INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

Understanding the Role of MPO & RTA's in Regional Transit

Oghogho Oriakhi
Transportation Planner I

Nick Fratzke
Director of Transportation

November 10, 2026

INRCOG | PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS

Developing Strong Local Government through Regional Cooperation

229 E Park Avenue | Waterloo Iowa 50703 | P (319) 235-0311 | F (319) 235-2891 | www.inrcog.org

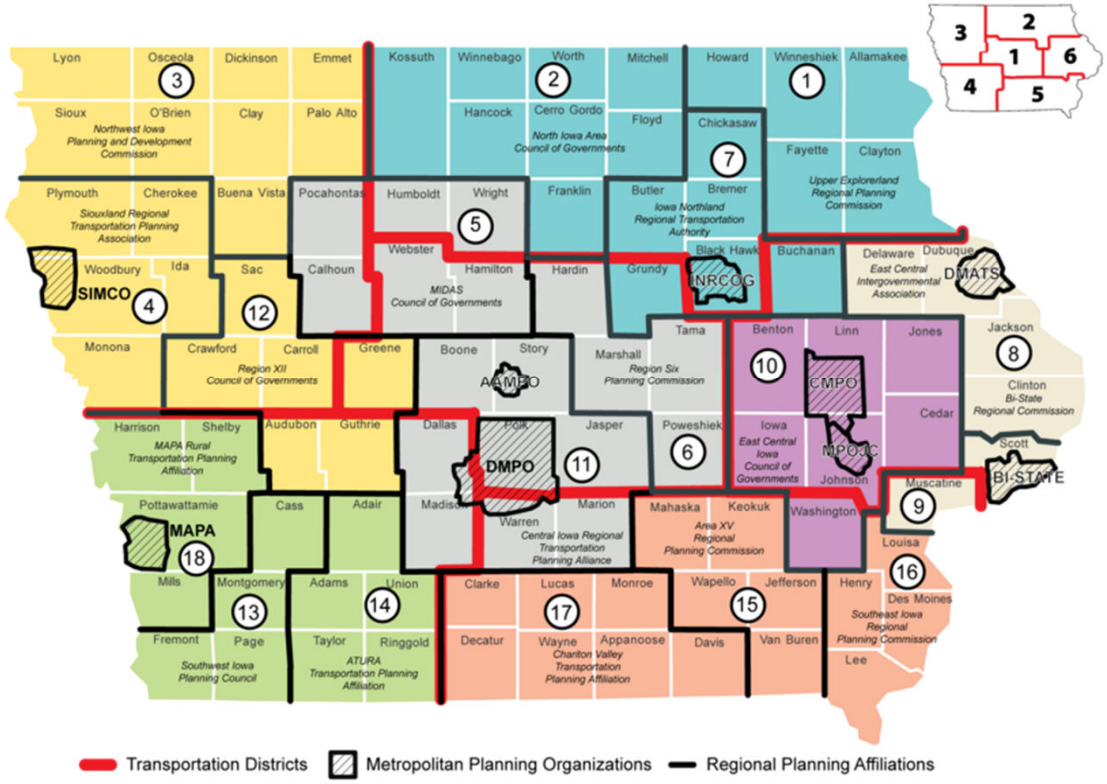
Outline

- INRCOG: Overview
- INRCOG Services
- The MPO & RTA
- MPO – MET Transit
- RTC – Onboard Public Transit
- Regional Transportation Planning
- Passengers Transportation Plan
- Microtransit
- Funding – Local & Federal
- The Future of Regional Transit: Challenges and Opportunities

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

INRCOG Overview

- Service and planning organization codified - Iowa code chapter 28H
- 18 Cogs in Iowa
- 9 MPOs
- 6 Transportation Districts
- INRCOG: Six counties and 54 cities
- Umbrella organization for:
  - Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board (MPO)
  - Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)



INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

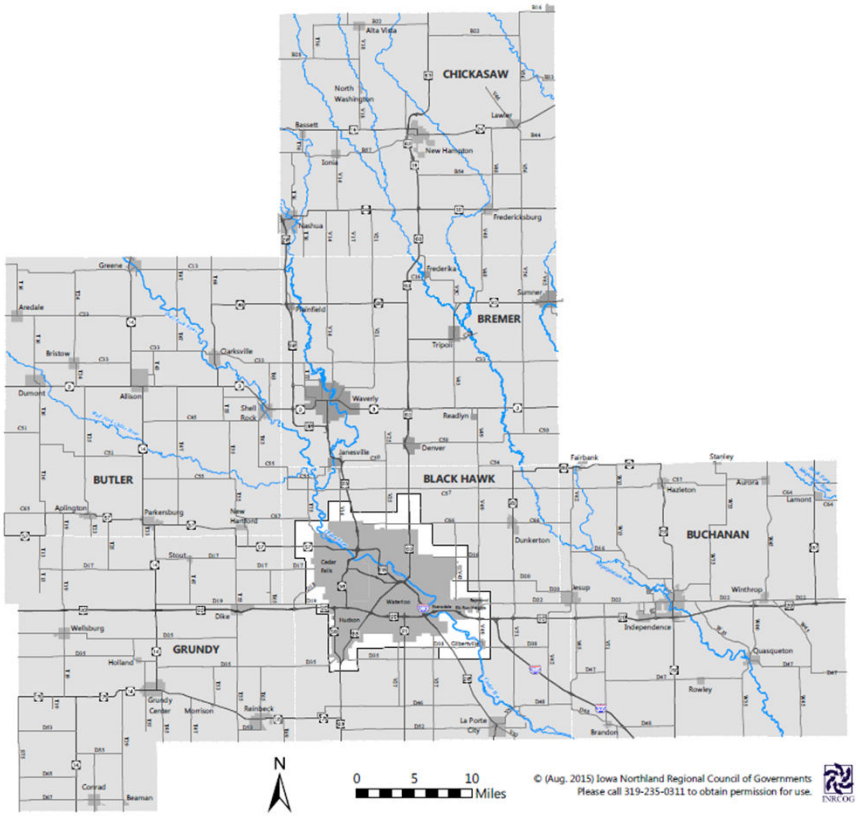
Beyond Transportation - INRCOG Services

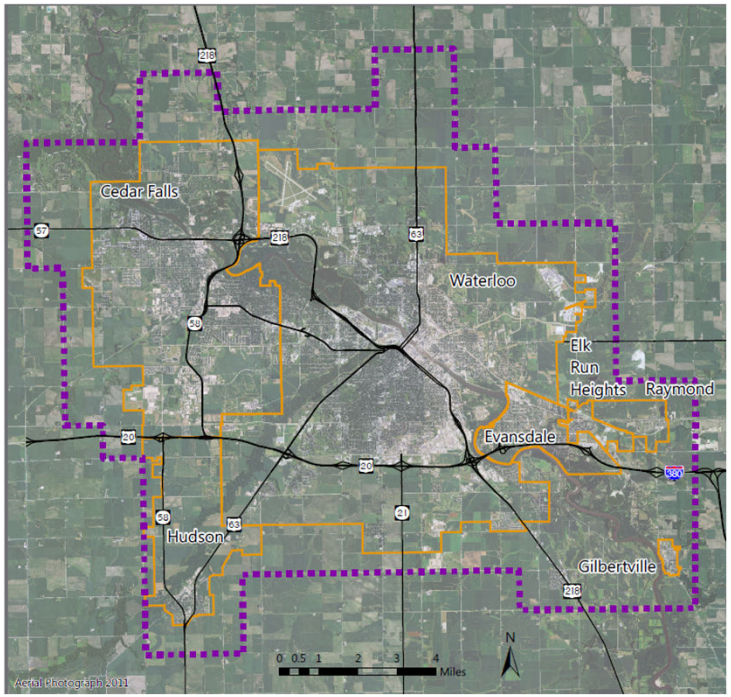




INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

The MPO & RTA





- Waterloo
- Cedar Falls
- Elk Run Heights
- Evansdale
- Gilbertville
- Hudson
- Raymond
- Black Hawk County

- Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Grundy Counties
- Two communities from each county, including Waverly and Independence

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

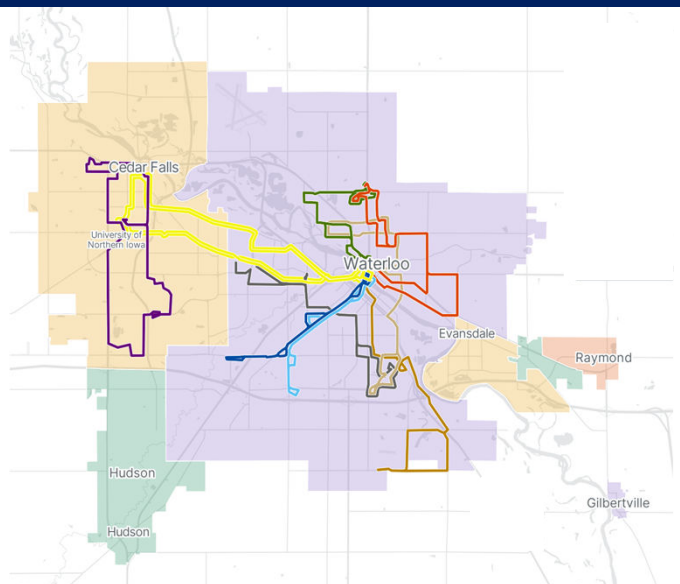
MPO – MET Transit

BHC MPO

1 COUNTY
Black Hawk County

7 CITIES
Cedar Falls
Elk Run Heights
Evansdale
Gilbertville
Hudson
Raymond
Waterloo

2 TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
Metropolitan Transit Authority
Waterloo Regional Airport





MET Transit's Central Transfer Facility, Downtown Waterloo

- Metropolitan Transit Service of Black Hawk County (MET Transit)
  - Intergovernmental Entity (28E) Between Waterloo and Cedar Falls
  - Metro Services
  - Fixed Route and Paratransit Services
  - 39 Vehicles
  - 45 Full - Time Employees (29 Drivers, 7 Maintenance, 4 Dispatchers, and 5 Management)
  - 215,500 Rides Per Year on Average (Previous Five Years)
  - Completed Comprehensive Service Study; Redesigned Fixed Routes

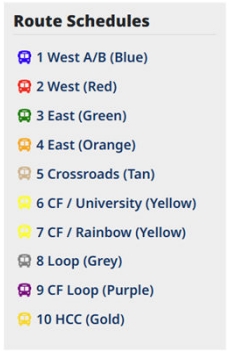
INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

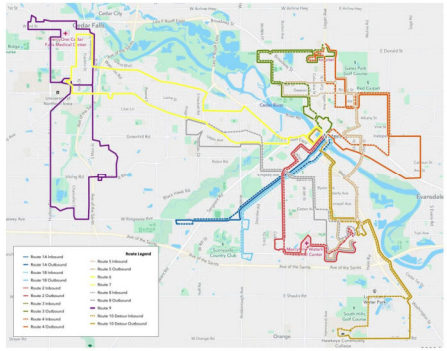
The MPO – Transit

- Fixed route service - Traditional public transit bus service. Waterloo and Cedar Falls



MET Transit's Central Transfer Facility, Downtown Waterloo





- Paratransit service - ADA and elderly door-to-door service for those that are unable to utilize the fixed route system. (Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Evansdale).



MET Paratransit



Waterloo Regional Airport

INRCOG's Role;

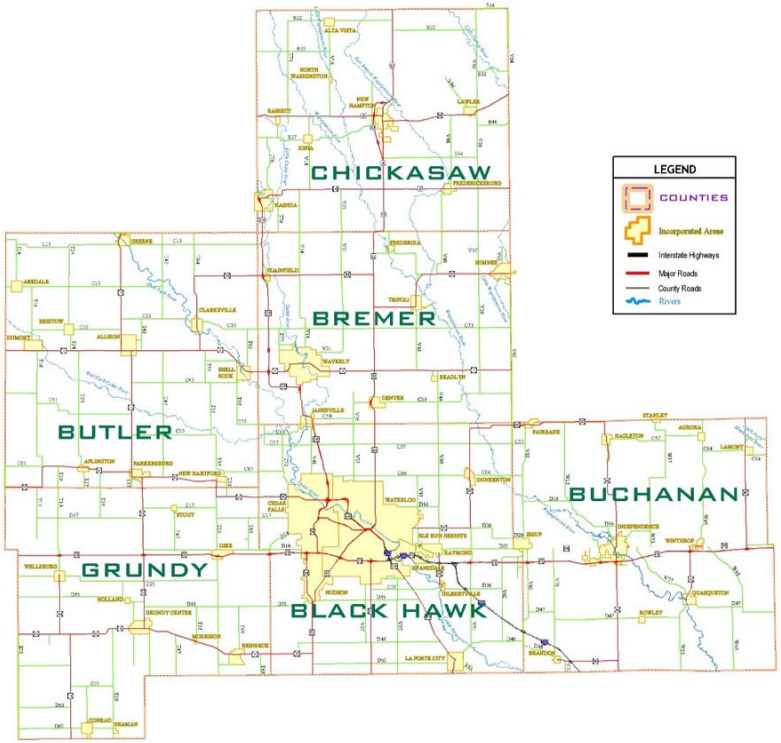
- Transportation Planning & Coordination
- Technical Assistance
- Funding & Programming Assistance

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

The RTC – Onboard Public Transit



Onboard Public Transit



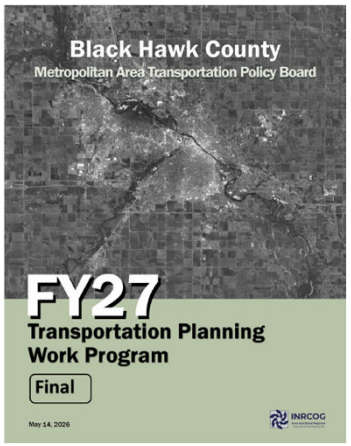
- Iowa Northland Regional Transit Commission (RTC)/On Board Public Transit
  - Under the INRCOG Intergovernmental (28E) Umbrella
  - 6 County region;
    - Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, and Grundy Counties
  - Demand Response Services (Dial-A-Ride; Door-to-Door)
  - 20 Vehicles
  - 14 Drivers
  - 32,000 Rides Per Year on Average
  - Completed Purchase and Implementation of Schedule and Dispatch Software; Established Bus Lot
- Cost for Rides: $2.00/mile (minimum $8.00/one-way trip

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

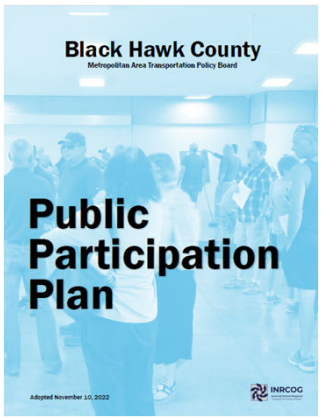
Regional Transportation Planning

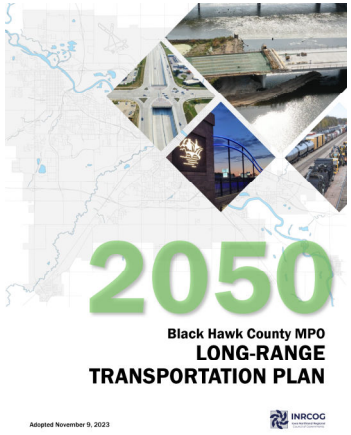


- **LRTP** - 20 - 30 years planning document
- **TIP** – 4year program of federal aid projects
- **TPWP** - Outlines annual tasks for MPO and RTA staff
- **PTP** - Passenger transportation and human service interests
- **PPP** - Guides public input process









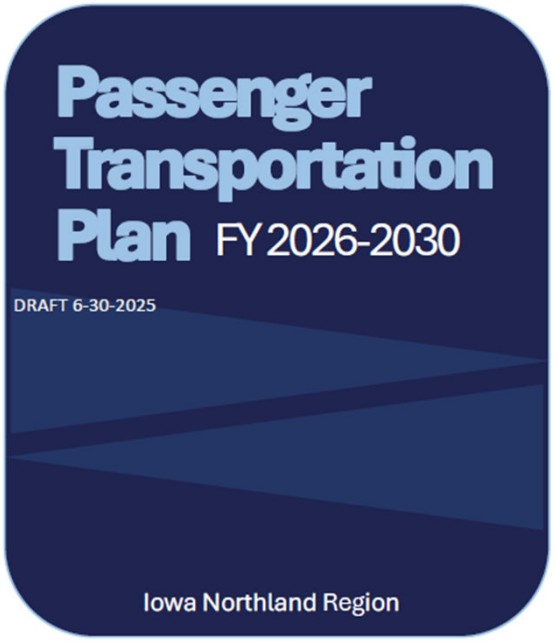




INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

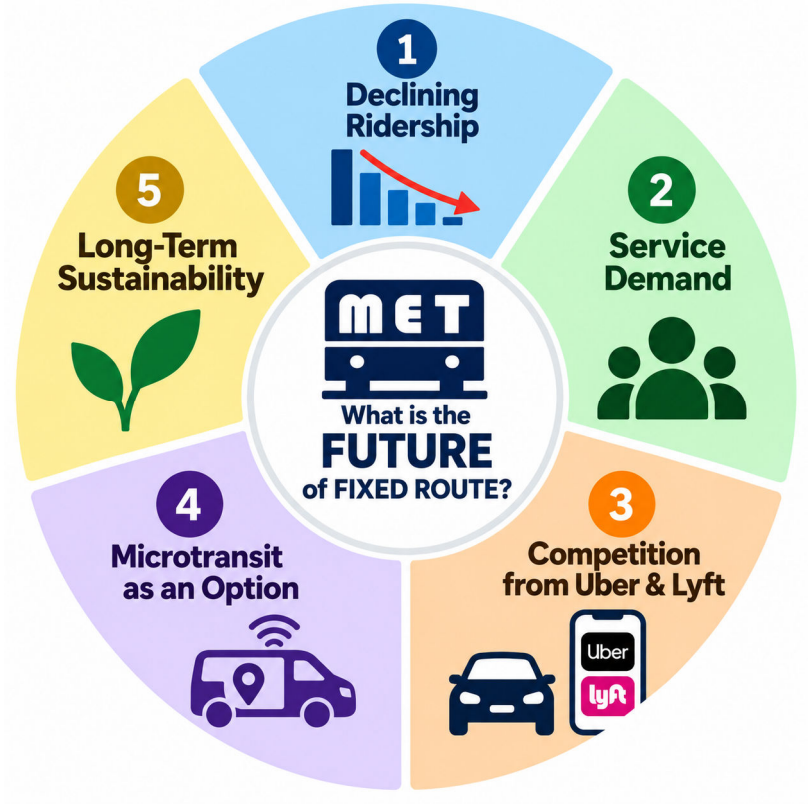
Passenger Transportation Planning FY 26 – 30 (PTP)

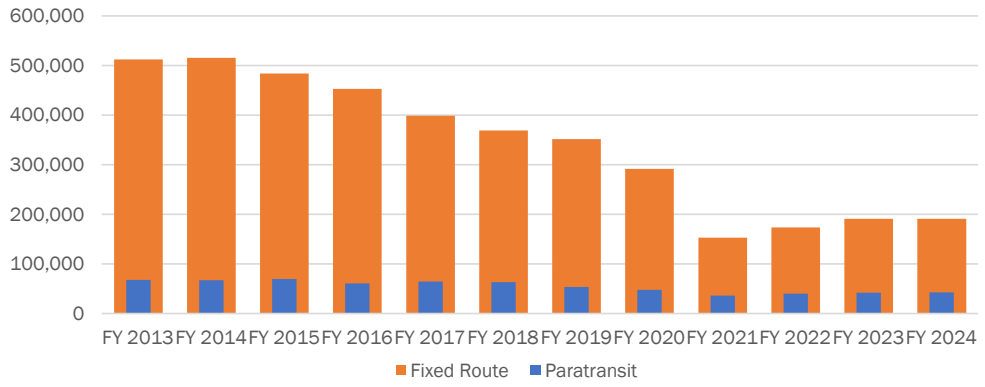
- INRCOG's planning process (LRTP, PTPs, etc.,)
  - Evaluates existing transit systems,
  - Coordinate with Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) – public input
  - Identify local and regional transit needs & priorities
  - Identify strengths
  - Service gaps,
  - Set goals and objectives
  - Leverages regional opportunities to improve mobility, coordination, and accessibility.

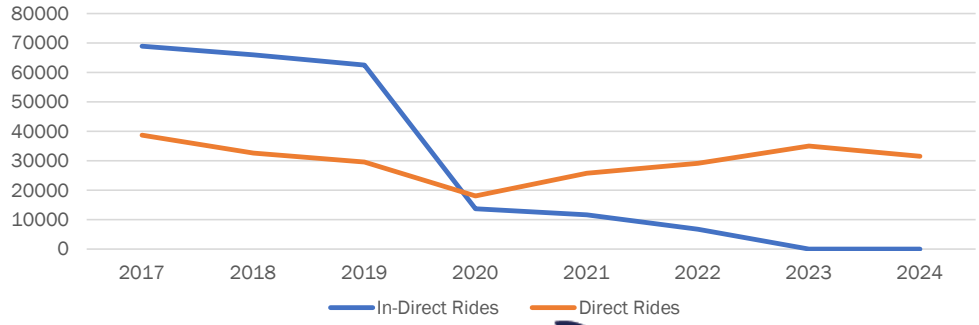


INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

Passenger Transportation Planning FY 26 – 30 (PTP)





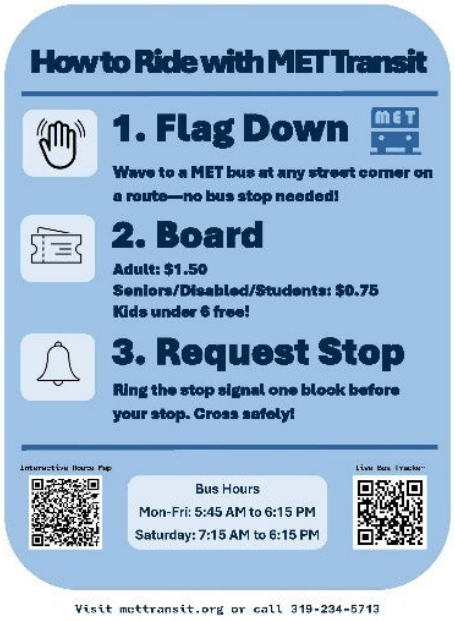


- COVID 19, uncertainties in demand, rising operating cost, etc.

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

Passenger Transportation Planning FY 26 – 30 (PTP)

- How to Ride Signage
  - Language Translation
  - QR to live bus tracker
  - Installed in Bus stops and key locations



Microtransit Task Force



This task force was established through the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), and the cities of Waterloo and Cedar Falls as part of the FY2026-2030 Passengers Transportation Plan (PTP), to develop, evaluate, and implement microtransit solutions to improve mobility, accessibility and better serve the Waterloo-Cedar Falls community.

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

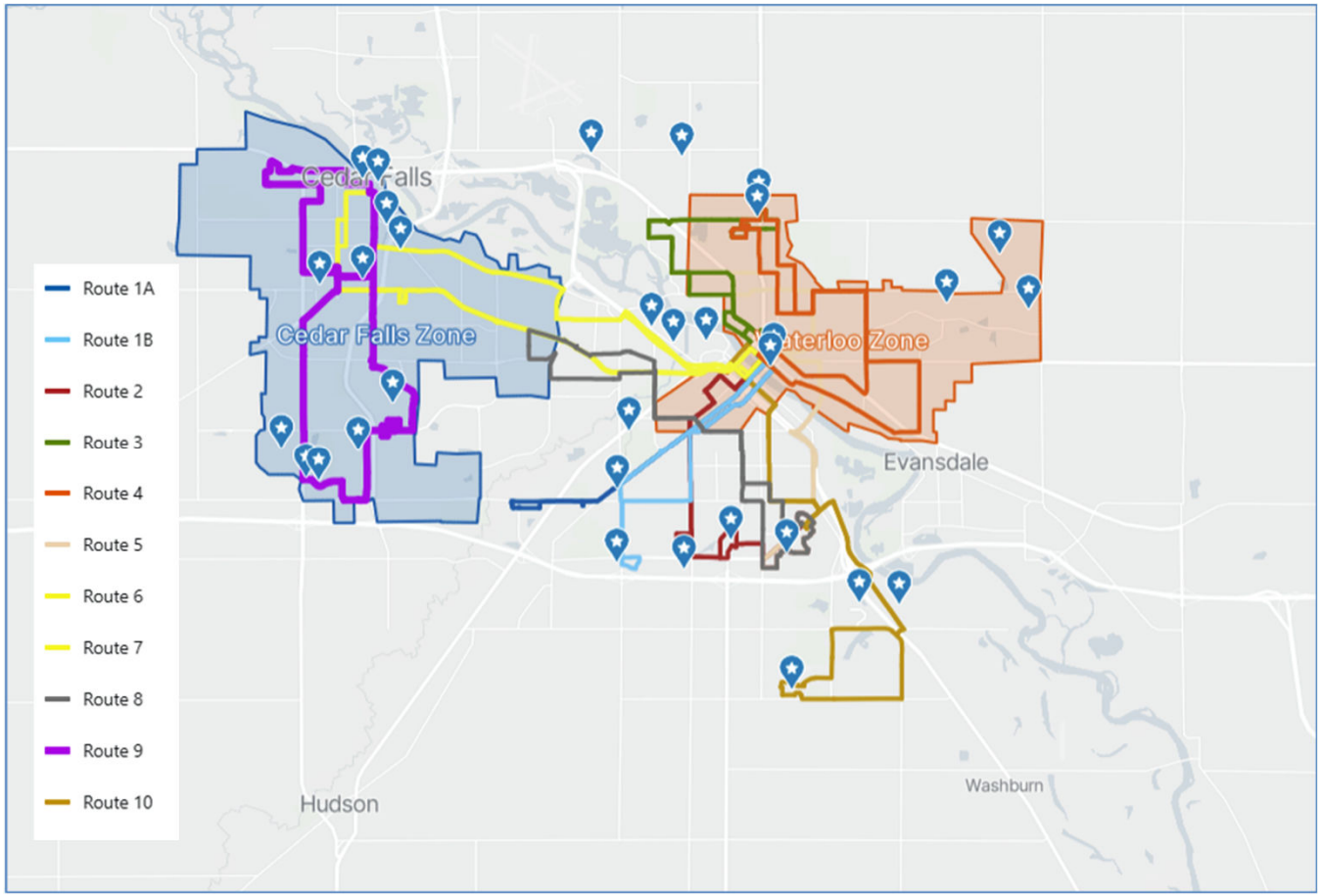
Microtransit Project



- A technology-enabled service that uses multi-passenger vehicles to provide on-demand services with dynamically generated routing.
- Microtransit services are traditionally provided in designated service areas to:
  - Improve the first/last mile connections
  - Increase access to employment
  - Rides are shared
  - Accessible for all types of riders
    - Commingling of ADA complementary paratransit services with general transit service
  - Dedicated fleet of branded vehicles
  - FTA compliant service
  - Complement the existing fixed route service

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

Microtransit – Service Areas



Zones based on;

- Route productivity,
- Ridership
- major employers,
- schools,
- service gaps (first/last mile connections)

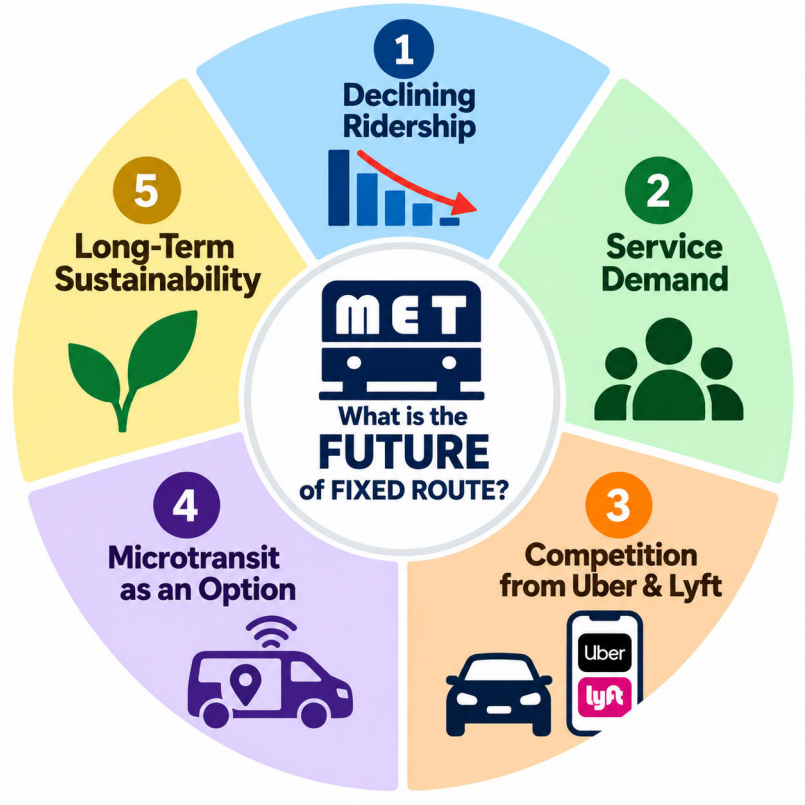
INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

Funding – Federal & State

- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA);** Section 5307 – Urbanized Area Transit Funding, Section 5310 – Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities, Section 5311 – Rural Transit Assistance, Section 5339 – Bus and Bus Facilities, Sections 5303/5304 – Metropolitan and Regional Transit Planning.
- **Iowa DOT – State Funding**; State Transit Assistance (STA). STA Special Projects.
- **Federal Flexible Transportation Funding**
- **ICAAP / CMAQ** – Air quality and emissions reduction.
- **STBG & TAP** – Surface Transportation Block Grant & Transportation Alternative (highway & bridge, trail, bike & ped, etc.).
- **Local & Partnership Funding**
- **INRCOG's Support;** Funding identification and coordination, grant writing and application development.

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

What is the Future of Transit ?



ON BOARD
PUBLIC TRANSIT PROVIDED BY INRTC

MET

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

Thank you!

Oghogho Oriakhi
Transportation Planner I
ooriakhi@inrcog.org

Nick Fratzke
Director of Transportation
nfratzke@inrcog.org

INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments