

RPA18

Regional Planning Affiliation - Region 18 Policy Board and Technical Committee Meeting

Aug 13, 2025 11:00 AM Training Room ▾ 17501 Eastern Hills Dr, Council Bluffs, IA 51503 ▾

MINUTES

In attendance:

Policy Board Voting Members

- **Charlie Parkhurst** - Shelby County, Chair
- **Susan Miller** - Pottawattamie County, Vice Chair
- **Richard Crouch** - Mills County
- **Angie Winkvist** - City of Glenwood*
- **Gervas Mgonja** - City of Harlan
- **Turri Colglazier** - City of Missouri Valley*

Technical Committee Voting Members

- **Chris Fredericksen** - Shelby County, Vice Chair
- **John Rasmussen** - Harrison County
- **Jamey Clark** - City of Glenwood

Non-Voting/MAPA Staff

- **Lindsey Button** - MAPA
- **Rachel Goettsch** - MAPA
- **Latifa Moro** - MAPA
- **Carlos Morales** - MAPA*
- **Jodi Marsh** - Pottawattamie County
- **Adam Ring** - Pottawattamie County
- **Travis Halm** - Iowa DOT*
- **Scott Suhr** - Iowa DOT

*Virtual attendance**

Charlie Parkhurst called the meeting to order at 11:06 am.

The slides noted the meeting was held in accordance with Chapters 21 and 22 of the Iowa Code and was live-streamed on MAPA's YouTube page.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of the Agenda (Policy)

Charlie Parkhurst called for a motion to approve the agenda. No changes were made to the agenda.

Policy Board: Richard Crouch motioned to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Susan Miller. Motion passed unanimously.



B. Approval of the Minutes: August 13, 2025 Meeting (Policy)

Charlie Parkhurst called for a motion to approve the minutes. No changes were made to the minutes.

Policy Board: Susan Miller motioned to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Richard Crouch. Motion passed unanimously.

C. 2050 Draft Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP):

Rachel Goettsch presented the 2050 Draft Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which is prepared on a five-year cycle with a 20-year planning horizon, and is a requirement for all Regional Planning Affiliations (RPAs). The purpose of the LRTP is to assess the existing condition of the transportation network, identify future needs, and evaluate how demographic, economic, and travel trends will affect the system. The plan also directs planning efforts and prioritizes programming and investments. The final version of the 2050 LRTP is due to Iowa DOT on November 17, 2025.

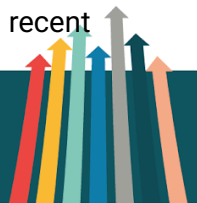
The updated 2050 LRTP goals build on the 2045 goals, with several carried over and others expanded to reflect new priorities:

- **2045 Goals:** Safety, Transportation Options, Preservation, Economic Vitality, Environment, and Land Use & Growth.
- **2050 Goals:** Safety & Security, Transportation Options, Preservation & Resilience, Economic Vitality, and Land Use & Growth & Sustainability.

Safety & Security: Updated to reflect the ongoing Safe Streets for All (SS4A) planning efforts. Rachel reported that final county safety action plans have been completed for all four RPA-18 counties as part of a broader 97-county SS4A initiative. A joint SS4A plan with RPA-13 is currently underway, covering seven communities, including Harlan, Glenwood, and Missouri Valley. She emphasized that Missouri Valley's inclusion in RPA-18 membership was key to ensuring the community's eligibility for future federal safety funding, noting that this plan will have a big impact on what they can do with transportation funding, specifically regarding safety funding.

Transportation Options: More emphasis was placed on trails, sidewalks, and Safe Routes to School projects. MAPA staff presented to county boards of supervisors during plan development to align with county priorities and gather feedback. The Harrison and Mills County Trails Boards have also reconvened, and MAPA is coordinating with them to support project applications—particularly for bicycle and pedestrian improvements eligible for Regional Transportation Alternatives (TASA/TAP) funding through RPA-18.

Preservation & Resilience: Iowa DOT's 2023 Statewide Resilience Improvement Plan identified flooding along the I-29/Missouri River corridor as one of the state's top three hazards. These recurring flood events have caused significant disruptions to the transportation network and required costly repairs, with increasing frequency in recent



years. Addressing this hazard has become a priority for the state, which is working to better avoid, plan for, and design against such impacts. Including this topic in the LRTP ensures that the region is aligned with the statewide plan and positioned for future funding opportunities.

Economic Vitality: Focuses on freight, rail, and tourism, with an emphasis on revitalizing small communities and downtowns to attract visitors and support local economies.

Land Use & Growth & Sustainability: Promotes coordination between the transportation system, housing, and land use to support responsible growth across RPA-18 communities.

Rachel noted that each goal has its own dedicated LRTP chapter, and then reviewed the outreach activities completed for the plan overall:

- A public survey conducted in summer 2024 received 19 responses.
- Eleven (11) public meetings and events were held across the region.
- The draft document was published online for public comment from August - September 2025.

Survey responses highlighted community priorities, including roadway maintenance, sidewalk gaps, and limited bicycle/pedestrian facilities, with safety consistently ranked as the top concern. Rachel concluded by noting that the draft LRTP will remain open for public comment through September, with the final version presented in October and submitted to Iowa DOT in November 2025.

Technical Committee: Chris Fredericksen motioned to

- Recommend approval of the draft 2050 LRTP and open the public comment period

Motion was seconded by John Rasmussen. Motion passed unanimously.

Policy Board: Richard Crouch motioned to

- Approve the Technical Committee recommendation.

Motion was seconded by Susan Miller. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Bylaws Revisions

Rachel Goettsch presented the proposed revisions to the RPA-18 Bylaws. She explained that she had incorporated recent redline edits into the draft with assistance from Susan.

Susan asked whether these should be considered bylaws or articles. Rachel explained that they are titled Articles of Agreement, but function as bylaws, and the group discussed whether to keep the name or update it. Rachel clarified that the document would continue to function as bylaws, with only the title changing. Lindsey suggested that they might be able to ask Elise as well if there were any legal connotations. Rachel



added that MAPA's grant coordinator is also reviewing the draft and will provide feedback if needed.

Rachel then summarized key changes, noting that the previous version was written solely from the perspective of the Policy Board and did not account for the Technical Committee. The updated version clarifies the relationship between both bodies and defines key terms:

- *Members* now refer to jurisdictions or eligible entities (e.g. SWIPCO).
- *Representatives* are individuals serving on the Policy Board or Technical Committee.
- *Non-voting entities* are eligible for RPA-18 services but cannot vote. For example, small communities without staff capacity can request MAPA's help with grant applications.

She also clarified the distinction between voting and non-voting representatives:

- *Technical voting members* include county engineers and other technical staff officially designated by their communities.
- *Technical non-voting members* include entities such as SWIPCO, FTA, FHWA, and Iowa DOT. While they do not attend regularly, their roles are clearly defined

She then walked the committees through the revised articles:

Article I – Sets the stage with RPA history and functions (Section 1.02). The last update was in 1994, and most of the language has since become outdated.

Article II – Covers membership. Membership applies to jurisdictions and other entities, with voting rights addressed in Articles IV and V. Language was clarified to define “good standing.”

Article III – Clarifies that powers rest with the Policy Board, aligning with best practices used by other RPAs.

Article IV – Outlines major updates for the Policy Board:

- Representation: one county supervisor per county and mayors of cities over 2,500 (previously 5,000), now including Harlan and Missouri Valley.
- Addition of a Small Community Representative from Pottawattamie County (cities under 2,500), serving on a two-year rotational term. *Susan recommended three years to allow time for members to learn the RPA's work.*
- Removed the ability for individuals to serve concurrently on both the Policy Board and Technical Committee.



- Election cycles are updated from one year to two years, to be held in even years prior to July 1, with terms beginning July 1 (start of the fiscal year). Votes for Policy and Technical will continue to be conducted separately.

Article V – A new article was added to define the Technical Committee. Officer roles were clarified: typically, the Policy Board Chair presides, followed by the Vice-Chair if absent. If both are absent, the Technical Chair or Vice-Chair would preside, with each body functioning separately under its own authority.

Articles VI–VIII – Contained only minimal updates, mostly nomenclature changes.

Article IX – Added a five-year review cycle to prevent the long gaps between updates.

Rachel concluded by asking whether the board wished to vote on the revisions or table them until October for additional review.

Discussion:

John raised concerns, stating that he did not understand why technical members were not simply designated as non-voting. He explained that having both bodies voting could be disruptive, particularly when the quorum for the Technical Committee was uncertain, and he did not want that issue to delay meetings.

Scott noted that even without a quorum, the Technical Committee can still make recommendations to the Policy Board, though no formal vote would be cast. He emphasized that county engineers provide professional expertise critical to reviewing projects before Policy Board action.

John responded that without a quorum, no action comes out of the Technical Committee and questioned the value of keeping them as voting members. He suggested technical representatives might instead serve as non-voting members with proxy authority, since attendance has often been an issue.

Lindsey explained that the purpose of the Technical Committee vote is to document that items were reviewed by technical staff before going to the Policy Board. She added that this is how MPOs and other RPAs operate, ensuring transparency and technical review even when the Policy Board has final approval.

Rachel acknowledged quorum challenges, noting that August meetings often have lower attendance, though staff send Tuesday followups to confirm participation. She added that, in her time with RPA-18, a quorum has rarely *not* been met.

Gervas stated that having technical staff review documents, even without a formal quorum, improves transparency and reassures him that different perspectives are considered.



John reiterated his concern, stating he would prefer being a non-voting member with proxy authority. He felt it was strange that the board could assign proxies to anyone other than engineers, who are already present and engaged in the process.

Carlos explained that the triennial report from Iowa DOT identified a deficiency in representation from smaller communities. The intent of the revisions is not to limit participation but to broaden perspectives, encourage discussion, and ensure federal funds are allocated with input from many viewpoints.

John agreed with broader participation but cautioned against setting quorum requirements too high, noting that attendance has historically been difficult (especially between 2004–2015), and due to that, was worried that stricter rules could make it harder to conduct business.

Rachel clarified that the revisions would set quorum at 50% of membership, or four members (currently three). She suggested that if quorum requirements create problems, the Policy Board could adjust the language later. She added that MAPA staff want to ensure that the 3C planning, which is coordinating, continuing, and comprehensive, is being carried out in all planning work.

John asked whether Policy Board members had concerns with engineers serving as proxies. Susan replied that she preferred allowing engineers to vote in her place rather than leaving a seat unrepresented and supported the proxy idea. John noted that proxies would prevent engineers from serving concurrently on the Technical Committee.

Lindsey questioned whether an engineer could hold both roles at the same time. She suggested it may work if, in a specific meeting, the engineer acts as a policy proxy but does not vote as part of the Technical Committee in that same meeting.

Scott responded that a county engineer serving as a proxy should still be able to vote in their technical role as well as cast the policy vote, since both functions are important. It was cautioned that proxy voting could become legally complicated, since individuals are not supposed to vote for two entities at the same time, but noted that the Technical Committee does not actually approve items with its vote.

Rachel added that, per her observation, even if technical votes are advisory, they strongly influence whether or not Policy Board actions move forward.

Scott provided a scenario to illustrate the issue. Lindsey replied that we want to be a little careful about that course of action, because ultimately, the powers lie with the RPA policy board as elected officials.

John commented that if he attends as a Policy Board member rather than as part of the Technical Committee, he could still run the forum, and questioned whether a quorum



requirement is really necessary for the Technical Committee. Charlie asked whether the Technical Committee vote should be taken before the Policy Board's vote.

Susan noted that, based on her experience, technical recommendations provide useful input that makes Policy Board decisions easier and more informed.

Gervas commented that the Policy Board can still make its decisions regardless of what comes from the Technical Committee, but noted that the committee's input is still helpful in guiding those decisions.

Scott recommended keeping technical votes as recommendations to the Policy Board. This allows the Policy Board to act with a clear record that technical staff had reviewed the item.

Lindsey suggested tabling the bylaws revisions until October so that staff can update the redlines. Rachel agreed and stated that MAPA staff will prepare multiple versions, including options for proxies and quorum requirements.

John proposed removing quorum requirements for the Technical Committee entirely. Gervas asked if technical input could still count with only one or two members present. John replied that transparency would remain, since agendas and packets are distributed in advance.

Lindsey added that minutes would continue to be recorded when recommendations were made, even if attendance was low. Rachel added that, for her, the quorum requirement is a protection to ensure technical votes are still taken, and she cautioned against removing it.

Travis asked if county highways were the only mode proposed for the committee, and whether John McCurdy (Policy Board) and Mark Lander (Technical Committee) from SWIPCO/SWITA were included.

Rachel responded that they were not specifically listed in the bylaws, noting that MAPA's interaction with SWIPCO has fluctuated and been inconsistent.

Lindsey added that trail and transit groups are already listed as non-voting members, and making them voting members would require a bylaw amendment, which likely cannot be completed by October.

Rachel concluded that the bylaws revisions would be tabled until the October meeting. No motion was carried or approved at this meeting.



DISCUSSION ITEMS

E. Public Comment

The floor was opened to give members of the public the opportunity to comment. No remarks were made.

F. Additional Business

a. Grant Information

Rachel provided an overview of the Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program (RTAPP), a federal program designed to help rural and tribal communities develop transportation projects. The program is 100% federally funded and does not require a local match. Awards range from \$250,000 to \$2.5 million, with an estimated total of \$54.2 million available through the program. Applications open September 8 and are due by October 8, 2025. It was noted that this program could be a good fit for smaller communities that often lack the staff capacity and local match to pursue larger federal programs.

b. RPA 13 & 18 SS4A Update

Rachel provided an update on the RPA 13/18 Safe Streets for All (SS4A) project. It is currently in the data analysis and outreach phase, with community input being collected through online mapping tools and pop-up events. She asked committee members to help share the survey in those communities to encourage greater participation, as some cities are less represented in the current responses. The final planned outreach event will take place at ShenFest in Shenandoah at the end of September.

G. Adjournment

Charlie Parkhurst called for a motion for the meeting to adjourn.

Susan Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 pm. Motion was seconded by Richard Crouch.

FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **RPA-18 Policy Board and Technical Committee Meeting:** September 10, 2025, at 11:00 am *(if needed)*
- **RPA-18 Meeting:** October 8, 2025, at 11:00 am
- **Council of Officials Annual Meeting:** October 8, 2025, at 5:00 pm

