
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

October 15, 2025



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING — OCTOBER 2025

The Transportation Commission (Commission) met for an informal workshop on October 13, 2025, in Clinton. The Commission discussed the following topics:

- **Commission Input.** The Commission discussed a tour in eastern Iowa. The tour began at the Hampton Inn in Clinton, then headed west along U.S. Highway 30 to look at bridge deck overlays, U.S. Highway 61 paving, and bridge rehab at the 210th Street interchange. The tour then visited Lock and Dam 14 in LeClaire before returning to Clinton.
- **Director's Welcome.** Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) Director Scott Marler gave comments about the DOT tour, thanking the District 6 team.
- **Administrative Rules.** The Commission received an overview of 761 IAC [151](#), "City Requests for Closure of Primary Road Extensions," which will be rescinded per Executive Order 10.
- **Transportation Trends Update.** The DOT provided the following updates:
 - U.S. railcar loads decreased by 1.2% in September 2025 compared to September 2024.
 - Monthly commercial service airport passenger counts in August 2025 increased by 1.0% compared to August 2024.
 - Monthly State vehicle miles of travel for August 2025 increased by 0.8% compared to August 2024.
 - As of October 2025, year-to-date statewide fatalities have decreased 24.0% when compared to the five-year average and major injuries have decreased 5.0% when compared to the five-year average.
 - The Mississippi River currently has lower water levels due to decreased rain. There is a restriction on size and weight of barges along the river that is expected to last through October.
- **2026 Highway Program Balance Report.** The Commission received an update on the FY 2026 Highway Program balance. The Program balance in September 2025 was \$11.8 million. This is a decrease of \$100,000 compared to August 2025.
- **State Recreational Trails Program.** The State Recreational Trails Program is a grant program to establish recreational trails in Iowa for the use, enjoyment, and participation of the public. Currently, there is \$3.2 million available for the Program. The Program received 24 applications. The DOT is recommending funding for the following 9 applications:
 - **Clay County Connection Phase 3**, sponsored by Dickinson County. The recommended funding is \$295,000, or 40.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Neal Smith Trail Reconstruction and Birdland Park Connection**, sponsored by the city of Des Moines. The recommended funding is \$200,000, or 17.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Wabash Trace Rapp Park Connector Trail**, sponsored by Page County. The recommended funding is \$285,000, or 15.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Waukee Regional Trail Connection and Safety Improvements Project**, sponsored by the city of Waukee. The recommended funding is \$500,000, or 9.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Heritage Trail Bridge 30 Replacement**, sponsored by Dubuque County Conservation Board. The recommended funding is \$170,300, or 75.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Grant Wood Trail Connection to Cedar Valley Nature Trail**, sponsored by the city of Cedar Rapids. The recommended funding is \$200,000, or 10.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Great American Rail Trail: Weston to Underwood**, sponsored by Pottawattamie County Conservation Board. The recommended funding is \$500,000, or 12.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Great Western Trail Rehabilitation Phase 2**, sponsored by Warren County Conservation Board. The recommended funding is \$543,200, or 66.0% of the total project cost.

- **Prairie Restoration Trail**, sponsored by the city of Laurens. The recommended funding is \$434,000, or 75.0% of the total project cost.
- **Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant (RRLG) Program.** The RRLG Program previously was the Iowa Railway Finance Authority (IRFA). The IRFA was created in 1980 in response to gaps in rail service caused by rail line abandonments. The RRLG Program was created in 2005 by an amendment to the Iowa Code and follows administrative rules set by the DOT. Currently there is \$3.3 million in both grants and loans available for the RRLG Program. The Commission received five applications, and recommended the following four projects:
 - **Floyd Valley Transload, 1321 Lewis Boulevard**, sponsored by Floyd Valley Transload. The recommended loan is \$830,000, or 55.3% of the total project cost.
 - **Floyd Valley Transload, Rustin Street Spur Addition**, sponsored by Floyd Valley Transload. The recommended loan is \$256,000, or 80.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Burlington Junction Railway (BJRY) Le Mars Transload Expansion**, sponsored by BJRY. The recommended loan is \$792,000, or 70.0% of the total project cost.
 - **Black Hawk — New Box Manufacturing Facility**, sponsored by International Paper. The recommended grant is \$1.5 million, or 0.5% of the total project cost.
- **FY 2027 Highway-Railroad Crossing Safety Program.** The Highway-Railroad Crossing Safety Program is a federally funded program for states to improve warning devices at railroad crossings. Currently there is \$6.5 million in available funding for the Program. There are 16 applications that are recommended for funding. The full list of recommendations can be found on the DOT [website](#).
- **FY 2027 Highway-Railroad Crossing Surface Repair Program.** The Highway-Railroad Crossing Surface Repair Program incentivizes railroads and roadway authorities to participate in the cooperative repair of crossing surfaces. Currently there is \$6.5 million available in funding for the Program. There are 12 applications that are recommended for funding. The full list of recommendations can be found on the DOT [website](#).
- **Transportation Asset Management Overview.** The Commission received an overview of Transportation Asset Management. In the coming months, the Commission will receive presentations of different asset management projects by the DOT.

The Commission held a business meeting on October 14, 2025, in Clinton. The Commission took the following actions:

- **Approved Minutes.** The Commission approved the minutes from the last meeting on September 9, 2025.
- **Administrative Rules Overview.** The Commission approved the rescission of 761 IAC [151](#), “City Requests for Closure of Primary Road Extensions.”
- **Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant (RRLG) Program.** The Commission approved the recommendations for the RRLG Program.
- **FY 2027 Highway-Railroad Crossing Safety Program.** The Commission approved the recommendations for the FY 2027 Highway-Railroad Crossing Safety Program.
- **FY 2027 Highway-Railroad Crossing Surface Repair Program.** The Commission approved the recommendations for the FY 2027 Highway-Railroad Crossing Surface Repair Program.

The Commission also held a public input meeting on October 14, 2025, in Clinton. The Commission heard from the following delegations:

- City of Clinton.
- Clinton Municipal Airport.
- City of DeWitt.
- Ports of Eastern Iowa Authority.
- Iowa Ports Association.
- State Representative Tom Determann.
- Representatives from Senators Charles Grassley and Joni Ernst.
- Iowa Quad Cities.
- US 30 Coalition of Iowa.
- City of Mason City.

- Dubuque Metropolitan Area Transportation Study.
- Ride the Rail.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for November 12, 2025, in Ames.

LSA Staff Contact: Garry Martin (515.281.4611) garry.martin@legis.iowa.gov

Doc ID 1543894