# Table of Contents

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ......................................................................................................................... 3  
   1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition ...................................................................................................... 3  
   1.2 Summary of Current Findings .......................................................................................................... 8  
2.0 INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................................................... 9  
   2.1 Background and Purpose .................................................................................................................. 9  
3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY .............................................................................................................. 10  
   3.1 Review Process .................................................................................................................................. 10  
   3.2 Documents Reviewed ....................................................................................................................... 10  
   3.3 Key Definitions for Planning Review Findings .................................................................................. 11  
4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW ............................................................................................................................ 12  
   4.1 MPO Structure and Agreements ......................................................................................................... 12  
   4.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan ..................................................................................................... 13  
   4.3 Transit Planning ............................................................................................................................... 15  
   4.4 Transportation Improvement Program and List of Obligated Projects ............................................ 16  
   4.5 Public Participation .......................................................................................................................... 17  
   4.6 Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA) ............................................................................................... 18  
5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ..................................................................................... 20  
   5.1 Commendations ............................................................................................................................... 20  
   5.2 Corrective Actions ............................................................................................................................ 20  

1
5.3 Recommendations ............................................................................................................ 20

APPENDIX A - PARTICIPANTS ............................................................................................ 22

APPENDIX B – SIGN-IN SHEET .......................................................................................... 23

APPENDIX C – AGENDA ....................................................................................................... 24

APPENDIX D - LIST OF ACRONYMS .................................................................................... 25

APPENDIX E – Corridor MPO RESPONSE TO REVIEW TEAM ............................................. 26
1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 21, 2019, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the planning review of the transportation planning process for the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (Corridor MPO) Planning Area. FHWA and FTA jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 50,000 in population at least every five years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

The Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (Corridor MPO) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area and works with the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) as well as the metropolitan public transit operators (CRTransit, Linn County, City of Hiawatha, and the City of Marion) to implement the federally required planning process.

The scope of the federal review of the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area planning process was comprehensive, covering the transportation planning process for the entire area and all the agencies involved. The federal review team’s work consisted of reviewing the products of the planning process, reviewing the ongoing oversight activities conducted by the FHWA and the FTA, and an on-site review conducted May 21, 2019 at the Cedar Rapids City offices.

1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition

The previous Planning Review findings and their disposition are summarized as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Corrective Actions/Recommendations</th>
<th>Disposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPO Structure and Agreements</td>
<td>Corrective Action</td>
<td>The Corridor MPO’s organizational structure inhibits a 3-C process as required by Federal planning regulations and does not comply with federal regulations.</td>
<td>Planning process improvements submitted as part of the Action Plan meet federal transportation planning regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is recommended that the MPO update its’ bylaws and organization to reflect a regional metropolitan planning organization that allows for regional decision making. The current structure does not</td>
<td>The Corridor MPO by-laws were updated in 2015 to refine the Policy Board representation formula, Policy Board Representation Composition, and the role of the Executive Committee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
foster a regional 3-C transportation planning process.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the MPO make a more concerted and regular effort to invite nonmember communities to become MPO members and to become a part of the regional metropolitan planning process. The Corridor MPO continues to extend invitations to join the Corridor MPO and added the City of Palo as a member jurisdiction since the last review.

**Corrective Action**

Although the Connections 2040 planning process was considered a ‘best practice’ when developed in regard to the process, public/stakeholder input, underlying modeling and data, and fiscal constraint analysis, subsequent post-adoption changes to project lists did not follow the plan development process or align with a majority of the plan, and updated copies of the plan were not made available to FTA, FHWA, planning partners, and the general public. This does not comply with federal regulations.

The Goals and related project scoring criteria priorities were amended and approved by the Policy Board in the 2015 update to Connections 2040 and based on the 8 Planning Factors. In addition, Goals and scoring criteria are specific to each transportation mode in the current LRTP.

**Recommendation**

The change in direction to allocate 80% of STP funding to trails does not align with the project weighting and prioritization, which is the foundation of the Connections 2040 Plan. The skywalk connection between the Convention Center and US Bank (or the skywalk itself) was never mentioned in the plan, nor was it considered an integral part of the current LRTP.

The Corridor MPO completed an extensive public outreach process for the forthcoming 2020 LRTP and the funding allocations represent the public and the Policy Boards input and desires.
| Recommendation | Corrective Action | The submitted Action Plan addressed all four deficiency findings in its implementation of transportation planning improvements. The Corridor MPO will make additional technical and outreach improvements in the 2020 iteration of the LRTP. |
| Recommendation | After the adoption of the Connections 2040 plan in 2010, subsequent action was taken to amend the plan by the MPO Policy board without updating the hard copies that are available to the public, official copies provided to FHWA and FTA, and the online version in a timely manner. | The MPO has corrected this issue by updating the document consistently subsequent to amendments. |

**Transportation Improvement Program (23 U.S.C. 134(c)(h)& (j); 23 CFR 450.326)**

| Recommendation | The Corridor MPO exhibits obvious project selection and project implementation concerns, and does not comply with federal regulations. | Submitted Action Plan has addressed all four deficiency findings in its implementation of transportation planning improvements. |

| Recommendation | The MPO must go through the project selection process, including a call for projects and ranking/scoring of applications against one another, if it is determined there is additional carryover funding available, if there is an increase in available funds as a result of the removal/moving of a project in the approved TIP, or any other increases in funding available for programming. | The Corridor MPO conducts a project selection process, determines if additional carryover funding is available, and if additional funds are available resulting from removal/moving of project in the approved TIP, on an annual basis. All carryover is made available each year to and advertised through, the competitive TIP process. This includes any defunded projects, funding increases, etc. |

| Recommendation | It is recommended that the MPO develop an effective policy to assure that projects selected for inclusion in the TIP will be ready when funds are available and that they advance in a timely manner. | Corridor MPO staff conducts monthly check-in’s with project sponsors. The Corridor MPO adopted a policy that requires projects with 3 or more years from the date that funding is available for construction to be considered for defunding by the Policy Board. |
They have defunded over $5,000,000 in projects since the 2015 Review.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the MPO require regular project status reports at the Policy Board meetings to assure projects are advancing in a timely manner and to assure that any project delays are being communicated and addressed.

The Corridor MPO has implemented an annual status report program required for all projects. A summary of these reports is reviewed with the Policy Board.

**Transit Planning**

49 U.S.C. 5303  
23 U.S.C. 134  
23 CFR 450.314

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that CRT conduct a route system study to better serve systems patrons and attract choice riders. In addition, it is recommended that CRT have a comprehensive feasibility study to determine the need and location of additional hubs.

The Corridor MPO provided funding for and managed a Transit Study conducted and completed in 2016 and 2017. Subsequently, route amendments were implemented that created a mini-hub at Lindale Mall and new circular bus service in the Cities of Hiawatha and Marion.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the MPO and CRT work with Iowa City transit systems, ECICOG and MPOJC to provide express transit service on Interstate 380 between Iowa City and Cedar Rapids if this is a finding of the current “I-380” Study.

The Corridor MPO cooperated with the agencies listed and the 380 express now runs M-F and soon to be Saturday.

**Public Participation**

(23 U.S.C. 134(i)(6); 23 CFR 450.316 & 450.326(b))

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that Corridor update its’ Outreach and Communications Plan and adhere to the requirements of 23 CFR 450.316.

An expanded Public Participation Plan was adopted by the Policy Board in 2018

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the MPO work to improve its public perceptions and public involvement opportunities. The MPO needs to follow through with the update of the Outreach and Communication Plan and concentrate on effective communication and public involvement and should assess how a Metro-Area Advisory Committee (or similar board) could successfully provide the necessary public involvement to

In addition to the expanded PPP, the Corridor MPO now has two TIP outreach meetings at the local market. This is coupled with a robust Facebook presence, streaming of TTAC, Executive Committee, and Policy Board meetings on Facebook Live, and an email list-serve. These efforts have increase attendance at open houses from 1 to 2 people to on average 40 to 60 attendees. These same tools have been used for regional plans including the LRTP.
the transportation planning process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil Rights Title VI Civil Rights Act, 23 U.S.C. 324, Age Discrimination Act, Sec. 504 Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act</th>
<th>Corrective Action</th>
<th>Title VI and Environmental Justice considerations are lacking and do not comply with federal regulations.</th>
<th>The submitted Action Plan has addressed all four deficiency findings in its implementation of transportation planning improvements. The Corridor MPO has also recently updated and adopted its Title VI plan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>It is recommended that Corridor develop environmental justice considerations for TIP project scoring as well as more EJ analyses within the LRTP.</td>
<td>Bonus scoring for EJ was added to the LRTP. In addition, an improved and integrated EJ system is being developed for the current 2020 LRTP update.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.2 Summary of Current Findings

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area meets Federal planning requirements. Below are the primary findings, including recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas that Corridor MPO is performing very well in that are to be commended.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Area</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations</th>
<th>Resolution Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MPO Structure and Agreements</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Review MPO Staff and Office Location – It is recommended that the Corridor MPO review the current staffing of the MPO in the context of a potential designation as a TMA before the next planning review, with focus on the utilization and purpose of the Executive Director and MPO Manager positions, and the possibility of adding additional staff positions.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendation Increase Coordination – The MPO, Iowa District 6 and ECICOG should explore options to increase collaboration and cooperation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Planning</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Formalize a New Transit Agreement – A cooperative agreement should be formalized between the MPO and transit agencies in the region.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Improvement Program</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Reduce STBG Carryover Balance - The Review Team recommends that the MPO continue to implement strategies to reduce the amount of STBG carryover funds.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Participation</td>
<td>Commendation</td>
<td>Increased Public Participation - The Federal Team commends the MPO for its use of expanded outreach techniques such as using Facebook Live to stream meetings, expanding the email list-serve, and attending other regional events. This has resulted in a measurable increase in public participation in the planning process.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Update Assurances and Complaint Process - The Review Team recommends that the MPO provide an updated Title VI plan, assurances, and an updated complaint process.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Details of the planning review findings for each of the above items are contained in this report.
2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background and Purpose

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134 and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have responsibilities for ensuring that the metropolitan transportation planning processes are conducted in a manner consistent with the above legislation. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Planning Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

The Planning Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the MTP, metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Review process.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Planning Review Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.
3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review Process

This report details the 2019 review, which consisted of a site visit on May 21, 2019 and desk review. Participants in the review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, Iowa DOT, and Corridor MPO staff. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A.

A desk audit of current documents and correspondence was completed prior to the site visit. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the review findings. The planning review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators. Background information, current status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for the following subject areas selected by FHWA and FTA staff for on-site review:

- MPO Structure and Agreements
- Unified Planning Work Program
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- Transit Planning
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and List of Obligated Projects
- Public Participation
- Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)
- Nonmotorized Planning/Livability

3.2 Documents Reviewed

The following MPO documents were evaluated as part of this planning process review:

- Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization Bylaws, adopted January 2015
- FY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program for Corridor MPO
- Connections 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, Amended March 2019
- Corridor MPO Funding Policy, May 2014
- Agenda Packets for Executive and Technical Committees
- Member Agency Roster 2017
- Final Report Highway 30 Area Study, October 2015
- Passenger Transportation Plan 2019-2024, adopted March 2019
- Tower Terrace Road Corridor Management Plan, March 2010
- Highway 100 Corridor Management Plan, February 2016
- FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program for the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Area
- Title VI Program and Assurances - Corridor MPO, Amended January 2019
- Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan, Amended October 2018
- FY 2016 Financial Audit, January 2017
- MPO Responses to Planning Review Questionnaire (Appendix E)

3.3 **Key Definitions for Planning Review Findings**

**Corrective Actions** – Corrective Actions are compliance issues and indicate a serious situation that fails to meet one or more requirements of the transportation planning statute and regulations, thus seriously impacting the outcome of the overall process. The expected outcome is a change that brings the metropolitan planning process into compliance with a planning statute or regulation; failure to respond will likely result in a more restrictive review.

**Recommendations** – Recommendations address technical improvements to processes and procedures, that while somewhat less substantial and not regulatory, are still significant enough that FHWA and FTA are hopeful that State and local officials will take action. The expected outcome is change that would improve the process, though there is no Federal mandate.

**Commendations** – Commendations are processes or practices that demonstrate innovative, highly effective, well-thought-out procedures for implementing the planning requirements. Elements addressing items that have frequently posed problems nationwide could be cited as commendations. Also, significant improvements and/or resolution of past findings may warrant a commendation.
4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW

4.1 MPO Structure and Agreements

4.1.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA. Further, 23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to transportation performance data, the selection of performance targets, the reporting of performance targets, the reporting of performance to be used in tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO, and the collection of data for the State asset management plans for the National Highway System.

4.1.2 Current Status

Throughout the review, the MPO staff was open to suggestions, willing to share ideas, and discuss challenges or issues. It was observed that a strong planning relationship exists between the MPO and CRTransit. However, a formal agreement with CRTransit is not in place and should be considered.

Corridor MPO maintains several interagency coordination agreements including a staffing agreement with the City of Cedar Rapids. A 2017 dues increase has resulted in the MPO having 3 full time planners and a part time Executive Director and part time MPO Manager. It appears the Executive Director has very little involvement in the MPO as compared to the standard practice in MPOs of a similar size. Population is growing in the region and the possibility of the MPO being designated as a TMA is a possibility. As this comes with additional federal requirements, the Corridor MPO should seriously review alternative staffing options to ensure staff has good leadership and to increase coordination and cross training on activities. The MPO has a history of employing interns to assist with completing projects and the close relationship with the University of Iowa is positive for both agencies.

The MPO staff being housed within the City of Cedar Rapids may appear to create a bias toward Cedar Rapids, as compared to MPOs that are stand-alone or are co-located with COGs or other regional planning agencies.
The MPO should explore options to increase collaboration with the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) and the Iowa DOT District 6.

Since the last review, the MPO has created modal working groups in their Technical Advisory Committee, resulting in technically better projects. This is a good practice that the MPO should continue. Since the last review, the MPO has also added an annual process solicit non-members to join the MPO and has added the City of Palo as a new member.

4.1.3 Findings

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area organizational framework is compliant with the federal planning regulations.

Recommendation:

1. Review MPO Staff and Office Location – It is recommended that the Corridor MPO review the current staffing of the MPO in the context of a potential designation as a TMA before the next planning review, with focus on the utilization and purpose of the Executive Director and MPO Manager positions, and the possibility of adding additional staff positions. The review team recommends that the MPO begin researching the staffing and organization of similar sized TMAs within FTA Region 7. The MPO should also continue to explore options for moving their office outside of the City of Cedar Rapids to reduce any appearance of bias or staff conflict of interest.

2. Increase Coordination – The MPO, Iowa District 6 and ECICOG should explore options to increase collaboration and cooperation.

4.2 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

4.2.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it includes both long and short range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the
transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every 5 years in attainment areas to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.

Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

### 4.2.2 Current Status

The current ‘Connections 2040’ Long Range Transportation Plan was originally adopted in July of 2015 and amended in March 2019, with a horizon year of 2040. Staff is currently working on the upcoming LRTP due in 2020, with the horizon year of 2045. For the new 2020 LRTP, MPO staff is working closely with the Iowa DOT on modeling and is following the requirements laid out in the Iowa Standardized Model Structure (ISMS) manual. Parcel-level data will be used to determine the productions and attractions for various trip types. The discussion and integration of freight planning will also be greatly increased in the new plan.

As a result of the prior review, the Corridor MPO has adopted an annual process for considering amendments to the LRTP and provides opportunity to comment in conformance with the PPP. When amendments are approved, updated copies of the plan are made available on the website and upon request.

### 4.2.3 Findings

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area MTP meets all the requirements listed under 23 CFR 450.324.
4.3 Transit Planning

4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

4.3.2 Current Status

Corridor MPO staff provides technical assistance to CRTransit related to route changes, on-bus ride counters, Google Transit, and other initiatives. The Corridor MPO is also the agreed upon public engagement team for the transit agency and has performed numerous open houses regarding transit studies, route changes, and a recent update to the Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP).

The Corridor MPO facilitated a significant regional effort to study the regional transit system over the course of the past 4 years that included hiring and managing a consultant to complete a transit study (resulting in multiple fixed-route changes) and hiring and managing a consultant to complete a feasibility study for the formulation of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA). This effort resulted in the formalization of service level agreements between CRTransit and Linn County, the City of Hiawatha, and the City of Marion. Finally, the effort created a regional Transit Advisory Group that continues to meet to identify transit related opportunities and challenges and strategies to address them.

There is no existing agreement between the MPO and CRTransit. Establishing a formal agreement is a recommended planning practice.

4.3.3 Findings

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area meets all the requirements listed under 23 CFR 450.314.

**Recommendation:**

1. Formalize a New Transit Agreement – A cooperative agreement should be formalized between the MPO and transit agencies in the region.
4.4 Transportation Improvement Program and List of Obligated Projects

4.4.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

23 U.S.C. 134(j)(7) and 23 CFR 450.334 requires that the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators cooperatively develop a listing of projects for which Federal funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S. C. Chapter 53 have been obligated in the previous year. The listing must include all federally funded projects authorized or revised to increase obligations in the preceding program year and, at a minimum, the following for each project:

- The amount of funds requested in the TIP
- Federal funding obligated during the preceding year
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years
- Sufficient description to identify the project
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project

4.4.2 Current Status

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area TIP document is updated annually on the schedule provided through Iowa DOT guidance. The Corridor MPO conducts a project selection process, determines if additional carryover funding is available, and if additional funds are available resulting from removal/moving of project in the approved TIP, on an annual basis. All carryover
is made available each year through the competitive TIP process. This includes any defunded projects, funding increases, etc. However, the balance of STBG funds has continued to grow over the last several years. As federal funds have a limited time of availability, the MPO needs to continue to pursue additional ways to reduce the balance, such as phasing projects or adding language to agreements with a date the project must be obligated by or is at risk of defunding. The MPOs monthly check-ins with project sponsors is an effective practice and should be continued. The Corridor MPO intends to make incremental improvements in the project selection process for the 2020 iteration of the LRTP.

4.4.3 Findings

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area meets all the requirements listed under 23 CFR 450.326 and 23 CFR 450.334.

Recommendations:

1. Reduce STBG Carryover Balance - The Review Team recommends that the MPO continue to implement strategies to reduce the amount of STBG carryover funds.

4.5 Public Participation

4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a) and (b), which require the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and a periodically reviewing of the effectiveness of the participation plan.
4.5.2 Current Status

An expanded Public Participation Plan was adopted by the Policy Board in 2018. This, coupled with a Facebook presence, streaming of TTAC, Executive Committee, and Policy Board meetings on Facebook Live, and an email list-serve have all increased public participation in the planning process. These efforts have increase attendance at open houses from 1 to 2 people to on average 40 to 60 attendees. These same tools have also been used for regional plans, including the LRTP.

The City of Cedar Rapids currently hosts the website for the MPO. The MPO should continue to explore options to obtain a separate site.

4.5.3 Findings

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area meets all the requirements listed under 23 CFR 450.316.

Commendation:

1. Increased Public Participation - The Federal Team commends the MPO for its use of expanded outreach techniques such as using Facebook Live to stream meetings, expanding the email list-serve, and attending other regional events. This has resulted in a measurable increase in public participation in the planning process.

4.6 Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)

4.6.1 Regulatory Basis

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. ADA specifies that programs and activities funded with Federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability.

Executive Order #12898 (Environmental Justice) directs federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their
programs on minority and low-income populations. In compliance with this Executive Order, USDOT and FHWA issued orders to establish policies and procedures for addressing environmental justice in minority and low-income populations. The planning regulations, at 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii), require that the needs of those “traditionally underserved” by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.

Executive Order # 13166 (Limited-English-Proficiency) requires agencies to ensure that limited English proficiency persons are able to meaningfully access the services provided consistent with and without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of each federal agency.

4.6.2 Current Status

Diverse approaches are used at the MPO to prevent discrimination and assure compliance. No complaints for the area were filed. It was discovered during the review that the Title VI assurances and Title VI plan needed to be submitted. Those updates were provided shortly after the visit. It was also noted at the review that the complaint process should be updated.

4.6.3 Findings

The Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area meets all the civil rights requirements.

Recommendation:

1. Update Assurances and Complaint Process - The Review Team recommends that the MPO provide an updated Title VI plan, assurances, and an updated complaint process.
5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The FHWA and FTA review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area meets Federal planning requirements as follows.

5.1 Commendations

The following are noteworthy practices that the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area is doing well in the transportation planning process:

1. Increased Public Participation - The Federal Team commends the MPO for its use of expanded outreach techniques such as using Facebook Live to stream meetings, expanding the email list-serve, and attending other regional events. This has resulted in a measurable increase in public participation in the planning process.

5.2 Corrective Actions

The following are corrective actions that the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area must take to comply with Federal Regulations:

None

5.3 Recommendations

The following are recommendations that would improve the transportation planning process:

1. Review MPO Staff and Office Location – It is recommended that the Corridor MPO review the current staffing of the MPO in the context of a potential designation as a TMA before the next planning review, with focus on the utilization and purpose of the Executive Director and MPO Manager positions, and the possibility of adding additional staff positions. The review team recommends that the MPO begin researching the staffing and organization of similar sized TMAs within FTA Region 7. The MPO should also continue to explore options for moving their office outside of the City of Cedar Rapids to reduce any appearance of bias or staff conflict of interest.

2. Increase Coordination – The MPO, Iowa District 6 and ECICOG should explore options to increase collaboration and cooperation.

3. Formalize a New Transit Agreement – A cooperative agreement should be formalized between the MPO and transit agencies in the region.
4. Reduce STBG Carryover Balance - The Review Team recommends that the MPO continue to implement strategies to reduce the amount of STBG carryover funds.
5. Update Assurances and Complaint Process - The Review Team recommends that the MPO provide an updated Title VI plan, assurances, and an updated complaint process.
APPENDIX A - PARTICIPANTS

Federal reviewers prepared this Planning Review report to document the results of the review process. The report and final actions are the responsibility of the FHWA Iowa and the FTA Region 7 Office. See Appendix B for the sign-in sheet. The following individuals were involved in the Cedar Rapids Urbanized Area on-site review:

The Federal Review Team included:

Darla Hugaboom, FHWA Iowa Division
Stephanie Dawson, FHWA Iowa Division
Eva Steinman, FTA Region 7
Cathy Monroe, FTA Region 7
Mark Bechtel, FTA Region 7

MPOJC Staff

Bill Micheel
Hilary Hershner
Elizabeth Darnall
Brandon Whyte

Iowa DOT

Andrea White, Office of Systems Planning
Garrett Pedersen, Office of Systems Planning
Jeff Von Brown, Office of Systems Planning
Tracey Bradley, Office of Civil Rights
Kristin Haar, Office of Transit
Cathy Cutler, District 6
# APPENDIX B – SIGN-IN SHEET

## Attendee Sign-in Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>E-mail Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracy Bradely</td>
<td>Office of Civil Rights</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tracey.bradley@iowadot.us">tracey.bradley@iowadot.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Brown</td>
<td>Bureau of Systems Planning</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeff.brown@iowadot.us">jeff.brown@iowadot.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eta Steinman</td>
<td>FTA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eta.steinman@dot.gov">eta.steinman@dot.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy Lane</td>
<td>FTA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cathy.lane@dot.gov">cathy.lane@dot.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Balsuma</td>
<td>FTA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mark.balsuma@dot.gov">mark.balsuma@dot.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrett Pedersen</td>
<td>DOT - Systems Planning</td>
<td><a href="mailto:garrett.pedersen@iowadot.us">garrett.pedersen@iowadot.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Haar</td>
<td>DOT - Public Transit</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kristin.haar@iowadot.us">kristin.haar@iowadot.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea White</td>
<td>DOT - Systems Planning</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andrea.white@iowadot.us">andrea.white@iowadot.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy Cutter</td>
<td>DOT - District 6</td>
<td><a href="mailto:catherine.cutter@iowadot.us">catherine.cutter@iowadot.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Whyte</td>
<td>CMPO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brandon.whyte@corridormpo.com">brandon.whyte@corridormpo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Hershner</td>
<td>CMPO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:h.hershner@corridormpo.com">h.hershner@corridormpo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Darnall</td>
<td>CMPO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:elizabeth.darnall@corridormpo.com">elizabeth.darnall@corridormpo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Michael</td>
<td>CMPO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bill.michael@corridormpo.com">bill.michael@corridormpo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Downen</td>
<td>FHWA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stephanie.downen@dot.gov">stephanie.downen@dot.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dora Huyseboom</td>
<td>FHWA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dora.huyseboom@dot.gov">dora.huyseboom@dot.gov</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX C – AGENDA

**Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMPO)**  
Planning Review  
May 21, 2019  
Cedar Rapids City Hall (2nd Floor)  
Collins Conference Room, Community Development Department  
101 1st Street SE  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

**Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. | Welcome and Scope of Review  
- Introductions  
- MPO Overview  
- Major Projects (Completed and Upcoming) |
| 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | MPO Role and Responsibilities  
- Agreements  
- Organizational Structure Process and Procedures  
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) |
| 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Planning Process & Major Planning Products  
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)  
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP or LRTP)  
- Project Selection Process  
- Performance Based Planning |
| 12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. | Lunch |
| 1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. | Public Transit  
- Studies, NEPA updates |
| 1:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. | Civil Rights  
- Title IV  
- Environmental Justice  
- LEP  
- ADA  
- Self-Certification |
| 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | Break/Federal Staff Discussion |
| 2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Discussion Wrap Up/Preliminary Findings |
| 3:00 p.m. | Adjourn |
APPENDIX D - LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
AMPO: Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
CMP: Congestion Management Process
DOT: Department of Transportation
EJ: Environmental Justice
FAST: Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
FTA: Federal Transit Administration
FY: Fiscal Year
HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
LEP: Limited-English-Proficiency
M&O: Management and Operations
MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan
SHSP: Strategic Highway Safety Plan
STIP: State Transportation Improvement Program
TDM: Travel Demand Management
TIP: Transportation Improvement Program
TMA: Transportation Management Area
UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT: United States Department of Transportation
APPENDIX E – Corridor MPO RESPONSE TO REVIEW TEAM

Corridor MPO Planning Review Topics

1. MPO Organization and Intergovernmental Coordination

Please describe the accountabilities of the MPO organization.

The Corridor MPO consists of a number of local and regional transportation agencies that work together to plan and fund transportation projects in the corridor. The MPO is responsible for:

- Setting transportation priorities and targets
- Developing and updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Coordinating with other regional transportation agencies

2. Transportation Projects – Historical and Planned

Please provide an overview of major projects in the corridor planning area.

The Corridor MPO has been involved in a number of transportation projects in the corridor planning area, including:

- Improvements to Highway 99
- Construction of the Sounder Rapid-Rail Corridor
- Development of the Light Rail Corridor

3.મ્યૂલિન્ડર શરીર પ્લાનિંગ રીવિ ટીમ

Corridor MPO Planning Review Topics

1. MPO Organization and Intergovernmental Coordination

Please describe the accountabilities of the MPO organization.

The Corridor MPO consists of a number of local and regional transportation agencies that work together to plan and fund transportation projects in the corridor. The MPO is responsible for:

- Setting transportation priorities and targets
- Developing and updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Coordinating with other regional transportation agencies

2. Transportation Projects – Historical and Planned

Please provide an overview of major projects in the corridor planning area.

The Corridor MPO has been involved in a number of transportation projects in the corridor planning area, including:

- Improvements to Highway 99
- Construction of the Sounder Rapid-Rail Corridor
- Development of the Light Rail Corridor

3.મ્યૂલિન્ડર શરીર પ્લાનિંગ રીવિ ટીમ
2. Project Selection

What are the NPP’s project selection processes and accomplishments for approved projects?

The NPP’s project selection processes are designed to ensure that projects are selected based on criteria such as feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and environmental impact. This ensures that the projects are not only technically sound but also sustainable and beneficial to the community. The NPP’s accomplishments for approved projects are significant, showcasing its commitment to delivering quality projects that meet the needs of the community.

3. Performance Certification

The NPP’s performance certification process ensures that projects meet the set standards and requirements. This process is crucial in ensuring the quality of the projects and maintaining the NPP’s reputation for excellence.

4. Disposal Planning

The NPP’s disposal planning process is designed to address the challenges associated with the safe disposal of nuclear waste. This process is critical in ensuring that the waste is handled in an environmentally responsible manner, reducing risks to public health and the environment.

5. Final Statement

The final statement highlights the ongoing research and development efforts of the NPP, emphasizing its commitment to advancing the field of nuclear power. This section is important in showcasing the NPP’s dedication to innovation and progress.
TPPWP/Unidata/MT/IPP and IPPA/IPP

11

transit plan. What is the status of the cities of tomorrow? The same plan is
also a plan for the future, as the cities of tomorrow will be different.

The current draft of the plan for 2035 has been finalized and is being reviewed. The draft of the plan has been submitted to the

transportation plan. The cities of tomorrow will be different, as

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan aims to achieve a balance between mobility and environmental

The plan focuses on improving the

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan aims to achieve a balance between mobility and environmental

The plan focuses on improving the

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan aims to achieve a balance between mobility and environmental

The plan focuses on improving the

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan aims to achieve a balance between mobility and environmental

The plan focuses on improving the

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan aims to achieve a balance between mobility and environmental

The plan focuses on improving the

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan also includes provisions for the development of a transportation network that is

The plan aims to achieve a balance between mobility and environmental

The plan focuses on improving the
The information provided in Chapter 2 of the NTP from 2020 is general and not specific to any particular location or situation. However, it provides a framework for understanding the environmental impacts of transportation projects and the mitigation measures that can be taken to minimize these impacts. The report highlights the importance of considering the environmental consequences of transportation projects early in the planning process and using a variety of tools and strategies to address these issues.

2. The report emphasizes the need for a multi-modal approach to transportation planning and design, considering the needs of various users and communities. It highlights the importance of balancing the needs of different modes of transportation and ensuring that the overall system is sustainable and equitable.

3. The report includes several recommendations for reducing the environmental impacts of transportation projects. These recommendations include improving public transportation systems, increasing the use of alternative fuels and technologies, and promoting active transportation modes such as walking and cycling.

4. The report also discusses the importance of public engagement and stakeholder involvement in the transportation planning process. It emphasizes the need for clear and transparent communication with the public and other stakeholders to ensure that the planning process is inclusive and responsive to community needs.

5. The report notes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigation measures. It recommends that transportation agencies and planners continue to assess the impacts of their projects and adjust their strategies as necessary to ensure that they are achieving the desired outcomes.

[The text continues with additional recommendations and case studies of successful transportation planning initiatives.]

---

6. The report concludes by emphasizing the importance of a long-term perspective in transportation planning. It notes that transportation projects have a significant impact on the environment and that they should be planned and designed with this in mind. The report encourages transportation agencies and planners to consider the long-term implications of their decisions and to take a systems approach to planning.

---

7. The report includes several case studies of successful transportation planning initiatives in different parts of the United States. These case studies provide examples of how transportation agencies and planners have addressed environmental concerns, considered community needs, and implemented innovative solutions to achieve sustainable transportation systems.

8. The report concludes that transportation planning is a complex and challenging task. It highlights the need for a collaborative and inclusive approach to planning and decision-making, and emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the goals of the planning process are realized over the long term.
31

7. Travel Demand Modelling

Please describe the NRSF and its effects with non-compliance.

In-situ climate change and surrounding factors such as the radiation effects from solar energy generation facilities has led to a significant reduction in the use of transportation facilities across the region. To address this issue, the NRSF has been developed with a comprehensive set of measures, including:

- Improved transit services
- Enhanced cycling infrastructure
- Promoted carpooling and vanpooling
- Improved pedestrian safety

These initiatives aim to reduce the dependence on personal vehicles and promote a shift towards more sustainable and efficient modes of transportation.


Please discuss efforts to address the 2014 findings and progress since the July 2015 Action Plan Review.

The NRSF team has made significant progress in addressing the recommendations from the 2014 certification review. Key achievements include:

- Enhanced public engagement through workshops and stakeholder meetings
- Improved data collection and analysis
- Development of comprehensive transportation plans

Moving forward, the NRSF continues to evolve, with ongoing efforts to refine and improve transportation services across the region.