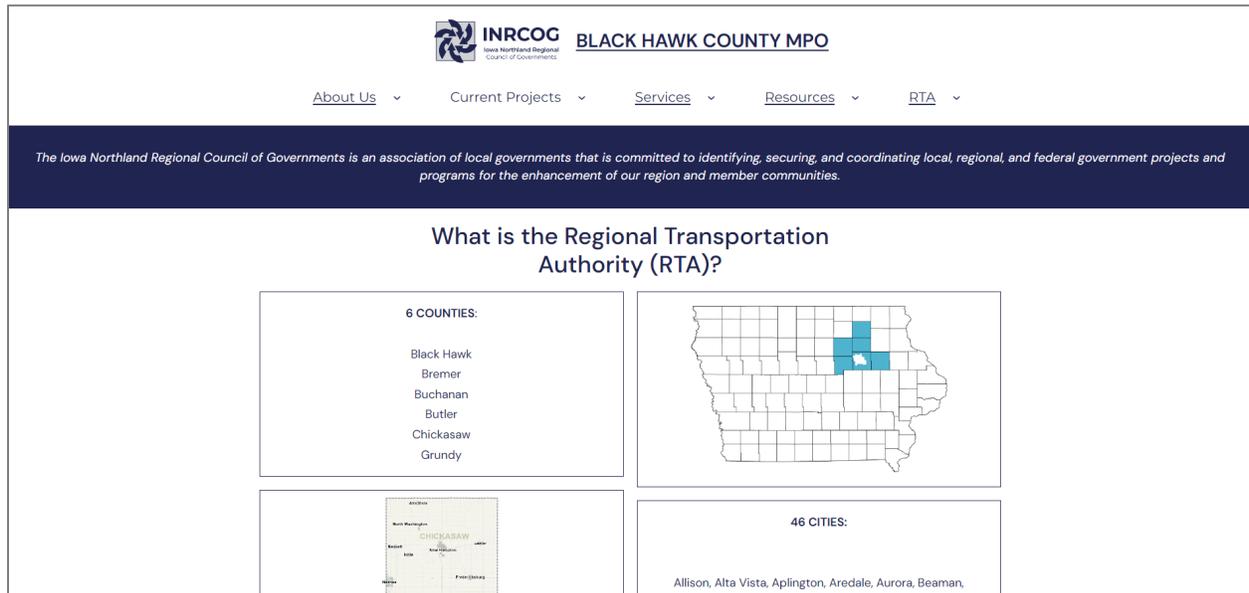
## NOTICES FOR RTA MEETINGS

The RTA provides public notice for meetings through the following:

- Publication on the RTA website [www.bhcmpo.org/rta](http://www.bhcmpo.org/rta).
- Electronic mail to board members, transportation technical committee members, advisory committee members, and other interested parties who have requested to receive agenda item notifications.
- Sending meeting agendas to local media sources.
- Posting the agenda outside the INRCOG office.
- Listing upcoming schedule of meetings in the monthly electronic newsletter *COG Connection*.
- All RTA meetings are open to the public and held in accessible facilities.

## WEBSITE

The RTA website [www.bhcmmpo.org/rta](http://www.bhcmmpo.org/rta) is used throughout the development of major transportation planning documents. Other information on the transportation planning process, additional transportation documents, and Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee meeting agendas and minutes are available on the website.



The screenshot shows the website for the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The header includes the INRCOG logo and the text "BLACK HAWK COUNTY MPO". Navigation menus include "About Us", "Current Projects", "Services", "Resources", and "RTA". A dark blue banner contains the text: "The Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments is an association of local governments that is committed to identifying, securing, and coordinating local, regional, and federal government projects and programs for the enhancement of our region and member communities." Below this is a section titled "What is the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)?" which lists "6 COUNTIES: Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Grundy" and includes a map of Iowa with the region highlighted in blue. A smaller map of Chickasaw County is also shown, listing "46 CITIES: Allison, Alta Vista, Aplington, Aredale, Aurora, Beaman."

## NEWSLETTER

The *COG Connection* is a monthly electronic newsletter produced by INRCOG to keep the community informed about regional developments. Each issue may feature a range of content, including updates on ongoing projects, highlights of local achievements, and news from local, regional, and national sources. It also provides information on funding opportunities and extends invitations for public involvement in various initiatives. The newsletter is distributed via email to local officials, citizens, local media outlets, and other interested parties, ensuring that a broad audience stays connected with the latest news and opportunities from INRCOG.

## SURVEYS

The RTA uses both online and paper surveys to gather public input for various projects and documents. These surveys are available via the RTA website, electronic newsletters, and direct mailings. Key surveys, such as those for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP), are conducted during their five-year updates to capture community feedback and ensure the plans address residents' needs and preferences effectively.

### Transportation Survey for the Iowa Northland Region

Play a role in the future of transportation planning in your community! The purpose of this survey is to gather input from rural Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties to identify transportation needs and priorities for the next 25 years.

This survey is being conducted by the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments. For questions or assistance, please [email](#) or contact Kyle Durant at (319) 235-0311.

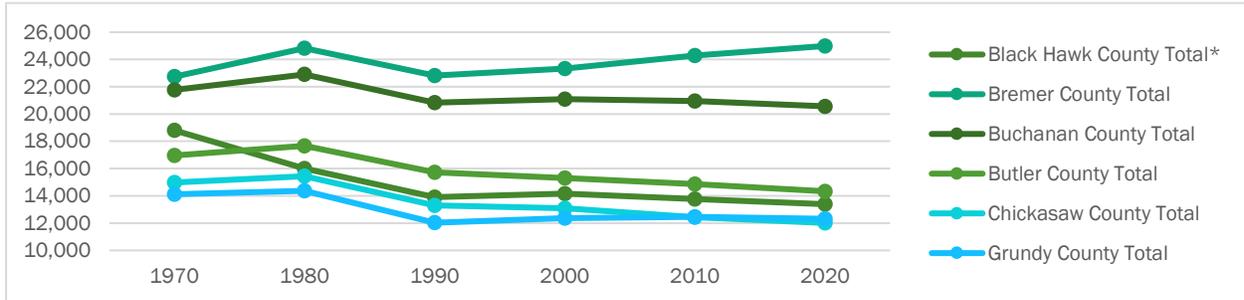


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## VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES

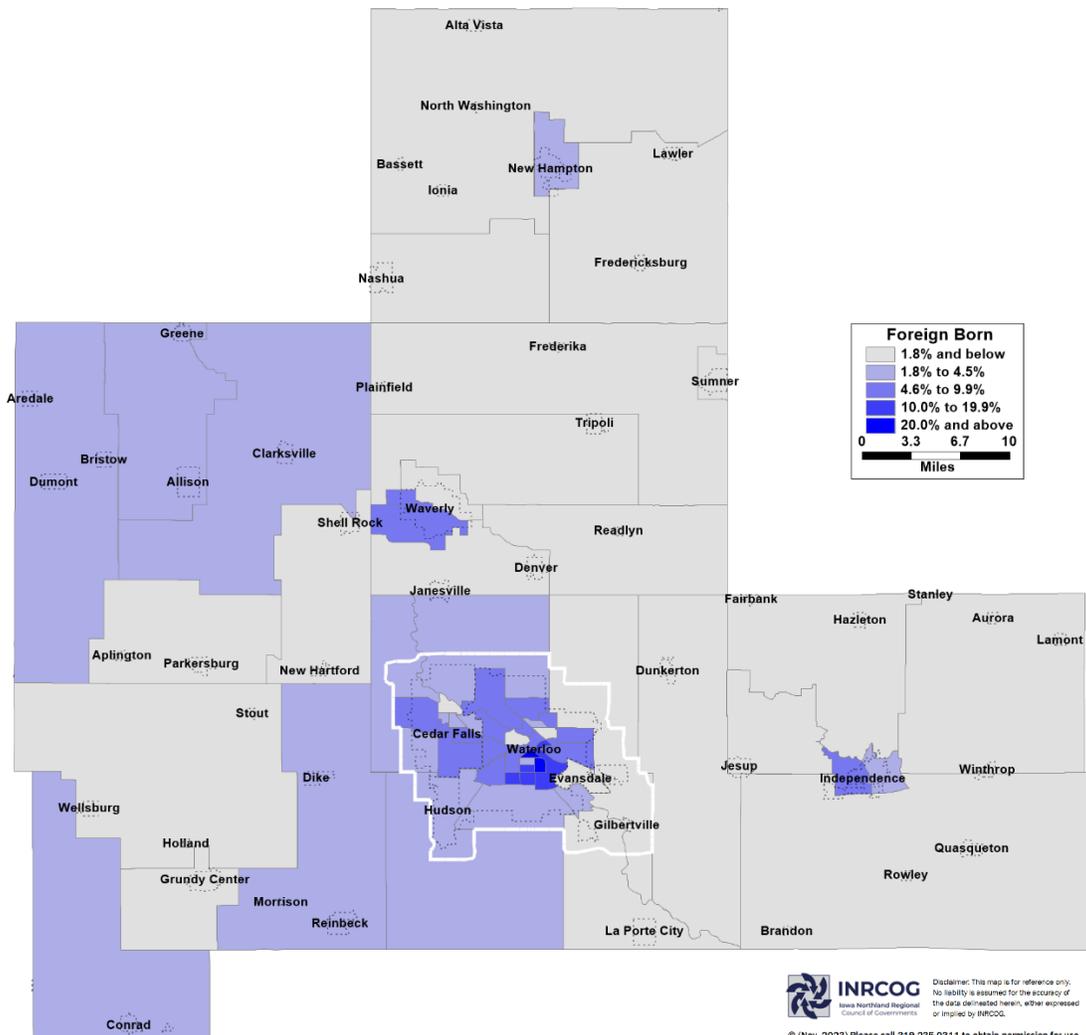
The RTA utilizes various visualization techniques to describe regional transportation plans and documents. This includes Geographic Information System (GIS) data visualizations and maps, interactive maps, charts, tables, and photographs. Example visualizations from the draft 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan are provided below.

**Figure 2.1: Historical Population, by County**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1970 to 2020. \*Black Hawk County includes La Porte City, Dunkerton, and all unincorporated areas

**Map 2.2: Foreign Born Population, by Census Tract**



# SPECIFIC PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT EFFORTS

## 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN SURVEY

In September 2024, RTA staff conducted a public input survey to gain input prior to the development of the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Two rounds of the survey were conducted to gather responses. The first round included purchasing a mailing list of 1,000 randomly generated households in Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties through the mailing list consultant DirectMail. Black Hawk County was excluded due to challenges in filtering out addresses within the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area. The second round was made available to anyone interested via INRCOG's media platforms, including email lists, the RTA website, and the INRCOG E-newsletter. Both rounds of the survey were launched simultaneously to maximize public outreach efforts.

The postcard features the logo of the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) on the left. To the right of the logo is the organization's name and contact information: "IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, 229 E Park Avenue | Waterloo Iowa 50703, (319) 235-0311 | www.bhcmpo.org/rta". Below this is the text: "You've been selected to play a role in future transportation planning in your community!". A blue starburst graphic contains the text "Chance to win \$50 cash!". A speech bubble says "Take the survey by September 15th!". A QR code is located on the right side. Below the QR code is the text "How to take the survey: scan the QR code or visit https://arcg.is/1vm9Kn0". At the bottom right, it says "Tell us your thoughts on:" followed by a list of topics: "Roads & Bridges", "Safety", "Transit", "Passenger Rail", and "Pedestrian & Bicycle Infrastructure". A map of the region is shown in the center.

ArcGIS Survey123 was used to create, administer, and analyze the survey. Postcards were created and mailed using VistaPrint. The postcard included a QR code and URL to provide access to the online survey. To increase response rates, participants could contact the INRCOG office and request a paper survey be mailed to their address.

The graphic has a blue background with a grid pattern. At the top, it says "TRANSPORTATION INPUT SURVEY" in large white letters. Below this is a photograph of a road with cars. To the right of the photo is a list of bullet points: "Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments", "Help identify transportation needs in Eastern Iowa", "Survey for residents in Bremer, Butler, Grundy, Black Hawk, Buchanan, and Chickasaw counties", "Access survey at www.bhcmpo.org/rta", and "Open until September 15th".

The survey included approximately 30 questions to capture input regarding roads, bridges, public transit, safety, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the region. There were multiple opportunities for written comments and three demographic questions.

## LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS

In 2020, three public input meetings were conducted for the draft 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these sessions were held virtually. They were promoted through a news release, flyers at public locations, the RTA website, and an email distribution. A slideshow presentation with various displays was shown on a continuous loop during the meetings, and staff were available throughout to answer questions. Participants could submit comments by phone, email, in person, or through an online form. Future LRTP public input sessions are expected to be held in person.



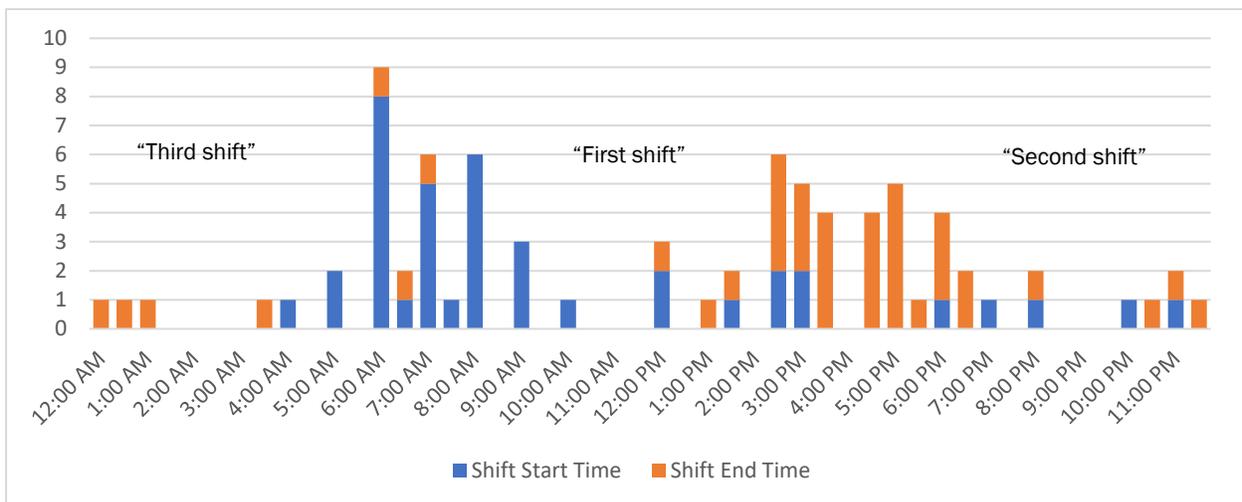
## AIRLINE HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

In 2018, MET Transit partnered with INRCOG, RTC, and Grow Cedar Valley to conduct a survey of businesses in the Airline Highway industrial area. This was a follow-up to a survey Grow Cedar Valley had conducted in 2017 which found that public transit was ranked the lowest of all community services in the region.

A total of 14 businesses responded to the Airline Highway Transportation Survey. Ten businesses said they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their business would benefit from improved public transit service. Two businesses said they would “possibly” be willing to contribute funds to have dedicated fixed-route bus service to their business. Three businesses said they would “possibly” be interested in sponsoring a rideshare program for their employees.

Businesses were also asked to list the times their employees arrive to and depart from work. Most employees start their shift in the morning on the hour (i.e., 6:00, 7:00, 8:00, and 9:00 a.m.). Departure times are more evenly distributed between the hour and half-hour, and most employees depart work between 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. Figure 2 shows the shift start and end times for employees at businesses surveyed in the Airline Highway industrial area. This data can help with scheduling a potential new fixed-route to the Airline Highway area.

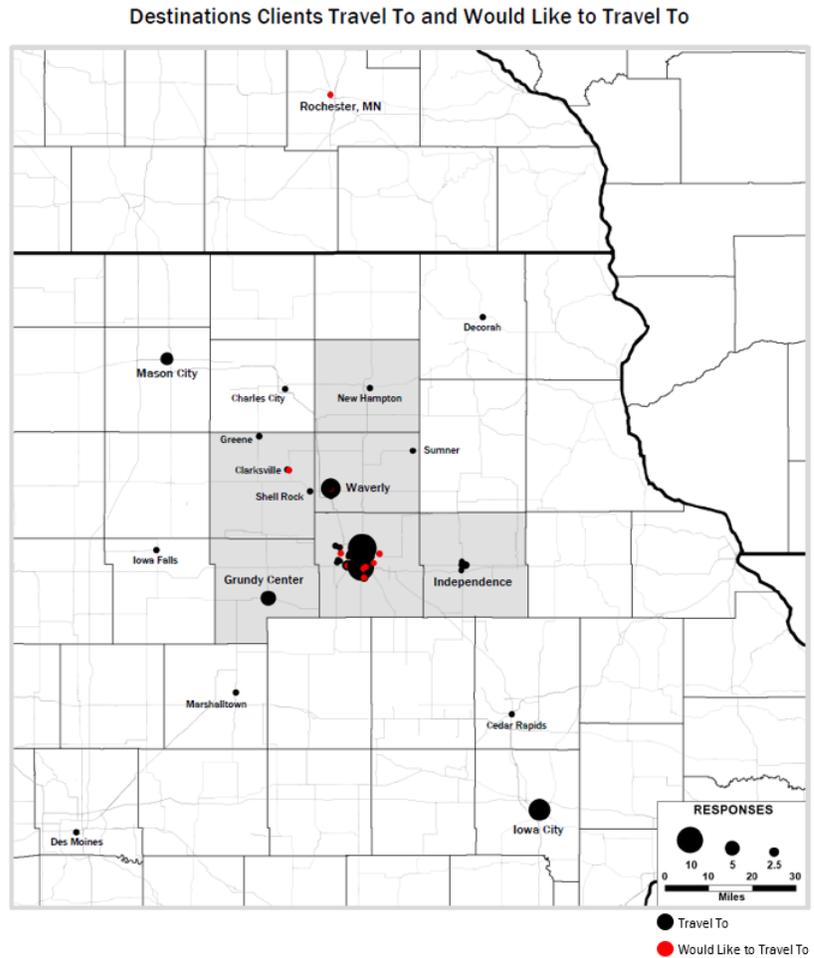
**Figure 2: Shift Start and End Times for Airline Highway Industrial Area Employees**



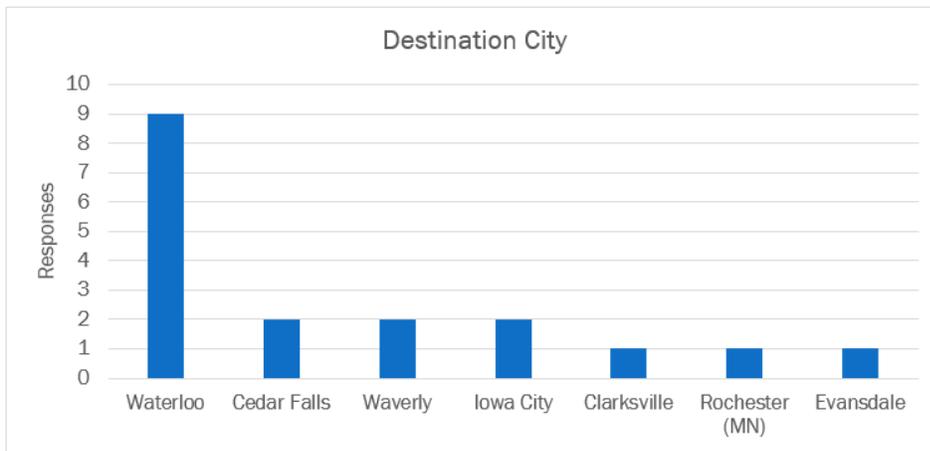
## PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

Public input was received through a Passenger Transportation Survey that was conducted as part of the FY 2021-2025 Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP). The purpose of the survey was to help identify existing transportation services, transportation needs, and opportunities for coordinated services in the six-county Iowa Northland Region, including the Black Hawk County metropolitan area. Survey responses were also utilized to help identify passenger transportation investment priorities and strategies for the next five years.

The online survey was distributed to passenger transportation providers and human service agencies in December 2019. The survey consisted of 12 questions as well as several opportunities for written comments. Agencies were also provided the opportunity to complete the survey manually. Agencies were notified of the survey through mailings and email. A total of 50 responses were received.



### 9. List up to three additional destinations your clients would like to travel to, but currently cannot (destination & city):



## WATER TRAILS MASTER PLAN PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS

In 2017 and 2018, INRCOG developed a Water Trails Master Plan for Black Hawk County. This project was funded through the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and identified site-specific improvements to river accesses throughout the County, including about 20 sites in the metropolitan area. Two public input meetings were held in July and August 2018. A total of 75 individuals attended the two meetings. Each meeting included informational handouts, a push-pin activity, interactive map and discussion, input surveys, and a variety of large displays. Discussions took place between meeting attendees and staff throughout the meeting space. This provided attendees the opportunity to learn more about the water trails process before filling out their survey form.

## EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

Several Federal, State, Tribal, and local government agencies were notified when the draft 2045 LRTP document was available for review. Feedback on topics relevant to their field of expertise was requested. Agencies notified include the following:

- Black Hawk County Conservation
- Bremer County Conservation
- Buchanan County Conservation
- Butler County Conservation
- Chickasaw County Conservation
- Grundy County Conservation
- Black Hawk County Emergency Management
- Bremer County Emergency Management
- Buchanan County Emergency Management
- Butler County Emergency Management
- Chickasaw County Emergency Management
- Grundy County Emergency Management
- Black Hawk County REAP Committee
- Grow Cedar Valley
- Hawkeye Community College
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
- Iowa Department on Aging
- Iowa Department for the Blind
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Iowa Department of Education
- Iowa Department of Human Rights
- Iowa Department of Human Services
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Iowa Department of Public Health
- Iowa Department of Public Safety
- Iowa Department of Transportation, Systems Planning Bureau
- Iowa Department of Transportation, District 2
- Iowa Department of Veterans' Affairs
- Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission
- Iowa Tourism Board
- Iowa Utilities Board
- Iowa Workforce Development
- Office of the State Archaeologist
- Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi
- State Historical Society of Iowa
- Transit Advisory Committee
- University of Northern Iowa
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs, Midwest Regional Office
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois-Iowa Field Office

# ROUTINE PLANNING DOCUMENTS

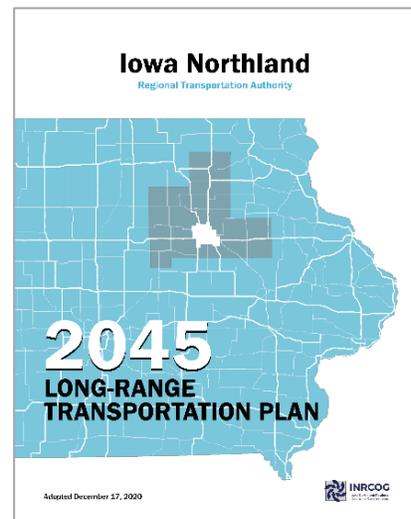
The RTA is responsible for completing the transportation planning documents outlined in this section and will actively seek input during development and implementation. Further, the RTA will seek input for all documents and processes concerning the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and its implementation within and beyond the region and service area. Several methods of seeking public input are outlined in this Plan. This list is not all-inclusive. Methods to inform the public and receive input will be evaluated and added when necessary.

## LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

The LRTP serves as a mechanism for the RTA to examine its current transportation networks including highway, public transit, air, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian modes, and to assess their adequacy for the existing population and economy. Moreover, it provides area officials with an opportunity to explore the future transportation needs of the community based on existing conditions and projected revenues. The document considers freight, safety, and environmental issues, financial feasibility, and system operations and maintenance. The LRTP also contains a chapter that discusses public involvement efforts and public comments received on the document.

The following actions will be undertaken to ensure full public participation:

1. Draft LRTP
  - a. The draft LRTP will be developed by RTA staff in collaboration with representatives from jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT, under the guidance of the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee.
  - b. Input will be solicited from a diverse group, including individuals, public agencies, representatives of transportation industries (employees, shippers, providers), users of public transportation, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle facilities, individuals with disabilities, and other stakeholders.
  - c. Focus groups representing various transportation modes and issues, such as transit, highways and land use, cycling and walking, safety and security, and environmental resources, may be convened. These groups will identify key concerns, potential solutions, and provide feedback on draft chapters related to their areas of expertise.
  - d. The draft document will be made available at INRCOG, on the RTA website, and upon request.
2. Notices and Public Meetings
  - a. At least two (2) public input sessions will be conducted to gather feedback on the draft LRTP.
  - b. At least one (1) public input session will be held in a designated low-income or minority community.
  - c. The meetings will be held in accessible facilities.
  - d. Notices for public input sessions will be widely disseminated through local media outlets, posted at government offices, libraries, post offices, transit buses, the INRCOG office, and the RTA website. Additionally, these notices may be distributed to organizations serving traditionally underserved communities.



- e. Individuals with special communication or accommodation needs, such as visual, reading, or language impairments, or those requesting online or phone participation, are encouraged to contact the RTA at least 48 hours before the meeting to arrange necessary accommodations.
3. Public Comment Period
    - a. Written and oral comments will be accepted during the public input sessions. Additionally, a 15-day comment period will be available after the final session for the public to submit comments via letter, email, phone, or in person.
    - b. A public hearing will be held during a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting to summarize public comments and responses received. Notice of this hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.
  4. Final LRTP
    - a. Following the public hearing, the Policy Board will adopt a final LRTP, including a summary of public comments and responses.
    - b. The final LRTP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA.
    - c. The final LRTP will be made available on the RTA website, at INRCOG, and upon request.
    - d. The public participation process associated with the LRTP will be evaluated and updated as needed.
  5. Revisions
    - a. The LRTP may be revised as needed between full document updates.
    - b. Amendments to the LRTP will require a public hearing at a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting. Notice of the hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.

## TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The TIP identifies all transportation projects in the region, including transit projects for OnBoard Public Transit, that are anticipated to receive federal transportation funding within the next four federal fiscal years. The TIP is a short-range component that is complementary to the Long-Range Transportation Plan. The TIP is updated annually with adoption by the Policy Board in July of each year. The document is incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by the Iowa DOT.

The following actions will be undertaken annually to ensure full public participation:



1. Draft TIP
  - a. The draft TIP will be developed by RTA staff in collaboration with the Transportation Technical Committee and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.
  - b. The draft document will be made available at INRCOG, on the RTA website, and upon request.
2. Notices and Public Meetings
  - a. At least two (2) public input sessions will be conducted to gather feedback on the draft TIP.
  - b. At least one (1) public input session will be held in a designated low-income or minority community.
  - c. The meetings will be held in accessible facilities.
  - d. Notices for public input sessions will be widely disseminated through local media outlets, posted at government offices, libraries, post offices, transit buses, the INRCOG office, and the

RTA website. Additionally, these notices may be distributed to organizations serving traditionally underserved communities.

- e. Individuals with special communication or accommodation needs, such as visual, reading, or language impairments, or those requesting online or phone participation, are encouraged to contact the RTA at least 48 hours before the meeting to arrange necessary accommodations.
3. Public Comment Period
    - a. Written and oral comments will be accepted during the public input sessions. Additionally, a 15-day comment period will be available after the final session for the public to submit comments via letter, email, phone, or in person.
    - b. A public hearing will be held during a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting to summarize public comments and responses received. Notice of this hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.
  4. Final TIP
    - a. Following the public hearing, the Policy Board will adopt a final TIP, including a summary of public comments and responses.
    - b. The final TIP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA.
    - c. The final TIP will be made available on the RTA website, at INRCOG, and upon request.
    - d. The public participation process associated with the TIP will be evaluated and updated as needed.
  5. Revisions
    - a. The TIP is a dynamic document and may need to be revised in between annual updates. There are two types of revisions—administrative modifications and amendments.
      - i. Minor revisions may be made to the TIP as necessary. These are considered *administrative modifications* and may be made by RTA staff without public review and comment. RTA staff may discuss administrative modifications with the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee, but formal action will not be required.
      - ii. Major revisions may also be made to the TIP as necessary. These are considered *amendments* and require public review and comment, and Policy Board approval. A public hearing will be held during a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting to summarize public comments and responses and to consider approving TIP amendments. Notice of this hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.

The following table outlines the differences between administrative modifications and amendments:

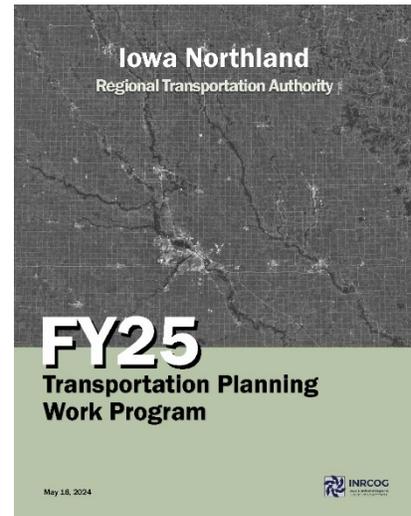
	<b>Administrative Modification</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
<b>Project Cost</b>	Federal aid changed by less than 30% and total federal aid increases less than \$2,000,000	Federal aid changed by more than 30% or total federal aid increases by more than \$2,000,000
<b>Schedule Changes</b>	Changes in schedule for projects in the first four years of the TIP	Adding or deleting a project from the first four years of the TIP
<b>Funding Sources</b>	Changing amounts of existing funding sources	Adding other federal funding sources to a project
<b>Scope Changes</b>	Moving funding between existing states of project scope (i.e., design to construction)	Changing project termini, number of lanes, or significant changes in project type

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (TPWP)

This document outlines the transportation-related activities and projects that are anticipated to occur during the state fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The document serves to address current and projected transportation needs for the region from a planning perspective. Within each work element, specific tasks are identified by the objective, previous work performed, a description of the task, and the desired outcomes. The TPWP is updated annually with adoption by the Policy Board in May.

The following actions will be undertaken annually to ensure full public participation:

1. Draft TPWP
  - a. The draft TPWP will be developed by RTA staff in collaboration with representatives from jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT, under the guidance of the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee.
  - b. The draft document will be made available at INRCOG, on the RTA website, and upon request.
2. Notices and Public Meetings
  - a. The draft TPWP will be presented to the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee at a regularly scheduled meeting in April.
  - b. The meeting will be held in an accessible facility.
  - c. Individuals with special communication or accommodation needs, such as visual, reading, or language impairments, or those requesting online or phone participation, are encouraged to contact the RTA at least 48 hours before the meeting to arrange necessary accommodations.
3. Public Comment Period
  - a. Written and oral comments will be accepted during the meeting in April. Additionally, a 15-day comment period will be available after the final session for the public to submit comments via letter, email, phone, or in person.
  - b. A public hearing will be held during a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting in May to summarize public comments and responses received. Notice of this hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.
4. Final TPWP
  - a. Following the public hearing, the Policy Board will adopt a final TPWP including a summary of public comments and responses.
  - b. The final TPWP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA.
  - c. The final TPWP will be made available on the RTA website, at INRCOG, and upon request.
5. Revisions
  - a. The TPWP may be revised as needed between full document updates.
  - b. Amendments to the TPWP will require a public hearing at a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting. Notice of the hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.



## PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN (PTP)

The Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) serves as a platform for coordinating passenger transportation services among providers in the six-county region. By uniting providers and major human service agencies, the PTP aims to enhance understanding of available transportation options and improve coordination among providers. This collaborative effort ensures that residents, especially those reliant on transit, have access to effective and affordable transportation choices. The PTP is updated every five years. The Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) acts as a key advisory body for passenger transportation planning in the region, playing a vital role in the development of the PTP. The TAC comprises transit users and advocates, human service organizations, local government representatives, and transportation providers.

The PTP is developed collaboratively with the Black Hawk County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). This plan includes a regional overview, an assessment of existing passenger transportation services and coordination challenges, a review of past transit-related initiatives, public input on needs and coordination issues, a five-year strategy outlining projects and financial resources, and available funding. The PTP incorporates public transit system projects for OnBoard Public Transit and MET Transit. MET Transit offers fixed-route and paratransit services in Waterloo and Cedar Falls, while OnBoard Public Transit provides accessible, open-to-the-public transit services within the INRCOG region outside of the metropolitan area.



The following actions will be undertaken to ensure full public participation:

1. Draft PTP
  - a. The draft PTP will be developed by RTA and MPO staff in collaboration with the Transit Advisory Committee.
  - b. Input will be solicited from a diverse group, including individuals, users of public transportation, local and regional transit agencies, human service agencies, healthcare providers, education institutions, local governments, and non-profit organizations.
  - c. The draft document will be made available at INRCOG, on the RTA and MPO websites, and upon request.
2. Notices and Public Meetings
  - a. The draft PTP will be presented to the RTA and MPO Policy Boards and Transportation Technical Committees at regularly scheduled meetings.
  - b. The meetings will be held in an accessible facility.
  - c. Individuals with special communication or accommodation needs, such as visual, reading, or language impairments, or those requesting online or phone participation, are encouraged to contact the RTA at least 48 hours before the meeting to arrange necessary accommodations.
3. Public Comment Period
  - a. Written and oral comments will be accepted during the meetings in which the draft PTP is presented. Additionally, a 15-day comment period will be available after the final session for the public to submit comments via letter, email, phone, or in person.
  - b. Public hearings will be held during regularly scheduled RTA and MPO Policy Board meetings to summarize public comments and responses received. Notice of these hearings will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the events.

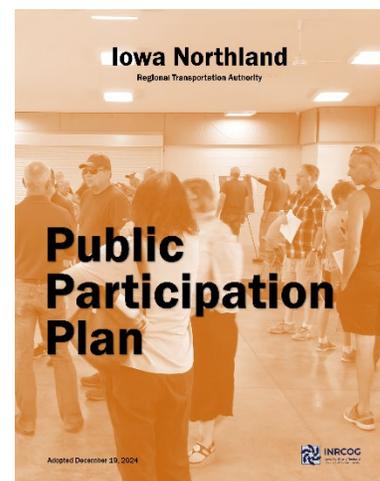
4. Final PTP
  - a. Following the public hearings, the RTA and MPO Policy Boards will adopt a final PTP including a summary of public comments and responses.
  - b. The final PTP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT and FTA.
  - c. The final PTP will be made available on the RTA and MPO websites, at INRCOG, and upon request.
5. Revisions
  - a. The PTP may be revised as needed between full document updates.
  - b. Amendments to the PTP will require public hearings at regularly scheduled RTA and MPO Policy Board meetings. Notice of the hearings will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP)

The Public Participation Plan outlines how public input is integrated into RTA activities. This input is crucial for government initiatives. The plan aims to provide all residents with opportunities to express opinions and concerns about multimodal and intermodal transportation planning, programming, and initiatives. The document is updated every five years.

The following actions will be undertaken to ensure full public participation:

1. Draft PPP
  - a. The draft PPP will be developed by RTA staff in collaboration with representatives from jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT, under the guidance of the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee.
  - b. The draft document will be made available at INRCOG, on the RTA website, and upon request.
2. Notices and Public Meetings
  - a. The draft PPP will be presented to the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee at a regularly scheduled meeting.
  - b. The meeting will be held in an accessible facility.
  - c. Individuals with special communication or accommodation needs, such as visual, reading, or language impairments, or those requesting online or phone participation, are encouraged to contact the RTA at least 48 hours before the meeting to arrange necessary accommodations.
3. Public Comment Period
  - a. Written and oral comments will be accepted during the meetings in which the draft PPP is presented. Additionally, a 45-day comment period will be available after the final session for the public to submit comments via letter, email, phone, or in person.
  - b. A public hearing will be held during a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting to summarize public comments and responses received. Notice of this hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.
4. Final PPP
  - a. Following the public hearing, the Policy Board will adopt a final PPP, including a summary of public comments and responses.
  - b. The final PPP will be submitted to the Iowa DOT, FHWA, and FTA.
  - c. The final PPP will be made available on the RTA website, at INRCOG, and upon request.
5. Revisions
  - a. The PPP may be revised as needed between full document updates.



- b. Amendments to the PPP will require a public hearing at a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting. Notice of the hearing will be published between four (4) and twenty (20) days prior to the event.

**SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT**

	<b>Updated</b>	<b>Draft Development</b>	<b>Public Input Sessions</b>	<b>Public Comment Period</b>	<b>Adoption</b>	<b>Document Availability</b>
<b>Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)</b>	Every five years	RTA staff in collaboration with representatives from jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT, under the guidance of the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee.	Minimum of two (2)	15-calendar-days following final public input session	Public hearing during regularly scheduled RTA Policy Board meeting	RTA website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request
<b>Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)</b>	Annually	RTA staff in collaboration with the Transportation Technical Committee and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.	Minimum of two (2)	15-calendar-days following final public input session	Public hearing during regularly scheduled RTA Policy Board meeting	RTA website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request
<b>Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)</b>	Annually	RTA staff in collaboration with representatives from jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT, under the guidance of the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee.	Not required	15-calendar-days following draft completion and presentation to the RTA Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee	Public hearing during regularly scheduled RTA Policy Board meeting in May	RTA website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request
<b>Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)</b>	Every five years	RTA and MPO staff in collaboration with the Transit Advisory Committee.	Not required	15-calendar-days following draft completion and presentation to the RTA Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee	Public hearing during regularly scheduled RTA and MPO Policy Board meetings	RTA and MPO website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request
<b>Public Participation Plan (PPP)</b>	Every five years	RTA staff in collaboration with representatives from jurisdictions and the Iowa DOT, under the guidance of the Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee.	Not required	45-calendar-days following draft completion and presentation to the RTA Policy Board and Transportation Technical Committee	Public hearing during regularly scheduled RTA Policy Board meeting	RTA website, at INRCOG Center, and upon request

# INVOLVING EVERYONE

The Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority will not exclude, deny, or discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, age, sex, gender, gender identify and expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, familial or marital status, religion, disability, veteran status, medical or genetic condition, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The RTA believes all persons should have input and benefit from transportation investments. To ensure everyone can participate in the transportation planning and decision-making process, it is imperative for the RTA to identify potential public input challenges and opportunities. Potential challenges include but are not limited to the following:

- Limited or no access to a vehicle
- Lack of access to internet or digital device
- Finding time to participate
- Reluctance to attend in-person public input meetings
- Navigating public transportation
- Language barriers
- Limited understanding of the RTA and what we do
- Unfamiliarity with transportation planning and public input opportunities/efforts

The RTA strives to address these challenges to help ensure public involvement is as accessible as possible. Public input opportunities include but are not limited to the following:

- Holding public input opportunities where people already are (i.e., grocery store)
- Online and in person public input meeting options
- Paper and online public input surveys made available in English, Spanish, and Bosnian
- Informational posters distributed to libraries, community centers, public buildings, religious centers, and senior centers
- Flyers and posters for public meetings printed in English, Spanish, and Bosnian
- Plans and documents provided online and in accessible formats when requested
- Executive summaries for major documents
- Web translation service provided for the RTA website
- Telephone translation service provided by INRCOG
- Inviting representatives of organizations that represent communities of color, people with disabilities, and seniors to meetings and appropriate focus groups or workshops
- Presentations from local, state, and national conferences shared on the RTA website
- Online interactive and paper mapping exercises

## UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

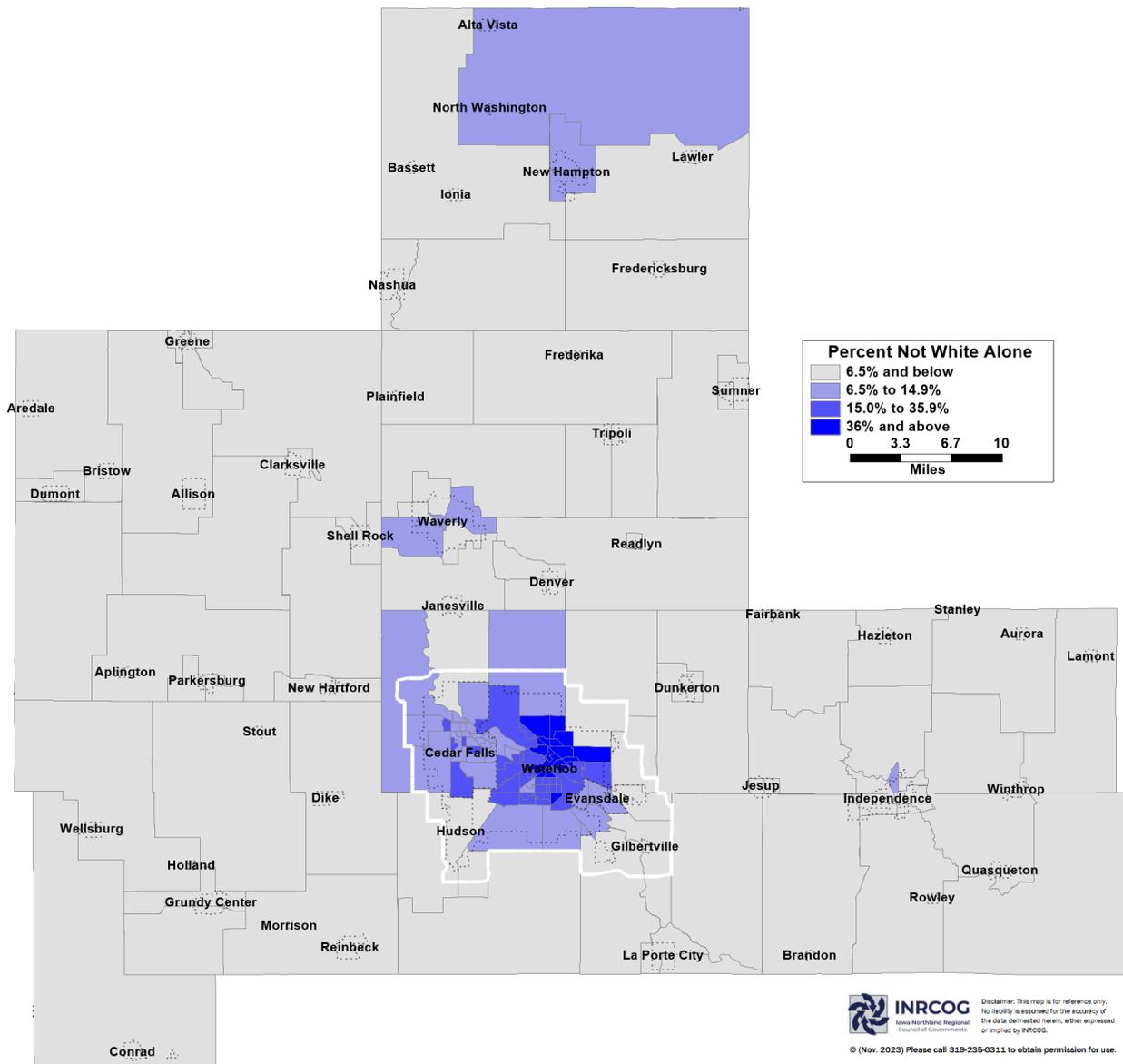
Identifying the locations and concentrations of Underserved Populations is essential to establishing effective strategies for engaging everyone in the transportation planning and decision-making process. To pinpoint the locations and concentrations of persons protected under Title VI and other nondiscriminatory regulations, the following maps were created to highlight areas with higher densities of these populations across the six-county region, including the Waterloo-Cedar Falls metropolitan area.

### Racial and Ethnic Minorities

For the purposes of this plan, Racial and Ethnic Minorities are defined as individuals that do not identify as White alone. Under this definition, the estimated Minority population accounts for approximately 4.7 percent of the total population in the region, excluding the MPO area.

### Racial & Ethnic Minorities

U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

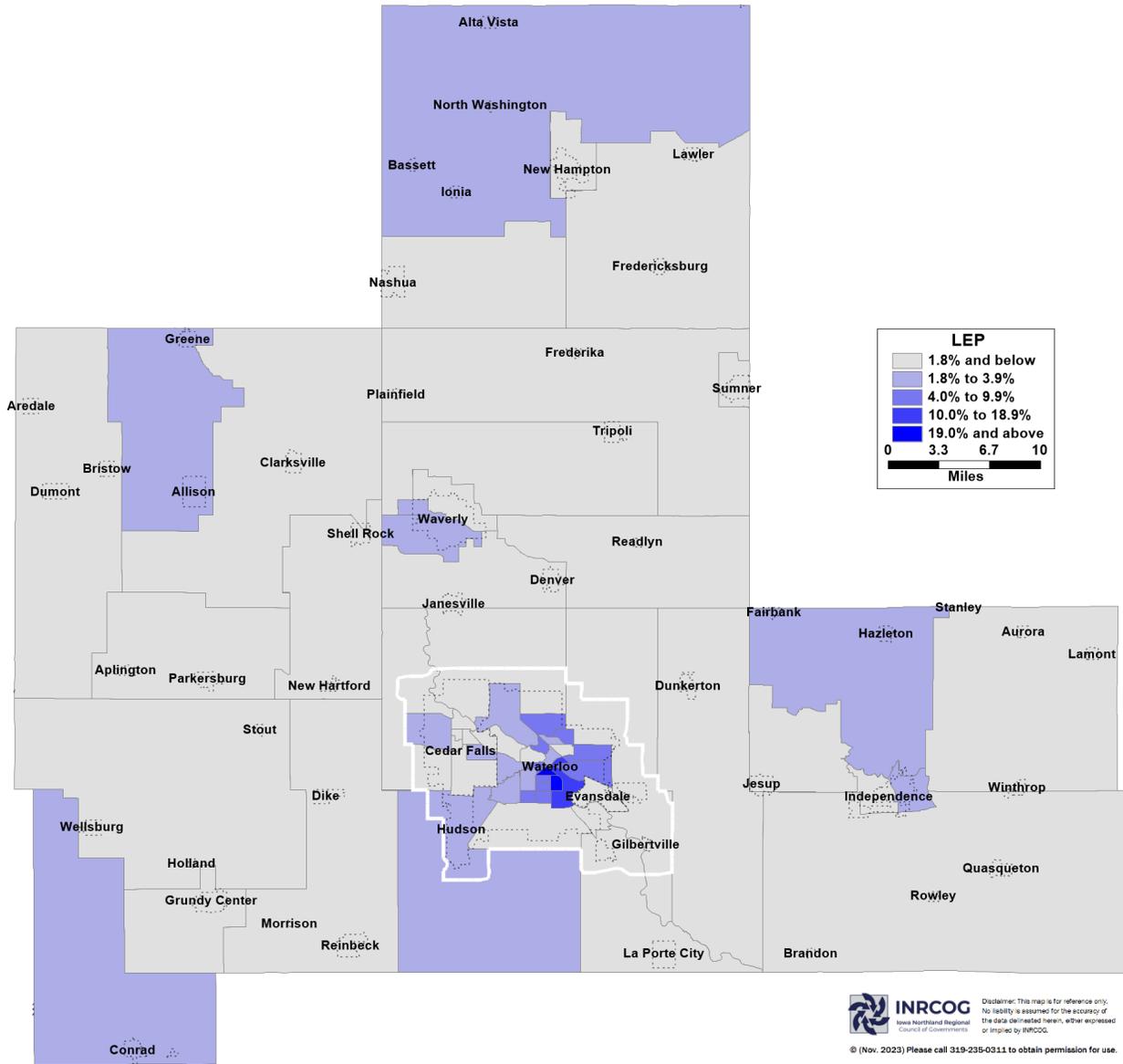


## Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The Department of Justice defines LEP persons as, “Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English...” Approximately 1.1 percent of the population 5 years of age and older within the region, excluding the MPO area, are considered LEP individuals. This information is crucial for the RTA to consider, as LEP individuals may face significant barriers to accessing transportation services.

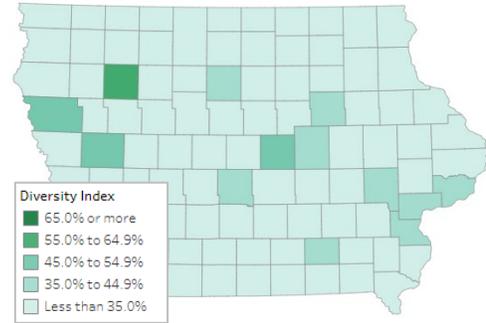
### Limited English Proficiency

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022



## Ethnic Diversity Index

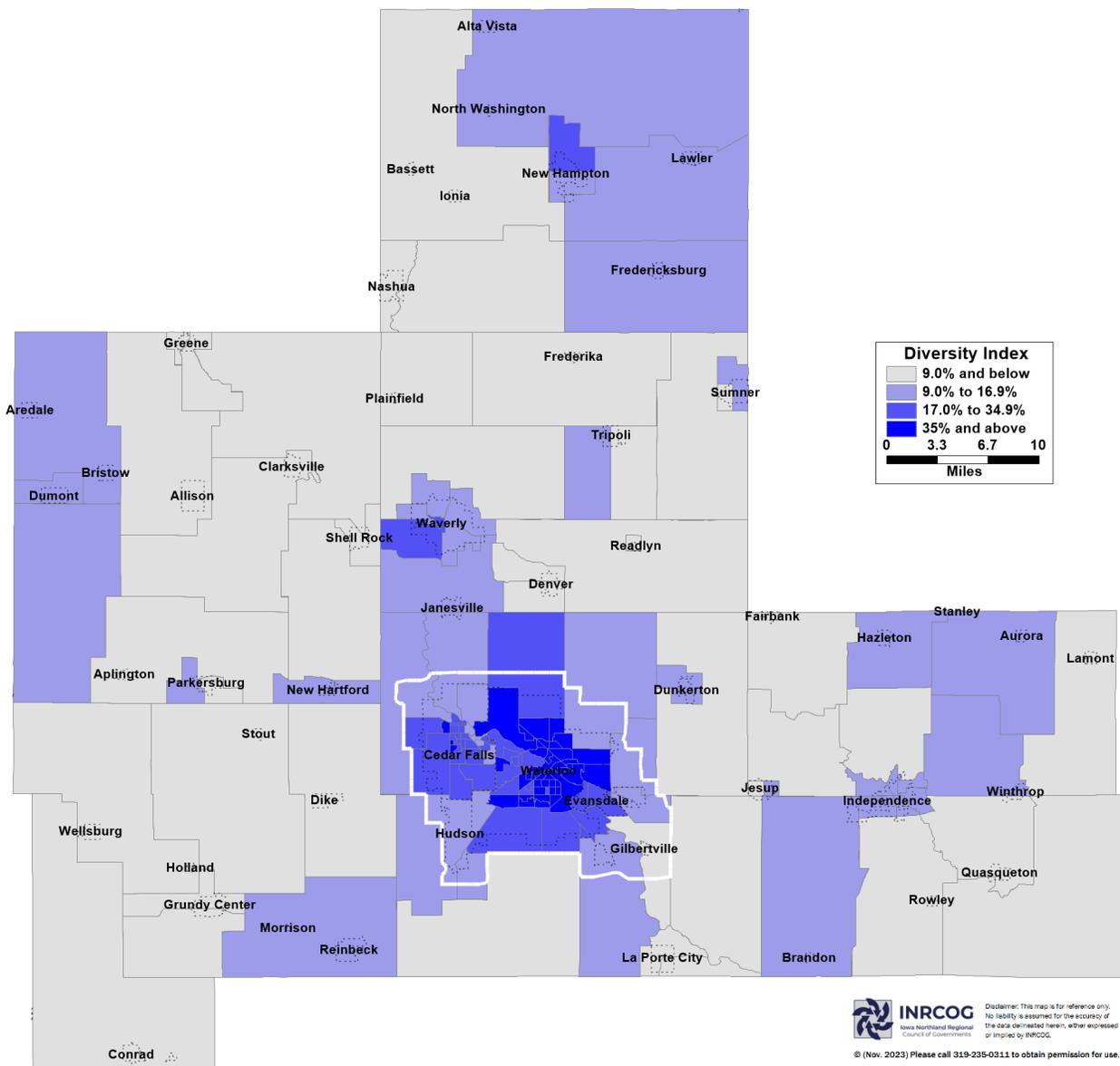
The U.S. Census Bureau uses a Diversity Index (DI) to measure the probability that two people chosen at random will be from different racial and ethnic groups. The DI is bounded between 0 percent and 100 percent. A value closer to 100 indicates that much of the population has different racial and ethnic characteristics. Map 2.7 shows the DI for the region by Census block group. For comparison, Black Hawk County has a DI of 30.8 percent, the ninth highest in the state.



<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/racial-and-ethnic-diversity-in-the-united-states-2010-and-2020-census.html>

## Ethnic Diversity Index by Census Block Group

U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census



**INRCOG**  
Iowa Northland Regional  
Council of Governments

Disclaimer: This map is for reference only. No liability is assumed for the accuracy of the data delineated herein, either expressed or implied by INRCOG.

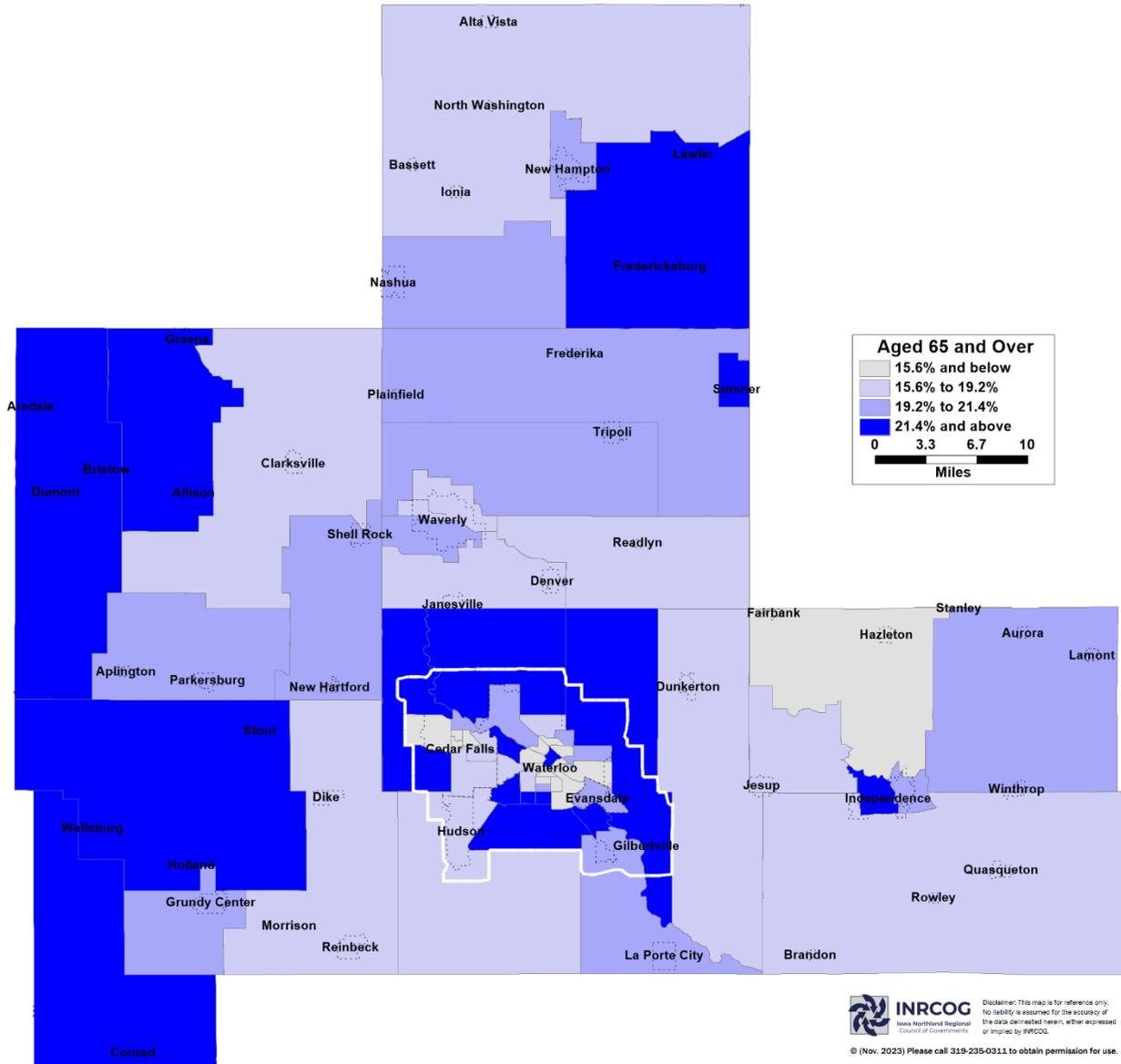
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## Aged 65 and Over (Seniors)

Identifying areas with higher concentrations of senior citizens is crucial for transportation planning and public engagement, as these populations face unique mobility challenges. With approximately 20.1 percent of the region's population aged 65 or older (excluding the MPO area), it is essential to include their needs in the planning process to create a transportation system that promotes accessibility, safety, and independence.

### Aged 65 and Over (Seniors)

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022

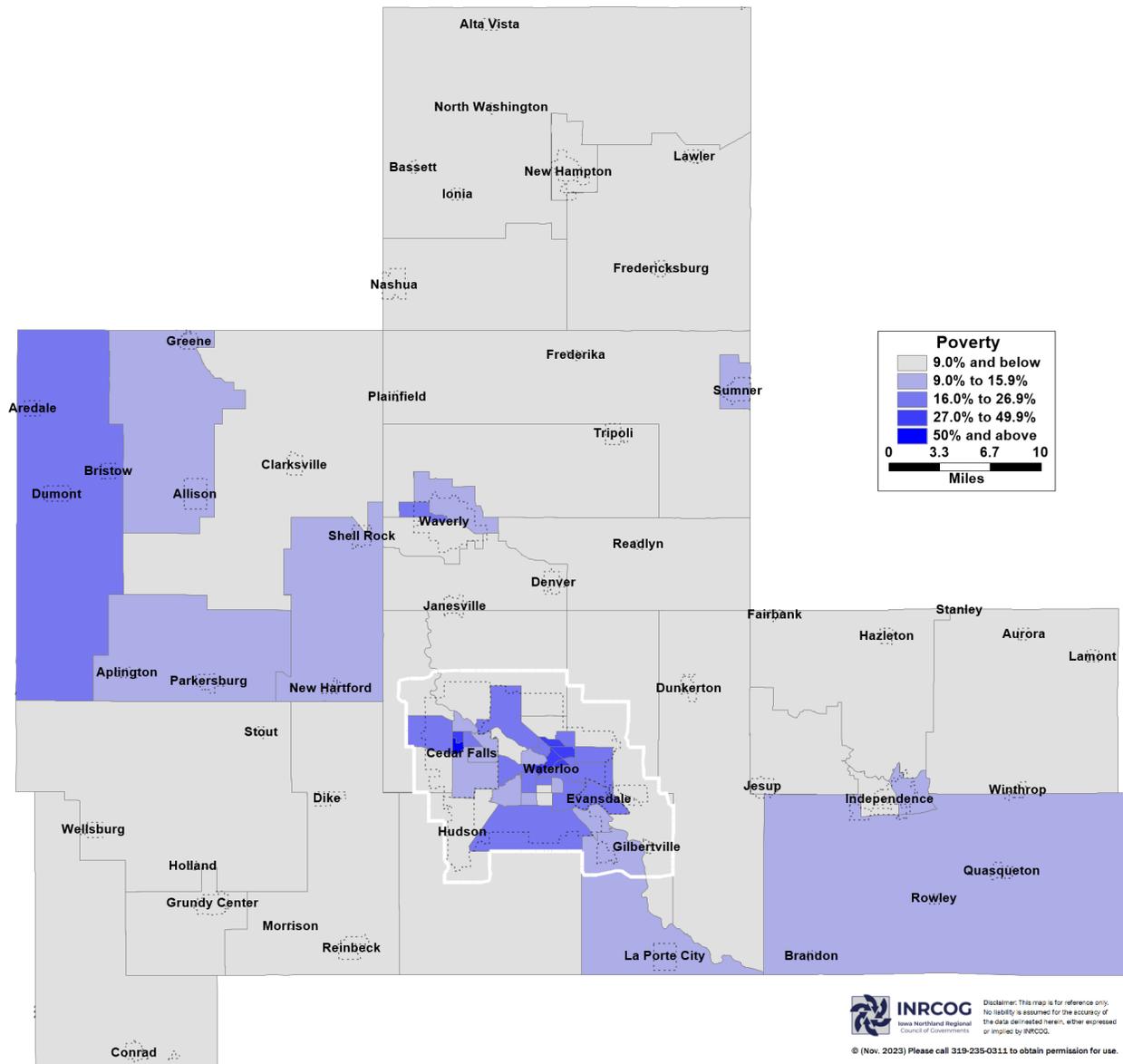


## Poverty/Low-Income

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, people and families are classified as being in poverty if their income is less than their poverty threshold. Approximately 7.8 percent of the population within the region, excluding the MPO planning area, is below the poverty level. By understanding the geographic distribution of poverty, communities can better allocate resources to enhance connectivity and ensure equitable access to essential services and employment opportunities across the region.

### Poverty/Low-Income

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022

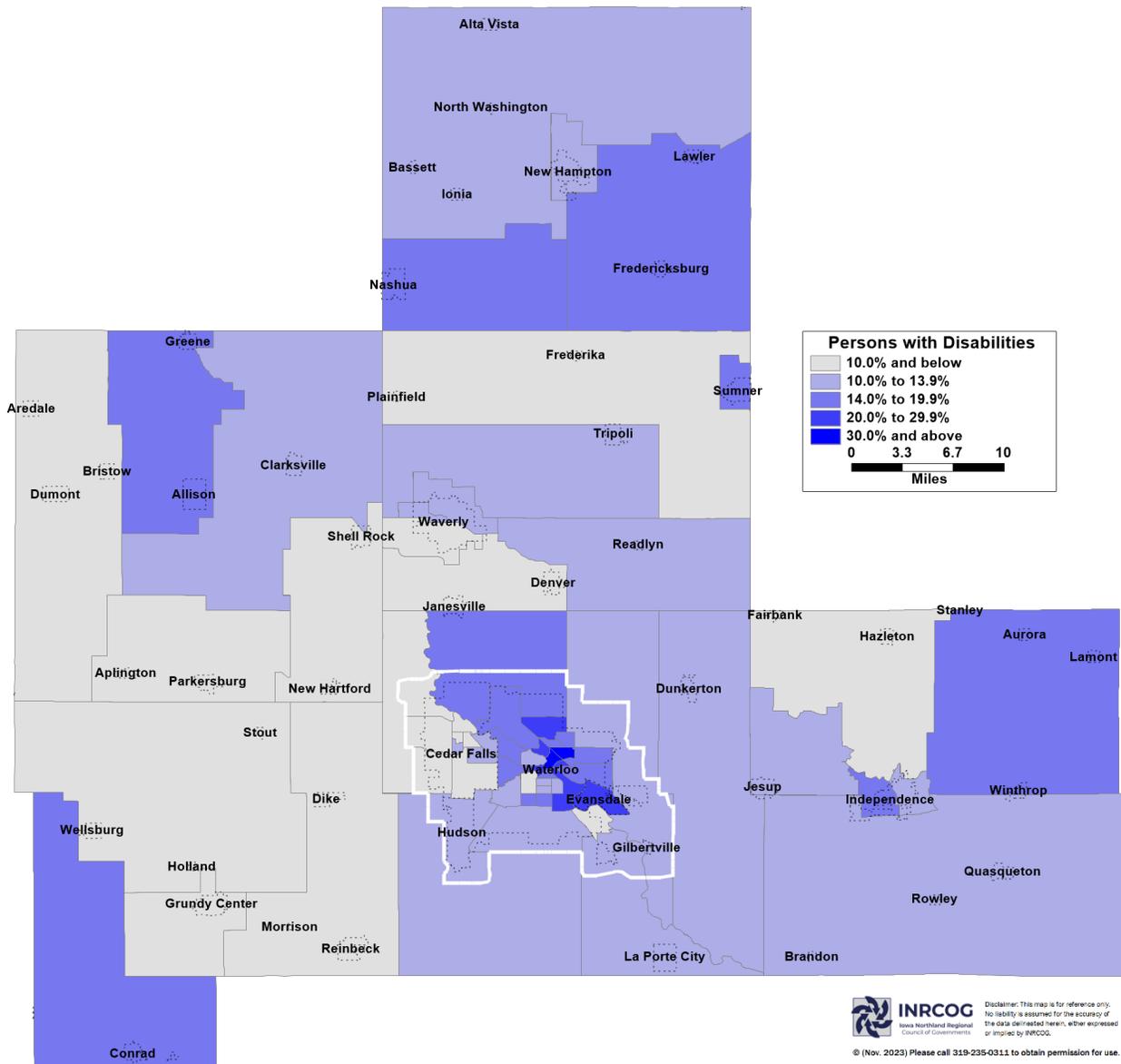


## Persons with Disabilities

To capture a variety of characteristics that encompass the definition of disability, the American Community Survey identifies serious difficulty with four basic areas of functioning – hearing, vision, cognition, and ambulation (movement); difficulty bathing and dressing; and difficulty performing errands such as shopping. Approximately 11.8 percent of the total civilian noninstitutionalized population in the region, excluding the MPO area, have at least one disability.

### Persons with Disabilities

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022

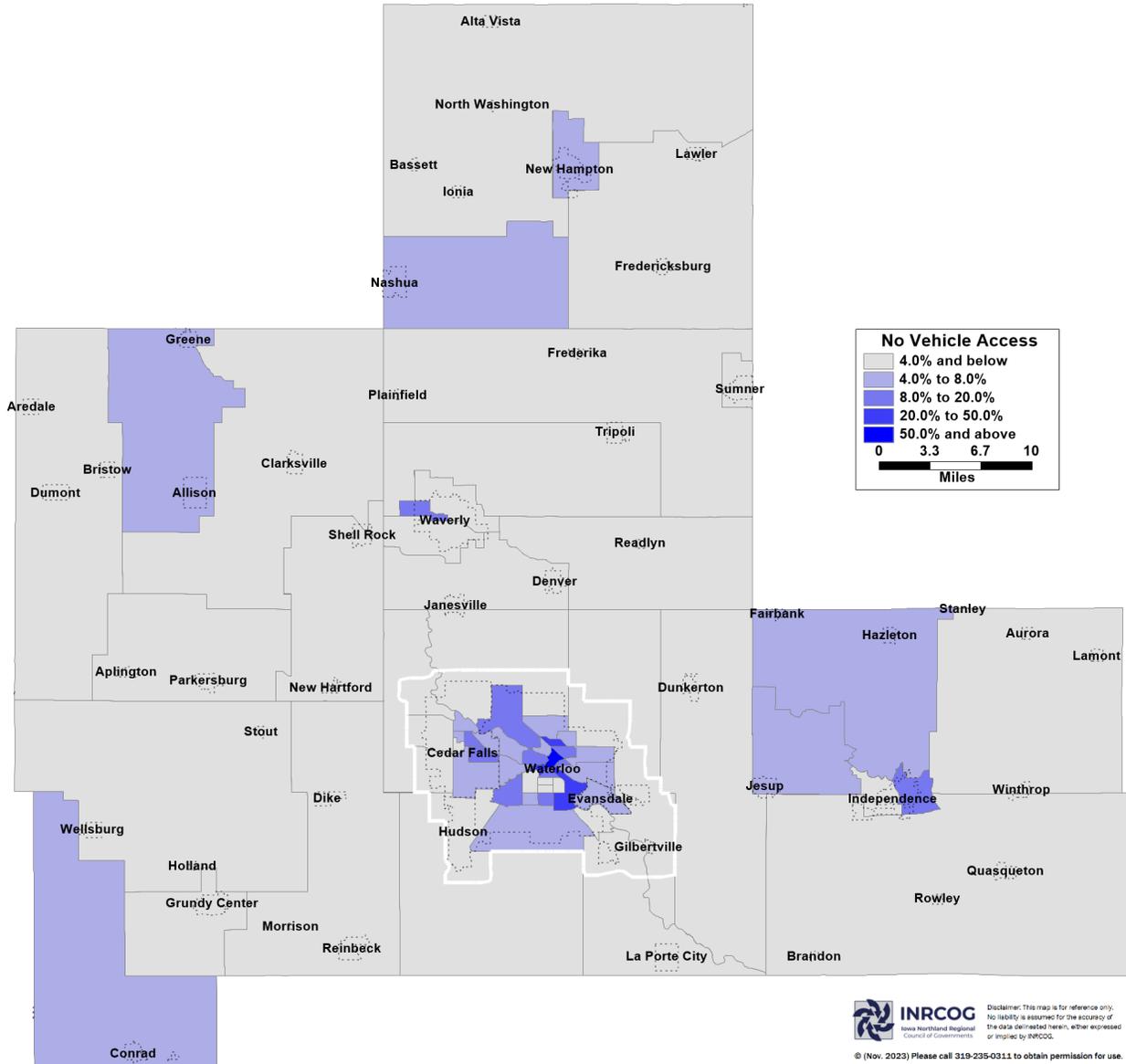


**Vehicle Access**

Approximately 3.4 percent of households in the region, excluding the MPO area, lack access to a personal vehicle, highlighting a significant segment of the population that may face transportation challenges. These households often depend on public transit, ride-sharing, walking, or biking, but the effectiveness of these alternatives can vary. In areas with limited or unreliable public transit and underdeveloped infrastructure for walking and biking, the lack of a personal vehicle can severely restrict mobility, access to essential services, and overall quality of life.

**No Vehicle Access**

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022

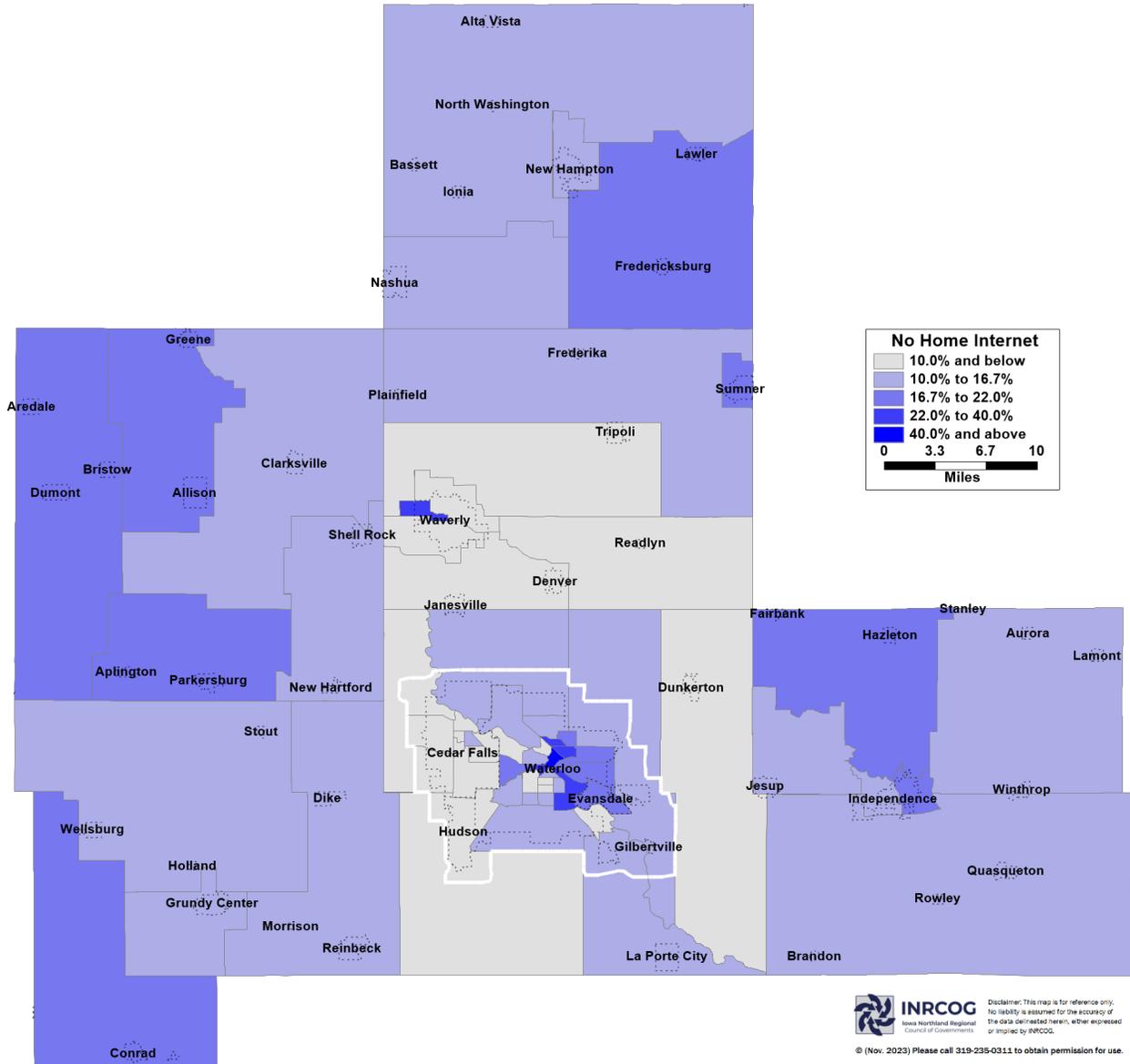


## Internet Access

Approximately 13.3 percent of households within the region, excluding the MPO area, lack an internet subscription, whether dial-up or broadband, highlighting a significant digital divide. This absence of internet access can severely impact various aspects of daily life, such as staying informed, engaging in remote work or education, and accessing essential services. Without reliable internet, individuals may struggle to access government services, job opportunities, and educational resources that are increasingly delivered online, as well as to participate in community activities and digital communication.

### No Home Internet

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022



## APPENDIX – PUBLIC COMMENTS

- No public comments received