
Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County

This is



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2012



Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County
410 E. Washington St. ■ Iowa City, Ia 52240

Welcome to MPOJC.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization of Johnson County (MPOJC) is the county-wide transportation planning organization for Johnson County, Iowa. Assistance is provided to MPOJC member agencies in transportation planning, administration, and assistance to small communities. Administration provides a forum for discussion of any regional planning issue. This has recently included evaluation and facilitation of a joint emergency communication center, discussion of transit route expansion, and animal shelter issues.

The following information will familiarize you with the scope and function of MPOJC. MPOJC also has a website at www.mpoj.org. Besides general information on MPOJC functions and its staff, you can access agendas, minutes, and published technical reports on this site. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the MPOJC staff. While any staff person can be contacted for any issues, primary duties are listed below:

- John Yapp, Executive Director and Transportation Planner, 356-5252, john-yapp@iowa-city.org
- Brad Neumann, Assistant Transportation Planner, 356-5235, brad-neumann@iowa-city.org
Mr. Neumann is the primary contact for public transit-related and traffic count program issues.
- Kent Ralston, Assistant Transportation Planner, 356-5253, kent-ralston@iowa-city.org
Mr. Ralston is the primary contact for traffic and corridor studies, and Long Range Transportation Plan issues.
- Kris Ackerson, Assistant Transportation Planner, 356-5247, Kristopher-ackerson@iowa-city.org
Mr. Ackerson is the primary contact for bicycle and pedestrian issues, the Transportation Improvement Program and grant applications.
- Darian Nagle-Gamm, Traffic Engineering Planner, 356-5254, darian-nagle-gamm@iowa-city.org
Ms. Nagle-Gamm is the primary contact for traffic engineering-related issues, such as traffic signal studies, stop sign analysis, and traffic forecasting.
- Janet Dvorsky, Administrative Secretary, 356-5230, janet-dvorsky@iowa-city.org

The MPOJC Policy Boards

MPOJC is coordinated under two policy boards, the Urbanized Area Policy Board and Rural Policy Board. A majority of the policy and funding-related programming decision-making rests with the Urbanized Area Policy Board; MPOJC is the designed transportation planning agency for the Iowa City urbanized area.

Urbanized Area Policy Board – 15 seats and 1 non-voting

City of Iowa City	6 seats
City of Coralville	2 seats
City of North Liberty	2 seats
Johnson County	2 seats
City of Tiffin	1 seat
City of University Heights	1 seat
University of Iowa*	1 seat
Iowa City School Board	1 seat (non-voting)

Rural Policy Board

Johnson County	2 seats
City of Hills	1 seat
City of Lone Tree	1 seat
City of Oxford	1 seat
City of Shueyville	1 seat
City of Solon	1 seat
City of Swisher	1 seat

*All representatives on the Urbanized Area and Rural Boards are elected officials, except for the University of Iowa representative, who is appointed by the University president.

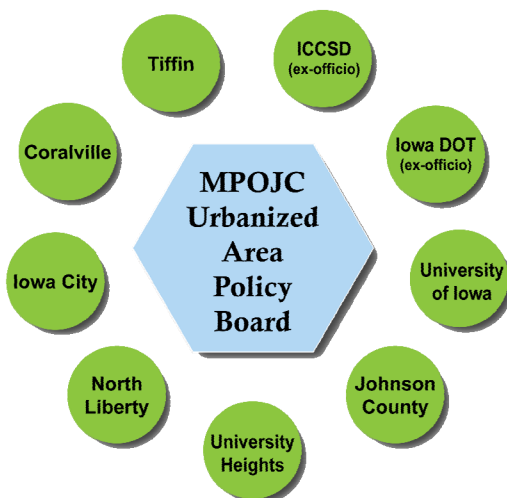
MPOJC was chartered in 1980 as a successor organization to the Johnson County Regional Planning Commission. The Iowa City community achieved urbanized area status with the 1980 census, and MPOJC was organized to accommodate federal transportation planning requirements for urbanized areas. In January of 1982 the Governor of the State of Iowa designated MPOJC as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Iowa City Urbanized Area.

The steering committee which established MPOJC attempted to address certain shortcomings of the preceding regional planning commission. The most significant changes were (1) the establishment of two policy boards to deal separately with urban and rural issues, (2) the representation of only elected officials on the policy boards (except for the University), and (3) the incorporation of MPOJC staff within the organization of the City of Iowa City. MPOJC was known as the Johnson County Council of Governments until January 2011, when the name changed to MPOJC.

Separate Policy Boards

The separation of urban and rural policy boards was done in an attempt to acknowledge the varying interests and concerns of the urban and rural portions of Johnson County. This separation of urban and rural concerns is reflected in the MPOJC Work Program. The Johnson County Board of Supervisors is represented on both the urban and rural policy boards since they represent the entire population of Johnson County. All MPOJC services are available to both policy boards.

Urbanized Area Policy Board

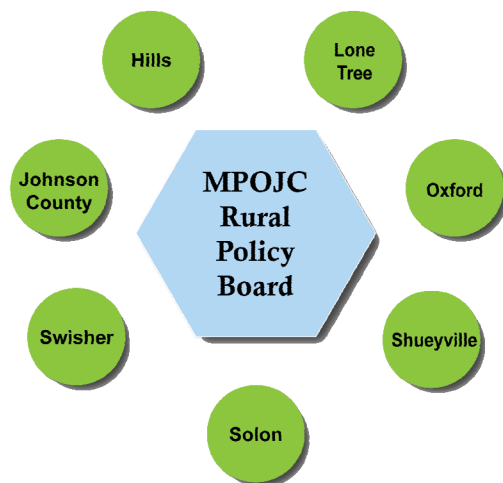


The Urbanized Area Policy Board includes representatives from governmental units included in the Iowa City Urbanized Area as defined by the U.S. Census. Also included are representatives from the City of North Liberty and the City of Tiffin. The number of representatives is roughly proportional to population. All representatives are elected officials, except for the University of Iowa representative, who is appointed by the president of the University. Federal transportation regulations mandate the Iowa Department of Transportation be included as an ex-officio member. The Iowa City Community School District is also included as a non-voting member.

Meetings of the Urbanized Area Policy Board are held on an as-needed basis, approximately six to eight times per year. The meetings are typically held on Wednesdays, in the late afternoon/early evening.

MPOJC is the designated transportation planning agency for the urbanized area, including growth areas, which define the metropolitan planning boundary. One of the more significant duties of the Urbanized Area Policy Board is the planning and programming of federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds within this planning boundary (see attached map). Several millions of dollars of STP funds are programmed each year to help implement regional transportation needs, including street improvements, trails, traffic signals, signage, and public transit capital and operating funds. Funds programmed by MPOJC are programmed within the Metropolitan Planning Boundary.

Rural Policy Board



The Rural Policy Board includes representatives from each incorporated area in Johnson County outside of the Iowa City Urbanized Area. Also included is Johnson County, representing the unincorporated portion of the county. All representatives are elected officials.

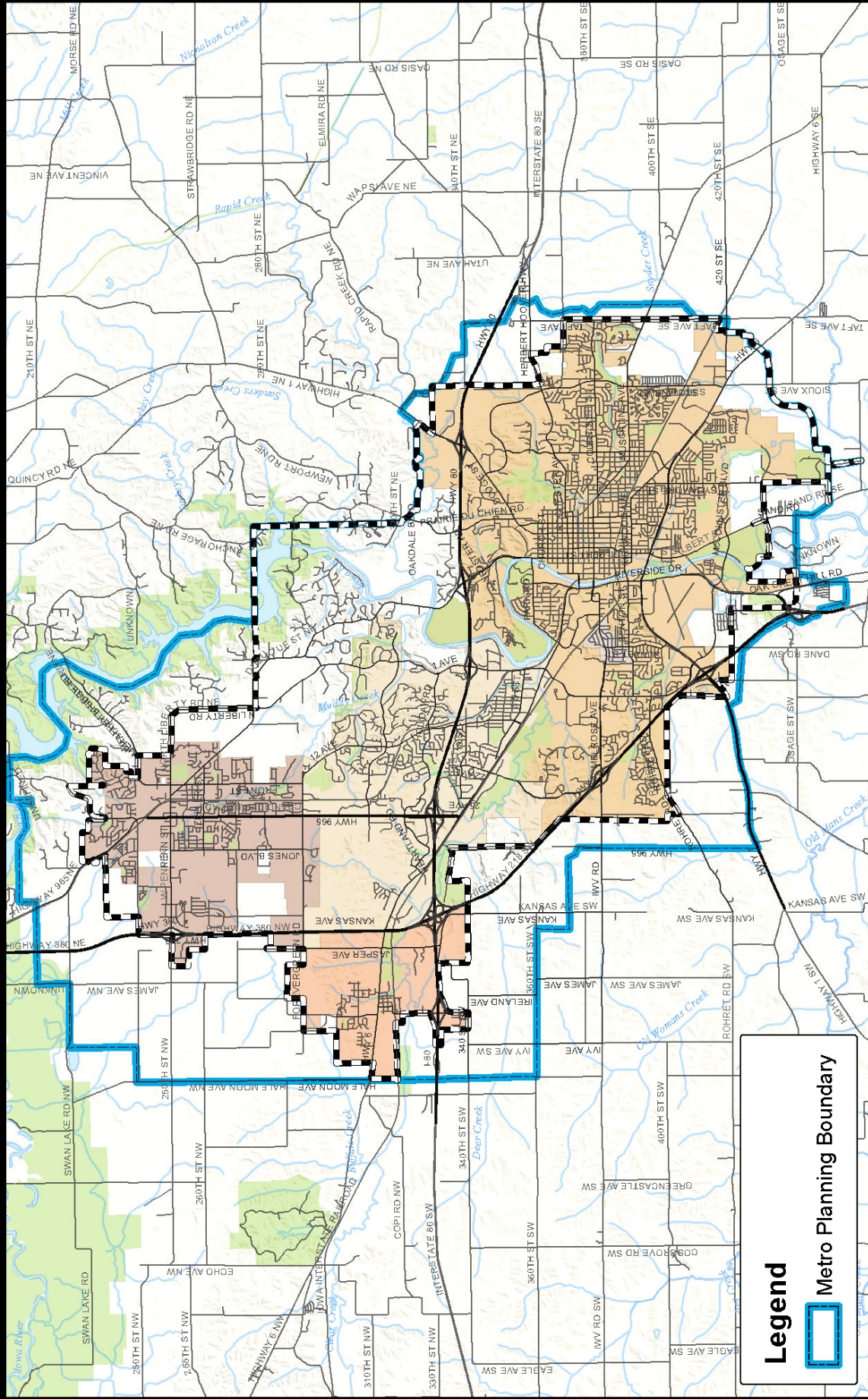
Planning assistance to small communities was provided directly by MPOJC staff until the mid-1980s. Since that time, it has been provided both by MPOJC (primarily traffic and transportation-related issues) and the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (land use and grant administration-related work). The majority of the work MPOJC conducts for Rural Policy Board members is traffic counts, traffic studies, traffic control sign evaluations, and review of development proposals.

Meetings of the Rural Policy Board are held on an as-needed basis, at least once a year.

Metro Planning Boundary



Prepared by: K. Ackerson
Date Prepared: 3/11/2011
Data source: MPO,
Johnson Co., Iowa DOT



Legend



Elected Officials

All MPOJC policy board voting representatives are elected officials, except for the University of Iowa representative, who is appointed by the president of the University. This arrangement ensures that elected officials are involved in policy matters at the regional planning level. It also provides continuity between policies developed by MPOJC and policies developed by the city councils/policy boards of the MPOJC member agencies.

Relationship with the City of Iowa City

MPOJC is organized under the City of Iowa City. Although funding is received from all MPOJC members, MPOJC staff are employees of the City of Iowa City. Through a 28(E) agreement, MPOJC staff provide assistance to the other members of the MPO. This arrangement provides for cost-sharing between Iowa City and MPOJC for services. Essentially, all member-entities have access to all MPOJC services, but costs are shared.

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Number of Employees: 1 half-time Executive Director
 1 part-time Administrative Secretary (.2 FTE)
 1 part-time Technical Assistant in graphics/drafting (.4 FTE)

 1.1 Total full-time equivalents

Total Annual Budget (FY13): \$168,786

Duties: The Administration Division provides oversight and support to the staff of MPOJC. The Executive Director supervises all MPOJC personnel. The Executive Director coordinates the budget process and the preparation of division work programs. Other administrative duties include preparation of mailings and providing graphic services.

Under the Administration Division the Executive Director coordinates the discussion of issues which do not fall under one of the normal functions of MPOJC. This includes policy and planning issues, and coordinating the annexation notification process to the Johnson County Mutual Aid Association, for example.

The Administration Division also provides a forum for county-wide issues involving member governments. In recent years, this has included discussion of consolidation of fixed-route transit systems and coordination and implementation of a joint emergency communication center. An upcoming issue for which MPOJC is serving as a forum is to discuss the size and scope of the Iowa City Animal Shelter.

Number of Employees: 1 half-time Transportation Planner
3 full-time Assistant Transportation Planners
1 full-time Traffic Engineering Planner
4.5 total full-time equivalents

Total Annual Budget (FY13): \$449,760

Duties: MPOJC is designated by the Governor of the State of Iowa as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Iowa City Urbanized Area. The Transportation Planning Division is charged with fulfilling the federal requirements of the 3-C transportation planning process. This process is required of all urbanized areas to maintain eligibility for grant programs of the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration.

The 3-C transportation planning process consists of a comprehensive, coordinated and continuing planning effort for all modes of transportation. In addition to planning projects which are required by Iowa DOT and U.S. DOT, each year the Transportation Planning Division assembles a work program of projects requested by MPOJC members. These projects include short- and long-range transportation development plans, corridor studies, intersection analyses, survey reports, and review of development projects. The Transportation Planning Division also prepares state and federal transportation grant applications and fulfills the associated administration and regulation compliance.

The Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. A Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) advises the Urbanized Area Policy Board on policy matters. This committee is composed of transportation staff members from MPOJC member agencies. Representatives of the Iowa and U.S. Departments of Transportation are also represented on the TTAC. This committee meets on an as-needed basis.

The Regional Trails and Bicycle Committee. The Regional Trails and Bicycling Committee (RTBC) discusses and coordinates matters pertaining to pedestrian and bicycle activity. The regional trails plan, for example, was developed through this committee. The trails plan and subsequent development of the regional trails system is an example of a successful comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing effort.

East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Assessment Planning Assistance to Small Communities

MPOJC functions as the “dues collector” for Johnson County communities’ dues to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments.

Number of Employees: None. All services provided under agreement with ECICOG.

Total Annual Budget (FY12): \$38,280 for general assessment
\$6,333 for planning assistance assessment

Funding to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments is based on two assessments:

- 1) A general assessment is levied for overall support and participation in ECICOG. The general assessment is population-based.
- 2) An additional planning assessment is made for communities which more specifically utilize ECICOG services.

Duties: ECICOG is a six county regional planning agency which includes Johnson County. It is Region 10 in the state's system of regional planning agencies. ECICOG provides planning oversight for Johnson County's paratransit service, SEATS. ECICOG coordinates regional solid waste management activities. Planning assistance is available through ECICOG to the small communities in Johnson County.