

NOTICE OF RPA 15 POLICY BOARD MEETING

Thursday, October 24th at 11:00am
Transit Office, 612 S Madison, Ottumwa
Or by phone 551-258-5668

Board Members

Chairperson: _____ Dale House Van Buren County Supervisor
Vice-Chair: _____ Daryl Wood Keokuk County Supervisor
Secretary: _____ RPC Staff

_____ Amal Eltalhir, Oskaloosa City Manager _____ Rick Johnson, Ottumwa City Mayor
_____ Doug Reinert, Fairfield City Administrator _____ Steve Wanders, Mahaska County Supervisor
_____ Jim Morlan, Sigourney City Mayor _____ Bryan Ziegler, Wapello County Supervisor
_____ OPEN, City Rep/Van Buren County _____ Lee Dimmit, Jefferson County Supervisor

1. Call to Order.

Action Items

1. **Minutes.** Review/approve June 27th, 2024 minutes.
2. **FTA Title VI Program:** FTA Title VI Program is required to be updated every three years. Review/approve program for submittal to Iowa DOT.
3. **Limited English Proficiency Plan:** As part of Title VI review, LEP Plan is reviewed and updated as needed. Review/approve LEP plan.

Discussion Items

2. **Status updates on active STBG/SWAP and TAP projects.** Project sponsors may discuss the status of current projects.

Other

3. **Next Meeting.** TBD
4. **Adjourn.**

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please call Area 15 RPC at 641-684-6551 by 10 AM Wednesday, October 23rd, 2024 This courtesy will assist the RPC in determining if a quorum will be present. If it is determined that a quorum will not be present, the RPC can then advise other Policy Board members.

Minutes of the RPA 15 Policy Board meeting
Thursday June 27th, 2024

Policy Board Members Present:

Dale House
Daryl Wood
Jim Morlan

Steve Wanders
Bryan Ziegler
Lee Dimmit

Others Present

Chris Kukla – RPA 15,

Call to Order. House called the Policy Board to order at 11:21 am.

Action Items

Approve Minutes. Wood made a motion to approve, Dimmitt seconded. All aye, motion approved.

Long-Range Transportation Plan. Kukla reviewed the development and content Forward 2045, the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Explained that the plan needs to be re-developed/updated every five years, looks at 20 years and should be project specific for 5-years.

Wood made a motion to approve, Dimmit seconded. All present voted aye, motion approved.

Transportation Improvement Program. Kukla summarized the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program. Reviewed that the RPA was fiscally constrained and briefly went through the projects contained within the program.

Wood made a motion to approve, Dimmit seconded. All present voted aye, motion approved.

Review Items

Status updates on active STBG/SWAP and TAP projects. No projects were discussed.

Other

Next Meeting. To be determined.

Adjourn. Wood made a motion to adjourn, Wanders seconded. All aye, motion approved.
11:48am



FTA Title VI Program



Planning Agency

Iowa Department of Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Revised 3.30.21

*This program to be submitted every three years to the Iowa Department of Transportation. *

Date: August 1st, 2024

Recipient Profile

Recipient: RPA 15 (Area 15 Regional Planning Commission)

Administrative Head: Chris Bowers Executive Director
Name Title

Recipient Title VI Coordinator: Chris Bowers Executive Director
Name Title

Address: 224 E Second Street, P.O. Box 1110

City/State: Ottumwa Zip Code/County: 52501/Wapello

Phone: (641) 684-6551 Fax: N/A

Email: Chris.Bowers@area15rpc.com

Website: www.area15rpc.com

What strategies has your planning process developed for ensuring, demonstrating, and sustaining compliance with Title VI?

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission has adopted a Title VI plan and Title VI assurances, developed a Title VI notice to the public and complaint form, and provides information to both RPC staff and the public on Title VI and the RPC's compliance.

The Title VI plan, assurances, and notice to the public and complaint form are available on the RPC website and in the office. A copy of the non-discrimination policy statement from the Title VI plan and the notice to the public are posted on a bulletin board in a common area of the office. In addition, a copy of Iowa DOT's "Title VI and You" brochure is posted in the common area and additional copies are available.

Area 15 reviews the Title VI documents and compliance strategies with the RPA 15 Policy Board every three years when preparing the FTA Title VI program.

General Requirements

1.

- Attach a copy of recipient’s Title VI Notice to the Public.

Required elements:

____ A statement that the agency operates programs without regard to race, color, or national origin

____ A description of the procedures that members of the public should follow in order to request additional information on the recipient’s Title VI obligations

____ A description of the procedures that members of the public shall follow in order to file a Title VI discrimination complaint against the recipient

List locations where the notice is posted:

A copy of the non-discrimination policy statement, Title VI notice and the “Title VI and You” brochure are posted in a common hallway where they are visible to staff and clients.

The Title VI notice, complaint form, Title VI plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan are posted on the RPC website.

2.

- Please attach a copy of the recipient’s instructions to the public regarding how to file a Title VI discrimination complaint, including a copy of the complaint form.
- Are complaint procedures and the complaint form posted on the recipient’s website? Please provide the URL: <https://www.area15rpc.com/title-vi>

3.

■ Please list and describe any transit-related Title VI investigations, complaints, or lawsuits filed with, concerning, or naming the recipient in the last three years.

| | Date Filed (Month, Day, Year) | Summary (include basis of complaint: race, color, or national origin) | Status | Action(s) Taken |
|-----------------------|--|--|--------|-----------------|
| Investigations | | | | |
| 1.NONE | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2. | | | | |
| Lawsuits | | | | |
| 1.NONE | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2. | | | | |
| Complaints | | | | |
| 1.NONE | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 2. | | | | |

4.

- Please attach a public participation plan that includes an outreach plan to engage minority and limited English proficient populations, as well as a summary of outreach efforts made in the last three years.
- Notices of public comment periods and public hearings were published in the Ottumwa Courier (paper of widest circulation)
- Promoted planning documents and comment periods on the RPC Facebook page.
- Translated major planning documents into Spanish and posted them onto the RPC website alongside English version.
- Held comment periods for 2023, 2024 and 2025 Transportation Planning Work Program and Transportation Improvement Program.
- Held comment period for 2022 Public Participation Plan.
- Solicited feedback from stakeholders and held comment period for Long-Range Transportation Plan.
- Held discussion with RPA Policy Board on the role, responsibilities and requirements of the RPA.

Please describe the methods used to inform low-income and minority populations of planning efforts for transportation-related services and/or improvements:

The RPA's general outreach uses several methods to inform all areas of the region's population, these include legal notices, press releases, the RPC website and RPC Facebook page. Notices for public comment periods and public hearings are published in the newspaper of widest circulation (Ottumwa Courier). Press releases are sent to local newspapers in the 5-county RPA region regarding transportation plans and comment periods, recently updated documents and comment periods are also promoted on the RPC Facebook page. The RPC website provides access to all of RPA 15's transportation plans, and the most recent agendas and minutes from the RPA's Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board.

To assist low-income and minority populations in participating in planning efforts the RPA uses the following methods: Meetings, public hearings, forums and stakeholder groups will be held at locations accessible for people with disabilities and at times and locations accessible by public transit. For people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), the RPA follows an LEP plan that provides for translating planning documents and providing oral translation services at meetings. The RPA uses visualization techniques such as maps, graphs and tables to help the public understand proposed plans.

List minority and/or community media utilized to ensure notification of public meetings or public review of recipient documents for residents in minority and low-income areas:

There is no minority media in the region. Notices are published in the Ottumwa Courier (designated newspaper) which is the newspaper of widest circulation. Agendas and documents are posted on the website: (<https://www.area15rpc.com/transportationplanning>)

When was the public participation plan last reviewed? Please describe how.

A new updated Public Participation Plan was developed for the RPA in 2022 and adopted in October of that year. During the development of the document the draft was reviewed by RPA and by Iowa DOT staff. The PPP is reviewed every five years and updated as needed, it will be reviewed again in 2027.

5.

- Please attach a copy of the recipient's plan for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency, based on the DOT LEP Guidance, *Federal Register*, Volume 70, Number 239, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2005-12-14/html/05-23972.htm>.

What steps has the recipient taken to ensure meaningful access to the benefits, services, information, and other important components of its programs and services to persons with limited English proficiency?

The Area 15 RPC has developed and adopted a plan for providing language assistance to LEP persons. This plan utilizes the four-factor analysis to determine the language assistance services that are appropriate to provide. As described in this document, the planning commission provides language assistance in the form of translation of the RPA's important written documents into Spanish and the availability for oral interpretation between Spanish and English at RPA meetings upon request. RPC staff that regularly interact with the public have training on the agency's Title VI and LEP policies to ensure that the agency provides appropriate assistance.

6.

List all non-elected committees and councils, the membership of which is selected by the recipient:

None

Describe the process the recipient uses to encourage the participation of minorities on such committees.

N/A

Racial/Ethnic Breakdown of the Non-Elected Committees and Councils:

| Group | Number |
|---|---------------|
| Male | PB: 8 TAC: 10 |
| Female | PB: 1 TAC 3 |
| White | PB: 8 TAC: 13 |
| Black or African American | 0 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 0 |
| Asian | 0 |
| Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander | 0 |
| Other | PB: 1 TAC: 0 |

8.

Has the recipient constructed a facility, such as a vehicle storage facility, maintenance facility, operation center, etc., with Federal Transit Administration funds? ____ Yes X No

If yes, please attach the Title VI equity analysis conducted during the planning stage with regard to the location of the facility.

9.

■ Please attach a copy(ies) of board meeting minutes, resolution(s), or other appropriate documentation showing the board(s) of directors or appropriate governing entity(ies) or official(s) responsible for policy decisions reviewed and approved the Title VI Program.

Requirements of Planning Agencies

1.

■ Has the planning agency developed a demographic profile of the planning area that includes identification of the locations of socioeconomic groups, including low-income and minority populations? Provide a summary of the planning area demographics.

| | Iowa | RPA 15 | Jefferson Co | Keokuk Co | Mahaska Co | Van Buren Co | Wapello Co |
|---|-----------|----------|--------------|-----------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Population | 3,190,369 | 92,742 | 16,843 | 10,511 | 22,381 | 7,570 | 35,437 |
| Percent 65 and older | 18.4 | 21.52 | 25.3 | 21.9 | 19 | 23.6 | 17.8 |
| Percent White | 89.8 | 94 | 91.5 | 98.2 | 96.1 | 98.7 | 85.5 |
| Percent Hispanic or Latino | 6.7 | 4.6 | 3.8 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.8 | 12.2 |
| Median Household income | \$69,588 | \$58,410 | \$52,210 | \$60,016 | \$65,200 | \$58,417 | \$56,209 |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.9 | x | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 4.9 | 4.4 |
| Percent Disabled | 12.8 | 15.3 | 14.2 | 15.4 | 13.6 | 17.8 | 15.5 |
| Percent that "speaks english less than very well" | 3.6 | 3.06 | 5.4 | 0.5 | 1 | 2.8 | 5.6 |

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, 2022 American Community Survey

2.

Please describe the procedures by which the mobility needs of minority populations are identified and considered within the planning process.

The mobility needs of minority populations are identified through consultations with stakeholders during transportation planning process for each planning activity and through providing for public notification and engagement across several different avenues.

Stakeholder groups include local governments, transportation providers, and health and human service agencies for the Long-Range Transportation Plan, transportation providers and health and human service agencies for the Passenger Transportation Plan, local jurisdictions and activity groups for the Regional Trails Plan. Input from the mentioned stakeholders is sought due to the difficulties in reaching out direct to the minority populations due to lack of minority language media, and the apathy among the public from providing feedback. Some of the stakeholders work, particularly the HHS organizations and public transit, with and/or provide services to minority populations and have an understanding of their mobility needs.

During the process for each of the documents, input is solicited from the previously mentioned stakeholders. These stakeholders are also given a chance to review and comment on the completed document during the comment period. Comments are solicited from stakeholders and the public by providing notice in print and electronic, and for feedback in individual or public forums.

3.

■ Please attach demographic maps that show the impacts of the distribution of State and Federal funds in the aggregate for public transportation projects.

4.

■ Please attach analysis of the planning agency's transportation system investments that identifies and addresses any disparate impacts.

No disparate impacts have been caused by transportation system investments funded by RPA 15 in the last three years. The RPA funded eight road projects, one public transit vehicle replacement, and five pedestrian infrastructure projects within the region during this time period. All of the road projects involved reconstructing existing roads, transit replaced existing vehicles, and the pedestrian projects were constructed in existing right-of-way. Two of the road projects occurred in the region's urban areas: one in Oskaloosa and one in Ottumwa. The other six projects occurred in rural areas. Three pedestrian projects occurred in urban areas, two in Fairfield and one in Ottumwa. The other two pedestrian projects occurred in rural areas (Van Buren County).

The map “Transportation Investments and Limited English Proficient Population” shows the location of these projects within the region and the percent of population within each census tract that identifies as “speaking English as less than well”. This map shows that Ottumwa and Fairfield have the highest limited English proficient populations. In Ottumwa a majority of those who identify as LEP also identify as speaking Spanish at home. In Fairfield the largest portion who identify as LEP identify as speaking a European language at home. This map shows that the projects are distributed throughout the different census tracts within the region. This distribution includes tracts have both high and low LEP populations. The region funded road projects in Ottumwa, Fairfield and Van Buren County, all with high LEP populations. It also funded projects in Jefferson, Keokuk and Wapello Counties, as well as Oskaloosa with low LEP populations.

The map “Transportation Investments and Non-white Population by Census Tract” shows the location of projects within the region and the percent of the population within each census tract that identifies as non-white. The map shows that Ottumwa and Fairfield have the highest non-white populations. The map shows that projects were funded across census tracts regardless of their non-white population.

List adverse social, environmental, economic or demographic impact identified in the planning process:

- The region is experiencing a steadily decreasing population. Three of the five counties are seeing a continual decrease in their population while the other two counties populations are remaining steady.
 - The population decrease and low-income levels result in a decreasing tax base, reducing local revenues and the ability to match federal and state grants, impacting funding for transportation improvements.
 - A higher-than-average elderly and disabled population requires additional passenger transportation services to provide trips to those who don’t drive or have someone who can drive them.
 - The largest Limited English Proficient population is in Wapello County, and a majority of the people who identified themselves as “speaking English less than very well” indicate that they speak Spanish at home.
 - Employment, health and human services, and shopping are all clustered in the three largest cities; Fairfield, Oskaloosa, and Ottumwa.
 - Income levels in the region are below the state average.
 - The region’s transportation infrastructure is aging and most projects involve maintaining current infrastructure and services.
-

Declaration of the Respondent

I declare that I have provided information as a part of the Title VI Program to the best of my knowledge and believe it to be true, correct, and complete.

Christopher S Kukla 10-15-24

Respondent Date

Declaration of the Administrative Head

I declare that I have reviewed and approved the information provided in the Title VI Program and to the best of my knowledge believe it to be true, correct, and complete.

Respondent Date

Approving Resolution

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FTA TITLE VI PROGRAM FOR REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15

WHEREAS, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission did complete the FTA Title VI Program for REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Planning 15 Policy Board did review the completed FTA Title VI Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15 approves the completed FTA Title VI Program.

Passed this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Chairperson
Regional Planning Affiliation 15

Adopting Resolution

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE PLAN FOR PROVIDING LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE TO PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN RPA 15

WHEREAS, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission did prepare a plan for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency in REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15; and

WHEREAS, it is a requirement that the RPA have a plan for providing language assistance to persons with limited English proficiency;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15 adopts the Plan for Providing Language Assistance to Persons with Limited English Proficiency in RPA 15.

Passed this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Chairperson
Regional Planning Affiliation 15

Attachment: Title VI Notice to the Public

Area 15 Regional Planning Commission Title VI Notice to the Public

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission hereby gives notice to the public public notice that it is the policy of the planning commission to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and all related statutes and regulations. Title VI and related statutes and regulations provide that no person shall on the ground of race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Any person who believes that they are being denied participation in a project, being denied benefits of a program, or otherwise being discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability have the right to file a Title VI Complaint. Any such complaint must be submitted using the Title VI Complaint Form and mailed to the Title VI Compliance Officer no later than 180 days after the alleged discrimination.

Chris Bowers, Title VI Coordinator
Area 15 Regional Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1110
Ottumwa, IA 52501
641-684-6551

YOU SHOULD CONTACT THE ABOVE INDIVIDUAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT NO LATER THAN 180 DAYS AFTER THE ALLEGED DISCRIMINATION OCCURRED, OR IF THERE HAS BEEN A CONTINUING COURSE OF CONDUCT, NO LATER THAN 180 DAYS AFTER THE ALLEGED DISCRIMINATION WAS DISCONTINUED.

Contact the Title VI Coordinator to get more information on the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission's Title VI Program.

Attachment: Title VI Complaint Form

Area 15 Regional Planning Commission Title VI Complaint Form

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Title VI complaints must be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination.

The following information is necessary to assist us in processing your complaint. If you require any assistance in completing this form, please contact the Title VI Coordinator by calling (641) 684-6551. The completed form must be returned to the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission, Title VI Coordinator, P.O. Box 1110, Ottumwa, IA 52501.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Person discriminated against (if someone other than the complainant)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Which of the Following best describes the reason for the alleged discrimination? (Circle all that apply)

Race

Color

National Origin

Limited English Proficiency

Other: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Have you filed a complaint with any other federal, state or local agency? (Circle one)

Yes

No

If so, list the agency or agencies and contact info:

Agency: _____ Contact Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Agency: _____ Contact Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

I affirm that I have read the above charge and it is true to my best knowledge.

Complainant's Signature

Date

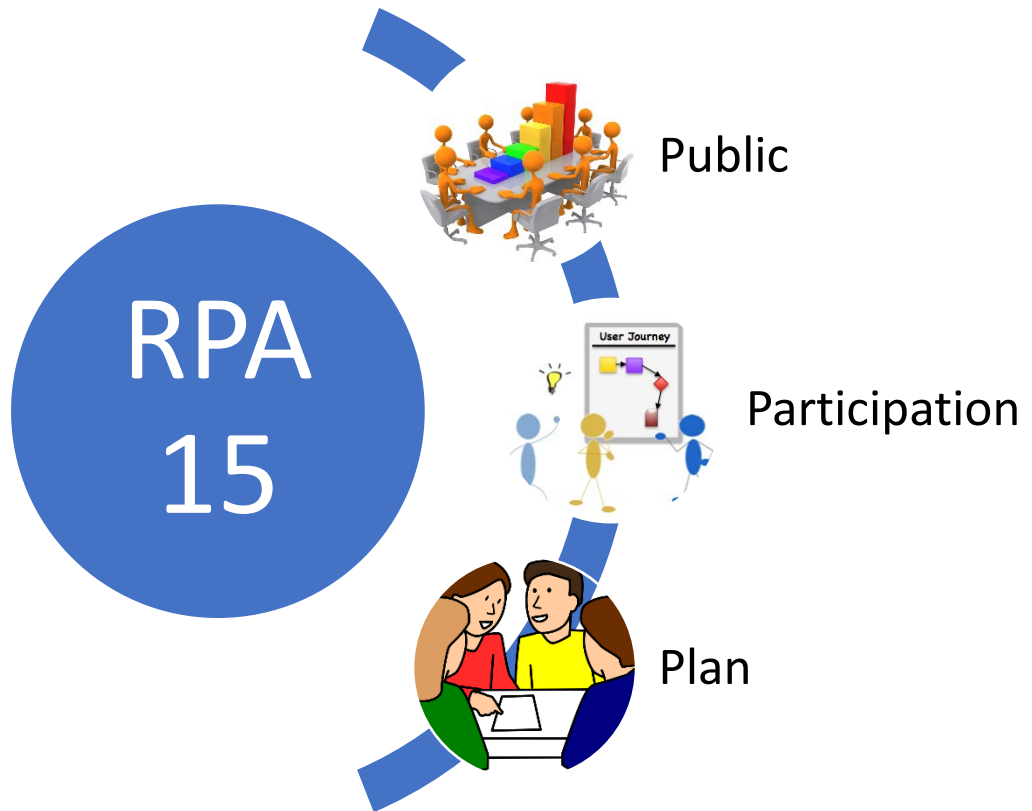
Printed or typed name of the Complainant

For Area 15 RPC use

Date Received: _____

Received by: _____

Attachment: Public Participation Plan



For Transportation Planning

October 2022

Prepared by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1110
Ottumwa, IA 52501
(641) 684-6551

This plan was prepared with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, and in part through local matching funds of the RPA member governments.

Adopting Resolution

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING RPA 15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission prepared a Public Participation Plan which identifies the process for providing information to and receiving comment from the public for REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15; and

WHEREAS, it is a requirement of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA Act) of 2021 that the transportation planning process be continued, and that public participation is required as part of that process;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that REGIONAL PLANNING AFFILIATION 15 adopts the RPA 15 Public Participation Plan for the 5-county region.

Passed this 27th day of October 2022.



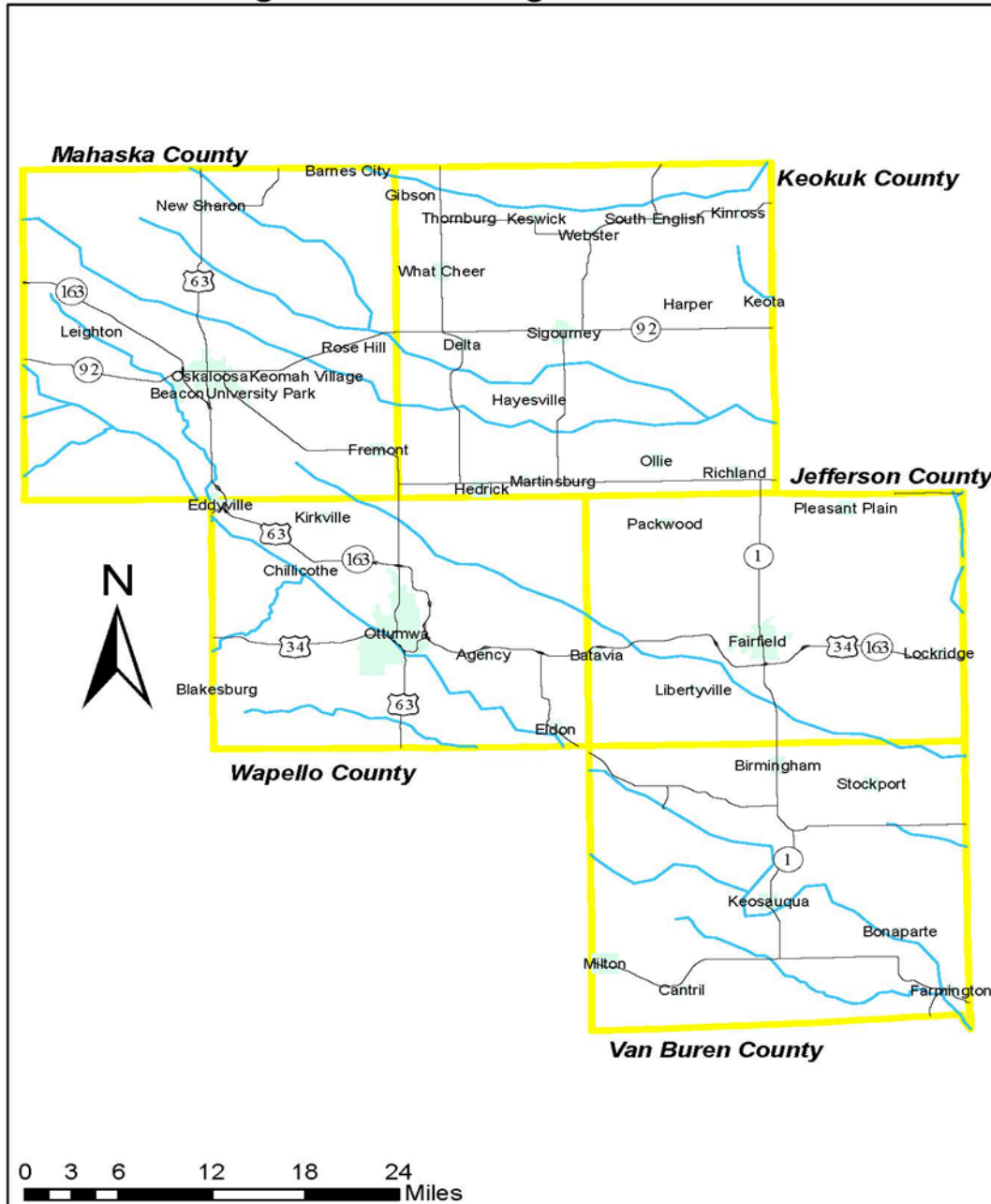
Chairperson
Regional Planning Affiliation 15

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RPA 15 Map

The Regional Planning Affiliation 15 Area



Section One: Introduction and Overview

Introduction

This document provides guidelines and procedures for public participation in the transportation planning efforts of Regional Planning Affiliation 15 (RPA 15). The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is responsible for transportation planning and programming in RPA 15. RPA 15 is located in southeast Iowa and includes Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Van Buren and Wapello counties. The public participation process in this document describes ways the RPA will inform the public and ways the public can become involved in RPA 15's transportation planning activities. This includes anyone who lives, works or has an interest in the region and could be affected by transportation decisions. It is the RPA's goal to engage all sections of the public, including those traditionally underserved by transportation including; minorities, low-income, elderly, and the disabled, through multiple means in order to encourage participation in transportation planning and programming.

This document replaces past Public Participation Processes for RPA 15, the most recent of which was adopted in 2006. The new process revises and expands on efforts from the previous plan by incorporating new federal and state guidance, adding new strategies to encourage public participation, and expanding the strategies that work.

Structure of the RPA

The structure of Regional Planning Affiliation 15 includes the Policy Board, Technical Advisory Committee, Transit Advisory Group, and the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission.

Policy Board

The Policy Board guides and sets the policies for the RPA's transportation planning efforts, is responsible for approval of projects and the final adoption of the region's transportation planning documents. This board is made up of ten representatives which includes one representative from each of the five member counties, one from each of the three urban areas, and one from a city in each of the two member counties that do not include an urban area.

Policy Board meetings are held on an as needed basis and are typically held at the 10-15 Transit Office on the fourth Thursday of the month at 11:30am. Agendas are available

the week before the meeting. People needing accommodations to participate in the meeting should be submit requests three days before the meeting.

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee provides technical guidance and advisory to the Policy Board, is responsible for reviewing, rating, and recommending projects to be considered for approval by the Policy Board and providing input for the region's transportation planning documents. This committee is made up of sixteen members which includes one engineer and one enhancement representative from each of the five counties, one engineer/public works director from each of the three urban areas, one transit administrator from each of the two public transit agencies, and one regional representative from the RC&D which represents the scenic byway.

Technical Advisory Committee meetings are held on an as needed basis and are typically held at the Ottumwa Transit office during the second or third Wednesday or Thursday of the month at 10:00am. Agendas are available the week before the meeting. People needing accommodations to participate in the meeting should submit requests three days before the meeting.

Transit Advisory Group

The Transit Advisory Group discusses items of interest relating to passenger transportation services, provides information for and feedback on the Passenger Transportation Plan. The group's membership includes: public transit agencies, private transportation providers, health and human service agencies, and local elected officials.

Transit Advisory Group meetings are held a minimum of twice a year. Meeting times and locations vary and do not have a specific schedule.

Area 15 Regional Planning Commission

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission serves as the Regional Planning Affiliation for Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Van Buren and Wapello counties. The planning commission provides staff for the RPA, receives project applications, keeps records of RPA activities and prepares the transportation planning documents required of the RPA by the Iowa Department of Transportation or requested by the RPA's Policy Board.

Transportation Planning Documents

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission solicits participation from the public in the development of and comments on major documents governing the RPA's policies and operations when these documents are initially approved or are amended. There are five

primary documents that the RPC is responsible for and that public participation is important in developing. These documents are:

Long Range Transportation Plan

The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a document that provides a look at the 5-county region's current transportation system and identifies both short term and long-term strategies and projects. The plan looks at all modes of transportation within the RPA, their condition and usage, identifies transportation problems and needs and discusses strategies to address those needs. The plan also identifies projects for the next five years and funding to implement the projects and discusses longer range policy goals and strategies for improving the region's transportation system.

Passenger Transportation Plan

The Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) looks at the region's passenger transportation services to provide information on available services and to identify areas where there is a need for service or additional service. The plan identifies passenger transportation services provided by public transit agencies, private transportation companies, health and human service organizations and schools and discusses the strengths and gaps of the region's passenger transportation services to develop strategies and projects for improvement over the next five years.

Public Participation Process

The Public Participation Process (PPP) outlines the process for involving the public in the development of documents and the decision making for transportation planning in RPA 15.

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) describes the process for identifying projects funded using federal aid in RPA 15 for the next four years. It also describes all city, county and state transportation projects that will be receiving federal highway or federal transit funds over this time period. The TIP is fiscally constrained and contains only projects that can be funded with anticipated revenue.

Transportation Planning Work Program

The Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) is a document describing the transportation planning activities that RPA 15 intends to carry out over the next year to support the cities and counties and the Iowa Department of Transportation in maintaining and improving the region's transportation system. The TPWP identifies work elements as they relate to implementing the work program, developing and implementing the TIP, public participation, long range planning, and passenger transportation. For each of these

elements the TPWP identifies the amount of time and cost anticipated to be spent and lists major projects and milestones to be completed for that element during the year.

In addition to the five primary documents listed above, the RPC may engage in additional transportation planning initiatives or develop additional documents for the RPA. As appropriate and necessary, public participation will be solicited according the guidelines within this document.

Section Two: Regulations and Requirements

Planning and Public Involvement

Federal regulations related to statewide transportation planning and public involvement are found in 23 CFR 450.316. These regulations require that a state use a documented public involvement process that provides public review and comment opportunities at key decision points. At a minimum, this process shall:

- Establish an early and continuous public involvement opportunities to provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making to individuals, public agencies, public transit providers, freight providers, private transportation providers, public transportation advocates, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, advocates of the disabled, and other interested parties.
- Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan.
- Provide adequate notice of public involvement activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including a reasonable opportunity to comment on the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan.
- To the maximum extent practicable, use visualization techniques in the Long-Range Transportation Plan and other supporting plans.
- To the maximum extent practicable, make information available electronically in accessible format and means.
- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input during the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Plan.
- Include a process for seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.
- Provide for the periodic review of the effectiveness of the public involvement process to ensure that it provides full and open access to all interested parties.

- Provide a public comment period for a minimum of 45 days before a public participation process is adopted or major revisions to the existing process is adopted.

Other Federal Regulations

The RPC has also developed RPA 15's public participation process and the Title VI plans to be consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, US Code Title 23 Section 109(h), Executive Order 12898, and Executive Order 13166.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ensures that no person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, nation origin, age, sex, disability, or religion.

Age Discrimination Act of 1975 protects against discrimination based on age in programs and activities receiving federal funds. It requires that public involvement be open to people of all ages.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 expands on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, protects individuals with disabilities from discrimination by public entities in their programs and activities.

United States Code Title 23 Section 109(h) requires the US Department of Transportation to ensure that transportation investments are in the best interests of the public.

Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations states that programs, policies, and activities that affect human health or the environment should identify and avoid disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations. It aims to ensure that no racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group bears a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from governmental programs and policies.

Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency states that efforts should be taken to evaluate all services provided by a federal agency, to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency are able to meaningfully access the services provided, without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of the agency.

State Regulations

Chapter 21 of the Code of Iowa: Iowa's Open Meetings Law applies to government bodies, boards, councils, commissions, and task forces created by the state or its political subdivisions. The law is designed to facilitate public access to government decisions. It defines a meeting and identifies the requirements for public notices, agendas, meeting procedures and minutes, as well as regulations concerning closed meetings.

Chapter 22 of the Code of Iowa: Iowa's Public Records Law provides for government agencies to be open with public records and states that every person has the right to examine and copy public records.

RPA 15 is operated in accordance with both Chapters 21 and 22 of the Code of Iowa. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend RPA meetings, and information about meetings, agendas, and minutes are available at the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission offices or at the RPC's website www.area15rpc.com. The RPA's public documents may be reviewed at the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission offices during normal business hours.

Section Three: Public Participation Techniques

Providing Information and Collecting Input

RPA 15 provides information on and collects input from the public throughout the year on transportation related plans and activities. Feedback is specifically sought when there are changes being made to projects receiving federal aid and when transportation plans, policies and strategies are being developed for the RPA.

General Outreach

To provide information to the public on the RPA's activities, the following methods of outreach are used:

- A website that provides access to all of RPA 15's transportation plans for the region, and the latest agendas and minutes for the RPA's Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board.
- Articles in Area 15 RPC's Newslines, a quarterly newsletter, on transportation planning activities, public input opportunities and key projects.
- Press Releases to local newspapers in the 5-county RPA region on transportation planning activities and requesting public input.
- Presentations to county boards of supervisors, city councils, economic development organizations and other interested groups as needed or requested.
- Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Board meetings that are open to the public.

Transportation Planning Documents and Document Changes

To provide information on specific transportation planning documents and document changes, the RPA will use the following methods:

- Inviting the public to offer input or make comment by submitting feedback during the designated comment period or by attending the designated public hearing.
- Proposed Transportation Planning Documents may be reviewed on the Area 15 RPC's website, or in the planning commission's office during normal business hours.
- Comments may be mailed, e-mailed, called in, given in person during normal business hours to the RPA 15 Transportation Director, or presented at the designated public hearing.
- Public forums may be hosted within the RPA or targeted project area to obtain input.
- Focus or stakeholder groups may be established to obtain project specific input.

Marginalized and/or Disadvantaged Populations

To assist marginalized and or Disadvantaged populations in engaging in RPA 15's public participation process the RPA will use the following tools:

- Meetings, public hearings, forums and stakeholder groups will be held at locations accessible for people with disabilities.
- To the extent possible, meetings, public hearings, forums and stakeholder groups will be held at times and locations accessible by public transit.
- As appropriate, meetings, public hearings, forums and stakeholder groups will be held at locations most affected by the proposed plan or planning activity.
- For people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), the RPA follows a LEP plan that provides for translating transportation planning documents and providing oral translation services at meetings.
- The RPA maintains a Title VI Plan to address any civil rights or discrimination issues or complaints.
- The RPA uses visualization techniques such as maps, graphs and tables to help the public understand the proposed plans or changes.

Development of Major Transportation Plans

RPA 15 is responsible for developing five primary transportation planning documents. The development cycle and public participation process for each document is outlined below:

Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

- Updated: Annually.
- Development: Developed by RPC staff with oversight by the RPA 15 Policy Board.
- Draft Review: IDOT, FHWA and FTA.
- Public Notice: Legal notice published for public comment and hearing in the newspaper of widest circulation.
- Comment Period: A minimum of 15 days.
- Public Engagement: Draft presented at RPA 15 Policy Board meeting. Posted on Area 15 RPC website and available in the planning commission's office during normal business hours.
- Adoption: Adopted by resolution at an RPA 15 Policy Board meeting.
- Approval: IDOT.
- Availability of Document: RPC website, offices and upon request.
- Revisions: Require a public hearing at a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting. Notice of a public hearing will be published a minimum of four days and a maximum of 20 days before the hearing.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- Updated: Annually.
- Development: Developed by RPC staff with input from the TAC.
- Draft Review: IDOT.
- Public Notice: Legal notice published for public comment and hearing in the newspaper of widest circulation.
- Comment Period: A minimum of 15 days.
- Public Engagement: Draft presented at RPA 15 TAC and Policy Board meetings. Posted on Area 15 RPC website and available in the planning commission's office during normal business hours.
- Adoption: Recommended for adoption by TAC. Adopted by resolution at an RPA 15 Policy Board meeting.
- Approval: IDOT, FHWA and FTA.
- Availability of Document: RPC website, offices and upon request.
- Revisions: Two types of revisions: an amendment and an administrative modification.
 - **An AMENDMENT** involves a major change to a project within the TIP. This includes the addition or deletion of a project, changes in federal funding that increases federal aid by more than 30% or more than \$2 million, the addition of a federal funding source, or a change in concept or scope. Changes that affect the fiscal constraint of the TIP must also be by amendment. An amendment requires public review and comment and re-demonstration of fiscal constraint.

RPA 15 processes amendments through a review by the TAC at a regular meeting and then a public hearing by the Policy Board at a regular meeting. A notice of a public hearing for an amendment will be published a minimum of four days and a maximum of 20 days before the hearing.

- **An ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION** involves a minor change such as a change in project costs that do not increase the federal aid by more than 30 percent or more than \$2 million, scheduling changes to projects within the four-year TIP and changing funding from one source to another. An administrative modification does not require public review and re-demonstration of fiscal constraint.

The RPA processes administrative modifications involving competitive funds (STBG-Special Projects and TAP) through a review by the TAC at a regular meeting and approval by the Policy Board at a regular meeting. Administrative modifications involving sub-allocated funds may be processed by RPC staff without TAC review or Policy Board approval. The TAC and Policy Board are notified of the modification.

- A project requesting to increase the awarded amount less than 30% or no greater than \$300,000, whichever is less, may be submitted using the shorter revision (amendment/modification) form and not go through a full application cycle. Other changes to a TIP will continue to use the revision request form.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

- Updated: Every five years.
- Development: Developed by RPC staff with input from the RPA members, TAC, Policy Board and interested organizations and individuals.
- Draft Review: IDOT.
- Public Notice: Legal notice published for public comment and hearing in the newspaper of widest circulation. Notices may also be advertised through local media sources, published in the RPC newsletter, posted on the RPC Facebook page, sent to member cities, member counties, private transportation organizations, and organizations serving disadvantaged populations.
- Comment Period: A minimum of 30 days.
- Public Engagement: Draft presented at RPA 15 TAC and Policy Board meetings. Posted on Area 15 RPC website and available in the planning commission's office during normal business hours. A minimum of one public input sessions will be held regarding the draft LRTP. Presentations on the plan will also be made to interested organizations.
- Adoption: Recommended for adoption by TAC. Adopted by resolution at an RPA 15 Policy Board meeting.
- Approval: IDOT.
- Availability of Document: RPC website, offices and upon request.
- Revisions: Require a public hearing at a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting. Notice of a public hearing will be published a minimum of four days and a maximum of 20 days before the hearing.

Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)

- Updated: Every five years.
- Development: Developed by RPC staff with input from the TAG.
- Draft Review: IDOT and FTA.
- Public Notice: Legal notice published for public comment and hearing in the newspaper of widest circulation.
- Comment Period: A minimum of 15 days.
- Public Engagement: Legal notice published for public comment and hearing in the newspaper of widest circulation. Notices may also be advertised through local media sources and sent to private transportation organizations and health and human service agencies.
- Adoption: Adopted by resolution at an RPA 15 Policy Board meeting.

- Approval: IDOT.
- Availability of Document: RPC website, offices and upon request.
- Revisions: Require a public hearing at a regularly scheduled Policy Board meeting. Notice of a public hearing will be published a minimum of four days and a maximum of 20 days before the hearing.

Public Participation Plan (PPP)

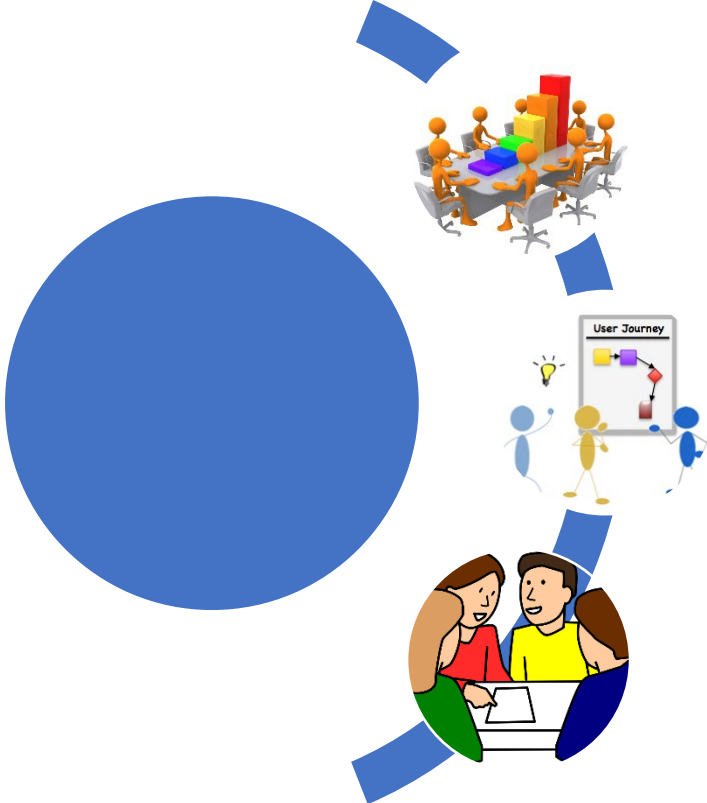
- Updated: Reviewed every five years, updated as needed.
- Development: Developed by the RPC staff with oversight by the Iowa DOT and RPA 15 Policy Board.
- Draft Review: IDOT.
- Public Notice: Legal notice published for public comment and hearing in the newspaper of widest circulation.
- Comment Period: A minimum of 45 days.
- Public Engagement: Draft presented at RPA 15 Policy Board meeting. Posted on Area 15 RPC website and available in the planning commission's office during normal business hours.
- Adoption: Adopted by resolution at an RPA 15 Policy Board meeting.
- Approval: IDOT.
- Availability of Document: RPC website, offices and upon request.
- Revisions: Minor revisions will be made in consultation with the Policy Board. Major revisions will be considered an updated and follow the process outlined above.

Documentation of input and Evaluation of Process

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission is committed to considering all public input and incorporating it into RPA 15's decision making process when appropriate. To ensure that all public input is considered, the Area 15 RPC will maintain a record of its public involvement activities and comments and input received from the public. The RPC will reply to requests for written documentation or published information within a reasonable amount of time, and when feasible or necessary, respond to input received during the public participation process. To ensure that the strategies contained within this Public Participation Plan are effective, outreach and feedback will be evaluated on a regular basis. Public attendance at meetings will be documented along with written or oral comments submitted during the comment period. Strategies will be reviewed after the completion of primary documents and adjusted if necessary. The entire Public Participation Plan will be reviewed at least every five years and updated as needed.

Summary of Transportation Planning Document Development

| | Updated | Draft Development | Public Notice | Comment Period | Adoption | Availability |
|--|---|--|--|-----------------------|--|--|
| Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP) | Annually | Developed by staff with oversight by Policy Board. | Legal notice published for public comment and hearing. | A minimum of 15 days. | By resolution at a Policy Board meeting. | RPC website, offices and upon request. |
| Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) | Annually | Developed by staff with input from the TAC. | Legal notice published for public comment and hearing. | A minimum of 15 days. | By resolution at a Policy Board meeting. | RPC website, offices and upon request. |
| Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) | Every five years. | Developed by staff with input from RPA members, TAC and interested stakeholders. | Legal notice published for public comment and hearing. | A minimum of 30 days. | By resolution at a Policy Board meeting. | RPC website, offices and upon request. |
| Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP) | Every five years. | Developed by staff with input from the TAG. | Legal notice published for public comment and hearing. | A minimum of 15 days. | By resolution at a Policy Board meeting. | RPC website, offices and upon request. |
| Public Participation Plan (PPP) | Reviewed every five years, updated as needed. | Developed by staff with oversight by Iowa DOT and Policy Board. | Legal notice published for public comment and hearing. | A minimum of 45 days. | By resolution at a Policy Board meeting. | RPC website, offices and upon request. |



Attachment: LEP Plan

Plan for Providing Language Assistance to Persons with Limited English Proficiency in RPA 15

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this Limited English Proficiency Plan is to outline how the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission 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. Executive Order 13166 defines LEP persons as those who do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. To prepare this plan, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission utilized the Four-Factor Analysis to determine the language assistance services that are appropriate to provide. The Four-Factor Analysis considers the following elements:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the region who may interact with the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission or are likely to encounter a transportation planning program, activity, or service provided by the RPC.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons encounter transportation planning programs, activities, or services.
3. The nature and importance of the transportation planning programs, activities, or services provided by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission to the LEP population.
4. The resources available to the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission for LEP assistance and the costs associated with that assistance.

Four-Factor Analysis

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the region who may interact with the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission or are likely to encounter a transportation planning program, activity, or service provided by the RPC.

Information on the Limited English Proficient population of RPA 15 was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey, which includes data on the number and percentage of people over the age of 5 that "speak English less than very well" and people that "speak a language other than English". According to data from the American Community Survey, the region does not have a large Limited English Proficient population as only 3% of the population (3,124 people) "speak English less than very well". This data also shows that the largest portion of the region's LEP population (1,420 people) speak Spanish or Spanish Creole,

followed by Asian and Pacific Island languages (778 people), other Indo-European languages (487 people), and other languages (439 people).

2. The frequency with which LEP persons encounter transportation planning programs, activities, or services.

Area 15 Regional Planning Commission staff assessed the frequency with which LEP persons have or could have contact with the region's transportation planning programs, activities, or services by reviewing the inquiries for interpreters or for the translation of documents. To date, there have been no requests received by staff for interpreters to be at RPA 15 meetings or for the translation of the RPA's documents.

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3. The nature and importance of the transportation planning programs, activities, or services provided by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission to the LEP population.

The nature transportation planning programs, activities, and services provided by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission is toward assisting the state department of transportation and local governments with transportation planning activities and involves frequent contact with these entities. Because the planning commission does not provide programs, activities, or services directly to the population of the region, it does not have frequent contact with LEP individuals regarding transportation planning. However, the planning commission must ensure that all segments of the population have the opportunity to be involved in the transportation planning process. This includes providing reasonable accommodations for language assistance to LEP persons to participate in the planning process.

Area 15 Regional Planning Commission staff have reviewed the transportation planning programs, activities, and services provided by the commission and believe the following may be of interest to LEP individuals:

- The Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)
- The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- The Regional Trails Plan
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- The Public Participation Plan (PPP)
- The Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)
- Title VI Plan
- Title VI Complaint Form
- Plan for Providing Language Assistance to persons with Limited English Proficiency

4. The resources available to the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission for LEP assistance and the costs associated with that assistance.

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission has identified the following resources for providing assistance to LEP persons at a low cost to the commission:

- The Microsoft Translator in Microsoft Office will be used to translate written materials at no cost to the planning commission.
- Bi-lingual staff of 10-15 Transit will provide oral translation at RPA 15 meetings at no cost to the planning commission.

Four Factor Analysis Conclusion

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission has reviewed the number of requests for LEP assistance and the demographics of the RPA 15 region to determine which languages translation services may be needed for. Based on this review, the commission has determined that written translation of important RPA documents and the availability of oral translation services at RPA 15 meetings is needed for LEP persons who speak Spanish or Spanish Creole since this group meets the 1,000 persons or 5% of the RPA's population threshold requirements. The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will evaluate and monitor the implementation of this LEP plan to provide appropriate language services to the population of the RPA 15 region.

Implementation

Language Assistance Measures provided by the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission:

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will provide language assistance for transportation planning to LEP individuals who speak Spanish or Spanish Creole since this group meets the 1,000 persons or 5% of the RPA's population threshold requirements. This assistance will include the written translating of important documents and the availability of oral translation services at RPA meetings. Other documents not identified will be translated upon request. The planning commission will also attempt to provide language assistance to LEP individuals who speak languages other than Spanish upon request to the extent possible.

How Area 15 Regional Planning Commission Staff will identify LEP persons needing language assistance:

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will provide notice of available language assistance to LEP persons and contact information for obtaining assistance. The planning commission staff

will also greet participants at RPA 15 meetings and informally engage them in conversation to gauge their ability to speak and understand English.

Translation of Written Materials:

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will make the following RPA 15 documents available in Spanish:

- The Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)
- A summary of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- The Regional Trails Plan
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- The Public Participation Plan (PPP)
- The Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)
- Title VI Plan
- Title VI Complaint Form
- Plan for Providing Language Assistance to persons with Limited English Proficiency

The documents listed above will be made available in Spanish as they are updated. Other transportation planning documents will be translated into Spanish upon request.

Oral Language Services:

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will provide oral interpretation to Spanish speaking LEP individuals at RPA 15 meetings upon request. To request interpretive services, the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission should be contacted by calling (641) 684-6551 at least 72 hours before the meeting so that arrangements can be made.

Staff Training:

In order to provide meaningful access to information and services to LEP individuals, Area 15 Regional Planning Commission staff that regularly interact with the public will be trained on the planning commission's Title VI and LEP policies and procedures. This training will ensure that the planning commission is able to provide language assistance and the staff are able to effectively work with LEP individuals.

Providing Notice of available Language Assistance to LEP Persons:

The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission has established the following methods to inform Spanish speaking LEP individuals, supporting organizations and the general public of available language assistance.

- Posting information: The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will post information in the reception area of its offices and on its website in Spanish and English to notify LEP individuals of available language assistance and how to obtain assistance.
- Outreach Documents: Major outreach documents will include a notice that some language assistance is available. This notice will be in both Spanish and English.
- Local Organizations: The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will notify local organizations of available language assistance services.
- Public Notices: Periodically the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission will issue notices about available language assistance services.

Contact

In order to request language assistance, please contact:

Chris Kukla – Transportation Director
Area 15 Regional Planning Commission
(641) 684-6551

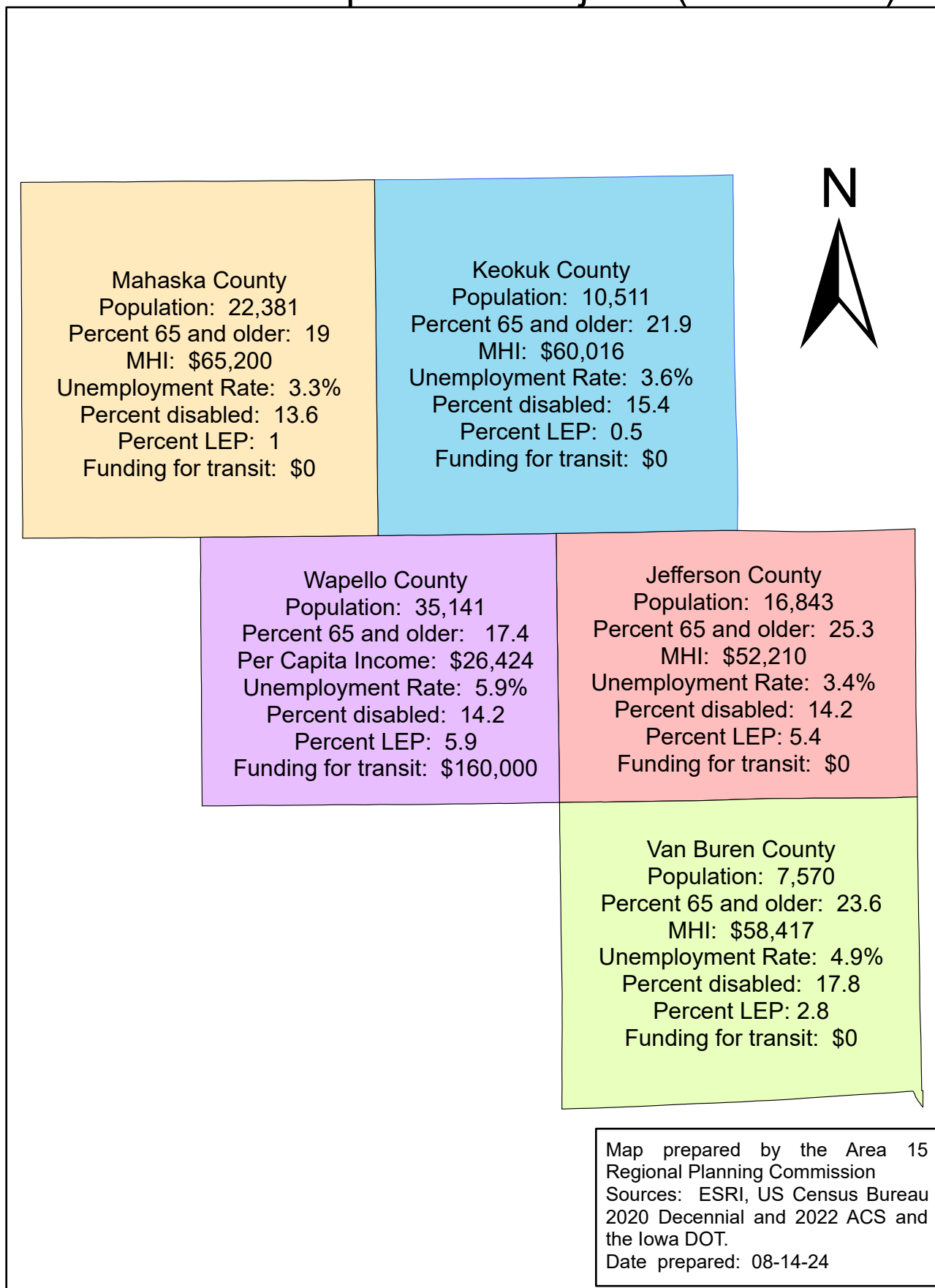
To discuss Title VI or LEP issues, please contact:

Chris Bowers – Executive Director / Title VI Coordinator
Area 15 Regional Planning Commission
(641) 684-6551

To file a complaint regarding LEP activities, please fill out the Title VI complaint form available at <http://www.area15rpc.com/transportation--planning>. The Area 15 Regional Planning Commission's Title VI complaint procedures will be followed for reviewing all LEP complaints filed.

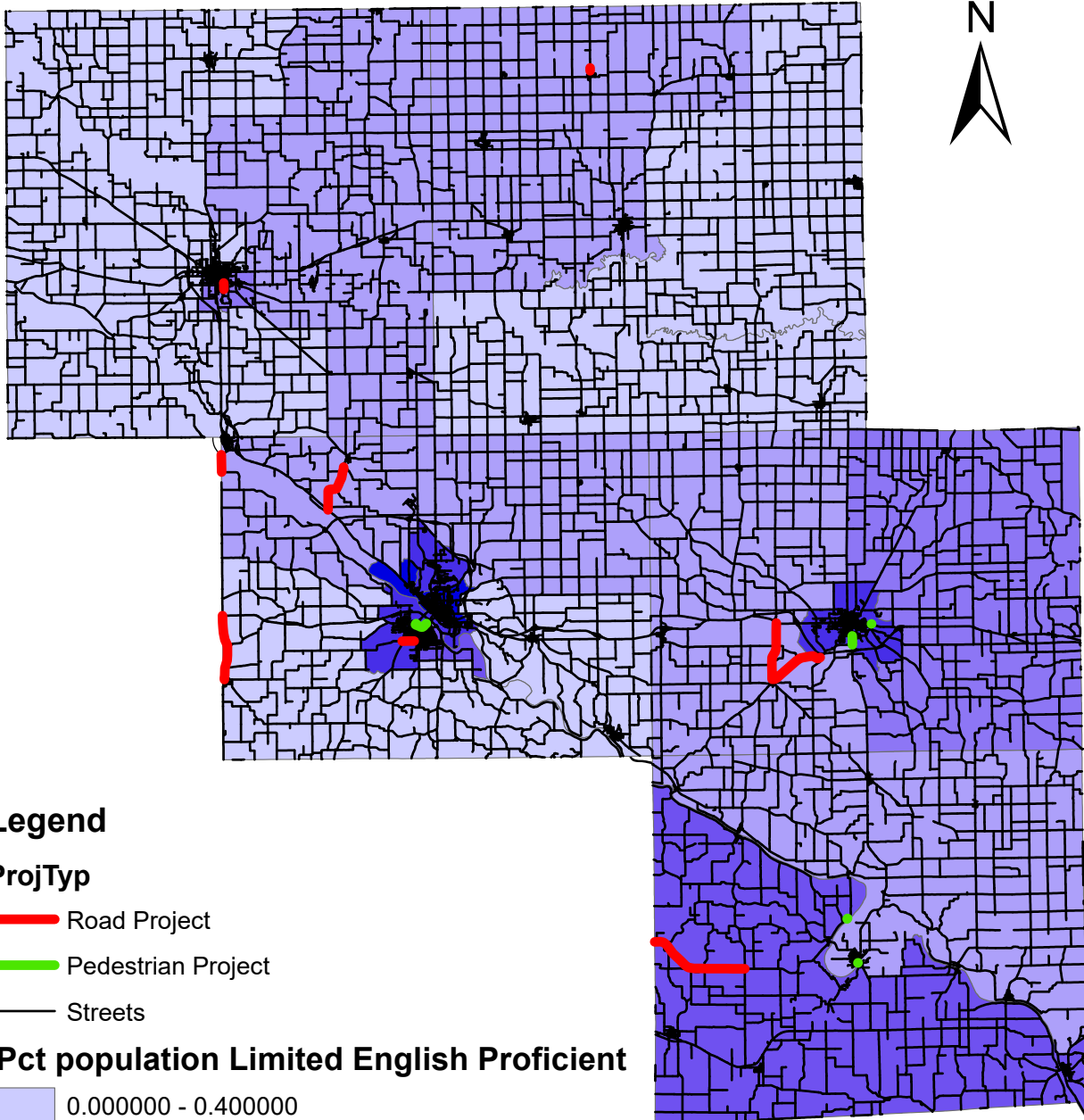
Attachment: Analysis of Transportation System
Investments

Distribution of STBG and TAP funds for Public Transportation Projects (2023-2025)






Transportation Investments (2023-2025) and Limited English Proficient Population

0 3 6 12 18 24 Miles









Legend

ProjTyp

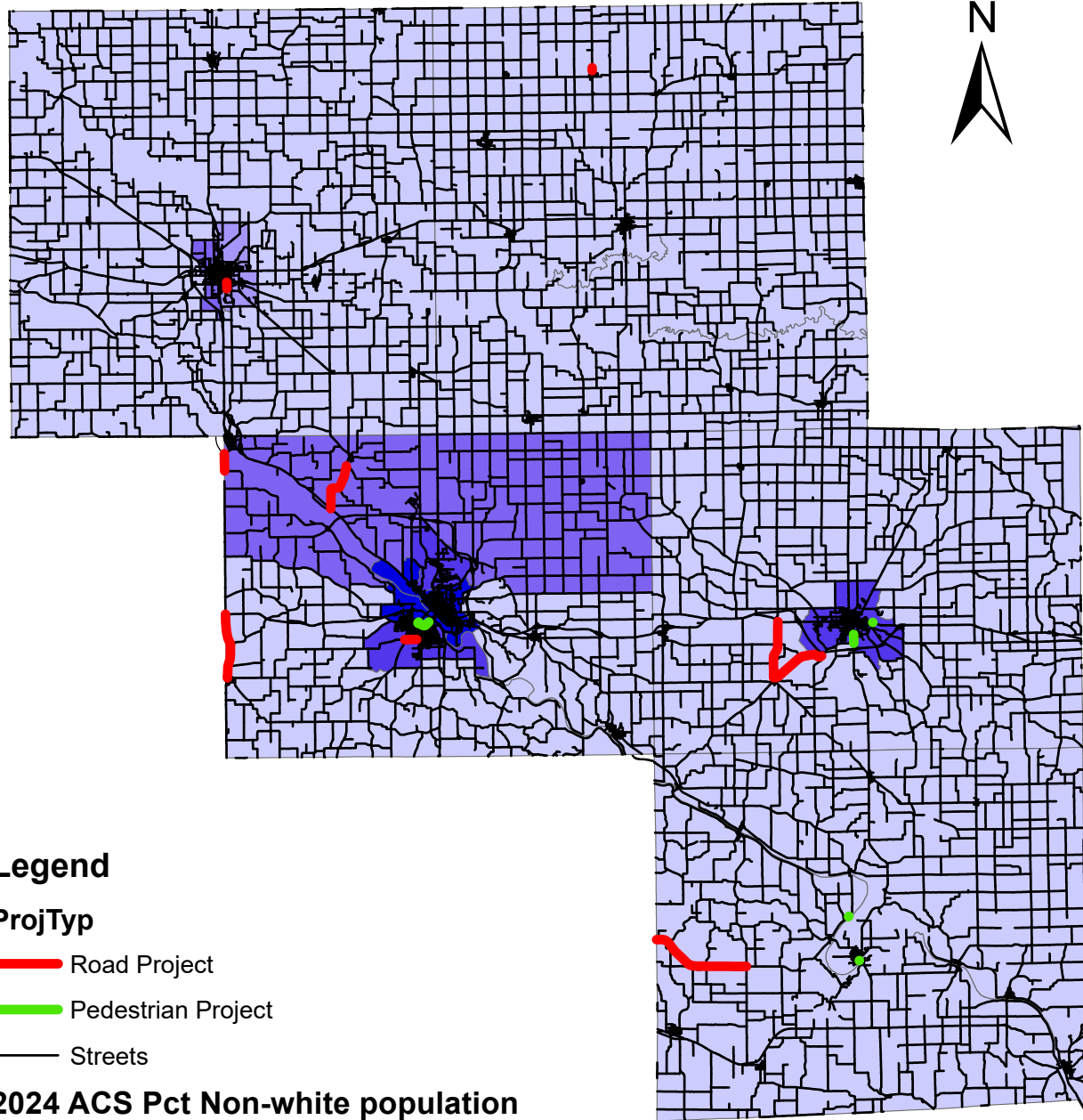
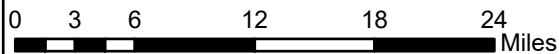
-  Road Project
-  Pedestrian Project
-  Streets

Pct population Limited English Proficient

-  0.000000 - 0.400000
-  0.400001 - 1.600000
-  1.600001 - 4.000000
-  4.000001 - 6.000000
-  6.000001 - 10.000000
-  10.000001 - 15.100000




Map prepared by the Area 15
Regional Planning Commission
Sources: ESRI, US Census Bureau
2019 ACS and the Iowa DOT.
Date prepared: 08-19-24

Transportation Investments (2023-2025) and Non-white Population by Census Tract








Legend

ProjTyp

-  Road Project
-  Pedestrian Project
-  Streets

2024 ACS Pct Non-white population

-  0.000000 - 3.000000
-  3.000001 - 6.000000
-  6.000001 - 9.000000
-  9.000001 - 18.000000
-  18.000001 - 33.000000

Map prepared by the Area 15
Regional Planning Commission
Sources: ESRI, US Census Bureau
2019 ACS and the Iowa DOT.
Date prepared: 08-19-24