
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING — JULY 2026

The Transportation Commission (Commission) met for an informal workshop on July 14, 2026, in Ames. The Commission discussed the following topics:

- **Commission Input.** Members of the Commission thanked the Department of Transportation (DOT) for the work they did on Highway 54 in Carroll.
- **Department Welcome.** Iowa DOT Director Scott Marler gave the following updates to the Commission on items involving the DOT:
 - Director Marler introduced a new executive fellow.
 - A Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) administrator visited Iowa and toured several construction sites along Iowa highway and interstate routes and discussed safety procedures in Iowa.
 - Approximately 1,200 State speed limit signs will change from 55 miles per hour (mph) to 60 mph pursuant to 2026 Iowa Acts, [Senate File 378](#) (Undivided Rural Highways, Speed Limit Act). There are 180 locations that the DOT will survey to ensure it is safe to increase the speed to 60 mph. This survey is expected to be completed by January 2027.
 - The DOT is ferrying approximately 500 vehicles a day across the Mississippi River during a bridge reconstruction.
 - The DOT is continuing construction at multiple sites along Highway 35.
- **Commission Legal Overview.** Shean Fletchall, Special Assistant Attorney General, discussed the role the Office of the Attorney General plays within the DOT. Mr. Fletchall explained that the Office of the Attorney General handles all legal matters for the DOT, including ensuring compliance with State laws such as hands-free driving and automatic traffic enforcement.
- **Review of Commission Guidebook.** The Commission received a review of its new guidebook, which includes the biographies of the Commission members, the organizational chart of the DOT, and the roles and responsibilities of the Commission and the DOT.
- **Transportation Trends.** The DOT provided the following updates:
 - Railcar load statistics are provided on a quarterly basis. U.S. railcar loads in the second quarter of calendar year 2026 increased by 5.7% compared to the same quarter in the previous year.
 - Monthly State commercial service airport passenger counts in May 2026 increased by 2.7% compared to May 2025.
 - Monthly State vehicle miles of travel for May 2026 increased by 2.1% compared to May 2025.
 - As of July 13, there have been 151 traffic fatalities in Iowa. This is an increase of 12.7% compared to the same period last year. Traffic fatalities have decreased by 4.4% when compared to the five-year average.
- **2025 Highway Program Balance Report.** The Commission received an update on the FY 2025 Highway Program balance. The Program balance in June 2026 was \$62.0 million. This is a decrease of \$6.4 million compared to May 2026.
- **August Commission Tour Preview.** The Commission will be touring Johnson and Linn counties for the August meeting. The tour will start in Iowa City along Iowa Highway 1 and will stop at the U.S. Highway 6 pedestrian bridge and I-80 construction sites. The Commissioners will then visit the Coralville Maintenance Garage site and stop by the Driving Safety Research Institute Driving Simulator, and will end at the U.S. Highway 6 Iowa River Bridge replacement project.

- **Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) Program.** The Commission was informed of the following immediate opportunity project and local development recommendations:
 - **RISE Fund Project for Butler County.** The immediate opportunity project will consist of paving approximately 2,400 feet of industrial park road located northwest of Shell Rock. The recommended RISE Fund grant amount is approximately \$360,000, or 80.0% of the total project cost.
 - **RISE Fund Project for Burlington.** The local development project will consist of construction of a roundabout at the intersection of West Burlington Avenue and Division Street. The recommended RISE Fund grant amount is approximately \$853,000, or 50.0% of the total project cost.
- **State Aviation Program.** The State Aviation Program awards three grants for airport construction and maintenance, including the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), General Aviation Vertical Infrastructure (GAVI), and Commercial Service Vertical Infrastructure (CSVI). A full list of applicants can be found on the DOT [website](#).
 - **Airport Improvement Program.** The AIP grant received 39 applications. Total funding for the AIP is \$5.1 million. Of the 39 applicants, 23 are recommended for funding by the DOT.
 - **General Aviation Vertical Infrastructure.** The GAVI grant received 11 applications. Total funding for GAVI is \$1.8 million. All 11 applicants are recommended for funding.
 - **Commercial Service Vertical Infrastructure.** The CSVI grant received eight applications. Total funding for CSVI is \$2.5 million. All eight applicants are recommended for funding.
- **Public Transit Special Notice of Funding.** The Commission received an overview of the Public Transit program and a notice of increased funds of \$205,000 from the FY 2026 carryover balance and \$216,000 from COVID-era relief funds.
- **Secondary Road Fund Distribution Committee.** The Commission received a presentation from Charlie Purcell, Director of the Transportation Development Division, and Brian Moore, Executive Director of the Iowa County Engineers Association Service Bureau, on the Secondary Road Fund Distribution Committee and the formula the Secondary Road Fund Distribution Committee uses when determining allocations to individual counties.
- **State Long Range Transportation Plan.** The Commission received an overview of the DOT Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP is required by both State and federal law and updated every five years. The current plan was adopted in May 2022, and administrative modifications were completed in April 2024. The next LRTP planned adoption is spring 2027.
- **Regional Planning Agency Overview.** The Commission received an overview of the Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs). The RPAs were established in 1991, and currently there are 18 RPAs in Iowa. The RPAs are responsible for transportation planning and programming at the regional level.

The Commission held a business meeting on July 14, 2026, in Ames. The Commission took the following actions:

- **Election of Commission Officers.** The Commission elected Bill Anderson as Commission Chair.
- **Approved Minutes.** The Commission approved the minutes from the last meeting on June 8, 2026.
- **RISE Program.** The Commission approved the recommendations for the RISE Program.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for August 10, 2026, and August 11, 2026, in Coralville.

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