
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

November 18, 2025



Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

515.281.3566

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING — NOVEMBER 2025

The Transportation Commission (Commission) met for an informal workshop on November 12, 2025, in Ames. The Commission discussed the following topics:

- **Director's Welcome.** Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) Director Scott Marler gave an update on the DOT ferry ride across the Mississippi River.
- **Overview of Transportation Research.** The Commission received an overview of Transportation research from Shauna Hallmark, Director of the Institute for Transportation (InTrans) at Iowa State University, and Allen Bradley, Chair of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Iowa.
- **Administrative Rules.** The Commission received an overview of 761 IAC [181](#), "Statewide Standard for Permitting Certain Implements of Husbandry," which will be rescinded per Executive Order 10.
- **Transportation Trends Update.** The DOT provided the following updates:
 - Year-to-date U.S. railcar loads in October 2025 increased by 3.0% compared to October 2024.
 - Monthly commercial service airport passenger counts in September 2025 increased by 1.0% compared to September 2024.
 - Monthly State vehicle miles of travel for September 2025 increased by 0.1% compared to September 2024.
 - As of November 2025, year-to-date statewide fatalities have decreased 24.2% when compared to the five-year average and major injuries have decreased 8.0% when compared to the five-year average.
 - The Mississippi River currently has low 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 November.
- **2026 Highway Program Balance Report.** The Commission received an update on the FY 2026 Highway Program balance. The Program balance in October 2025 was \$6.8 million. This is a decrease of \$5.0 million compared to September 2025.
- **2026 Highway Program Amendment.** The Commission received an update to the 2026 Highway Program to begin work on the Interstate-35 corridor from Ankeny to Ames.
- **Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) Program.** The Commission was informed of a local development recommendation. Currently there is \$6.9 million available from the city RISE fund and no available funds from the county RISE fund as of September 30, 2025. The city of Dewitt submitted an application for a local development project of construction of approximately 2,810 feet of industrial street, paving of approximately 1,430 feet of 300th Avenue, and intersection improvements including turn lanes and R-Cut at the intersection of U.S. 30 and 300th Avenue located on the southeast side of town. The recommended funding amount is \$2.9 million, or 50.0% of the total project costs.
- **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 nine 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 \$170,000, 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 \$543,000, 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.
- **FY 2027 Traffic Safety Improvement Program (TSIP)**. The TSIP is a program designed to implement traffic safety features in order to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. Available funding for the TSIP is \$9.8 million. The TSIP received a total of 36 applications. Funding for the TSIP is split between three funding categories called Site-Specific Improvements, Traffic Control Devices, and Studies and Outreach. A full list of applications can be found on the DOT [website](#).
- **CY 2026 Intercity Bus Grant Program**. The Intercity Bus Grant Program is used to support intercity bus service that includes stops at nonurbanized locations and makes meaningful connections to a nationwide network. Current available funding for the Intercity Bus Grant Program is \$6.1 million. The Program received a total of 15 applications, with 13 recommended for funding. Greyhound Lines had seven applications recommended for funding, Jefferson Lines had five applications recommended for funding, and the city of Fort Dodge received one application approved for funding.
- **Project Prioritization Update**. The Commission received an overview of the DOT Infrastructure Prioritization and Scoring System (IPASS). The IPASS is used to align project prioritization with department objective with a renewed focus on needs and outcomes, integrating with the business case process, and using the scores to evaluate projects that will be presented on the highway candidate list for Commission consideration.

The Commission held a business meeting on November 12, 2025, in Ames. The Commission took the following actions:

- **Approved Minutes**. The Commission approved the minutes from the last meeting on October 14, 2025.
- **Administrative Rules Overview**. The Commission approved the rescission of 761 IAC [181](#), "Statewide Standard for Permitting Certain Implements of Husbandry."
- **Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) Program**. The Commission approved the recommended funding for the city of Dewitt local development project.
- **State Recreational Trails Program**. The Commission approved the recommendations for the State Recreational Trails Program.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for December 9, 2025, in Ames.

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

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