

ECICOG Passenger Transportation Plan

FY2014 Annual Update

Spring 2013

The purpose of this update is to explain the progress of goals and projects set forth in the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) 2011-2015 Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP), and to document changes in passenger transportation planning throughout the seven county region. ECI Transit is coordinated by ECICOG, with each county in the region managing their own fleet of vehicles to provide public transit service to residents without access to fixed-route transit service. Additionally, a

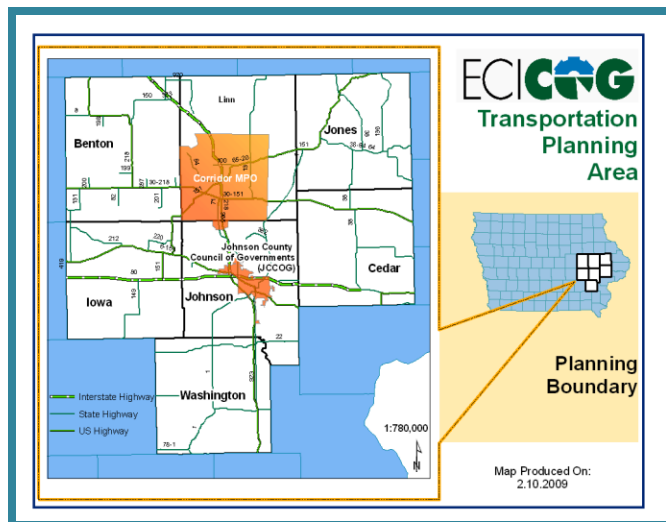


Figure 1: Map of ECICOG Region

variety of private organizations provide transportation service throughout the region, and the coordination of these services with ECI Transit is a major objective of the PTP.

The 2011 PTP heavily emphasized transportation coordination efforts undertaken by a mobility manager. Since publication of the 2011 PTP, staffing changes at ECICOG resulted in the loss of a full-time mobility manager, and have therefore changed the emphasis of mobility management on a regional scale from

the perspective of ECICOG. Mobility management continues to be a major transportation need in both the ECICOG region and the metro areas of Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, and the recent hire of a mobility manager for the metro area of Cedar Rapids demonstrates that this need being addressed.

Process:

Past input on needs

ECICOG has partnered with the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan Planning Organization (Corridor MPO) and the MPO of Johnson County (MPOJC) in past years to identify transportation needs related to human service organizations. From these partnerships, the Human Service Transportation Advisory Group (HSTAG) formed, and one of its responsibilities has been to advise the Corridor MPO and ECICOG on needs and projects related to the PTP. In January 2012, this advisory group collectively

voted to change their name to the TAG, and identified its primary service area as Linn County and surrounding communities.

ECICOG staff conducted one-on-one surveys with transit managers and human service providers when compiling the 2011 PTP. These interviews resulted in a broad list of needs and gaps, which have been revisited by an advisory group each year of the PTP update. The following list of needs was prioritized by the TAG and included in the 2011 PTP:

- 1. Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options available to low-income workers**
- 2. Increase marketing and communication of transportation information**
- 3. Maintain and expand services in the rural areas**
- 4. Improve transportation to medical and dental appointments**
- 5. Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options to elderly**
- 6. Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options to persons with disabilities**
- 7. Ongoing education and training for HSTAG and transportation staff**

These needs continue to represent the region. Having this list of needs helps to guide priorities in establishing future projects, priorities, and work among various organizations with a focus on efficient collaboration of services.

Passenger Transportation Meetings

The TAG is comprised of transit providers and representatives of human service agencies that provide excellent input for a wide variety of transportation needs. However, the focus of this group has shifted to the Cedar Rapids Metropolitan area in recent years and as a result ECICOG has decided to form a separate committee to focus on passenger transportation needs of the entire seven-county region. Starting in the spring of 2012, the ECICOG Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC) met to provide input and advise on the changing needs and opportunities for passenger transportation. Members of this committee were appointed by the boards of supervisors from each county in the ECICOG region and primarily consist of public transit providers and central points of contacts for human services.

The following is a list of meetings from the past year in which transportation issues relating to the PTP were discussed, along with scheduled meetings to finalize this annual update to the PTP.

Date	Meeting	Purpose
Sep. 6 2012	ECICOG PTAC	Review FY13 PTP Goals/Projects; Additional Input

Dec. 18, 2012	Linn County TAG	Input on PTP Goals/Projects
January 3, 2013	ECICOG PTAC	Recommend Approval of draft FY14 PTP
April 26, 2013	ECICOG RPA Policy Board	Public Hearing, Approval of Update

Public Input on Needs

Based on input from the FY2013 PTP Update, the ECICOG PTAC developed numerous concerns pertaining to passenger transportation issues facing the region. The following list of needs and concerns were identified:

- Expanding transit service to weekends and weeknights
- Uncertainty of certain non-profit transportation groups such as C.A.B.S. in Linn County
- Affordability of public transit service in rural areas
- Differences in rates between “in-town” trips vs. long-distance trips in rural areas
- Realization that many ideas for new transit service never realize their anticipated demand (i.e. night and weekend services, services for targeted groups of people)
- Not enough coordination between transportation providers and case managers
- Unforeseen changes in Mental Health funding at State and Federal level and the local impacts

The ECICOG PTAC met again in September 2012 to review these issues and make any updates necessary for the annual PTP update. The following items were addressed that differ from the needs and concerns listed above:

- Affordability of public transit service in both rural and urban areas
- Partnering with private employers to provide transportation to employment centers

Two additional passenger transportation issues which have recently come to light in the region are the need for additional service for veterans and Iowa Care patients between Linn County and Iowa City, and additional service for private employers in rural areas. Specifically, the need for service for Iowa Care patients is becoming evident because the University of Iowa Hospitals is reducing transportation service for these patients, leaving the patients on their own for finding and paying for transportation to the University Hospitals. Iowa Care is a healthcare service for low income Iowans and the University Hospitals is the only health care center in the area that can treat patients enrolled in this program.

Results from previous public input

Aside from collecting input from the TAG, the 2011 PTP relied on one-on-one meetings with transit providers, a specific PTP survey, and several public meetings. The survey

and meetings were meant to gather input from the general public on shortfalls and needs of passenger transportation across the ECICOG region. This input proved very helpful in assisting the TAG develop and prioritize needs.

Two of the most evident needs that arose from public input meetings were transportation to medical and dental appointments, and making transportation more affordable. Results from the PTP survey yielded a wider variety of service needs ranging from improved medical and dental transportation services to more outreach and travel training for rural service areas.

Development of the PTP has helped create many projects meant to address the needs of passenger transportation in the region. Neighborhood Transportation Services hired a paid staff person to administer the Cabs to Augment the Bus System (CABS) program, which had previously been managed on a part time basis by several organizations. This project was specified as a strategy in the PTP and resulted from a proposal by a collaboration of transit and human service providers in Linn County.

Since the adoption of the 2011 PTP, the general public has been welcome to attend TAG meetings but no specific public input has been received during this time on passenger transportation needs of the region. Individual transit providers regularly hear from their constituents – from daily conversations and during quarterly advisory meetings – and take this input into account when adjusting the services they offer and planning for future service. Many documented needs in the PTP stem from public input, both direct and indirect, through transit and human service providers who interact with the general public most often.

Ongoing fleet replacement and maintenance has been ongoing throughout the region, which is a central strategy outlined in the PTP. Updating and maintaining an efficient, modern fleet of transit vehicles helps ensure that many of the needs outlined in the PTP will be met, and that service levels for passenger transportation continue to meet demand.

Project Status:

A list of projects outlined in the 2011-2015 PTP is shown below, along with a short description of the project, a timeline for project implementation, what need(s) the project will address, what group(s) originally proposed the project, and the current status of the project. In addition, 5310 program funds will be used for the cost of contract service.

Project:	Community Transportation Forum
Description:	A full-day educational and outreach event to share ideas about transportation. Open to the public but particularly interested in reaching the business community, policy makers and human service & transit providers
Timeline:	June 2, 2010
Need(s)	All identified needs
Addressed:	
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Complete.

Project:	Mobility Manager Position
Description:	A position that would continue to build on the existing transportation coordination effort
Timeline:	2010
Need(s)	All identified needs
Addressed:	
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Initiated by group in the metro Cedar Rapids area

Project:	Dual-sided Transit Route Map
Description:	Map would have Cedar Rapids' (possible Iowa City & Coralville) fixed-route system on one side and entire region on the other. Info regarding transit services will be included within each county on regional map.
Timeline:	2011
Need(s)	All identified needs
Addressed:	
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Ongoing; urban section of map near completion.

Project:	Cabs to Augment the Bus System (C.A.B.S.) Paid Staff Support
Description:	Part-time staff support for the 20+ year-old program. Staff will provide tasks that in-kind staff support has coordinated on historically.
Timeline:	2010
Need (s)	Need to improve transportation to the disabled
Addressed	Need more marketing and communication of transportation information Need for more transportation to grocery shopping and errands
Proposed by:	CABS Task Force (CR Transit, Linn County Community Services, Options of Linn County, Goodwill, ARC of Eastern Iowa, Abbe Community Care, PADS) and PTP survey
Current Status:	Complete. Staff position filled by Neighborhood Transportation Service.

Project:	Medical- Outpatient Treatment Transportation
Description:	Partner with volunteer & transit providers, AoA, UWECI, medical community to address need for transportation related to outpatient care
Timeline:	2011
Need(s)	Need to improve transportation to medical and dental appointments
Addressed:	Need to expand services in rural area and across county lines Need to improve transportation to the elderly, disabled and low-income
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Ongoing; coordination efforts underway between transit providers and volunteers to provide outpatient care. Increased efforts will continue to be explored. Similar program recently funded for Johnson County

Project:	Regional Volunteer Transportation Coordination Project
Description:	Partner with agencies who are currently funding volunteer transportation programs (AoA and United Way) to maximize efficiency and rides
Timeline:	2011
Need(s)	Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options to elderly
Addressed:	Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options to persons with disabilities Maintain and expand services in rural areas Need to make transportation more affordable
Proposed by:	Transportation and Coalition Meetings, PTP Survey, Public Input
Current Status:	Ongoing; identifying partners and determining responsibilities. Similar program recently funded for Johnson County.

Project:	Mobile Data Computers & Vanpool/Carpool Software
Description:	Allow for more efficiency in delivering rides. Possibly allow human service vehicles to coordinate seats and vehicles with one another and with public transit. Vanpool/carpool software will allow consumers to connect and businesses to be involved in ridesharing effort
Timeline:	2012
Need(s)	All identified needs
Addressed:	
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Continuing to explore potential funding sources, and other new technology such as tablets that utilize Routematch software.

Project:	Cedar Rapids-Iowa City Shuttle Feasibility Study
Description:	Shuttle study to be completed after recently funded area wide study, will reevaluate the demand for a shuttle service between communities.
Timeline:	Spring 2012
Need(s)	Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options available to low income workers
Addressed:	More marketing/communication of transportation information Maintain and expand services in the rural areas Improve transportation to medical and dental appointments
Proposed by:	All Sources
Current Status:	Determining need and scope for feasibility study.

Project:	ITS Investment in One- Call Transportation Center
Description:	Regional call center that would allow consumers to make one phone call to inquire transportation and to schedule trips
Timeline:	2013
Need(s)	All identified needs
Addressed:	
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Project partially initiated by NTS for Linn County

Project:	Consolidated Transit Application
Description:	Annual application for transit funding
Timeline:	Annually, ongoing
Need(s)	All Identified Needs
Addressed:	
Proposed by:	RPA
Current Status:	Ongoing; FY2014 application to be complete by May 1 st 2013

Project:	Service Expansion to Rural Areas (Johnson County)
Description:	Expand service options in rural Johnson County with additional hours
Timeline:	2013
Need(s)	Maintain and Expand services in rural areas
Addressed:	Improve transportation to medical and dental appointments Need for more transportation to grocery shopping and errands
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Possibility for 2014

Project:	Fleet Maintenance and Expansion
Description:	Provide regular maintenance on existing fleet and secure vehicle improvements by following the regular replacement schedule.
Timeline:	Ongoing

Need(s) Addressed:	All identified needs
Proposed by:	All sources
Current Status:	Ongoing; draft TIP assembled for FY14 Consolidated Transit Application

Recommended Strategies since publication of the 2011 PTP:

In recent years the TAG discussed several ideas meant to address several of the passenger transportation needs of the region. The following strategies were discussed to offer ideas for future projects that may be included in the PTP:

Strategy	Alternative Transportation Methods (i.e. Vanpool and Carpools)
Description:	Provide option for commuters with similar schedules and destinations.
Timeline:	2014
Need(s) Addressed:	Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options available to low income workers More marketing/communication of transportation information Maintain and expand services in the rural areas Improve transportation to medical and dental appointments
Proposed by:	HSTAG
Current Status:	Exploratory; possible partnership with Office of Public Transit program for statewide carpool software

Strategy	Handicap Accessible Taxicabs
Description:	Program to encourage and/or fund taxicab to handle wheelchairs and other handicap devices.
Timeline:	2014
Need(s) Addressed:	Expand, explore and improve transportation services and options to persons with disabilities Improve transportation to medical and dental appointments
Proposed by:	HSTAG
Current Status:	Exploratory

Strategy	Enhanced Technology for Transit systems
Description:	Technologies such as updated routematch hardware, real-time vehicle locations, BONGO etc.
Timeline:	2014
Need(s) Addressed:	More marketing/communication of transportation information Maintain and expand services in the rural areas
Proposed by:	TAG
Current Status:	Exploratory

Estimated funding for Region 10 Transit purposes

Funding Source	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
5309	\$2,255,000	\$1,218,836	\$871,000	\$505,000
FTA 5311	\$511,900	\$532,300	\$553,600	\$575,700
STA	\$356,700	\$371,000	\$385,800	\$401,200
Local Funding	\$2,494,550	\$2,266,203	\$2,258,170	\$2,279,450
LOST*	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Total	\$4,449,543	\$4,214,850	\$4,159,547	\$5,069,076

*Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) is specific to Washington County Minibus

Future Projects

FY13

Description	Fund	Total Cost	Federal Cost	State Cost	Local Cost
Operations	5310/5311/STA	\$2,905,600	\$511,900	\$356,700	\$1,915,000
Planning	5311/5310	\$171,800	\$136,600	\$0	\$35,200
Replace 7 LDB (138" wb)	5309	\$490,000	\$406,700	\$0	\$83,300
Replace 5 MDB-32'	5309	\$865,000	\$717,950	\$0	\$147,050
Replace 2 Mini Vans	5309	\$88,000	\$73,040	\$0	\$14,960
Replace 7 LDB (158" wb)	5309	\$504,000	\$418,320	\$0	\$85,680
Replace 4 LDB (176" wb)	5309	\$308,000	\$255,640	\$0	\$52,360
Corridor feasibility study	STA Special Project	\$75,000	\$0	\$60,000	\$15,000
Total		\$5,527,400	\$2,616,150	\$416,700	\$2,494,550

FY14

Description	Fund	Total Cost	Federal Cost	State Cost	Local Cost
Operations	5310/5311/STA	\$3,021,800	\$532,300	\$370,900	\$1,992,300
Planning	5311/5310	\$178,600	\$141,900	\$0	\$36,700
Replace 3 MDB 32'	5309	\$486,720	\$403,977	\$0	\$82,743
Replace 4 LDB (176"wb)	5309	\$240,116	\$199,296	\$0	\$40,820
Replace 1 LDB (158" wb)	5309	\$72,000	\$59,760	\$0	\$12,240
Replace 6 LDB (138"wb)	5309	\$420,000	\$348,600	\$0	\$71,400
Total		\$4,569,236	\$1,805,833	\$370,900	\$2,266,203

FY15

Description	Fund	Total Cost	Federal Cost	State Cost	Local Cost
Operations	5310/5311/STA	\$3,142,600	\$524,000	\$385,700	\$2,072,000
Planning	5311/5310	\$185,800	\$147,700	\$0	\$38,100
Replace 1 Mini Van	5309	\$44,000	\$36,520	\$0	\$7,480
Replace 4 LDB (158"wb)	5309	\$288,000	\$239,040	\$0	\$48,960
Replace 7 LDB (176" wb)	5309	\$539,000	\$447,370	\$0	\$91,630
Total		\$4,199,400	\$1,394,630	\$385,700	\$2,258,170

FY16

Description	Fund	Total Cost	Federal Cost	State Cost	Local Cost
Operations	5310/5311/STA	\$3,268,300	\$545,000	\$401,100	\$2,154,900
Planning	5311/5310	\$193,200	\$154,500	\$0	\$38,700
Replace 1 Mini Van	5309	\$44,000	\$36,520	\$0	\$7,480
Replace 4 LDB (158" wb)	5309	\$288,000	\$239,040	\$0	\$48,960
Replace 1 MDB-32'	5309	\$173,000	\$143,590	\$0	\$29,410
Total		\$3,966,500	\$1,118,650	\$401,100	\$2,279,450

Recent Developments:

Change in advisory group for PTP

The newly formed PTAC was based on the need to solicit passenger transportation input from all non-metro areas of ECICOG's region, and to include a strong representation from transit providers, human service agencies and others involved with passenger transportation planning. Previously, ECICOG partnered with the Cedar Rapids Corridor MPO and utilized the Human Service Transportation Advisory Group (HSTAG) for input into the PTP. However, this group has recently developed a focus on the metropolitan area of Cedar Rapids instead of all rural areas from the ECICOG seven-county planning region; Cedar County is part of the ECICOG planning boundary, although it is not in the six-county transit boundary.

As part of this process, the boards of supervisors from each county appointed one person who represents transit for that county and one person knowledgeable with human service agencies, most of whom are the Central Points of Contact (CPC) for the county. The first meetings were successful in that it generated substantial discussion among the various attendees and many ideas were put forward for future meetings. The group was generally positive about future meetings and the potential for meaningful discussion and coordination among the members. An agenda and notes from the two meetings held for the FY2014 PTP update can be found in Appendix 1.

With the recent hire of a mobility manager for the metro area of Cedar Rapids, several initiatives that also relate to the ECICOG PTP have commenced. A one-call center housed at NTS in Cedar Rapids has begun taking calls for users in the metro Cedar Rapids area, along with a dedicated website to easily transmit information. The Office of Public Transit will solicit proposals for a statewide carpool matching software program, similar to the type of project identified in the PTP process, which should meet the goal of offering this service to commuters in the region. Developments are ongoing to provide a service for medical trips between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City starting in 2013.

Passage of MAP-21 resulted in the elimination of two previous programs that funded such projects outlined in this plan: JARC and New Freedom. With the loss of these funding programs, future efforts to secure funding will need to rely on alternative funding sources. The intent and scope of projects will remain the same, and the target population for which the service is intended may dictate federal funding sources from which funding can be secured, such as the 5310 and 5311 programs.

Appendix 1:

ECICOG Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda and Notes

ECICOG - Region 10
Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee
September 6th, 2012
10:00 a.m.
ECICOG Office
700 16th Street NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

Agenda

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Purpose of Committee
 - a. Background of ECICOG Region, past PTP Plans
- 3) Results and Input from Past meeting (April 2012)
 - a. Review goals relating to passenger transportation planning
- 4) Potential impacts (and opportunities) on Transportation from the MHDD redesign
- 5) Other related Transportation/Human Service topics
- 6) Schedule future meetings

Meeting Notes
ECICOG Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC)
September 6th, 2012 10:00: ECICOG Conference Room

Present at the meeting were:

Mary Williams	Benton County Transportation
Brock Grenis	East Central Iowa Council of Governments
Tracy Dekoter	East Central Iowa Council of Governments
Rick Zimmerman	Iowa County Transportation
Marilyn Austin	Iowa County Human Services
Kathy Koerperich	Jones County JETS
Deb Shultz	Jones County Human Services
Tom Brase	Johnson County SEATS
Ann Hearn	Linn County Community Services
Tom Hardecopf	Linn County LIFTS
Mark Haigst	Washington County Minibus
Bobbie Wulf	Washington County Human Services

After introductions, Grenis described the purpose and background of the PTAC. This was only the second meeting of the PTAC, and the primary purpose of the group is to serve as a steering committee in the formation of the ECICOG Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP).

The group then began reviewing goals from the 2012 PTP put together after the group's previous meeting. The first topic discussed related to transportation for workforce development. Several committee members shared information from a roundtable meeting held with economic developers, workforce agencies, transit providers, and major employers throughout the region. This meeting identified major needs for employers in rural area relating to transportation for employees in order to reduce turnover and increase reliability in order to expand the workforce. Several examples were discussed that could be of benefit, including vanpools, carpool matching software, public transit, alternative modes of transportation, and non-profit agencies partnering with employers.

The group had a lengthy discussion on the new MHDD design affecting counties across the state. The biggest concern relating to passenger transportation needs is that transportation is not identified as a "Core Service" in the new legislation. Because of this, counties and newly formed regions will have less of an emphasis to fund transportation for human service needs because it will not be mandated. The group agreed that transportation is a very important service for human service needs, but is worried that funding for transportation will be tighter in the near future as a result of the current legislation. In addition, the differences in transportation needs among different counties will present a large challenge in arriving at a solution for transportation service that is fair and reasonable for all users and providers.

Another topic discussed by the group was the affordability and perception of public transportation in all areas of the region, both rural and urban. In order to be fair and provide equal service, the availability and cost of transportation service to consumers should be relatively fair between rural counties and more densely populated areas. Transit providers discussed the

difficulties in achieving fairness between rural and urban areas, and agreed that despite the challenges, finding common ground should be a goal.

The group discussed several areas of passenger transportation and how they relate to human service needs and came up with the following list of needs and concerns:

- Expanding transit service to weekends and weeknights
- Uncertainty of certain non-profit transportation groups such as C.A.B.S. in Linn County
- Affordability of public transit service in both rural and urban areas
- Differences in rates between “in-town” trips vs. long-distance trips in rural areas
- Realization that many ideas for new transit service never realize their anticipated demand (i.e. night and weekend services, services for targeted groups of people)
- Not enough coordination between transportation providers and case managers
- Unforeseen changes in Federal and State funding and the local impacts
- Partnering with private employers to provide transportation to employment centers

The committee then agreed to hold their next meeting Thursday January 3rd at 10:30 at the ECICOG conference room.

ECICOG - Region 10
Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee
January 3rd, 2013
10:00 a.m.
ECICOG Office
700 16th Street NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402

Agenda

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Purpose of Committee
- 3) Results and Input from Past meeting (September 2012)
 - a. Review goals relating to passenger transportation planning
- 4) Consider approving draft FY13 PTP Update (attached)
- 5) Other related Transportation/Human Service topics
- 6) Schedule future meetings

Meeting Notes
ECICOG Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC)
January 3, 2013 at 10:00 AM: ECICOG Conference Room

Present at the meeting were:

Mary Williams	Benton County Transportation
Dana Burmeister	Benton County Transportation
Mary Rump	East Central Iowa Council of Governments
Kathy Koerperich	Jones County JETS
Deb Shultz	Jones County Human Services
Tom Brase	Johnson County SEATS
Tom Hardecopf	Linn County LIFTS
Tracy Laws	Washington County Minibus
Terry Bergen	TAG

After introductions, Rump described the purpose and background of the PTAC. This was only the second meeting of the PTAC, and the primary purpose of the group is to serve as a steering committee in the formation of the ECICOG Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP).

Rump reviewed the goals related to passenger transportation planning that were discussed at the previous meeting, and the draft FY 13 PTP Update. She noted that Ann Hearn, who was unable to attend, submitted her comments and suggestions prior to the meeting. The group reviewed these comments. Bergen asked if the update should include a project to address each of the outlined needs. Rump indicated that the list of projects should be limited to those that can be accomplished in the next five years; however, the list of needs may take longer to address.

M/S/C (Hardecopf, Brase) to recommend approval of the update with amendments to address the comments from Ann Hearn. All ayes.

The group also had the opportunity to meet Terry Bergen, Mobility Manager for Cedar Rapids. Bergen described a couple of efforts he has underway, including a meeting with Doug Elliott and other directors to discuss an offer from a legislator to consider funding to funding for IowaCares trips. He also noted that he had submitted a request for State Transit Assistance funds to provide regular service for Iowa Cares patients and Veterans to medical services in Iowa City. His hope was that, if funded, it may be possible to coordinate with other area transit providers to extend service to other areas. The application, however, is specific to service provided in Cedar Rapids/Linn County.

The committee adjourned at 11:02 AM, and agreed to hold their next meeting June 13th at 10:00 at the ECICOG conference room.