



HIRTA

TITLE VI EQUITY ANALYSIS

FACILITY SITE SELECTION:
ADMINISTRATIVE AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY

DRAFT REPORT

1/12/2026

NW VICKSBURG COURT
DALLAS COUNTY, IOWA 50263

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BACKGROUND

The Heart of Iowa Regional Transit Agency (HIRTA) provides approximately 125,000 rides annually across our seven-county rural service area in central Iowa. While this figure reflects the unique needs and demographics of rural communities, HIRTA plays a critical role in ensuring access to healthcare, employment, education, and daily living activities for residents without access to personal transportation. Rural transportation disparities are often more amplified than in urban areas due to the lack of alternative options. HIRTA addresses these challenges by providing flexible, demand-response, door-to-door service rather than fixed routes. In addition to our core transit services, HIRTA also utilizes volunteer drivers and vanpools to expand access and fill mobility gaps for individuals who might otherwise have no transportation options.

HIRTA operates a responsive and community-centered transportation system available to the general public, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. Service is available Monday through Friday, with limited service on weekends in some areas, and scheduled through HIRTA's centralized call center or online ride request system. With a diverse fleet of accessible vehicles, HIRTA continually evaluates and modernizes operations to ensure safety, efficiency, and inclusivity. HIRTA has also embraced innovative mobility solutions through initiatives like the Health Connector, which improves coordination of healthcare-related transportation, and the integration of technologies such as NaviLens for enhanced accessibility. HIRTA continues to lead among our peers by piloting data-driven scheduling tools, expanding volunteer driver networks, and developing regional partnerships to create more seamless and equitable transit experiences across rural communities. HIRTA's commitment to rural mobility directly supports regional well-being, sustainability, and equity across central Iowa.

STUDY PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

HIRTA currently lacks a dedicated transit facility and is the only transit system in Iowa operating without one. This absence significantly limits our ability to effectively maintain our fleet, support staff, and deliver consistent, equitable service across our region. HIRTA's reliance on expensive external maintenance is cost prohibitive given limited rural transit funds. The lack of a facility also impacts efficiency, response times, and long-term sustainability of the system. To address these barriers, HIRTA is pursuing the development of a centrally located facility to improve operational efficiency, enhance regional connectivity, and strengthen the reliability of transit services.

The proposed facility will be constructed on a 3.95-acre parcel and is designed with growth, sustainability, and accessibility in mind. The building will include a 30,800

square foot maintenance area and an 8,300 square foot administrative area. The site will support 22 staff members (18 current and 4 future positions), and will feature secure public access, a reception area, break rooms, conference and training space, and restrooms on both levels—including facilities compliant with FTA drug and alcohol testing requirements.

Maintenance functions will include four service bays, drive-through access to reduce safety risks, dedicated wash and paint/body repair areas, and storage for parts and supplies. Indoor fleet storage will support 6 large (176") buses and 6 Ford Transits, with capacity for 8 additional vehicles and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. This will address current fleet storage deficiencies and improve readiness, especially in extreme weather conditions.

The facility will include 75 parking spaces as required by Dallas County Planning and Zoning to support staff, visitors, and training events. Importantly, the project is designed to eliminate service gaps, improve mobility options, and support consistent and equitable transit access across a large geographic area.

This project directly supports HIRTA's mission to provide safe, reliable, and accessible transportation by addressing service gaps across the region and ensuring the facility is designed to meet the needs of the communities we serve. The new facility is essential to ensure rural residents can continue accessing vital services such as medical appointments, employment, and the ability to visit loved ones. It supports their independence and peace of mind by helping them stay connected to the people and places that matter most.

This Title VI Equity Analysis will evaluate the site for HIRTA's new facility.

TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

HIRTA is committed to ensuring no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, transit services on the basis of race, color, or national origin as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B. Further, Title 49 CFR Section 21.5(b)(3) states, "In determining the site or location of facilities, a recipient or applicant may not make selections with the purpose or effect of excluding persons from, denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination under any program to which this regulation applies, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin; or with the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the Act or this part." Finally, Title 49 CFR Part, 21, Appendix C, Section 3(iv) provides that, "The location of projects requiring land

acquisition and the displacement of persons from their residences and businesses may not be determined on the basis of race, color or national origin."

The public can find HIRTA's current Title VI Non-Discrimination Policy and complaint process/form on the web at: <https://www.ridehirta.com/policies>

To comply with this regulation, HIRTA is required to conduct a Title VI equity analysis to demonstrate the facility site is selected without regard to race, color, or national origin.

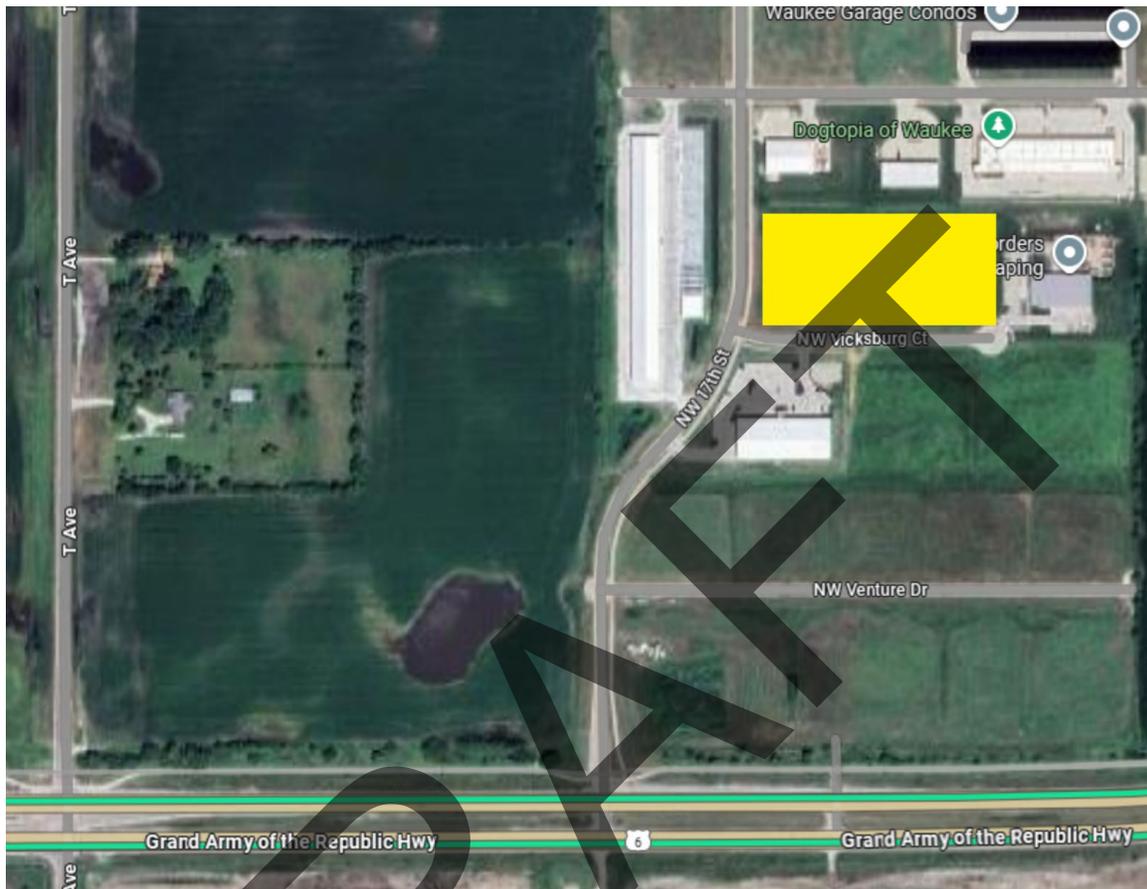
SITE SELECTION PROCESS

HIRTA's site selection process involved identifying vacant parcels of land within a central location of our seven-county service area which could support current operational needs while allowing for future expansion. A comprehensive review was conducted with a focus on location, size, development potential, and alignment with long-term strategic goals. This process led to the identification of three candidate sites: a site on NW Vicksburg Court, one near Ute Avenue and another near Grand Prairie Parkway.

Through a comparative scoring and evaluation process, the NW Vicksburg Court site emerged as the preferred alternative. This location offers significantly greater development potential and long-term viability compared to the Ute Ave or Grand Prairie Parkway site, which lacks the acreage required to accommodate HIRTA's full facility program and future growth. The Ute Avenue site presents problems with shared utilities and future annexation. The NW Vicksburg site meets the project's key criteria, including infrastructure availability, centrality within the service region, and suitability for administrative offices, training space, indoor fleet storage, and essential fleet maintenance operations.

Land availability in the region is limited due to the overall demand for parcels that meet the specific needs of a transit facility. After reviewing all seven counties, it was determined a central location for maintenance operations would be ideal. Waukee was identified as the most suitable area due to its infrastructure and accessibility, though its rapid growth has made parcels that meet the facility's needs increasingly rare. Many sites were found to be either too small or excessively large (exceeding 40 acres), which would introduce unnecessary acquisition and development costs. The NW Vicksburg Court site represents a rare and timely opportunity to secure a centrally located, appropriately sized property that aligns with HIRTA's operational, financial, mission, and vision. This investment will allow HIRTA to modernize operations, enhance regional mobility, and improve access to transit for all residents.

PROJECT LOCATION MAP



BENEFITS AND BURDENS ANALYSIS

HIRTA evaluated the benefits and burdens of the identified site to determine any potential impacts to the surrounding community. The preferred location is currently a vacant industrial lot, and its development would not result in the displacement of any residents or businesses. While there are some residential properties near the site, none are directly adjacent, and the surrounding land use consists primarily of industrial and commercial development. As a result, the facility is not anticipated to have any adverse impact on nearby neighborhoods. The site is located along a major regional corridor in a rural area, and no cumulative impacts from surrounding businesses are expected.

Table 1: Benefits and Burdens

Benefits/Positive Impacts	Burdens/Adverse Impacts
<p>NW Vicksburg Ct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No displacement of residents or businesses; current site is industrial. • Central location within the region reduces deadhead mileage and operating costs. • Adequate parcel size (approximately 3.95 acres) to meet facility needs without excess land. • One of the few available sites with sufficient size, utilities, zoning, and suitable topography. • Access to existing paved roadways with good ingress and egress for transit vehicles. • Utilities including water, sewer, and electric are available near the site. • No known easements or geotechnical issues that would materially impact development. • Site is not located in a floodplain and is not a former landfill. • No anticipated significant environmental impacts related to air quality, noise, water, or traffic. • Potential for shared use or joint development to reduce long term construction and operating costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited land availability in the area increases competition and acquisition pressure • Acquisition costs are higher than outlying areas due to location within the City of Waukee • Slopes on the north side of the property will increase construction costs • Transit operations may introduce additional traffic and noise during early morning and evening hours • Environmental impacts such as noise, traffic, and visual changes will need to be evaluated during NEPA review

EQUITY ANALYSIS

HIRTA analyzed area demographics and equity impacts (Tables 2 and 3) to ensure this site did not result in disparate treatment on the basis of race, color, or national origin. **The site at NW Vicksburg Court is located in Dallas County, Iowa in Census Tract 509.02.**

Table 2: Demographic Data		
Impact Criteria	NW Vicksburg Ct Site	Dallas County
Total Population	6,488	111,092
White	5,881	95,040
Non-White	607	16,052
Non-White Percentage	9.4%	14.5%
Population Under Poverty Line	109	8,221
Percentage Under Poverty Line	1.7%	7.4%
Median Income (Households)	\$133,647	\$102,349
Limited English Proficiency Percentage (Less than Very Well)	0.7%	1.6%

Source: Data from U.S. Census Bureau 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In summary, the site's minority population, poverty rate, and LEP rate are slightly lower but remain comparable to county-level statistics, while the median household income is higher than the county average.

Table 3: Equity Impact Comparison	
Impact Criteria	NW Vicksburg Ct
Who would be impacted by selecting this site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Will selecting this site require displacement of residents or businesses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No
Listed other similar facilities nearby including maintenance, storage, operations, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial, self-storage

In summary, the Alternative Equity Analysis found there were no adverse or cumulative impacts, or disparate impacts per the Title VI regulations.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

HIRTA held a public hearing on February 26th, 2026 for people to review the facility plan, ask questions of staff and make comments. Notification of the release of the study and public input opportunities was made in the following ways:

- Information on HIRTA's website included:
 - Draft Equity Analysis
 - Public Hearing date/time/location/purpose
 - Comment Period
- Notice in local media
- Notices on HIRTA's website
- Social media notices on Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter) and notifications on HIRTA's website

During the public comment period, the following comments were received.

- To be completed after the public meeting and comment period ends

CONCLUSION

The preferred site identified and evaluated by HIRTA for our future facility was selected without regard to race, color, or national origin. An analysis of demographic data, including poverty rate, minority population rate, and limited English proficiency (LEP) rate in the surrounding area, indicates no disparate impact would result from selecting this location. The site is currently used as farmland, with no displacement of residents or businesses anticipated. Nearby properties are primarily commercial or agricultural, and no immediate residential adjacency exists.

Furthermore, the location is along a major regional transportation corridor and was chosen based on objective criteria, including centralized access, development readiness, and suitability for long-term operations. HIRTA's review of potential benefits and burdens found the project would not adversely affect the surrounding community and may result in improved access to regional services. X public comments were received indicating the proposed location would negatively impact minority or underserved populations.

(This conclusion will add any impacts identified through the public input process.)