



5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190  
West Des Moines, IA 50266  
Phone: (515) 244-0779

# Iowa County Engineers Association Service Bureau

[www.iowacountyroads.org](http://www.iowacountyroads.org)  
[www.iceasb.org](http://www.iceasb.org)



## MEMORANDUM OF TRANSMITTAL

**From:** Brian P. Moore, P.E., Executive Director

**To:** Governor of Iowa  
Iowa State Transportation Commission  
Chief Clerk of the Iowa House of Representatives  
Secretary of the Iowa Senate  
Iowa County Engineers

**Date:** January 27, 2025  
**Ref:** Report of activities for 2024

Per Iowa Code Section 312.3B, the Service Bureau is required to file an annual report of its activities with the parties identified above.

We respectfully submit the 2024 edition of this report, listing our major functions and special activities.

Questions and comments regarding the report should be directed to: Brian P. Moore, PE at 515-244-0779 or to [brian.moore@iceasb.org](mailto:brian.moore@iceasb.org)



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## ANNUAL REPORT of ACTIVITIES – for 2024

The Iowa County Engineers Association Service Bureau, ICEASB, is a small, 28-E agreement agency serving Iowa's 99 county road departments. Formed in 1998, the Bureau operates from office space sub-leased from the Iowa State Association of Counties in West Des Moines. It provides a variety of support and data services to Iowa secondary road departments and Iowa DOT via the Internet. A Board of directors consisting of county engineers and county supervisors sets policies and establishes budgets.

This report is filed to satisfy the requirements of Iowa Code Chapter 312.3B.

### GENERAL OPERATIONS:

The majority of the Bureau's services are delivered via several websites: one that's exclusively designed to serve county road department personnel. A second that provides project programming and development tracking services to all local road agencies in the state. A final website, added in 2016, provides the public and media with information about and connections to county roads and engineers.

Main County Engineers' website – [www.iceasb.org](http://www.iceasb.org) (Password protected)

- News and updates area

This section notifies county engineers of news and events that affect county roads. A headlines area alerts engineers and staff of regulations, training availability, legislative action, and related information. 119 headlines, notices, updates and reminders were published in 2024, along with 197 calendar events, 115 data files, and 27 job opening notices.

- Find and Contact (communications) area

This part of the website provides county engineers with the means to find each other, make contact, ask questions and share knowledge. County staff members can broadcast questions and obtain guidance from their peers, look each other up and send emails or faxes, find and communicate with DOT personnel, send messages to committees, and check on contractor pre-qualifications online. 123 questions were posted, generating 1,137 replies. An additional 14 surveys went through a system that enables secondary road staff to develop surveys, which generated 455 survey responses to better help each other solve problems.

- Downloads area

Another service is that of providing an on-line library of forms, documents, data tabulations, and computer aided design files. Access to these items permits people to eliminate storing paper forms and assures them of always having the latest permit form, model resolution, or CADD detail. The download area contains over 1,841 items in 25 categories.

- Online tools

Provides counties with automated, on-line tools for filing annual reports, year-end salary survey, electronic polls & surveys, road closure notification system, posting of local letting notices, GASB-34 Infrastructure reporting, and on-line GIS based mapping. This includes a full local letting support tool (170 lettings in 2024) and a local project pay voucher tool (37 projects / \$3,342,160 in payments processed). A GASB-34 depreciation calculation system tracks 13,285 past projects.

The Road Notification Tool (RNT) was used in 2024 for 3,124 road construction / maintenance / weather closure events and generated 57,965 notices to public safety, school, media, and the general public, through a combination of email, text, and other notifications. Road Notification Tool was used by 94 counties.

Work Orders application was used by 86 counties, Sign application was used by 74 counties, Culvert application was used by 40 counties.

In November 2023, a new text-based Call Out application was deployed. This application allows county road departments to call out employees by text messaging to report to work due to winter weather. In 2024, 20 counties used the application generating 2,971 notifications.

- Operations Management System (OMS)

In 2023, the Service Bureau released the first piece of the new Operations Management System (OMS). A time tracking module was created and deployed for counties to collect hours and track work performed electronically. Time tracking module consists of electronic time clock in/out, reimbursement requests and approvals, time policies and time sheets. In 2024, 15 counties were using the time tracking module.

In 2024, the communications component of OMS was completed. The existing calendar application was upgraded with additional features. The application is now available to all counties to use to communicate events. Counties can share meetings within their own organization or share and set up meetings statewide communicating this with all users of the Service Bureau.

In 2024, development was started on the OMS Inventory module. This module will allow counties to track equipment, parts, tools, and real property. This will include inventory and costs.

Transportation Program Management System (TPMS) [www.tpms.org](http://www.tpms.org) (Password protected)

TPMS, provides a statewide framework for project programming and project development tracking. It links and assists the various parties involved in these activities: cities, counties, consultants, DOT district local systems staff, DOT district planners, RPAs, MPOs, and others. The new TPMS 2020 application was deployed in July of 2021. It exchanges data on Local Public Agency projects in real time with the DOT's new programming and project management

system, MasterWorks, and a periodic electronic update process keeps TPMS' and DOT's STIP records synchronized. In 2024, there were 2,467 projects contained in County Five-year programs, including 1,353 Federal-Aid and 73 Federal-Aid SWAP projects identified in the State Transportation Improvement Plan, (STIP). Approximately 312 were in development tracking and 257 reached letting status in 2024.

The public information website can be accessed at: [www.iowacountyroads.org](http://www.iowacountyroads.org) (Public site)

The ICEA public information website continues to be maintained and resides on the ICEA Service Bureau servers.

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Along with the general operations, the Bureau performed a number of special projects and upgrades during 2024:

- a) Performed research and conducted polls, as requested, to assist ICEA leadership respond to legislative inquiries and initiatives.
- b) Calculated and communicated Secondary Road and Farm to Market Fund distribution factors for FY24, FY25 and FY26.
- c) Published copies of county engineer conference presentations for access and review by engineers after the meetings.
- d) Prepared system for and extracted summaries from: Annual Report, Salary Survey, summer employment prospects, and committee assignment requests.
- e) Used methodology developed in Iowa Highway Research Board project TR-608 to determine base needs of secondary roads - broken down by bridges vs. roadways for four surface classes.
- f) Worked with Iowa One Call to establish, monitor, and update protocols for automating issuance of underground facility locate requests direct from the county engineer work orders application.
- g) Gathered data from Annual Report and TPMS to prepare the annual Structural Deficient (SD – Poor) bridge report for the Iowa DOT to give to the Iowa Legislature.
- h) Attended the Iowa State University fall and spring career fairs to assist counties in filling job vacancies.
- i) Held in person trainings for 151 county road department staff around the state to train them on use of Work Orders, Sign Inventory, and other applications and provided new county engineer orientation presentations for several.
- j) The County Annual Report tool was updated with additional transparency and features added. Upgrades reduced review time by the Iowa DOT.
- k) In 2024 the Road Notification Tool was integrated with Iowa 511 and with WAZE, so now counties' road closures are being transferred real time and showing on Iowa 511 and Google Maps.
- l) Worked with the Iowa DOT to establish new administrative rule regarding the Secondary Road Fund Distribution Committee (SRFDC) after the 2024 Iowa legislative session.

m) The Service Bureau, in conjunction with INGIOS, Inc, embarked on a project to implement an AID Grant received by Buena Vista County. The project involves using a vibratory roller to map (collect modulus strength values, soil moisture, photos) of approximate 11,000 miles of gravel around across 24 counties across Iowa. Phase 1 to complete all 66,000 miles of gravel roads in Iowa. In 2024, 3 counties were complete (Buchanan, Linn, Boone). 74+ million records were collected and transferred to Service Bureau databases. Work to continue in 2025 and 2026.

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES

The Service Bureau added the position of Secondary Roads Research Engineer (SRRE), in 2016, to identify, coordinate, plan, supervise and report on research projects undertaken to improve county road/bridge materials, technologies, construction and maintenance. The SRRE visits counties to learn of and help launch research projects. The SRRE also interacts with the academic community to coordinate the work, represents Iowa's interests on national boards, and actively helps counties turn findings into actions.

For 2024, the Secondary Road Research Engineer (SRRE) undertook the following tasks: field reviews in 6 counties relating to various research projects of county importance; attended 6 regional updates geared towards bringing all 99 counties up to speed with completed and ongoing research projects; 17 postings of research and educational news on the county engineer website; assisted in 33 Technical Advisory Committees across 4 states; oversaw 6 new IHRB project startups; and kept in contact with some 50+ active research projects in 3 states.

The annual County Engineers' Research Focus Group meeting was held on May 1<sup>st</sup> this year. It was attended by over 50 engineers and researchers generating 25+ research project ideas and voting on four to send to the Iowa Highway Research Board for potential funding. Those projects included a local tax on dyed fuels, a centralized online permitting system for local permits used by counties, development of box culvert end sections with steeper wing walls to reduce right-of-way needs, and a pavement preservation tool for county engineers.

The SRRE was available for some on-site project visits and to all counties through virtual on-line meetings. The SRRE continued a collaborative effort at Camp Dodge with the National Guard, ISU InTrans Motor Grader Operator (MOGO) training program, ISU geotechnical department, MSU geotechnical department, and select counties to "rebuild" granular roads with stabilization of the base using county crews, county equipment and county ideas to improve roadways in Camp Dodge. This endeavor has proven to be an effective scenario where counties teach the National Guard processes to maintain roadways in a more effective manner, expose county personnel to processes to improve, in a controlled environment, an unpaved road that they can take back and implement in their counties. It also allows researchers and maintenance workers an interaction to teach each other the issues of roadway maintenance (from a worker's standpoint) and the science behind how we improve the roadways (from a researcher's standpoint) that improves the overall data collection, value, and implementation aspects of the research projects.

The Service Bureau added the position of State Planning and Research Engineer (SPRE), in 2020, to assist in the effort to coordinate state, regional, and national research with local research activities through the Iowa Highway Research Board, IHRB. In 2024, the SPRE started 18 and finished 26 research contracts. At the end of calendar year 2024, there were 57 active research contracts.

In January 2024, the SPRE attended the Transportation Research Board's Annual Meeting held in Washington, D.C. to provide updates on a number of Iowa research initiatives and present on a project titled "Roadway Friction Modeling: Improving the Use of Friction Measurements in State DOTs", which was the recipient of an AASHTO Research Advisory Committee High Value Research Award in the Safety, Security and Emergencies focus area. In May 2024, the SPRE attended a peer exchange held in Madison, Wisconsin with the other 8 AASHTO Region 3 States DOTs to discuss the topics of workforce development, knowledge management, research project development, research project management, and implementation strategies. In July 2024, the SPRE attended the AASHTO Research Advisory Committee Annual Meeting in Columbus, Ohio and led a panel discussion titled "Pooled Funds – What really happens at a State DOT" in addition to helping moderate other sessions and be a part of the meeting planning committee. In September 2024, the SPRE helped host an Iowa-led peer exchange in Des Moines, Iowa with invited guests from around the nation to discuss the topics of research innovation programs, research innovation activities, encouraging and promoting innovation among employees. In December 2024, the SPRE helped plan and host BIM Week 2024 in Charleston, South Carolina, which was a week-long event dedicated to critical BIM topics with representatives from nearly 40 states in attendance along with a number of AASHTO Committees centered around two Iowa-led pooled fund research projects.

A new federal transportation bill (BIL) was passed in 2022. This new bill created several new funding programs and levels never seen before available to counties. These new funding programs are based upon grants and require a lot of time to understand the programs, write competitive applications, and administer federal aid grant awards. To accomplish this efficiently, a single person was needed to coordinate this effort. To provide this service for the counties, the Service Bureau created a new position in 2023 and hired a Discretionary Grant Coordinator (DGC).

The DGC reports directly to the Service Bureau Executive Director, acting as the primary contact for grant applicants, grant recipients, grant writers, consultants and all others involved in Iowa County Engineers Association (ICEA) grant applications. The DGC collaborates with the ICEA Grant Committee, Iowa DOT, and Iowa FHWA to oversee and executes all elements of the discretionary grants, their applications, and reporting for any and all Federal and State grants submitted by ICEA. The DGC led the effort for the submittal and award of the 2023 RAISE Grant (\$24.76 Million for 9 county bridges); submittal and award of the 2024 BIP Grant (\$38.6 Million for 6 county bridges); submittal of 2023 RURAL Grant (\$29.62 Million for 6 county road projects); submittal of the 2024 RAISE Grant (\$25 Million for 7 county bridges); Implementation of the awarded 2022 SS4A Grant (\$2 Million to complete 97 county Safety Action Plans).

After the passage of the current federal transportation bill in 2022, Iowa has seen a large increase in federal transportation funding thru successful discretionary grant applications and additional formula funding. This increase in funding comes with an increase in stewardship by the Local Public Agencies (LPA's) to ensure all federal rules and regulations are being followed when using the federal funds. In 2024, the Service Bureau focused on providing services needed by LPA's. Services include a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Document Manager to assist LPA's getting projects through the NEPA process, a Discretionary Grant and Earmark Engineer and a Discretionary Grant and Earmark Technician to assist LPA's to develop, build, and close out federal aid construction projects.