

ITEM #: 1
DATE: 02-13-24
DEPT: AAMPO

TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **DRAFT FFY 2025-2029 PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

BACKGROUND:

The Iowa Department of Transportation requires the Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) to develop and promote coordinated passenger transportation planning programs that further the development of local and regional public transportation systems. The AAMPO does this coordination with the Story County Transportation Collaboration committee. This group has representatives from public transit systems, private transportation providers and health/human service agencies within the Ames planning area.

Furthermore, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires one federal funding program which is designated to assist the elderly and individuals with disabilities to be coordinated through the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) process. If these projects are not specifically mentioned in the PTP document, they cannot be approved through the AAMPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process and subsequent transit grants process. However, the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has indicated that it would like other federal/state funded projects continued to be coordinated through this process, if possible, to improve upon overall coordination of transit services throughout Iowa.

The overall goals of the PTP process, as identified by the Iowa DOT, are to:

- Improve transportation services to individuals working/living in Ames
- Increase passenger transportation coordination
- Create awareness of unmet transportation needs
- Develop new working partnerships
- Assist decision makers, advocates, and consumers in understanding the range of transportation options available
- Develop justification for future passenger transportation investments
- Save dollars and eliminate overlapping of services

PTP Document

The Iowa DOT requires a full Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) to be submitted every five years. Since the AAMPO's last full plan was last submitted in May 2019, the next PTP is due to the Iowa DOT by May 1, 2024. The plan must include an honest effort to jointly involve human service agencies/organizations, private transportation providers and transit systems in the passenger transportation planning process to consider all passenger transportation needs and services.

The AAMPO conducts this required coordination through the Story County Transportation Collaboration committee which convenes quarterly throughout the year. At least two meetings are required to be documented through formal meeting minutes to the Iowa DOT. These minutes are required in the plan or may be submitted directly to the Iowa DOT Systems Planning Bureau by July 31 of each year when the full plan update is not required. The PTP should also be one of several inputs into the transit portion of the next AAMPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan update.

Specifically, the Draft FFY 2025-2029 PTP (see **Attachment A**) is divided into five sections:

1. Introduction & Process: Discussion of coordination efforts and documentation of the process in how the PTP was completed. Includes meetings, public input, and a listing of all participants (pgs. 3-5).

2. Inventory & Process Discussion:

- Inventory: Includes a discussion of existing providers within Ames (pgs. 6-19)
 - Provider for each passenger transportation service
 - Types of services available
 - Who is eligible for the service
 - Hours/days of service
 - Type, number and ADA status of vehicles in each fleet, if applicable
- Area Profile: (pgs. 20-35)
 - Demographic characteristics within Ames and how they impact transportation needs
 - Analysis of limited English proficient (LEP) population – identify where concentrated areas where LEP persons live, work, attend school, etc. Identify how meaningful access to passenger transportation programs and activities are provided.
 - Describe layout of the study area in where the population accesses services and how this impacts transportation needs.

3. Coordination Issues: This discussion will cover the following: (pg. 36-45)

- a. General assessment of service, management, fleet and facility needs
- b. Status of previously recommended priorities and strategies
- c. Recent development that may affect coordination issues
- d. Public input received concerning needs and/or coordination issues.

4. Priorities & Strategies: Describes proposed strategies for the next five years that could eventually lead to projects. The Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities funding (Section 5310) projects must be specifically included in the PTP. For CyRide, this is to fund Dial-A-Ride services, Dial-A-Ride buses, annunciators and bus shelter/bus stop improvements. Additionally, projects funded with other federal, state and local funding benefiting the general public was also discussed as potential strategies over the next five-year period. (pgs. 46-57)

5. Funding: Includes an overview of funding opportunities and expectations. This section lists what sources are available including non-DOT funding, what funding is reasonably achievable over the next five years and what funding sources will be sought to meet strategies. (pgs. 58-70)

Timeline

On January 24, 2024, the Story County Transportation Collaboration recommended that the PTP plan--as well as projects, priorities, and strategies--be recommended to the AAMPO for formal approval. This committee was involved in the development of the priorities and strategies specifically for the elderly and disabled populations. **The Story County Transportation Collaboration committee and Iowa DOT were sent the Draft FFY 2025-2029 PTP document on February 1, 2024, for final review of the document.** The Iowa DOT will review the document to ensure the [required elements](#) have been met while the Transportation Collaboration may provide input into the development of the specific needs/priorities/strategies needed to be incorporated into the final document. **Comments are due back from the Iowa DOT and Transportation Collaboration by March 1, 2024, for incorporation into the final PTP.**

On February 1, 2024, the AAMPO Technical Committee also reviewed the Draft FFY 2025-2029 PTP and unanimously recommended approval by the AAMPO Policy Committee. Once the draft is approved, a 30-day public comment period will be open from February 13, 2024, to March 14, 2024. Any comments received will be documented into the PTP appendix and incorporated into the Final FFY 2025-2029 PTP.

After review of Draft FFY 2025-2029 PTP by the Iowa DOT, AAMPO committees, and the public, the Final FFY 2025-2029 PTP will be brought to the AAMPO Policy Committee for public hearing and formal approval on March 26, 2024. Once approved by the AAMPO Policy Committee, the Final FY 2025-2029 PTP will be electronically submitted to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Federal Transit Administration before May 1, 2024.

The Iowa DOT requires any Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities projects funded under Section 5310 funding to be contained within an approved PTP update prior to inclusion of projects into a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and subsequent grant applications.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the Draft FFY 2025-2029 Passenger Transportation Plan and set March 26, 2024, as the date of public hearing.
2. Approve the Draft FFY 2025-2029 Passenger Transportation Plan, with modifications, and set March 26, 2024, as the date of public hearing.

MPO DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Draft FFY 2025-2029 Passenger Transportation was developed in accordance with Iowa DOT requirements and in coordination with the Story County Transportation Collaboration. The AAMPO Transportation Technical Committee also reviewed and unanimously recommended approval the Draft FFY 2025-2029 Passenger Transportation Plan. **Therefore, it is the recommendation of the MPO Executive Director that the Transportation Policy Committee adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.**

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Attachment A - Draft FFY25-29 PTP.pdf](#)