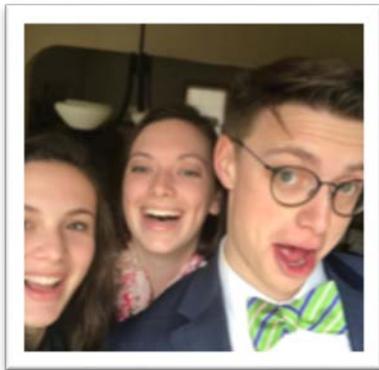


## April 2018 Director's Report

Hi, everybody! Last month I was talking about springing forward, but it feels like spring is stuck – 16 degrees this morning and snow tomorrow has made it hard to feel like spring has sprung, and I admit to being sick of my winter running gear. But spring and summer will surely be upon us – with great optimism for warmer weather I signed up for my first RAGBRAI, and expect to be joined by my son Matt and some college friends at different points along the way. It will be an interesting way to commute to Ames!

For those of you that celebrate Easter I hope you had a happy one. We were lucky enough to have Matt and Mary



*Erin, Mary, and Matt after Easter Mass. That's not a clip-on.*

home with Erin, which gave us 75% of the kids

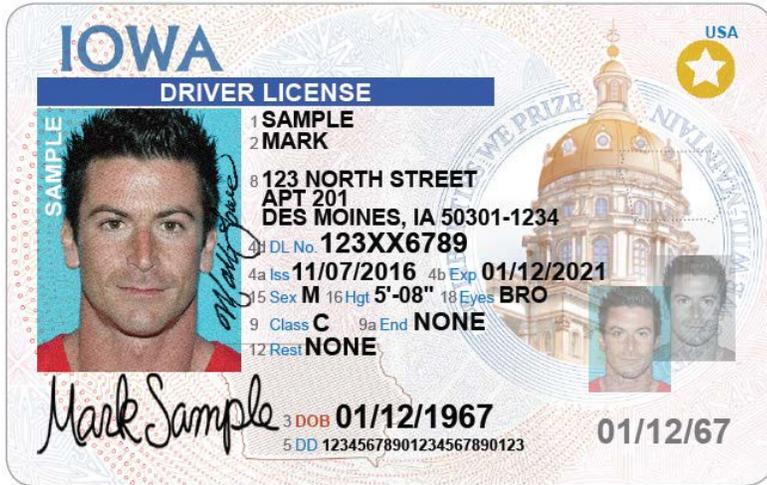
there for Easter. Even though they are (soon to be) 21, 19, and 17, they were still up for coloring Easter eggs (which made me feel a lot better, I would have felt bad if I was the only one) and the annual Lowe-kid Easter egg hunt (I'm disqualified from that as the spouse of the egg-hider-in-chief). Mary and Matt also brought their flute and trumpet home and played at the Easter vigil and mass at St. Kate's in Des Moines, so it was a nice family holiday all around. We missed Dan, who's in Utah, but we get to see him this coming week when we travel to Utah State in Logan for his senior art show. It will be interesting to see his work and to also see what color his hair is now. I'll report back and let you know next month; in the meantime, here's this month's report!



*All the "kids" coloring eggs together.*

## New driver's licenses and ID cards coming soon!

I mentioned last month that we would be releasing new card designs for our driver's licenses and ID cards, and promised to share the new designs with you. We've been working with our card production vendor to complete production testing, and now have a target date of April 30 for the transition to the new design. As I mentioned last month, we update our cards on a regular basis to adopt new and better security features to make sure they remain resistant to and protected against counterfeiting or alteration, and to make sure they continue to meet



Sample adult license.

cards as official government documents and represented all Iowans, but it's important to remember that the images used on the cards are more than just pretty pictures – they are actually part of the card security, adding to the layers of visible and embedded security that prevent counterfeiting and alteration. (Which is why we did not go through a public jury for the image selected, as we did for license plates.) We can't share all the embedded and hidden security features, but more overt or visible ones include UV and infrared images and a laser engraved state outline that's visible when you hold the card to the light.

Here's additional information on the transition to the new design that may be helpful for friends, family, or customers that have questions:

- **We're only changing licenses and IDs as we go forward**, meaning that customers will get the new cards as they apply for a new license or ID, renew a license or ID that has expired or will expire soon, or replace a license or ID that has been lost, stolen, damaged, or destroyed. All licenses or IDs issued before we switch to the new design remain valid until they expire, and no one needs to go to a service center to exchange a card with the current design for one with the new design.
- **There is no additional charge or fee for the new licenses or IDs.** The change in design has absolutely no effect on the fees we charge for licenses and IDs, which are set by statute, and they remain the same – fees are \$4 per year for the usual noncommercial licenses and \$8 (total) for IDs. (There are additional fees for commercial licenses and additional privileges like motorcycle privileges, but those all stay the same as well.) IDs are valid for eight years, and we're in the middle of completing a transition from five-year licenses to eight-year licenses – beginning in 2019 most licenses will be valid for eight years. (Exceptions are licenses issued to people 72 and over, licenses and IDs issued to people who are temporary foreign nationals, and licenses issued to people that have medical issues that affect their driving ability and require more frequent assessment – these may be valid for two years or less.)

federal standards for card security promulgated by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). (The last time we updated our card design was in 2012.) They key objective is a secure credential that protects Iowans from identity theft or fraud.

The new design (see images) features the state capitol with its gold dome and our state motto: "Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain". We picked this design (with the approval of then-Governor Branstad and Lt. Governor Reynolds) because we thought it helped announce the

- **The change in design doesn't affect the process or procedure for getting a license or ID.** The change is a design change only and doesn't affect or change the eligibility requirements or requirements for getting an Iowa license or ID.
- **The new design will be available through all our service centers.** We issue licenses and IDs to about 2.2 million customers through 17 service centers we operate, as well as service centers operated by 83 county treasurers (county treasurers provide driver and identification services under our supervision and as our agents in the 83 counties in which we don't directly operate a service center). The new design will become available through all service centers at the same time.
- **We will continue to mail the licenses from a secure central facility.** We switched to a process called central issuance in April 2010, which means the final "hard" cards are produced at a central facility and mailed to customers, and customers are given a secure-paper temporary card until the final card arrives. The new design doesn't change that and we will continue to mail the final card to customers. (There also won't be any change in the secure-paper temporary card.) Central-issuance lets us produce higher quality cards with better security features and lets us offer much higher security for the card materials and card production process at a much lower cost, because we're doing it all at one highly secure location used by several states, rather than trying to spread all the materials, printers, and security mechanisms through more than 100 service locations. Central issuance also helps us meet the high security standards of the federal REAL ID Act, and gives us the opportunity to complete critical facial recognition reviews to detect attempted identity theft or fraud before we issue the final card.
- **The new design will be incorporated on all the cards or credentials we issue.** I showed you the usual noncommercial licenses we issue to adults, but you will see the new card design in all the cards and credentials we issue, including ID cards, minor's licenses, commercial driver's licenses, motorcycle licenses, cannabidiol registrations cards, and state employee ID cards.

This is an important improvement to one of our main products, and one that reflects the important role we play in identity management (and that identity plays in mobility and accessibility). As our mobility coordinator Jeremy Johnson-Miller is fond of saying, "getting you there" is more than just moving people from point A to B -- it's about what you do when you get there. Secure, protected, and recognized identities help us do what we want and need to do when we get there. Thank you to the Driver & Identification Services team for making this happen!

### **Federal transit grant will fund new buses**

Speaking of mobility and accessibility – I often like to say that we're the Department of Transportation, not the Department of Driving, and public transit emphasizes that – transit offers mobility and accessibility to a variety of people that for economic or personal reasons can't use or access personal transportation, including elderly residents, low-income residents, college students, disabled residents, and youth, and it also offers options for people that choose not to drive for economic, practical, or environmental reasons. It also reduces demand and

congestion on our highway system, which promotes safety and mobility for everyone. So as a Department of *Transportation*, it's important that we help promote a robust transit system.

We're lucky in Iowa to have public transit service in all 99 counties, but to keep that service up and enhance it, it's critical that we replace aging public transit vehicles – our state long range plan ([Iowa in Motion 2045](#)) identifies vehicle replacement as the highest impact public transit strategy.

That's why I'm excited to report that we received a \$3.6 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration's Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program (the FTAB&BFIP, for short), which provides federal resources to states and transit systems to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities, including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no emission vehicles or facilities. This award will help replace transit vehicles across the state that are in poor condition and have surpassed their useful life, with new efficient vehicles that have lower maintenance costs. (Vehicles to be replaced will be selected in accordance with our Public Transit Management System, which prioritizes vehicle replacements across multiple transit systems and vehicle types.) Thank you and congratulations to everyone that helped us secure this importance source of funding!

### #newiowaplatedesign

I reported last month that we were starting production of our new license plates on March 19, and since then they have started to make their way out to county treasurers offices and into customers' hands. As I indicated, because we use an automated plate ordering system that produces and delivers new plates to counties as they deplete their existing inventory, the roll out will happen over the next few months. One thing, however, that accelerates delivery of the new plates is orders for personalized and specialty plates, which are produced and delivered on demand --so far, Bremer, Butler, Carroll, Cass, Cedar, Clayton, Dallas, Davis, Dickinson, Emmet, Fayette, Grundy, Hamilton, Henry, Jasper, Jones, Mahaska, Pottawattamie, Story, Union, Wapello, and Webster Counties have all reported issuing personalized or specialty plates with the new designs, and standard plates will start to hit the streets soon.

The new license plates are not just appearing on streets and in vehicles – they're also appearing on TV and on social media. *Chicago P.D.* of NBC (showing a remarkable eye for detail) ran an episode that included a suspect from Cedar Rapids, and made sure the



*Jodi Whitworth of WHO-TV posted this image from NBC's Chicago P.D.*



*Dickinson County Treasurer Kris Rowley (left) with a customer.*



*Cass County Treasurer Tracey Marshall (left) with a customer.*

prop license for his vehicle featured the new license plate. And county treasurers and their customers are also getting in the act, by posting pictures of their customers with the new plates on Instagram. Follow us on Instagram as iowadot – in addition to these fun plate posts (which I think are great) you'll also see lots of great safety messages.

### Heroes of the Heartland video released

In my February report I talked about Motor Vehicle Enforcement (MVE) Sgt. Jeff Jones, who was named as a 2018 Heroes of the Heartland award-winner by the Red Cross. As you may recall, Jeff's quick and well-trained actions helped save the life of a truck driver that was having a heart attack at our scale facility on I-380 near Brandon (between Waterloo and Cedar Rapids). The award ceremony was March 28, and since then the Red Cross has released a YouTube video that highlights the incident and includes interviews with the truck driver and his wife, Jeff, and MVE Sgt. Randy Moore, who also assisted. You can see the video [here](#). Congratulations again and thank you once more to everyone that acted quickly and professionally to save a life.

### Tolling in the news

You may have seen in the news and editorial pages over the last couple of weeks articles about the possibility of tolling Interstate 80 (I-80) in Iowa. The articles were referring to a technical memo about tolling that was part of a much larger, long-term study of the I-80 corridor across Iowa that's called a planning environmental linkages (PEL) study. The PEL study, which you can find [here](#), looks at the needs of, and potential solutions for, the I-80 corridor through 2040 and beyond, and includes a series of technical memos that detail different issues and topics important to the future of I-80. The tolling technical memo addressed the feasibility of tolling I-80 to finance its future expansion and maintenance.

I was concerned about the media coverage, not because it explored the topic of tolling or our work, but because some of the coverage wrongly suggested we were actively planning to implement tolling and then abruptly changed course when it proved unpopular. That happens – media coverage can move fast and in its quick and abbreviated wake can sometimes leave impressions that are not quite right – we can always handle that. But I think it's important to us to know internally that we don't make decisions that way, so I'm sharing the following with you.

As the tolling technical memo indicates, the tolling study is conceptual, and designed to help us make an informed decision on whether we should continue to consider or pursue tolling to finance future expansion of I-80. We continued to discuss the relative merits of tolling from the inception of the study last summer through its completion in December, and we ultimately decided that tolling, while financially feasible under certain assumed circumstances, was not recommended and that we would not pursue it. This was not a fast or abrupt decision, but was a thoughtful and deliberate decision that included our highway and planning leadership, and that we reached weeks before the media coverage arose. Our reasons for not recommending tolling, which we continue to share with the media and the public, include the following:

- **It's a bad fit for our open, farm-to-market system** – it would divert interstate traffic to other corridors not designed or intended for interstate traffic.
- **It takes us out of the pay-as-you go financing model** that has served Iowa very well over the years, and diverts infrastructure funding to debt financing.
- **It's a less efficient form of revenue collection** that diverts infrastructure funding to new physical and administrative structures needed to support the collection of tolls.
- **It's a speculative solution** – we have no authority for tolling at the state level and inadequate authority at the federal level.

We were also uncomfortable with the impact on rural versus urban travelers (the feasible toll corridors were in rural segments only); and perhaps most importantly we felt it financed a solution that was not necessary – the tolling option would finance a rapid expansion to a six-lane corridor across the state by 2027, but our models suggest a six-lane corridor across the entire state may not be necessary until beyond 2040. A more gradual approach gives us the opportunity to continue to assess and adjust in a way that meets future transportation needs without overbuilding the highway system.

We expect the final study recommendations to be released in mid-summer, and they will include our final recommendations on tolling. They are of course open to continued public policy debate and we welcome and encourage that – it strengthens the process and the decision-making. But in the meantime, I recognize the excellent work our staff in the Office of Location & Environment has done and continues to do in leading all aspects of the PEL study – we couldn't make informed and intelligent decisions like this without their thorough and diligent work. Thank you!

## Legislative update

We're drawing closer to the end of the session and continue to have success with our proposed bills. We now have four of our five proposed bills signed by Governor Reynolds, and we expect the last to be taken up by the House this week:

### Signed by the Governor

- **Third-party commercial driver's license (CDL) skills testing by Iowa motor carriers.** This bill eliminates a May 14, 2019 sunset provision and allows Iowa-based motor carriers (or their subsidiaries) that operate a CDL training program to continue to conduct the skills (driving) tests a driver must pass to get a CDL at their premises and using their own examiners, provided we train and certify those examiners and audit their performance as required by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. This bill was filed as [House File 2197](#), signed by Governor Reynolds on March 7, 2018, and becomes effective July 1, 2018.
- **Blue/white lights on snow plows.** This bill ends a pilot project we started in 2015 and accelerates equipping all our plow trucks with rear-facing white and blue lights to improve their visibility and avoid side-swipe and rear-end collisions during winter operations. This bill was filed as [Senate File 2163](#), signed by Governor Reynolds on March 7, 2018, and becomes effective July 1, 2018.
- **Charges for operating a commercial motor vehicle while texting or while using a handheld mobile device.** This bill assures continued compliance with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs) that prohibit a person from texting or using a hand-held mobile device (for instance a mobile phone) while driving a commercial motor vehicle, unless the device is being used to make a call and is within the immediate reach of the driver and can be activated by a single touch, by adopting them under a specific and separate code section that can be specifically cited and tracked to the driver's record to assure proper identification of drivers that are subject to disqualification of their CDL for multiple serious offenses. This bill was filed as [House File 2196](#), signed by Governor Reynolds on March 21, 2018, and becomes effective July 1, 2018.
- **Transportation Commission terms.** This bill shifts the terms of members of our Transportation Commission from four-year terms beginning May 1 in the year of their appointment and ending April 30 in the year their term expires to July 1 in the year of their appointment and ending June 30 in the year their term expires, to assure that Commissioners that start developing a five-year highway program can see it through to its approval in June, and that new members aren't asked to immediately approve a program they are not familiar with. This bill was filed as [House File 2195](#), signed by Governor Reynolds on April 2, 2018 and becomes effective immediately for Commissioners appointed and confirmed during this legislative session, and also applies retroactively to Commissioners appointed in prior years to extend their term to June 30 in the year their term expires. This retroactive application assures that we won't have any gaps between terms of Commissioners as we transition from Commissioners that were appointed under the prior law to Commissioners appointed under the new law.

### Still pending

- **Motor Vehicle Enforcement (MVE) officer authority.** As I indicated last month, we made some adjustments to this proposal but the basic premise remains the same – MVE officers are fully authorized peace officers that have authority to enforce all laws of the state and all rules and regulations of the department, but operationally we will assure that our focus remains solidly on our core missions of size and weight enforcement and commercial motor vehicle enforcement. We worked with the legislature to tie operational requirements to our reporting requirements to assure we're consistently targeting 90 percent or more of enforcement activities at core activities, but I'm again very comfortable with the balance we struck, as it's very consistent with how we consistently function. The bill was filed as [Senate File 2326](#) in the Senate, and has passed the full Senate and is pending action by the House, which we hope will happen this week (the week of April 9).

There have also been a number of bills that we did not run as agency bills but that are of interest to us, including very helpful bills on the use of ignition interlock devices for OWI offenders and the study of electric vehicle registration fees and fuel tax revenue, and I will start detailing those next month. More to come!

### Commission appointments

Another significant legislative action was the approval of two Transportation Commissioners. Our Transportation Commission members are appointed by the Governor, subject the confirmation by the Senate. This year Governor Reynolds re-appointed our current Transportation Commission Chair, John Putney, to a second term, and appointed Kraig Paulsen to replace Dan Huber, who will be retiring from the Commission at the end of his term in June. The Senate confirmed the appointment of both on April 2. You can read John's bio [on our Commission web page](#), and many of you may recognize Kraig as the former speaker of the Iowa House and current leader of the Supply Chain initiative at Iowa State University. I'll give you more information about John and Kraig in the next couple months, but for now please join me in congratulating John and Kraig!

### Project management initiative growing

Earlier this year we signed a charter for the Enterprise Project Management Initiative (EPMI). The charter helps guide the work of two offices that are collaborating to lead portfolio and project management throughout the Iowa DOT – the Portfolio and Project Management office in the Highway Division, which is led by Deanna Maifield, and the portfolio and project team in the IT Division, which is led by Alesia Trask.

Although it's titled an initiative, it's important to recognize that this is not just something we're doing for a brief time, but something that we intend to become an ongoing part of our work and work culture – the ability to consistently, effectively, and maturely exercise portfolio and project management principles throughout the Iowa DOT.

One of the things I learned during my time as Motor Vehicle Division director is that great ideas and projects can suffer from a lack of effective project management – they can fail to start, they can take forever to get going or

complete, or they can suffer from inconsistent or poorly defined goals, requirements, or objectives. That's not a knock on the people involved in them at all, but it does reflect the very real effect of asking people to do too many things and to try to lead multiple and often complex projects while handling all their other work duties. Project management is a professional discipline, and when we recognize that and bring certified project managers into our projects (as other professional organizations are doing), we can inject a structure and rigor that avoids those things and helps us

successfully and effectively complete our critical projects, typically with less stress and strife. As business managers, we can sometimes resist giving up "control" of our projects, for fear that we will lose our business requirements or the result won't do what it's supposed to do. But I often like to compare project managers to attorneys – they have specific professional skills that can help you be successful with your "case," and when you take advantage of those skills, it helps you bring out and meet those business requirements and make sure your goals are met. And they also help you spend less time worrying over projects, which give you more time for other things.

We established project management teams in our Highway and IT divisions because both are consistently and constantly involved in large and complex projects and will benefit from the direct influence of project management teams. But their influence is intended to be much broader than just those divisions – the teams are collaborating to develop project management structures and resources and to lead training and development of project management skills throughout the Iowa DOT. This includes monthly project management forums where trainees learn techniques and strategies and hone skills (last count shows 48 people across all divisions of the Iowa DOT participating) to grow the discipline across the Iowa DOT.

There will be more to report as this initiative advances, but the main thing to know is that you can be a part of it. Whether you're a business manager who wants to learn more about how to leverage project management resources in your work, or someone that's interested in developing project management skills, there's room for you. Don't be shy – contact Alesia and Deanna and find out how to get involved – they will be excited to hear from you!

### **Song of the month**

Mitch Dillavou and I just drove to Orange City for the April Commission Tour through four hours of snow and ice and then had dinner at a Mexican restaurant with what could only be described as the Dutch-Mex (as opposed



*Signing the EPMI charter.*

to Tex-Mex) name of Los Tulipanes (a spectacular place to eat, by the way), so this month I'm going with the Red Hot Chili Peppers and their 2006 hit from their Stadium Arcadium album, "Snow (Hey Oh)." I'm really hoping next month I can pick something like "Sunny" (Bibby Hebb), "Good Day Sunshine," (The Beatles), "Walking on Sunshine" (Katrina and the Waves), "House of the Rising Sun" (The Animals), "Island in the Sun (Weezer)," "I'll Follow the Sun" (The Beatles again), "Blister in the Sun" (The Violent Femmes) . . . I could go on and on, but basically anything that says warm sun and blue skies!

### Wellness tip

Last month I talked about yoga, but here's a fitness activity that's even easier to work into your fitness routine – walking. Walking has the same benefits as running (without all the pounding on your knees), you can do it almost anywhere (and even during work breaks), and you don't need any training or practice to do it (although I've been known to make it look like I do). Benefits of regular, brisk walking include weight loss; prevention and mitigation of chronic conditions like heart disease, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes; and improved mood, balance, and coordination. I've been adding extra walks here and there to supplement my exercise and calorie burn and find the mental benefits almost surpass the physical – it's just good to get out in the fresh air! The Mayo Clinic has an excellent web page on the benefits of walking and how to get started safely that you can find [here](#).

\* \* \* \* \*

Well, my friends, we have reached the end of another report. As always I hope it has been helpful and informative to you. Please keep letting me know of things you would like to hear about or things I should be sharing – good dialogue often starts with a good question. In the meantime, have a good month, and as always, stay safe in all you do!

*Mark*