



MEETING AGENDA

MPO Regional Trails & Bicycling Committee Tuesday, October 10, at 1:00 PM

**University Heights City Hall
1302 Melrose Avenue**

1. Call to order; recognize alternates; consider approval of minutes
2. Public discussion*
3. Discuss Committee Representation
4. Consider Transportation Alternatives Funding (TAP) Schedule
5. Consider Metro Area Bike Master Plan
6. Review Annual Pedestrian and Bicycle Measurements
 - a. Baseline School Bicycle Counts
 - b. Metro Multi-Use Trail Counts
7. Discuss updates to 2018 Metro Area Trails Map for 2018
8. Updates on local trail/bike/pedestrian projects and activities from MPO entities
9. Other Business
10. Adjournment

*Public input is permitted on any agenda item during discussion of the item.

Please indicate to Sarah Walz if you wish to comment.

To request any disability-related accommodations, please contact MPOJC staff at least 48 hours in advance at 319.356.5239 or email Sarah-Walz@iowa-city.org.



Date: October 10, 2017

To: MPO Regional Trails and Bicycle Committee

From: Sarah Walz, Assistant Transportation Planner

Re: October 10 Agenda Items

Item #3: Discuss Committee Representation

The Regional Trails and Bicycling Committee is an ad hoc subcommittee of the MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The RTBC includes representatives from each MPOJC entity (University Heights, North Liberty, Coralville, Iowa City, Tiffin, Johnson County, and the University of Iowa). The committee also includes representation from several bicycle interest groups: Bicyclists of Iowa City, Johnson County Trails Foundation, and Think Bicycles.

The RTBC provides a forum for sharing information and planning for our communities as we work toward a metro-wide bicycle network, including trails and on-street facilities, and toward regional and multi-county trail connections, such as the Hoover Trail. The RTBC discusses and makes recommendations on trails and other bike and pedestrian infrastructure, policies, and programs as requested by MPO entities.

For the past decade (or more) Terry Dahms has represented the Johnson County Trails Foundation and also ably served as the RTBC representative to the TAC. The Trails Foundation is no longer an active board and so Terry will be stepping from this role. Brian Loring has served as the representative for Bicyclists of Iowa City (BIC) but recently noted that he is no longer actively part of that organization. Bob Oppliger has offered to serve as a representative for BIC.

The committee should consider whether to name another organization to replace the Johnson County Trails Foundation on the RTBC and name a replacement for Dahms as representative to the TAC. (The representative to the TAC should not be from one of the MPO entities.)



Date: October 10, 2017
To: Regional Trails and Bicycling Committee
From: Kent Ralston; Executive Director
Re: Agenda Item #4: Consider Transportation Alternative Program funding schedule

Typically, the MPO conducts our competitive grant process for both Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TAP) funds in the spring every other year. This biennial process has historically reflected the desire of both the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and the Urbanized Area Policy Board to allow two years of funding to be allocated at once – thereby allowing projects to receive larger funding awards.

Due to changes in federal transportation legislation, the Iowa DOT notified staff last fall that there would be modifications to how the TAP program would be conducted. One significant change was that the MPO would need to submit project applications and recommended funding allocations to the Iowa DOT for 'approval' in October of each year. Previous to this change, the MPO was permitted to simply follow our locally approved grant process - screening projects for eligibility and programming funds every other year at the direction of the Urbanized Area Policy Board.

With the information available, we conducted our standard process for allocating STBG funding this past spring but could not allocate TAP funds. Since that time, the Iowa DOT notified staff that we could in fact use our standard process for allocating TAP funds. The change back to the old system was made possible as the DOT will be utilizing a different pool of funds that will not require adherence to federal TAP guidelines.

While we are now free to conduct a TAP application process at any time, I recommend that we wait until spring of 2019 to conduct the next TAP application process. Doing so would be advantageous as both the STBG and TAP funding processes would (again) be conducted concurrently and allow for better project planning and streamline the application process. If the process is conducted in the spring of 2019, we would have approximately \$1,100,000 of TAP funding to program for FY23-24. If we were to start the process this fall, we would have approximately \$550,000 to program for FY21-22.

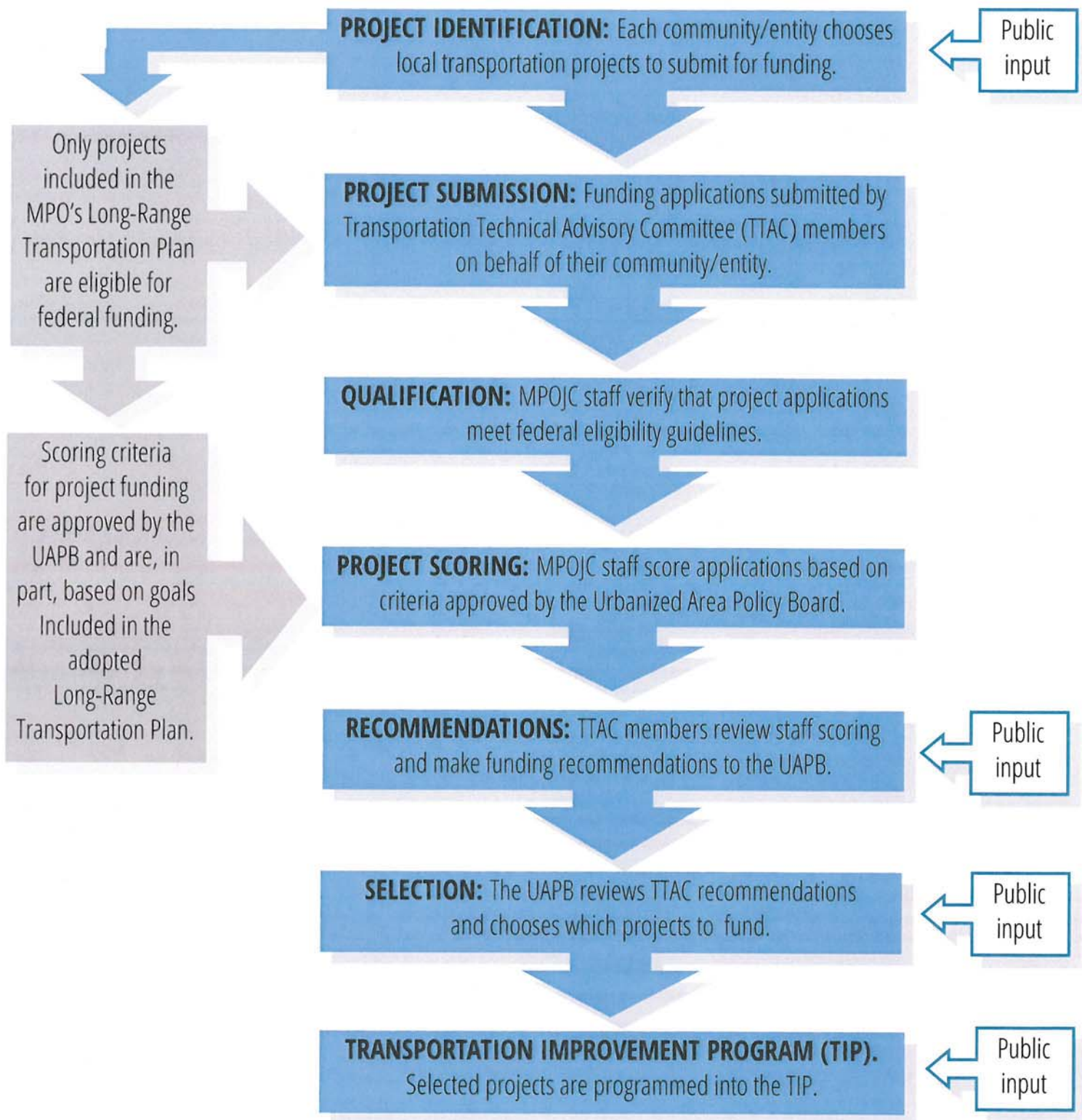
Please be prepared to discuss this issue and make a recommendation regarding the timing of the next TAP process to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. I have attached a description of the grant funding process and a schedule of previously programmed TAP projects for your reference.

I will be at your October 10th meeting to answer any questions you may have.

Regional Transportation Alternatives Program Summary of costs and federal aid

	Federal fiscal year	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
	TAP funding target	\$157,000	\$157,000	\$157,000	\$157,000
	TAP Flex funding target	\$121,000	\$121,000	\$121,000	\$121,000
	TAP Flex transferred to STP	(\$107,214)	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Carry-Over from prior year	\$896,378	\$270,717	\$48,717	\$224,717
	Sub-total	\$1,067,164	\$548,717	\$326,717	\$502,717
Projects awaiting authorization					
#21066, Coralville, Clear Creek Trail Phase 6 and 7: Deer Creek to Interstate 380	Project total	(\$1,453,920)			
	Regional TAP Aid	(\$619,295)			
#16472, Johnson County, F28: North Liberty CL to Iowa River	Project total	(\$2,600,000)			
	Regional TAP Aid	(\$177,152)			
#33924, Iowa City, Highway 1 Trail: Sunset St to Mormon Trek	Project total		(\$625,000)		
	Regional TAP Aid		(\$500,000)		
#33925, Tiffin, Clear Creek Trail: Phase 6	Project total			(\$212,865)	
	Regional TAP Aid			(\$102,000)	
#33926, Coralville, Iowa River Trail segment	Project total				(\$879,604)
	Regional TAP Aid				(\$462,717)
Running total per year regional TAP funds		\$270,717	\$48,717	\$224,717	\$40,000

Funding Allocation Process for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternative (TAP) Funds



STBG and Tap funds are federal formula funds distributed annually by the Iowa DOT. MPOJC entities and other stakeholders work cooperatively through committees and the Urbanized Area Policy Board, which includes elected officials from each ecommunity, to make decisions regarding which transportation projects will receive funding.



Date: October 10, 2017

To: MPO Regional Trails and Bicycle Committee

From: Sarah Walz, Assistant Transportation Planner

Re: October 10 Agenda Items

Item #5: Consider a Bicycle Master Planning:

The MPO adopted its Metro Bicycle Master Plan in 2009. The plan provides general guidance for improving bicycle facilities and programs for the metro area. As part of the MPO's Work Program, the City of Coralville has requested an update to the plan.

In the years since the metro bike plan was adopted, our communities have focused greater attention on improving conditions for bicycling. Coralville achieved its bronze designation as a bike friendly community in 2016 and recently completed a plan for its trails and other off-street bike facilities. Iowa City adopted its new Bicycle Master Plan in August. The organizing framework of the Iowa City plan relies on the League of American Bicyclists 6 E's (Engineering, Evaluation, Education, Education, Encouragement, and Equity) and its recommendations focus on achieving a gold Bike Friendly Community designation. The University of Iowa, which is a silver level Bike Friendly University, is completing a Bicycle Master plan in-house. University Heights is also a Bike Friendly Community (bronze level). North Liberty plans to apply for Bike Friendly Community status in 2018. Johnson County's downtown administrative and human services campus was designated a Bike Friendly workplace in 2017.

In moving forward with an update to the Metro Bike Plan, MPO staff will refer to the bicycle master plans for Iowa City and the University to identify opportunities for connectivity in the metro bicycle network and potential for uniform or complementary policies or programs across the metro. At the request of Coralville, the plan update will reconsider on-street facilities and review their bicycle programs and policies in Coralville. Other metro communities who are interested may request in depth review and recommendations for their local on- and off-street network and areas of bicycle policy or programming.

MPO staff will begin work on the plan during the winter (January and February 2018) with public input opportunities to take place March-May. The Metro Bicycle Plan update will be prepared for adoption before the end of the fiscal year.

Item #6: Review Annual Pedestrian and Bicycle Measurements

a. Baseline School Bicycle Counts

A key measurable outcome of expanding bicycle facilities and complete streets is increased bicycle ridership. One of the numbers that is typically used to measure ridership is the Bicycle Commute Share reported in the American Community Survey (U.S. Census). The shortcoming of this number is that it only collects the method of transportation for working members of the household and only for their journey to work. Information on non-work trips is not collected and no travel information is collected for non-wage earners (i.e. children).

There are a few reasons why it makes sense to do give some attention to youth ridership:

1. It is easy to get counts. With the possible exception of high school students, attendance hours for schools are fixed. Students come and go on a regular schedule and they park in the same location. This means it takes little time to get a count.
2. Adults are more likely to ride bicycles if they began riding as children. It therefore stands to reason that measuring ridership among children provides an indication of what the future holds. It may also tell us something about the perceived or real safety of our road and bicycle network. In other words, if bicycling feels like a safe and efficient travel mode for kids, it should feel safe for everyone.
3. Schools provide a captive audience of potential bicyclists—an easy population to target with education and encouragement.

One of the goals of the current Metro Area Bicycle Plan and Iowa City's new Bicycle Master Plan is to expand youth bicycling. The Iowa City Bicycle Master Plan and the MPO's Future Forward: Long-Range Transportation Plan both include input from children and youth. On-line surveys provided information on how and where children need to travel, the transportation obstacles they face, and their preferred method of travel. Many children, particularly those in junior high and elementary school, indicated a preference for active modes of transportation—bicycling, walking, and bus.

With changes to school attendance areas and the limitations of bus transportation for school and after school activities, bicycles provide an important and efficient option for getting kids from place to place. An annual count at schools will help us to measure whether our efforts are having an impact on youth ridership.

Note: the school districts have not released their student enrollment numbers for 2017-2018. These numbers will be available in December at which time we can calculate ridership rates for each school and school district.

MPOJC Annual School Bicycle Count (September 11-15, 2017)

SCHOOL	TOTAL COUNT	Day of the week	Time of school day	Weather Conditions
Alexander	19	Tuesday	AM	Ideal
Borlaug	21	Wednesday	PM	Ideal
Coralville Central	1	Friday	AM	Ideal
Garner	41	Friday	AM	Ideal
Hoover (Old)	22	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Hoover (New)	16	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Horn	10	Wednesday	PM	Ideal
Kirkwood	20	Thursday	PM	Ideal
Lemme	9	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Lincoln	11	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Longfellow (TEMP CLOSED)	0			
Lucas	15	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Mann	14	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Penn	52	Friday	AM	Ideal
Shimek	15	Thursday	AM	Ideal
Twain	13	Tuesday	AM	Ideal
Van Allen	49	Friday	AM	Ideal
Weber	13	Wednesday	PM	Ideal
Wickham	4	Wednesday	PM	Ideal
Wood	7	Tuesday	AM	Ideal
<i>ICCSd elementary count</i>	352			
North Central Jr High	54	Friday	AM	Ideal
Northwest Jr High	9	Friday	AM	Ideal
Southeast Jr High	85	Tuesday	AM	Ideal
<i>ICCSd junior high count</i>	148			
City High	66	Tuesday	AM	Ideal
Liberty High	22	Friday	AM	Ideal
West High	49	Wednesday	PM	Ideal
<i>ICCSd high school count</i>	137			
Clear Creek Amana High	2	Wednesday	AM	Ideal
Clear Creek Amana Middle	12	Wednesday	AM	Ideal
Tiffin Elementary	0	Wednesday	AM	Ideal
<i>CCA school count</i>	14			

b: Metro Multi-use Trail Counts

Between May and October each year, the MPO collects data on bicycle and pedestrian usage along the regional trail system. Data is collected using an infrared device that counts both bicycles and pedestrians—the device cannot differentiate between the two.

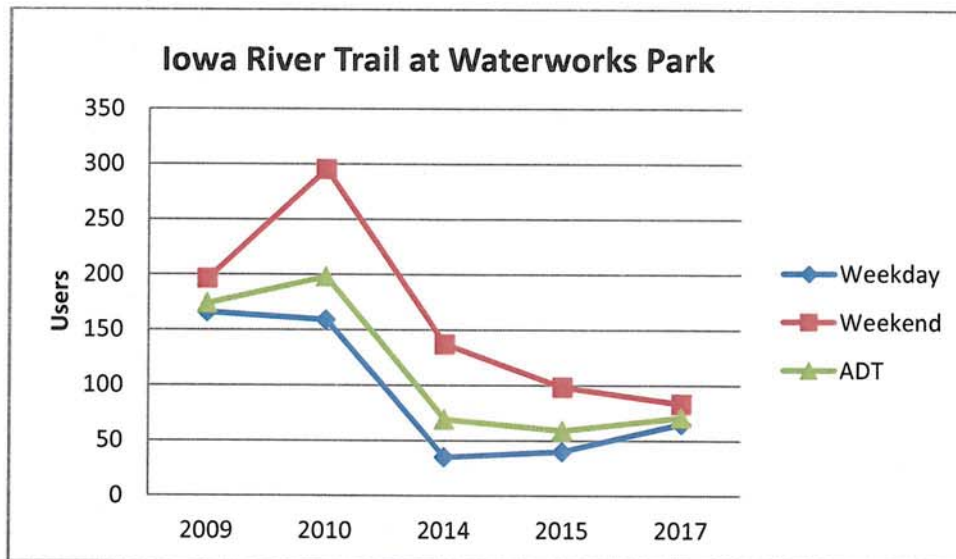
We have completed counts at 15 out of 17 locations. The count locations are based on requests from MPO entities and entered into a scheduled rotation to ensure we are measuring at points along major trails every 2nd or 3rd year.

Baseline counts (first-ever counts) were taken on the wide sidewalk near Alexander Elementary (ADT: 38), on the Iowa River Trail near the new Liberty High School (ADT: 130), and on the Highway 1 trail near Hawk Ridge (ADT: 105).

The last time we discussed trail counts, members of the committee expressed some desire to view longer term trends for trail use. Now that we have nearly a decade of data we are able to show trend lines for some trail sections.

Keep in mind that a number of factors influence annual counts—the month or week the count was taken, weather, adjacent trail or road construction or closures, the opening of additional trail access points, increased development around the site, etc. This can make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about usage from a year-over-year comparison.

For example, the measured use of the Iowa River Trail near Waterworks Park shows some decline in use. The measurement is taken along the trail at a point adjacent to the parking lot. Anecdotally, we know users are entering and exiting the park at several different locations and, therefore, may be bypassing the location of the counter.



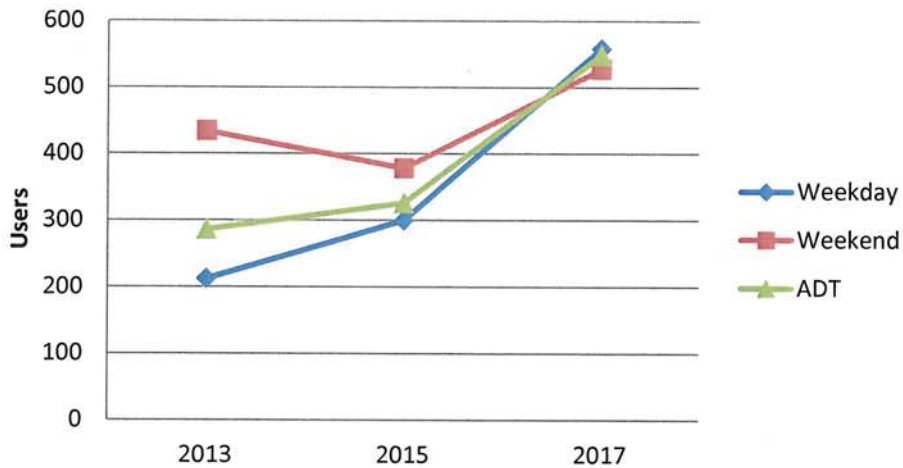
2017 Count

Weekday: 65

Weekend: 83

ADT: 71

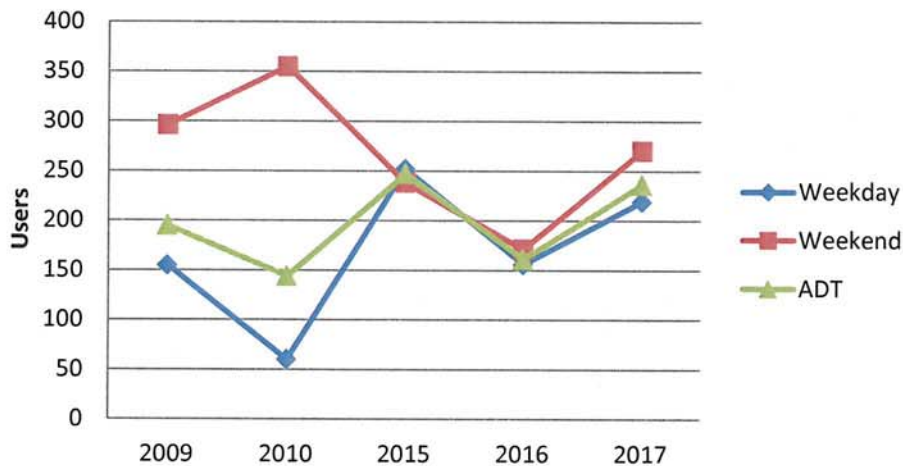
Iowa River Trail at Trueblood Rec Area



2017 Count

Weekday: 558
Weekend: 527
ADT: 548

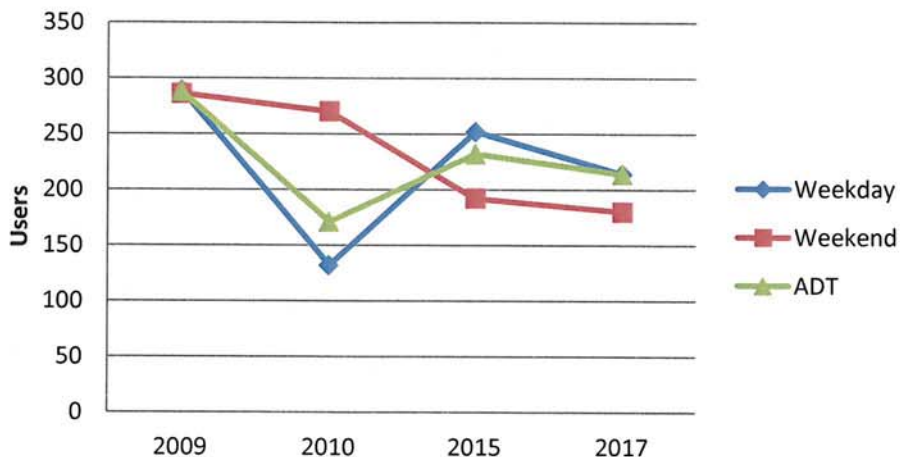
Pedestrian Bridge: Iowa Power to Peninsula



2017 Count

Weekday: 219
Weekend: 270
ADT: 236

North Ridge Trail near I80 Tunnel



2017 Count

Weekday: 214
Weekend: 180
ADT: 214

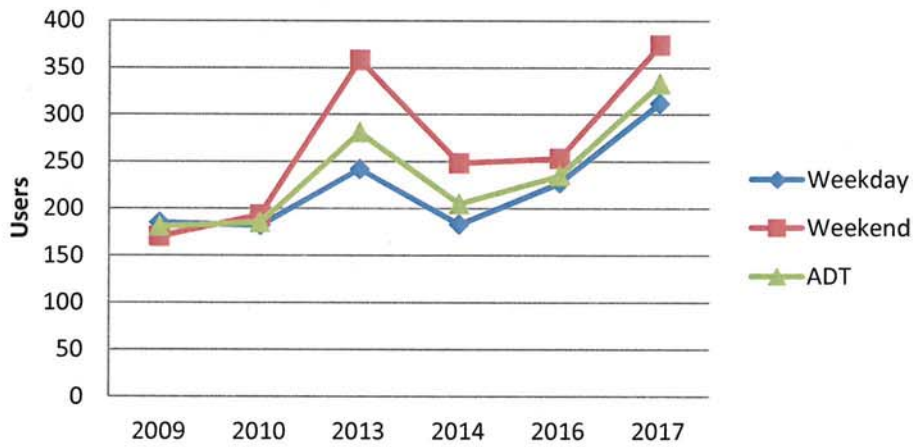
North Liberty Trail at Forevergreen Rd



2017 Count

Weekday: 249
Weekend: 197
ADT: 232

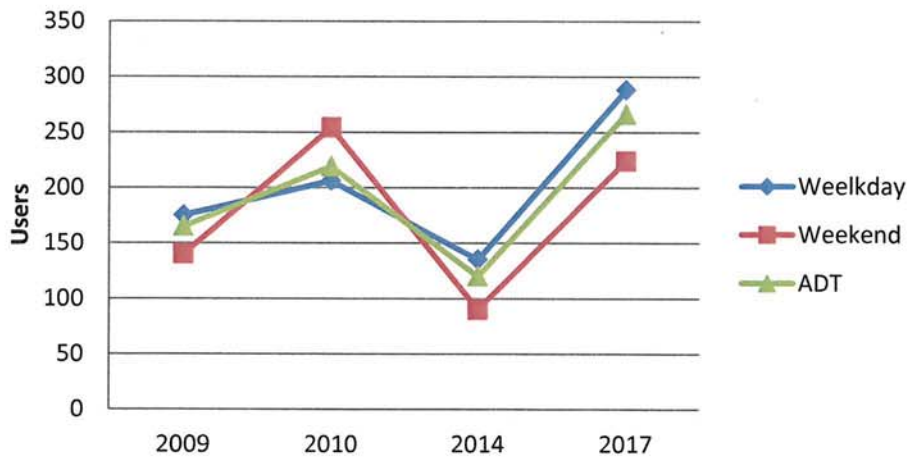
North Liberty Trail at Rec Center



2017 Count

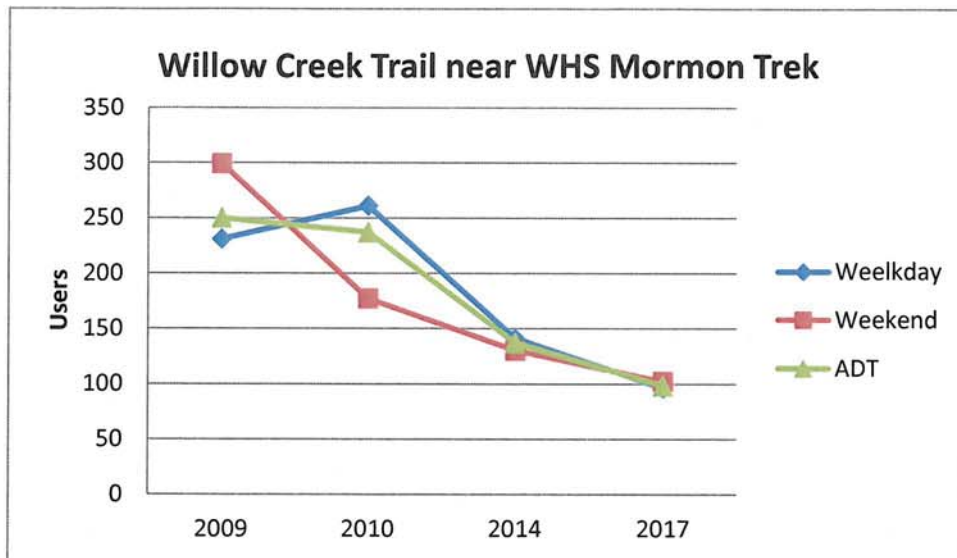
Weekday: 312
Weekend: 374
ADT: 333

Willow Creek Trail at Willow Creek Park



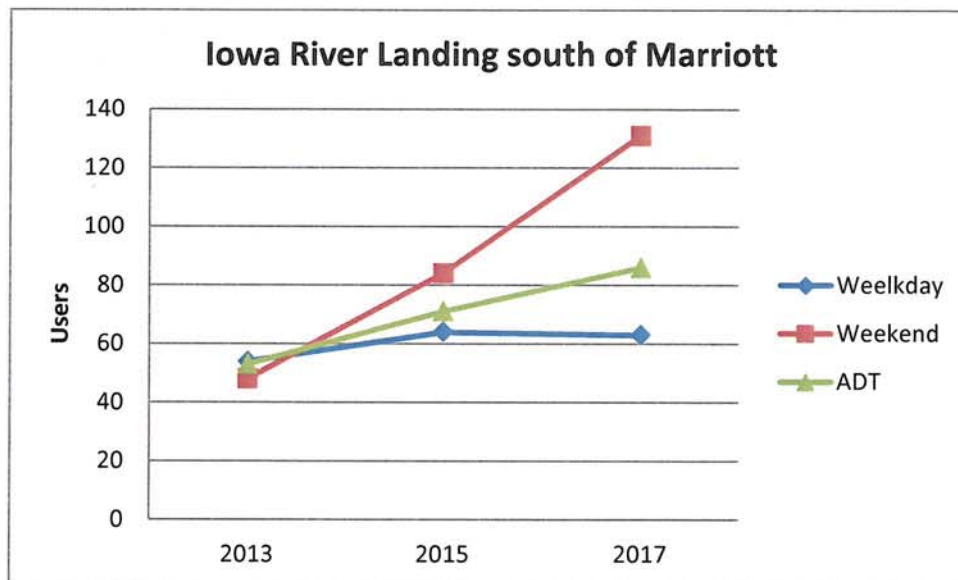
2017 Count

Weekday: 288
Weekend: 224
ADT: 266



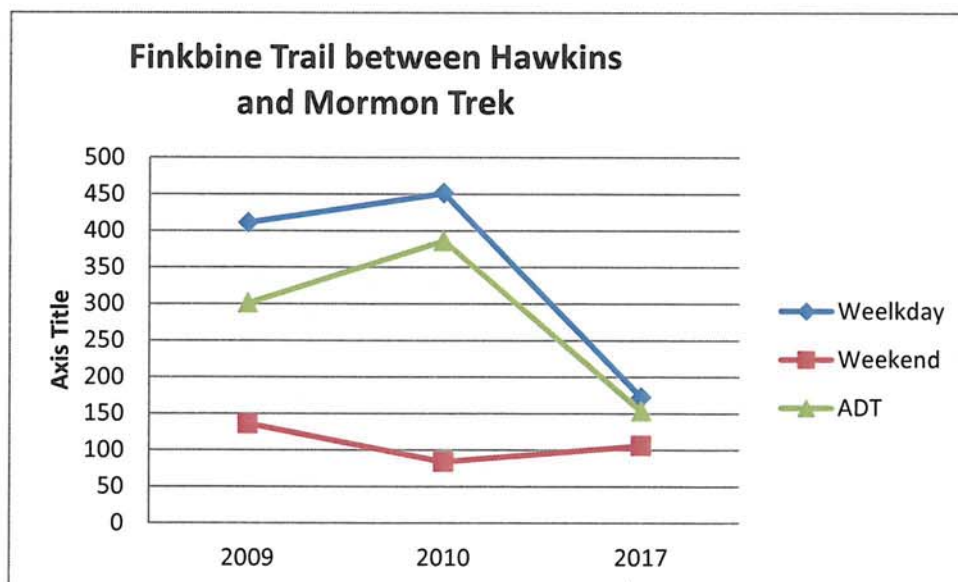
2017 Count

Weekday: 96
Weekend: 102
ADT: 98



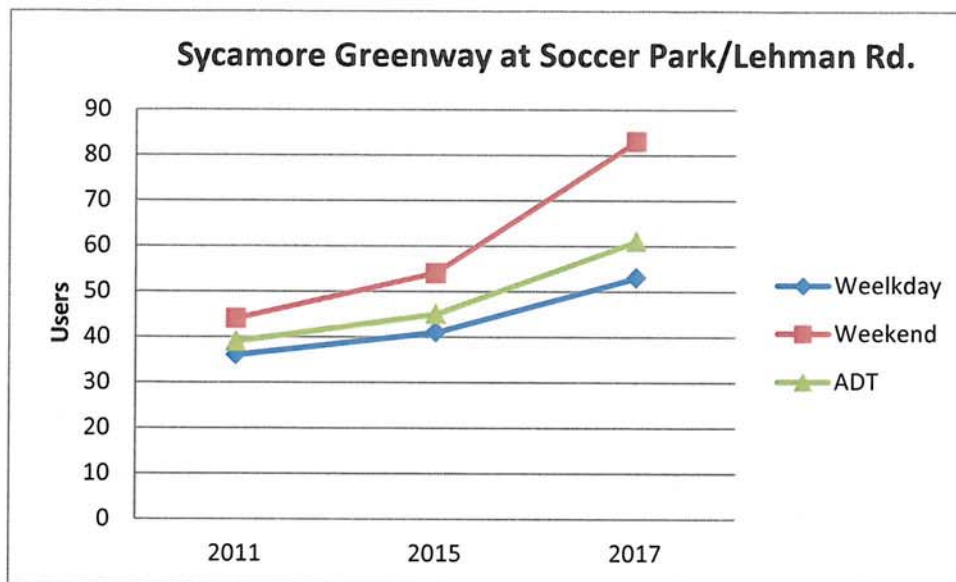
2017 Count

Weekday: 63
Weekend: 131
ADT: 86



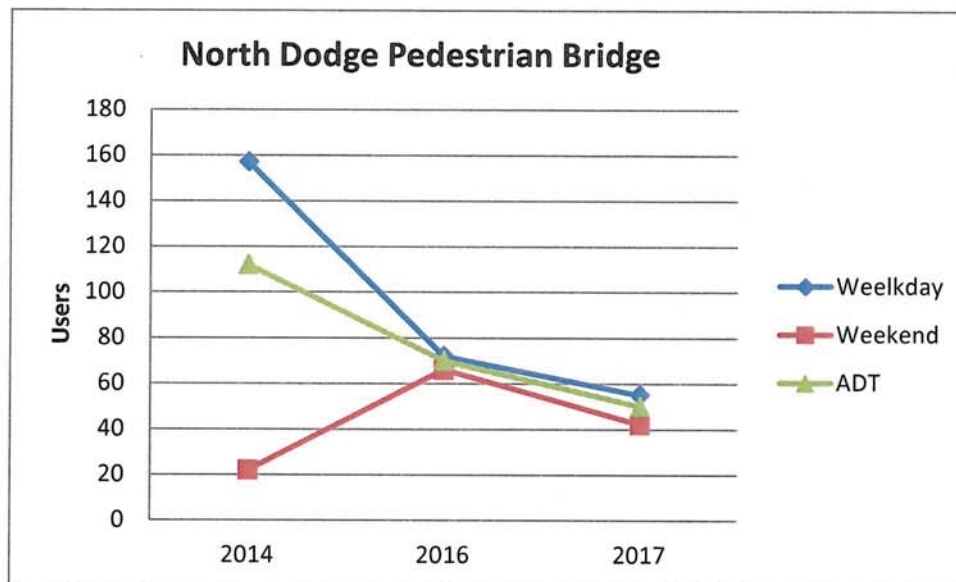
2017 Count

Weekday: 172
Weekend: 106
ADT: 153



2017 Count

Weekday: 53
Weekend: 83
ADT: 61



2017 Count

Weekday: 55
Weekend: 42
ADT: 50

ITEM #7: Discuss Updates to 2018 Metro Area Trails Map

In 2016 and 2017 the MPOJC printed 15,000, trails maps—our annual print runs were previously 10,000. Maps are provided for distribution to all MPO communities (including the University), local bike shops, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, realtors, and any other agencies or businesses that request a supply. The convention and Visitor's Bureau is probably our largest user, supplying copies to local hotels/motels. We currently have a little over 2,200 maps left.

Information added in 2017:

- Last year we added locations of K-12 schools.
- All known locations of publicly accessible bike fix-it stations.
- Coralville's new designation as a Bike Friendly Community was included along with Johnson County's designation as a Bike Friendly Business for their downtown campus.

- The date and location of the 2017 World Cyclo-Cross Championships was also included on the map.

Things to add in 2018:

- New trails or trail sections to be completed in 2018; trails anticipated for construction in the near future will be designated with a dotted line (note extensions to the Clear Creek and Iowa River Trail on the 2017 map).
- Locations of any new bike park facility, such as Coralville's new cyclo-cross park.

Please let us know of any additional changes that we should consider incorporating in the 2018 map. For the past couple of years we have discussed whether it would be appropriate to substitute a commuter-type map may for the county side of the map. A commuter map could show detailed insets of areas such as the Iowa City's near downtown neighborhoods, routes through the University Campus, or the Iowa River or other major trails. If this is the direction the Committee would like to go we would want to know a.s.a.p. so please be prepared to discuss this at our meeting.

We plan to print 15,000 maps again this year. The maps will be sent to the printer by the end of March, with new maps printed and available by the beginning of May. We will request final updates for each community's trails or other bike facilities by late January/early February.

MINUTES
MPO REGIONAL TRAILS AND BICYCLING COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2017
CITY HALL, IOWA CITY

PRELIMINARY

MEMBERS PRESENT: Louise From, Becky Soglin, Juli Seydell Johnson, Alex Buhmeyer (Coralville), Bob Oppliger (Think Bicycles), Michelle Ribble

MEMBERS ABSENT: Brian Loring, Shelly Simpson, Terry Dahms

OTHERS PRESENT: Brock Grenis, Del Holland

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Walz, Emily Bothell

1. CALL TO ORDER; RECOGNIZE ALTERNATES; CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Walz called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

Oppliger made a motion to approve the October 11, 2016 minutes; Seyell-Johnson seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

2. Public Discussion

None.

3. REVIEW TRAIL COUNTS FOR 2016 AND TRAIL COUNT PLAN FOR 2017

Walz noted late revisions to the Trail Count memo. She explained that it is difficult to know what effects counts year over year. Weather, obviously can have an effect. As more connections to trails are made that will bring more users, however users may be entering and exiting the trail at different points. Likewise, construction on adjacent roadways and road closures can impact trail use, such as along North Dubuque Street (during the Gateway Project). A trail count being up or down during a given year may not be predictive of a long-term trend.

There was some discussion that the count data is hard to use because there is so much variability year over year.

There was some discussion of changes to the trail system along the Riverfront Crossings Park and where future measurements should be done—along the river vs. along the creek as the trail splits in this location.

4. REVIEW PRELIMINARY STRAVA DATA

Emily Bothell explained the source of Strava data, which is an application used by bicyclists to track routes, mileage, and performance. The Johnson County Trails Foundation provided funding to pay for data. Bothell explained that the data can help us see where popular bicycling routes exist, level of service, and the time of day that people are using the route.

Bothell showed two maps to illustrate how the data can be used. The first was total weekday trips in the metro and the second showed weekend trips. Bothell noted that the scales of the original maps in the packet were not the same, and that there are far more trips during the

weekday than on the weekend. However, cyclists are using many of the same routes whether for commuting or for recreation.

Bothell cautioned that Strava is a subset of all users and is not a random sample. It would tend to be for more serious bicyclists rather than the average weekday commuter or occasional bicyclist. She said that while there are many limitations to the data, it is the only data of its kind currently available and is useful as one more piece of information to give us a sense of routes people are using to travel across the metro. This data can help with planning for future infrastructure improvements or routes. Bothell noted that there is data for each direction on a roadway as well as intersection data. Additional demographic information on riders is also captured.

Bothell showed the heat map of the metro with total commute trips during one month (May). She noted she was surprised by the number of bike trips north of the metro and out in the county. She noted that at the end of summer she would receive second year data so that we can make comparisons. If communities are interested in a particular route or trail section or intersection or want access to the data they should contact her.

5. DISCUSS TRAIL MAPS FOR 2017

Walz reminded the committee that the map format changed in 2016 to a smaller size and that some of the information previously contained on the map was dropped, in part to simplify the amount of information that staff had to manage and update. On the 2017 maps the location of schools would be added back in along with the location of fix-it stations that can be easily accessed by the public.

Walz asked for any other requested changes to trails. She had received some comments that the countywide side of the map may not be that useful and that it may make more sense to provide insets on one side of the map for riders who are commuting through downtown Iowa City or through the university campus. The county side may be useful for people planning routes on gravel vs. hard surface roads; whether it offers some advantage over the County's road map, she was not sure.

6. DISCUSS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND BIKE EDUCATION FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN.

Walz noted that as part of the Iowa City Bicycle Master Plan a vision had been articulated that all school age children have the opportunity to learn to bike in physical education classes. The resource that is lacking is a supply of bicycles to supplement these kinds of programs. Walz noted that the cost for a trailer and bikes is relatively inexpensive—it could likely be done for well under \$20k. In response to a question she noted that if communities were interested in supporting the program with some level of funding, a match grant could be considered. Walz asked for some input from the MPO whether their community would like to move forward with some support for pursuing funding.

7. SOLICIT ITEMS FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WORK PROGRAM FOR FY2018

Walz noted that there had been a request for an update to the Bicycle Master Plan in FY2018. She invited communities to let them know of other projects to be added to the work plan.

8. UPDATES ON LOCAL TRAIL/BIKE/PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES FROM MPO ENTITIES

Walz noted that the Iowa City Bicycle Master Plan was well underway and that the work done for that could provide some basic groundwork for updating the Metro Area Bicycle Plan.

From described the complete streets plan for Melrose Avenue drawn from a Vision Iowa Plan. This would fix the geometry of the roadway, provide sidewalks on both sides of the road, extends the bike lanes through University Heights, and provides lighting and crosswalks. University Heights would be seeking approximately \$900k funding to complete the project.

Oppliger noted that he also was working with Tony Branch on getting schools to offer bike education. He also noted that a number of bike rodeos would be taking place starting in April and running through Bike Month in May. He noted that Think Bicycles was super sizing Bike to Work Week to the entire month and that grants were available to organizations and businesses who host events.

Ribble noted that the University was installing 8 bike repair stations on campus. She stated that the university was interested in finding ways to measure how much use the stations get. The University is also doing an in-house bicycle master plan. Ribble indicated that the Strava data might be useful for helping them establish bikeways, which is the first step in their planning. They would then move on to bike parking, policies and programs, and finally bike education. She noted the University had never done a full bicycle master plan before.

Soglin noted that the County was applying for a Bike Friendly Business application. She said the County would be hosting some events for Bike Month, including a demonstration on how to use the bus bike racks.

Seydell-Johnson said that in addition to the Iowa City Parks Department was finalizing it Parks Master Plan which would overlap with the goals of Bicycle Master Plan in some areas. For example, she noted that their plan would likely contain a statement that all children have the opportunity to learn to ride a bike.

Buhmeyer said the City of Coralville was working on a Bicycle Trails Plan. The engineering phase for the Clear Creek trail segment between Coralville and Tiffin was under way—he thought it would be completed in 2018. They are also prioritizing their natural surface trails, including the single track trail near the Clear Creek (Harkin) trailhead.

9. Meeting Adjourned 1:55 PM