Iowa

Mississippi River Parkway Commission

2015-2016 Annual Report
September 2016

Edith Reiss Pfeffer, Chair
Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Jane Regan, Treasurer
Allamakee County

Lori Wallace
Clayton County

John Goodmann, Secretary
Dubuque County

Vacant
Jackson County

Edith Pfeffer, Chair
Clinton County

Scott Tunnicliff
Scott County

Daniel Petersen, Vice-Chair
Muscatine County

Jay Schweitzer
Louisa County

Lisa Walsh
Des Moines County

Martin Graber
Lee County
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission (IAMRPC) was organized to:

- Preserve, promote and enhance the scenic, historic, natural, archaeological, cultural, and recreation resources of the National Scenic Byway (NSB)/Iowa Great River Road (GRR) and the Iowa Mississippi River Valley.

- Foster economic growth of the Mississippi River corridor.

- Develop the National Scenic Byway/Great River Road.

VISION

The Iowa Great River Road will sustain rewarding lifelong experiences for Iowans and visitors from around the world through the support of a cooperative network of partners and stakeholder, each of which invest in and benefit from the conservation, development, promotion, interpretation and management of the diverse intrinsic resources of the Iowa Mississippi River Valley.

(Adopted December 15, 2014).
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Assist in coordinating the increase of investment and awareness of the National Scenic Byway/Iowa Great River Road and its amenities with roadside parks, scenic overlooks, educational experiences and opportunities and historic information.
- Continue the identification, documentation and protection of the intrinsic resources of the Great River Road.
- Expand the local citizen awareness of the resources and importance of the Great River Road in Iowa and the adjoining states.
- Provide new travel experiences through effective interpretation and promotion of the Great River Road.
- Increase information services to residents and organizations along the Great River Road.
- Identify economic development opportunities based on the sensitive use of the Road’s intrinsic resources.
- Sustain existing alliances with other organizations that are interested in the future of the Great River Road and develop new partnerships where needed.
- Identify volunteer opportunities for individuals and organizations along the Great River Road.
- Assist in coordinating the increase of investment and awareness of the Great River Road and its resources with delivery of programs for public awareness, interpretation and promotion.
- Increase the awareness for Great River Road stakeholders of availability of public and private funding for resource conservation, transportation enhancement, interpretation and promotion.
- Develop communication opportunities to tell the stories of the National Scenic Byway/Great River Road.
  Arrange community involvement meetings and workshops pertaining to a variety of Great River Road related topics.
  Advocate for the Great River Road Interpretative Centers.
- Advocate for the Great River Road research, planning, and development studies. Advocate for transportation related projects in the Great River Road Corridor that incorporate the principles of context sensitive design.
- Advocate for the use of sustainable design principles such as L.E.E.D. (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), native plant community restoration, multi-functional streets, etc.
- Conserve, develop, promote and interpret, and manage the Iowa Great River Road.

(Adopted December 15, 2014).

A major factor in achieving these goals and objectives is partnering with area and national groups and associations that have similar goals and interests. By networking with other organizations, we can best utilize all our assets, including financial, contacts, and personnel.
IOWA MRPC STRUCTURE

The Iowa Commission consists of ten commissioners appointed by the Governor of Iowa representing the ten counties that border the Mississippi River. The commission by Iowa statute is gender and politically balanced. In addition, there are five technical members representing: Iowa Department of Transportation, Department of Economic Development, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Office of Tourism, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The commission has received verbal commitments from the Iowa Department of Economic Development to appoint new technical advisor but as of the date of this report no formal appointment has been completed.

An updated Iowa MRPC commission member's contact list follows:

Iowa MRPC Commission and Technical Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMISSIONERS</th>
<th>IOWA MRPC OFFICE/NAT’L COMMITTEE</th>
<th>ELECTRONIC ADDRESS &amp; PHONE NUMBER</th>
<th>TERM EXPIRES</th>
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6/30/2017
IOWA MRPC COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Iowa MRPC met on four separate occasions in the past year. July 7, 2015 at Le Claire Community Library, Le Claire, Iowa; August 10, 2015 at the Hurstville Interpretive Center, Maquoketa, Iowa; October 8, 2015 at the Mason Dupuy Hotel in New Orleans, LA.; November 9, 2015 United Way Office in Muscatine; February 8, 2016 at the Lyons Branch of Clinton Public Library, Clinton, Iowa; March 21, 2016 at The Drake, 106 Washington St., in Burlington, Iowa; May 2, 206 at our National MRPC semi-annual meeting in La Crosse, Wisconsin and June 20, 2016 at the Hurstville Interpretive Center, Maquoketa, IA.
Minutes of the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission are always public record. Public notices and meeting minutes are also posted here:

http://www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/mississippi_river.htm

Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 7, 2015
Le Claire Community Library 323 Wisconsin Street
Le Claire, Iowa

Call to order:
In the absence of Chair, John Goodmann, Vice Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken with a quorum of the 7-member 2016 roster present.

2016 Commissioners: Edith, Lori W, Jane
Dan, 2015 Commissioners: Larry, Debbie
Tech Members: Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways
Program Guests: Sam Shea, Iowa DOT, District 6
Consultants: David Dahlquist and Breann Bye

Welcome and Announcements:
Pfeffer welcomed attendees and announced two recent awards for MRPC member efforts:

- The Iowa Great River Road (IGRR) was awarded the “2015 Champion of Tourism Award” from the Clinton Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Edith also personally received the Al Wise Volunteer of the Year Award from the Clinton Chamber of Commerce on June 4, 2015. She was recognized for her work with the IGRR, The Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway, Iowa Byways, Trees Forever and other local concerns.

Completion of FY 2015 Business:
Minutes –
April 23, 2015, meeting minutes as distributed were read by Pfeffer. There were no corrections suggested. Moved to accept minutes as distributed and read: Petersen, Second: Wallace.
*Approved.

Treasurer reports
Jane Regan reported the MRPC Foundation balance is $4553.45.
Moved to accept MRPC Foundation as distributed and read: Petersen, Second: Wallace.
*Approved.
Mary Stahlhut reported the MRPC DOT appropriation budget balance at $2,316.96. Motion to accept MRPC DOT report as distributed: Petersen; Second: Wallace.
Discussion: Stahlhut confirmed that there is one more outstanding travel reimbursement claim for the 2015 fiscal year. The balance remaining after that claim will be directed toward the final consultant invoice for the Corridor Management Plan Project. The remainder will be billed to the Foundation for the balance of the local match, completing the CMP project.
*Approved.

Other business

**Budget**
Members reviewed the 2014 - 2016 Budget review handout provided by Mary Stahlhut showing budget line items, expenditures and final balances for the previous, current and next state fiscal years. The budget discussion was deferred to the August meeting when members will have completed the CMP Implementation Workshop setting priorities.

Annual MRPC meeting October 6-8 in New Orleans, Louisiana.
Members discussed the importance of attending. DOT will provide out of state travel request forms as soon as the event details are published. Commissioners were encouraged to think about their travel options to drive or fly so they are ready to submit travel requests quickly when the event information is available. Commissioners may refer to the web page for details (http://mrpcmembers.com/) and make hotel reservations now.

**Reports**

Semiannual MRPC meeting April 22-24, St. Paul, Minn.
Presentations are posted here: http://mrpcmembers.com/national-meetings/
Members agreed to defer discussion to later in the meeting when Commissioner Goodmann would be present to report on the MRPC Executive Board meeting of the ten states. Of special interest is the National Geographic Geo-Tourism Project.
Members were reminded to keep submitting destinations for tourists on their county’s GRR. There were no reports from the Transportation Committee or the Environment, Recreation & Agriculture Committee.

Jane and Edith reported on the agenda items and field trips that showcased Minnesota successes in developing the GRR and riverfront amenities for both community development and tourism. The Mississippi Head Waters and Indian Reservation outing was really good. St. Cloud had city examples of synergy combining recreation, business and health interests like the St. Cloud Hospital along the river.

Culture and Heritage Committee: Edith Pfeffer
Edith reported that there are PowerPoint presentations for all the interpretive centers to use. This version includes all the Iowa centers. She distributed prints and flash drives. Edith also provided copies of the survey document that all the GRR interpretive centers need to fill out and return. The forms are on the 10-state web site under forms and resources. Jane reminded all commissioners that the personal visits with center staff are essential to building promotion and identification of the GRR identity.
Communications and Marketing: Jane Regan
Central will send out a kit for promoting “Drive the Great River Road” this year. It will include radio spots, press releases and other resources. Jane will distribute them. Key to promoting might be connecting to TV stations that serve the GRR. This varies from north to south where stations reach. Iowa might coordinate with Illinois MRPC for stations in Illinois.

New Business
Iowa Tourism partnership advertising: Jane Regan. A list of potential partnership ads from Travel Iowa was distributed, including those that Jane reserved for MRPC. Discussion: Shawna Lode has offered to help MRPC pick which advertising to use and will work with MRPC in August to meet the September deadline.

Departing MRPC commissioners’ comments:
Deb Jochims reported that locals are working on the Aldo Leopold Interpretive Center in Des Moines County. New commissioner candidates have been recommended by the out-going commissioners and others. Larry Kruse made a recommendation, but has not heard more. Perhaps someone who lives in or near a thriving town would be the most effective. Edith thanked Larry and Deb for their service and contributions to the GRR, the CMP and MRPC work.

Commissioner local actions discussion:
Regan reported that assets on the GRR are always changing and commissioners can monitor these in their county and help keep sites welcoming for travelers. In Allamakee County, water landings had washed out. When Jane called the County Conservation Office, they mobilized to bring in sand and restore the landing. Commissioners can encourage locals to enhance local signage to point visitors to shared attributes.
Remember that the Corridor Management Plan for the Great River Road is county-wide. Economic development plans should tie to the GRR. Commissioners are encouraged to engage with local economic development and metro or regional planning to ensure the GRR is identified as an asset and included.

Iowa Great River Road Corridor Management Plan (CMP): David Dahlquist and Breann Bye

Report:
Dahlquist distributed final reports on the CMP roll-outs and David and Breann offered final comments. The June roll-outs reaffirmed a number of the key points that were developed during the CMP process, especially those on pages 10-11 in the report.
- GRR is of high value to local. State, USA and global audiences
- Collaboration among varied stakeholders in different disciplines is parallel rather than connected.
- Leadership needs a new start to maximize the wide range of existing leaders who are pro-GRR in some collaborative form. Perhaps use an existing diverse assembly to leverage time and talent.
- Funding needs to be shaped and directed. BB and DD make the suggestion to have a funding feasibility study.
- Brand. Could GRR sell “naming rights”? What brand efforts and be leveraged. We need a new funding model. The GRR brand needs to be both protected and
promoted.
• Flash drives of final digital files were mailed Thursday to each commissioner.

Discussion and commissioner suggestions for CMP implementation:
• John Goodmann commented that the MRPC has evolved and needs a new relationship with stakeholders and the founding mission.
• Regan commented that the question is “What is expected of MRPC Commissioners going forward?”
• Dan Petersen noted paragraph 2 on page 11, suggesting that locals can be asked to contribute reasonable amounts in annual budgets to implement the CMP. The scale could be determined by the type and size of various entities. Kruse added that local budget discretionary funding is limited.
• Dahlquist mentioned an Iowa Legislature Interim Study Committee to frame the ongoing funding needed and potential sources.
• Regan commented that the Great River Road logo use cost at the national level is very low and the brand could be used effectively to better promote the GRR.
• Pfeffer reported that there is growth in GRR tourism and the Viking cruise ships will be scheduling 5-6 ships 3-4 times a week along the Iowa Mississippi and that will have a large impact in tourism dollars spent locally.
• Regan commented that the US Travel Association Travel Study demonstrates the value of the GRR travel corridor. This a good source for proving value in supporting GRR promotion partnering with the MRPC.

Moved to approve the June 2015 CMP Rollout Meeting Report as distributed: Regan, Second: Petersen
*Approved.

Dahlquist and Bye final comments:
Thank you, for allowing us to work with you on the GRR CMP. It has been an absolute pleasure. The experience has convicted me as a central Iowan to get off the interstate and explore Iowa’s byways. It has made me an absolute cheerleader and advocate for the Iowa Great River Road. There is so much enthusiasm and support up and down the GRR and there is wonderful potential in the organizations and individuals to engage in what MRPC does to implement the CMP. On this journey there are many, many rewards. It is good for your counties, communities, Iowa, the country. There is value and importance in doing this.

MRPC Chair, John Goodmann comments:
During this Corridor Management Plan (CMP) process, the MRPC has moved from functioning with a simple “Kindergarten level” CMP to a more robust role for MRPC and a college level CMP to implement. Now the CMP better represents the level of performance expected of the MRPC and its purpose is in the years to come. Having lived in this corridor, we take this river for granted. For others it is big-time and we should accept this and immerse ourselves in this implementation and identify ourselves as local tourism facilitators.

Adjourned for lunch at 11:55AM
Business meeting resumed at 1:00 PM
9
2016 MRPC

Business Call to

Order
Vice Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.

Roll call was taken with six of the seven-member 2016 roster present.
   2016 Commissioners: Edith, Lori W, Jane, Dan, John, Scott
   2015 Commissioners: Larry, Debbie
   Tech Members: Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways
   Program Guest: David Rose, Iowa DOT Commissioner
   Facilitator: Terry Buschkamp, Main Street
Program Iowa Economic Development Authority,

Election of 2016 Officers
Nominations for were received and new officers were elected:

Confirmed: Edith Pfeffer, Chair

Vice Chairperson: Nomination of Dan Petersen: John Goodmann; Second: Scott Tunnicliff
Nominations ceased.
Confirmed: Dan Petersen, Vice Chair

Secretary: Nomination of John Goodmann: Dan Petersen; Second: Scott Tunnicliff
Nominations ceased.
Confirmed: John Goodmann, Secretary

Treasurer: Jane Regan nominated: John Goodmann; Second: Scott Tunnicliff
Nominations ceased.
Confirm: Jane Regan, Treasurer

2016 Budget
Commissioners discussed the 2016 budget and the transition from spending a large share of
the budget on the CMP development changing to investing in the CMP implementation.
Members agreed that marketing will be an important element in implementing the plan. A
discussion of marketing options continued with a conclusion that the afternoon workshop and
help from Tech member, Shawna Lode from Travel Iowa will provide information needed before
decisions are made.
Moved to defer the 2016 budget decisions to the August MRPC meeting: John Goodmann,
Second: Jane Regan.
*Approved
Meeting Schedule
August
MRPC will meet Monday August 10th. The afternoon session, beginning at 1PM will be a marketing plan workshop led by Shawna Lode.

September
To be determined in the August meeting.

October
MRPC Annual Meeting October 6-8 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Other Business
GRR Infrastructure
Members discussed the additional wash-out issues on the Great River Road in Montrose. A news article with pictures was passed around. The road now has a 3 to 4 foot-deep drop-off and has been closed to traffic. For safety, the city has blocked the road with gravel to prevent motorists from driving around barricades. This has become much more than cosmetic and Montrose has no assets to fund the extensive shoring and rebuilding required. No FEMA funds are available. Iowa DOT Commissioner Rose offered to speak with Iowa DOT Programming, Planning and Modal Division Director Stuart Anderson about finding funding assistance.

Committee Assignments
Chair Edith Pfeffer asked commissioners to call or e-mail her their national committee assignment preference. After names are submitted to the national office, commissioners may begin to be contacted by those committees for conference calls and planning committee agendas for October. The committees are: Culture and Heritage, Communications and Marketing, Environment, Recreation and Agriculture, and Transportation. 
http://mrpcmembers.com/committees/

Adjournment
The business meeting was adjourned at 1:30 and the CMP Implementation Workshop followed, facilitated by Terry Buschkamp.

Additional documents:
- Business documents:
  - Agenda
  - Iowa DOT Budget report
  - MRPC budget worksheet 2015-17
  - MRPC Foundation Report
  - Montrose Road article
- Summary June 2015 CMP Roll-out Meetings
- MRPC Planning Meeting Report

Submitted by Mary Stahlhut.
7/7/2015
Tuesday, July 7, 2015
Le Claire Public Library
Participants included:

- Jane Regan - Allamakee County
- Edith Pfeffer - Clinton County
- Lori Wallace - Clayton County
- Debra Jochims - Des Moines County
- John Goodmann - Dubuque County
- Larry Kruse - Lee County
- Dan Petersen - Muscatine County
- Scott Tunicliff - Scott County
- Mary Stahlhut, Iowa Byways Program Manager, Iowa DOT

Terry Poe Buschkamp, Iowa Economic Development Authority / Main Street Iowa Promotion Specialist facilitated the session.

An overview of the process was provided, and it was explained that we would be spending the next three hours thinking strategically on where the Commission will be focusing their efforts in the next year.

The attendees proposed that the desired outcome for the afternoon was to think strategically about priorities, and the implementation steps required to achieve three - four of those priorities in the next 12 months. The group affirmed that this is where we were going to focus our attention.

Comments on the 2015 Corridor Management Plan
Session attendees were asked to share their thoughts about the 2015 Corridor Management Plan that was presented to the Commission by the consultants earlier in the day. Comments included:

- It helps us think about the future
- Defines the roles and responsibilities of the Commission members
- Indicates we need to involve partners
- Shows we have a lot of work to do (need administration and money)

Review of the Mission of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission
It was noted that the Commission does not currently use a mission statement to focus, direct, motivate and unify the work of the group. For the purposes of our discussion, it was agreed that we would use the duties of the commission that are found on the State of Iowa web page:

“The Mississippi River Planning Commission is responsible for the continued development, preservation, and promotion of the byway and its amenities.”
Review of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission Achievements

Session attendees were asked to work independently to list work that they have done in the past year to promote the mission of the Commission. Individuals were asked to share their activities for the last 12 months. These accomplishments were noted on flip chart paper (in no particular order):

- Developed, edited, approved and rolled out the new 2015 Corridor Management Plan
- Contacted local stakeholders to encourage attendance at the Corridor Managements Plan meetings
- Helped orchestrate Corridor Managements Plan sessions and rollout at venues across the region
- Monitored local projects (new $.5M Interpretive Center in Allamakee County and potential new facility in Louisa County)
- Contacted and met with staff at the Interpretive Centers in local counties to help them understand the relationship their relationship with the commission
- Provided support and oversight for the Interpretive Centers (conducted evaluation for National Mississippi River Parkway Commission)
- Distributed information (maps, flash drives with information) to Interpretive Centers in Iowa and neighboring states, local tourism offices, and numerous tourist attractions
- Delivered new signs and inspected existing signage at local Interpretive Center for location and prominence
- Participated in the Iowa Scenic Byway collaboration meetings, either in person or via conference call
- Served on National Mississippi River Parkway Commission committees
- Made public presentations to numerous local groups
- Welcomed representatives from the National Park Service
- Served as Mississippi River ambassadors for Convention and Visitors Bureaus in the local communities
- Hosted Transportation Day at the Iowa State Capitol
- Staffed booth at the Iowa State Fair
- Exhibited at the Tourism Night event for State Legislators
- Became familiar with route by driving the Great River Road
- Recruited new Commission members
- Attended/made arrangements for Commission meetings
- Communicated with other Commission members
- Communicated with local leaders, stakeholders and partners
- Prepared annual report of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission for elected officials, partners and stakeholders
- Requested new graphic to create passport templates for the Interpretive Centers
- Redesigned and printed the Iowa Great River Road map tear sheet
- Created new business cards to identify Commission members
- Worked on the development of new Great River Road signage project
- Implemented National Scenic Byway Projects
- Developed GPS mapping of significant sites in the region

Determination of Mississippi River Parkway Commission Priorities

Buschkamp introduced a series of four questions that were designed to be reflective of the four areas for elevated effectiveness that were identified in the Corridor Management Plan:

- Level 1: Existing Level of Appropriation
- Level 2: Effective Administration and Communications
- Level 3: Effective Promotion and Interpretation
- Level 4: Facilitator for Capital Investment

Taking one question at a time, attendees worked individually, then shared their responses with the group using the “Magic Wall” (a lightweight magnetic receptive panel mounted on the wall) as a tool to help organize the ideas.
When all of the project ideas had been posted, attendees were asked to indicate their first four top choices, and four second choices. The following raw data includes a priority ranking that was achieved by assigning 2 points to each of the 1st choice responses to the questions that were posed, and 1 point for each of the 2nd choices.

**Question #1**

“What can we do in the next 12 months to increase the level of appropriation and funding for the MRPC?”

- Request AGAIN increased allocation from the state via the Iowa DOT (7)
- Legislative meeting this fall (7)
- Meeting with House and Senate Transportation Committees (6)
- Establish advocacy talking points for money for the MRPC (6)
- Request support from local subdivisions City or County (5)
- Impress on local governments the value of tourism to them (5)
- Work with Legislators for more funding to Iowa MRPC that is earmarked for marketing (3)
- Try fundraising efforts as a group (3)
- Meet with Governor (3)
- Start a “Friends Group” [who can host] bake sales (2)
- Apply for a grant from IEDA’s Iowa Tourism Office (2)
- Appeal to others via a LETTER from the MRPC for donations for an administrator (2)
- Determine and identify legislative audience (2)
- Find a farmer to [donate the proceeds from] the grain in one bin
- Identify a program to promote the Iowa Great River Road brand with a “buy-in” program with locals [cooperative travel guide supported by the sale of advertisements]
- Fund or find a feasibility/assessment analysis to target sources MPO/RPA or Pro
- Find an Iowa DOT commissioner with good looking legs to convince DOT to increase allocation to commission (sic)
- Develop a plan for spending
- Consider the use of social media to raise awareness and money from millennials [crowd funding]
- Sell Great River Road logo [merchandise] pacifiers and headband bonkers (sic)

**Question #2**

“What can we do in the next 12 months to improve the administration and increase awareness of the MRPC?”

- Present the Corridor Management Plan to local authorities - City and County – at public meetings (10)
- Make sure Commissioners attend all state meetings and a minimum of one national meeting annually (4)
- Help new members get going [assign mentors] (3)
- Set achievable goals (2)
- Commissioners do what Corridor Management Plan suggests at the end of the plan (local tasks, communication, etc.) (2)
- Set routine stakeholder events/webinar with [tourism organizations] (2)
- Visit EICA’s RPA/MPO [East Central Intergovernmental Association Regional Planning Affiliation or Metropolitan Planning Organization] (1)
- Set 2016 priorities and publish them (1)
- [Make available/post on the website] a one-page roster of Commissioner’s phone numbers, e-mail, addresses. Include DOT contacts (1)
- Draft proposed legislation
- Meet with Iowa DOT Commission and present plan
- Lobby Senators and Representatives
Attend local government meetings on a regular basis
Meet more often or have working committees do priority tasks
Meet locally and regularly at the county level
More local presentations
Write monthly newspaper articles
Use the Great River Road brand to communicate with locals this winter
[Install] signage
[Install] banners in every Interpretive Center in Iowa
Challenge local to improve signage. Make a checklist for them.
[Provide] Great River Road vinyl clings [with the new graphic identity to businesses]
Use the new business cards
All members participate
Hire a staff person for the Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Question#3
“What can we do in the next 12 months to achieve increased visitation and travel party expenditures in the Iowa Great River Road communities?

- Create an ad campaign (Jane’s) challenging folks to visit each of the Interpretive Centers (4)
- Offer to provide interviews on local radio and television shows (like Fran Reiley) (4)
- Secure sponsorships to fund a bike trip along the Iowa Great River Road (3)
- Develop and implement a marketing plan (2)
- Lobby county/engineers to complete the Mississippi River Trail (2)
- Unite the Great River Road counties with a “Drive the Great River Road” promotion (product / postcard / placemat) (1)
- Partner with local tourism organization (1)
- Do an online survey of stakeholders to choose a #1 promotion action (1)
- Encourage corridor towns/cities to promote their festivals on the Iowa Great River Road website (1)
- Regularly post Facebook messages, encouraging desired partners to join/like
- Advertise / brand that we are the gateway to the Mississippi River
- Use an ad campaign to steer folks to our website – increase our brand identity
- Advertising
- Promote the Iowa Great River Road to Iowans!
- Have local businesses advertise that they are located on the Great River Road
- Encourage local businesses to participate in the national geo-tourism project
- Group promotions
- A “Geocaching” trip
- Have a Great River Road [scavenger] hunt
- Organize activities like fishing, boat rides
- Bring more groups/tourism (bike and bicycle) to the area
- [Print] new placemats for September
- Coupon sharing from other river “companies” [cooperative marketing]
- [Create/sell] cheap souvenirs
- [Encourage] Mississippi River Parkway Commission website to open up an events tab so festival can be posted
Question #4
“What can we do in the next 12 months to establish funding for programs associated with the Core Management Directions?”

- Ask local governments for money (2)
- Promote the existing Great River Road Foundation and contributions to it so stakeholders can apply for grant funding for their projects

Creation of Timeline to Implement Commission Priorities

The top priority in each of the focus areas was selected for our discussion, and attendees were asked to indicate what actions would need to be taken to implement the projects in the next 12 months and identify their willingness to follow through with the action items on the list. Following is a rough timeline for four projects:

**Project #1: Request increased allocation from the state via the Iowa DOT (by October 215)**
- July 2015: - Executive team determine needs/Identify a Plan (Edith, Jane)
- Compile a list of actions performed by the Commission in the last 12 months (Terry/done!)
- Discuss MRPC CMP progress with Craig and Stu / provide last year’s request (Mary)
- August 2015: - Present the CMP to the Iowa DOT board at their August meeting
- Research when/how specific to marketing and administration assistance to create a plan that the DOT can assess and approve/check timetable and last year’s presentation (John)
- Talk to Craig Paulsen and Todd Bowman re the timeliness of a request for 2016 (Edith)
- Attend meeting in Burlington (Deb)
- Sept 2015: - Write a script for the presentation (include all Commissioners attending) (Edith)
  - Create a power point presentation (Edith, Mary)
  - Prepare hand out materials (Marketing Plan, CMP) for DOT (Edith, Mary)
- October 2015: - Request time on the October 13 Iowa DOT board meeting the agenda (Edith)
  - Make presentation to Iowa DOT board at their meeting in Decorah (Scott, Dan)

**Project #2: Present the Corridor Management Plan to local authorities - City and County – at public meetings**
- August 2015: - Create a template for a proclamation re the Great River Road and provide to the Commissioners for personalization (Edith)
- Create a summary and Power point for Commissioners to use for presentations to local City/County elected officials (John)
- Burn info to flash drives and provide to Commissioners/learn how to use a projector (Edith)
- Request time on the Allamakee Board of Supervisors agenda/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Jane)
- Request time on Clinton County Board of Supervisors as well as City Councils in Clinton and Camanche agendas/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Edith)
- Request time on Scott County Board of Supervisors agenda/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Scott)
- Sept 2015: - Request time on Dubuque County Board of Supervisors agenda/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (John)
- October 2015: - Request time on city councils’ agendas in Harpers Ferry, Lansing and Waukon/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present the CMP (Jane)
- Request time on Lee County Board of Supervisors agenda/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Larry)
- Request time on City Councils and Board of Supervisors Clayton County agendas/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Lori)
- Request time on Burlington City Council and Dubuque County Board of Supervisors agendas/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Deb)
- Request time on City Council agendas in Davenport, Bettendorf, LeClaire and Riverdale, ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present CMP (Scott)

Nov 2015: - Request time on City Councils agendas in Danville, Middleton, West Burlington and Mediapolis/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present the CMP with the new Commissioner from Des Moines County (Deb)
- Request time on Muscatine County Conservation Board and City Council agenda in Muscatine/ascertain that they have the equipment needed/secure handouts and present the CMP with the new Commissioner from Muscatine County (Dan)

Project #3: Create an ad campaign challenging folks to visit each of the Interpretive Centers

- July 2015: - Secure proclamation for National office and provide to each County Commissioner to include in their presentations on the CMP to local officials (Jane)
- August 2015 - Make personal contact with local tourism bureau to provide information on driving the Great River Road in September (ALL COMMISSIONERS)
- Post a "Call to Action" to drive the Great River Road in September on Facebook page, Travel Iowa and via Constant Contact to all stakeholders (Mary)
- Contact local television station (i.e. Fran Reiley) to offer to provide an interview about driving the Great River Road in September (Edith, Dan, Scott)
- Contact local television station (KWWL and KCRG) to offer to provide an interview about driving the Great River Road in September (Jane)
- September - Contact local television station (Channel 6) to offer to provide an interview about driving the Great River Road in September (Lori)
- Deliver handouts about driving the Great River Road to local restaurants (Lori)

Project #4: Ask local governments for money

- July - Have discussions with the UERPC RPOs (i.e. Rachelle Howe) and ask for ideas on how to fund an administrative position (Jane)
- September - Provide new Great River Road signage/branding material for Commissioner’s use with marketing plan and financial requests determined at August meeting (Mary)
- November - Develop a list of potential individual donors in my county (Edith)
- Use marketing plan to demonstrate need for cash from local authorities and Interpretive Centers (John)
- December - Use marketing plan to appeal to County Supervisors and possibly City Council to demonstrate need for cash from their budgeting process (Dan)
- Use marketing plan to appeal to County Supervisors to demonstrate need for cash from their budgeting process (Scott)
- January - Will go to local governments to provide documentation ask for money (Jane)

Session Wrap Up
At the close of the session, Terry thanked the attendees for their active participation, and stated that within two weeks she will provide a session report for Mary to distribute to the Mississippi River Parkway Commission members.
Summary
It is evident that with the new Corridor Management Plan, excitement is building and many ideas have emerged. During the planning meeting, it was apparent that there is surplus of proposals, and scarcity of time and manpower to accomplish the long list of projects and activities. With a fresh perspective on its mission and an appreciation of what has been accomplished, the Mississippi River Parkway Commission should use the information in this report to move forward in a direction based on the desires of the Commission members.

Recommendations for Next Steps
☐ Add the duties of the Commission (your mission), a list of accomplishments and roster of names/contact information for Commissioners to your website.

☐ Move forward with the implementation steps for the four priority projects that are outlined in this report.

☐ At your August Commission meeting, review all of the proposed initiatives listed in this report to determine additional projects that could be added to the program of work for the coming year, and what should be moved to a later date (long range/next year’s plan) or dropped. Thoughtfully take into account your budget/time restraints before adding any of the projects that were not identified as priorities.

☐ Add implementation steps to the additional priorities that the Commission has selected for inclusion on your program of work. Appoint a Champion for each project who will create detailed action plans and assign responsibilities. Be sure to include every step necessary to complete the activity, a timetable, and the name of the person responsible. If you can’t find an individual who will accept responsibility for an activity, it shouldn’t be on the action plan.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.
Terry Poe Buschkamp I 515.725.3075 I terry.buschkamp@iowa.gov.
Call to order: 9:30 am
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.
Roll call was taken with a quorum of the eight-member 2016 roster present. Attendees:

Commissioners:
Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC.; John Goodmann, Sec.; Jane Regan, Treas.; Lori Wallace, Marvin Graber, Jay Schweitzer. Scott Tunnicliff arrived later

Tech Members: Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program

Guests:
Craig Markley, Office of Systems Planning
Rod Marlatt, Chair, Byways of Iowa Foundation
Jessica Rilling, Chair, Byways of Iowa Coalition
Jean Peiton, City of Ft. Madison,
Cody Barnes, News Director, KMAQ Radio

Welcome and Announcements:
Pffeffer introduced new Commissioner Marvin Graber. Introductions followed.

Byways of Iowa Coalition and Byways of Iowa Foundation and Funding

Jessica Rilling – BIC Mission to protect. Officers: Jessica, Paul, Jan G
Rob Marlatt – BIF and Art grant example
Discussion:
Explain the financial constraints. Commissioner commitments and time limits Byways of Iowa Foundation membership and BIC agreement.
Table decision to the afternoon business session. Moved: Reagan, Second: Goodman

Business:

Minutes –
Moved to accept July 7, 2015 minutes as distributed: Petersen; Second: Regan
*Approved.

Treasurer reports
Jane Regan reported on the MRPC Foundation costs for the local match on the Great River Road Corridor Management Plan and foundation legal fees.
Moved to accept MRPC Foundation as distributed and read, and pay the final legal fees leaving a balance of $563.70: Schweitzer Second: Goodmann
*Approved.

Mary Stahlhut Reported the MRPC DOT appropriation budget balance at $39,854.20. Motion to accept MRPC DOT report as distributed: Regan Second: Petersen
*Approved.
Iowa Byways Sustainability Project:
Edith reported that she sent commissioners the notes from the latest Byways call. Monthly conference calls and quarterly training meetings are conducted with the eleven Iowa Byways managers and other program participants. The GRR is not part of the contract but is entitled to be fully informed and participate in the project’s collaboration among byways through the shared projects and resources the project produces. Edith has participated in the calls and trainings in Ames. The group now shares a “Cloud” file of resources. Submit new overlook sites
New shared web site with templates
Review the minutes from the sustainability

10-State MRPC Reports- Edith Pfeffer
- Annual reports are due in August.
- MRPC Annual Meeting is October 6-8 in New Orleans, Louisiana.
  - Hotel reservations should be made ASAP. Travel requests due back to Peggy at DOT by September 4, 2015.
- Semiannual MRPC meeting April 27-29, 2016, La Crosse, Wis.
- Annual MRPC meeting Sept. 14-16, 2016, Natchez, Miss.
- Semiannual MRPC may be held in Iowa in spring 2017

Committee and Project Reports
National Geographic Geo-Tourism
Pfeffer reported that local meetings have been started with participation by CVB, Conservation etc. Commissioners are to contact interpretive centers and encourage them to go to the site to make entries. http://mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com/. Go to the bottom of the page and click on “nominate a place” in the black box at the bottom. All web entries are reviewed before being accepted. Jean Pelton from Ft. Madison CVB reported on the activity and delays. Edith reported that the web site capacity should expand.

Culture and Heritage Committee: Edith Pfeffer
- Annual update worksheets for the interpretive centers in your county need to be completed, signed by the commissioner and turned in.
- New interpretive center nominations are due. Forms are online. Jane has Motor Mill between Elkader and Guttenberg to submit. Edith reported Clinton is working on a new one as well.

Communications and Marketing:
“Drive the Great River Road” materials are now available online for use from MRPC office in Wisconsin. (Commissioners- check your email from Edith.) Press release, proclamations etc. are provided. Commissioners are encouraged to contact their local jurisdictions. Each interpretive center will receive some key tags and can promote in their local media. Jane Regan gave an example of using a local radio program. National will have an online sweepstakes for a $500 gift card. Edith forwarded the information to CVB’s and Shawna Lode. This afternoon the discussion for marketing will include this. Edith may request a Governor’s proclamation. New maps are produced every two years and will be available at the La Crosse meeting after a redesign. The GRR logo policy is under review.

Jane reported that Iowa has been billed $400 for the shipping cost of 10-state maps from the printer in Wisconsin. It was moved to pay this cost from the marketing budget line: Goodmann, Second: Schweitzer
*Approved
**2017 Budget Discussion**
Craig Markley, Office of Systems Planning, explained the process that works from Systems Planning, through the Planning and Model Division up to DOT Director Trombino. It is then submitted with other DOT budgets to the Iowa Department of Management, then the Governor’s office and then the Legislature. The appropriation comes from the Road Use Tax Fund and has been at $40,000 since (2004 or 2005).

A draft budget request letter for DOT was prepared by Pfeffer, Regan and Goodmann. Edith and Jane led commissioners through the content providing background and budget line item proposals. A number of revisions were discussed.

Revise the proposal for budget as discussed and submit to DOT this week. Moved Regan and Second Goodmann. *Approved.

**2016 Current Budget Discussion**
Table this budget until after the afternoon Marketing Workshop this afternoon. Move Regan. Second Goodmann. *Passed

**Networking Lunch – Historic Squiers Mansion**

**Afternoon Session**

**Call to Order – Hurstville Interpretive Center**
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. Roll call was taken with seven of the eight-member 2016 roster present.

**Attendees:**

**Commissioners:** Edith Pfeffer, Lori Wallace, Jane Regan, Dan Petersen, Jay Schweitzer, Scott Tunnicliff, Marvin Graber

**Tech Members:** Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program
Shawna Lode, Iowa Tourism Office

**Guests:**
Jean Payton, Ft. Madison
Regina Lehman, Fulton Illinois
Cody Barnes, News Director KMAQ Radio

**Travel Iowa Updates – Shawna Lode**

**2017 Iowa Travel Guide Development**
Shawna asked commissioners to contact their key local people to input tourism data. Be sure local stakeholders go to the Travel Iowa website and bring all their local attractions and records up to date. It is imperative that local concerns populate their own data to be best represented in the statewide guide. They must do this in the next week. Contact your key local people to input. If a record has not been touched for 18 months, it will be de-activated. The content for the 2017 Iowa Travel Guide is created from the online information. August 21 will “dump” the data to move into the print version.
www.IowaGreatRiverRoad.com Report
Travel Iowa staff have tracked the web activity for this site since adopting the dormant web content. It is performing at or above the standards expected/set by the web team.
- 5,070 user sessions.
- 72% were new users.
- Bounce rate is only 34%. (Bounce rates can be as high as 90%... goal is 50%.
- Visiting 2.94 minutes per visitor. Generally, goal is 2.5 minutes.
- Travel Iowa has seen traffic grow from 1 million to 1.5 million in a year.
- Highest Users on Travel Iowa are women 55-65.
- Travel Iowa buys search engine marketing words that are seasonally changed including scenic drive, fall colors and other GRR assisting terms.

Marketing Workshop - Shawna Lode, Iowa Tourism Office
Details are in a separate report

Marketing Purchases
After discussion, the MRPC agreed to make these five marketing purchases through the Travel Iowa partnership marketing program:
- Travel Iowa- remarketing $1,000 – reminders guaranteed 50,000 impressions and 1,000 clicks Jan – March
- Iowa Travel Guide $2650 ½ page.
- Casey’s General Store Out of Home $1350 - 10 gas pump toppers- you choose the stores (April- June)
- Iowa Outdoors $225
- Eastern Iowa Tourism ¼ page once a year- $495
Moved: Petersen  Second: Graber
*Approved

Action required:
Travel Iowa – Art work due Nov. 4th
EITA – Art due September 30, 2015
Wallace and Regan will work on draft ad content and design services. Stahlhut will ask about DOT resources.

Other Business
Committee Assignments
- Culture and Heritage Committee: Edith Pfeffer, Martin Graber, Scott Tunnicliff, Shawna Lode
- Communications and Marketing: Jane Regan, Lori Wallace
  Wednesday at 9AM call for this committee.
- Transportation John Goodmann, Mary Stahlhut, Ron Diennes
- Environmental, Recreational, Agriculture
  Jay Schweitzer, Dan Petersen, Margo Underwood

The 10-state committee conference call number and links to committee records can be accessed from this site: http://mrpcmembers.com/
Byways of Iowa – Coalition Agreement and Foundation annual membership fee.
Payment of the $500 annual membership fees to the Byways of Iowa Foundation and signing the Byways of Iowa Coalition agreement was moved: Petersen; Second: Regan

Discussion:
Petersen stated that it is important for the Iowa Great River Road Byway to be a team player with the other 10 Iowa Byways. Benefits of the affiliation were discussed - based on the discussion earlier in the day with BIF and BIC representatives. The BIF affiliation is intended to promote byway financial support to benefit Iowa Byways efforts statewide. BIC is another way to improve communications and to support all the byways in collaboration and replication of good practices from the strengths and experience available among the byways managers and their local boards. Signed agreements should be sent to Jessica Rilling by August 31st, 2015.

*Approved

Meeting Dates
September – Executive team to meet in DSM with Governor or his designee
October – Maison Dupuy Hotel, New Orleans, Thursday, October 8th 7 AM
November – Meet and invite legislators Monday, 9th - Muscatine- Dan 9:30

Project Updates: Mary Stahlhut
- GRR Signing Project- Commissioners can help with local jurisdiction agreements later in the process. Letting November and construction 2016.
- Lansing- Authorized for letting
- Marquette- Construction halted for endangered Mussel assessment
- Bee Branch in Dubuque- MRT and overlook project are in line for September and November lettings.
- MRT in Riverdale- nearly complete but on hold for utilities conflicts
- Louisa MRT- In line for letting August 18, 2015
- Louisa project archeological report and progress on hold for potential redesign.

Adjournment
The business meeting was adjourned at 3:15
Marketing Workshop- Shawna Lode- Facilitator

Preparation Questions were sent to commissioners in advance:

1. Who is the target audience?
   a. Primary:
   b. Secondary: (if applicable)
2. What is the target market?
3. What are the goals?
4. How will they be measured?
5. What is the desired action? Click? To web? Too social? Like? Call?
6. What is the message?
8. What is the budget?

Who is the primary target audience?
Boomer Leisure travelers (women 55-65 largest demographic)

Where are the travelers drawn from?
Regional draw: from the west I-29 through Des Moines and East into Illinois to Chicago.
Other target areas? Minneapolis, Probably not south into Missouri

Goals: What do you want people to do in response to the ad?
Action step... link to GRR web site and Phone for product
   - www.IowaGreatRiverRoad.com
   - 800- 345-IOWA for print mailings. (Travel Iowa and DOT coordinate.)

Message: What are you selling?
The river, Midwest welcome/ nice people, History (US move west and ancient), Outdoor, the river, scenery, communities with unique culture, recreation, National byway, 3rd most popular global destination

Draft summary of message:
The Iowa GRR is the world’s third most sought after river destination. This nationally recognized (designated) scenic byway is home to charming riverfront communities rooted in history, with abundant wildlife encounters, and recreation.

What is the best delivery method for this message?
Discussion: Print, online, billboards, radio/TV?
Magazines with related content, web, billboards, targeted radio/TV

Travel Iowa Partnership ProgramWait listed:
   o Preservation Magazine $900
   o Minneapolis Star Tribune $600

Ready
Travel Iowa- Web site   Remarketing reminders guaranteed 50,000 impressions- and 1,000 clicks Jan - March   $ 1,000
Casey’s General Store   Out of Home - 10 gas pump- toppers. you choose the stores (April- June)   $ 2,650
Iowa Travel Guide ½ page ad   $ 1,350
Iowa Outdoors DNR Magazine ad   $ 225
Eastern Iowa Tourism ¼ page once a year   $ 495
Midwest Living Magazine   $ 3,450
“O” Oprah magazine   $ 2,300
Other discussion:
- The GRR has seasons outside the prime Iowa tourism primary target ad dates. March – May. Early Spring Eagle watching around March and a fall push for GRR is appropriate.
- Reserve balance of marketing funds for graphic development and Fall promotion.
- Consider motorcycle community promotions.
- Jane: local radio “103.5” program buy. $103.50 ad cost and tag words. Trivia about GRR on the air all week with a Friday prize of $103.50.

Other Opportunities

Constant Contact
MRPC will soon have access to the GRR CMP Constant Contact account. DOT can manage the renewal from the MRPC budget, but using it will be up to MRPC. Newsletters can be distributed through this and stakeholder contacts from the CMP need to be maintained.

Face Book
https://www.facebook.com/IowaGreatRiverRoad?ref=aymt_homepage_panel
MRPC also has a GRR Facebook page but management is not in place and postings have been rare. A valid FB presence requires regular postings.
The last three posts are:
- DOT New web page for the 2015CMP,
- Newsletter release on CMP from Constant Contact,
- Notice about the new Iowa Great River Road byway signs coming in 2016.
The last post before that was May 2014.
Commissioners Present: Chair, Edith Pfeffer, Clinton Co; Treasurer, Jane Regan, Allamakee Co; Martin Graber, Lee Co; Lisa Walsh, Des Moines Co; Jay Schweitzer, Louisa Co, and Technical Advisor from Iowa DOT, Mary Stahlhut.

Meeting was called to order by Chair at 7:15 a.m.

Minutes of the August 10’ 2015 meeting were approved.

Treasurer’s report approved as presented. Motion Jay Schweitzer/Martin Graber

Committee reports were given by members updating the Commissioners on the National Committee Meetings that took place the day before: Culture & Heritage talked about the 10 State map and the missing two Interpretive Centers for Iowa. The Sawmill Museum at Clinton and Rock Creek Marina Eco Tourism Center at Camanche. Discussed a “white paper” that C&H will be developing to help educate our Stakeholders about our Interpretive Centers. Also encourage the States to invite our Interpretive Center Staff or Directors to attend our State Commission meetings to bring us up to date on their current events and provide updates on visitor numbers.

Environmental/Recreation/Agriculture: Jay reported on the ephemeral experiences they discussed such as the promotion of when the dogwoods bloom, when Harvest of Wheat, Cotton, Corn and Soybeans occurring, more farmer’s markets listing needed on the website, fall pumpkin patches, etc. The MRT has approached our National Board to discuss joining or becoming an arm or partner of MRPC. Further discussion will take place with the National Board. Iowa and other States need to continue to populate the experiencemississippiriver.com, website with more Agri-tourism sites such as John Maxwell at Cinnamon Farm. ACTION NEEDED BY COMMISSIONER: Chair Edith, asked each commissioner to work on a list of Agri-Tourism businesses in our County to bring to the November State Meeting. (Winery, Corn Maze, Pumpkin Patches, Tree Farms, Farmers Markets, Dairies, Buffalo Farms, etc.)

Marketing: Jane shared that the 10 State Map will be reprinted this next spring and Iowa has requested the maximum allowed of 30,000 maps due to the fact we have the most interpretive centers of all 10 States with 15 and one more being added after this National Board Meeting. Advised that the Café Press online source the National Office was going to use is not a viable option with poor quality promotional items and they are looking into working with Lands’ End for our promotional material vendor.

Discussed our State advertising plans for 2016 and reviewed each publication and its cost and will add a revision to the Iowa Travel Guide ad DOT has prepared for us by placing the statement “go online to order your map”.

Riverboat paddlewheels that came up River this year such as the Mississippi Queen and American Queen seem to have full control on the buses they bring with this cruises and the scripts that must be approved by the Riverboat. We question whether the towns where the stops are being made by the Riverboats will see any return on investment for all their work due to the limit time on land they get and
no “heads in beds” or purchase of gasoline and very little restaurant business. We need to ask our CVBs in these towns to try to track if these people come back to their towns after their cruise is done ever and hope they stay longer. Edith commented on the boats that landed in Clinton had alumni groups from the colleges and historic preservation groups.

Transportation meeting – Lisa Walsh reported they reviewed the Strategic Work Plan. Led by Carol Zoff. Identified action items and moved some items to immediate such as GIS shape files for the routes for every state and get a central library put together. (Iowa is the only State this is completed) Partner with interns and scan and prepare the docs. CMP plan for the entire route is needed. Iowa should be in good shape having just completed theirs and Minnesota is right behind us. The others States will have to have new plans updated. Assemble the resources we have and draw a short version from what we have from all the states. Iowa presented the signage and GIS point by point of where the actual route is since we already have this in place. Other State’s should ask their DOTs to do the maps.

Edith suggested we have a Lidar view shed illustration presented at our State Meeting in Nov. She will talk with Jared Neilsen at NE Iowa RC&D to see if he could present this. The State Byways group is looking for five spots to put overlooks.

Mary Stahlhut advised our GRR Social Media Facebook page is getting updates posted weekly. DOT does not have possession of constant contact from Dave Dahlquist and Mary will work with Breann Bye to get this done and report back at our November Board meeting.

Byways sustainability – the other Byways two main things affecting the GRR and NE Iowa. GRR was not able to commit to two art installations funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). NE Iowa RC&D is lead on this and included GRR art sites where it shares locations with other byways in their plan. This grant will allow for the planning and local funding to do the construction. They cannot sign a contract until all details including the installation sites are in order.

Commissioners reviewed the Fiscal Year End 2015 annual report. Each Commissioner was advised to provide Mary Stahlhut with the number of copies they need for Stakeholders, Local Governmental Officials in our cities and counties, County Conservation Boards, Engineers and Stakeholders. The DOT has mailed a copy to the Governor and all State Senators and Representatives.

Byways are sponsoring regional Byways conference in April. More details to come on that. By Ways of Iowa Foundation continues to form and get off the ground. Casey’s General Convenience Stores may be a big lead on this.

Edith reminded commissioners to continue to review and deliver copies of the newly adopted Iowa Corridor Management Plan to our local Elected Officials. We plan to invite our Senators and State Representatives to the State Commission meeting Nov 9 in Muscatine. Edith and Jane will be meeting with the Governor on Monday, September 12th in Des Moines. They will provide the annual report and the CMP to the Governor and discuss legislative approval of an increased budget request for Iowa MRPC for FY 2017.
GRR route review – Montrose will continue to be signed as a detour and also at the Crapo Park portion in Burlington. Mary reported that bridge signage to the state to the east will not be done when the new GRR signs are installed in the spring of 2016. That project has gone out for bid and construction will be let 11/17 and fabrication will be bid 11/25. has finally been let and a contractor hired for the installation. Commissioners will be informed of this process so that we can keep our local officials informed on its progress as well.

Edith reported that THE GREAT RACE is coming through Iowa in 2016 again. The last time they came through Iowa was during the 75th Anniversary of the Great River Road in 2013. There will be a stop for lunch at Walcott and refueling, with the race ending at John Deere Commons in Moline, June 26, 2016. Iowa MRPC will work with Joe Taylor at Quad Cities CVB to see if we can set up a booth at the Walcott Truck Stop Museum. A meeting has been set with the owners of the Museum following our State Commission meeting on November 9, 2015.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 AM to attend National MPRC meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane M. Regan, Secretary Pro-Tem
Call to order:
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order. 
Roll call was taken with a quorum of the nine-member 2016 roster present.
Commissioners:
Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC. Jane Regan, Treas.; Martin Graber, Lisa Walsh, Scott Tunnicliff, Jay Schweitzer.
Tech Members: Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program

Welcome and Announcements:

Business:

Minutes – 
October meeting minutes as distributed were reviewed.
Motion to accept minutes as distributed and read: Graber, Second: Walsh
*Approved.

Treasurer reports
Jane Regan reported the MRPC Foundation balance is $653.29. Additional donations for a gift to the Driftless Area Visitor Center have been received. Reported total dollars and funds to be forwarded in the name of the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission.
Motion to accept MRPC Foundation balance and activity as described: Peterson Second: Walsh. *Approved.

Jane reported outstanding bills:
Kane, Norby & Reddick, P.C. for filing 501 C4 status is fully filed and current. Moved to approve: Peterson, Second: Walsh

Mary Stahlhut Reported the MRPC DOT appropriation budget balance at $32,220. Motion to accept MRPC DOT report as distributed: Peterson Second: Graber
*Approved.

Reports of pending expenses.
Motion to pay a “Drive the GRR” radio promotion: Peterson, Second: Walsh.
*Approved.

Motion to pay the Eastern Iowa Tourism annual dues: Regan Second: Tunnicliff. *Approved.
Other Reports: Commissioner Regan reported on the successful groundbreaking Tuesday, November 3rd at the Great River Road Driftless Area Interpretive Center in Lansing:

“Conservation Director Jim Janett welcomed a crowd of approximately 80 people to the groundbreaking ceremony for the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center to be constructed just south of Lansing on the Columbus Bridge property along the Great River Road. The Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center, a three-story, 10,000 square foot building situated between Village Creek and Columbus Road, will offer experiences and exhibits reflecting the cultural, recreational, environmental and historical significance of the Driftless Area, which encompasses northeast Iowa, southwest Wisconsin, southeast Minnesota and portions of northwest Illinois.”

Economic Impact Report – Jane Regan
Regan reported the Domestic Travel Impact on the 10 Mississippi River Counties. The impact is staggering and it will be helpful for legislators and the CAT (Community Attraction and Tourism Grant (CAT Grant.) Economic Authority grant application for the Driftless. The Mississippi River is the third most sought-after destination in the world.

2015 MRPC Annual Meeting Reports in New Orleans
Pfeffer reported that the Annual MRPC meeting was held October 6-8 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Reports from the event are on the National Web site. The Motor Mills site in Elkader and Skypton were accepted as a new GRR interpretive center. Financial discussions have been refreshed on what funds should be used and what reasons there may be for keeping unutilized funds. The next MRPC meetings are scheduled:
- Semiannual MRPC meeting April 27-29, 2016, La Crosse, Wis.
- Annual MRPC meeting Sept. 14-16, 2016, Natchez, Miss.
Committee Reports:  [http://mrpcmembers.com/](http://mrpcmembers.com/)
Culture and Heritage Committee: Edith Pfeffer
Edith reported the minutes are online and they have requested a budget. Edith also reminded commissioners to complete the interpretive center surveys and return them to her as soon as possible.

Communications and Marketing: Jane Regan
2016 is the year of birding, biking and driving. Continue to have your local interpretive centers make their entries online. Jane will email the link to commissioners.
AG- Jay requested that each commissioner provide natural and agricultural events and sites for national to do. Email your nominations to Jay. The Drive the Great River Road campaign resulted in an Iowa couple winning the sweepstakes. Updates for the web.
New decals that are the more distinctive dark green. Requesting that they contact $15,000 budget request for marketing activities this year. Contact Meredith about a travel book. Casey's pump-toppers.

Environment, Recreation & Agriculture (ERA): Graber and Peterson:
The committee proposed too national to have a documentary film developed. Active committee including a white paper to better discuss the impact of these resources and the opportunities ahead.

Transportation: Walsh and Stahlhut
The committee is worked through the new Strategic Plan to prioritize implementation elements this committee should address, including better records of the Infrastructure needs along the route. The first step will be to compile a GIS records from all the states. The other states are interested in how Iowa is planning to use GIS to inventory and coordinate signing installation on the Iowa GRR in 2016.

General
Edith encouraged all commissioners to read the annual meeting report. Nat. Geo. Geo-Tourism project – Meetings / workshops to be held in MN week of the 26th -30th. Bob M. will continue to be involved and plans on attending the MRCC meeting in NOLA on Nov. 17-18. There was consensus that all of the committee and states should be encouraged to contact their unique Agri-Tourism (and Rec.) sites and encourage them to attend a NG workshop and/or submit their nomination for inclusion on the site.

All committees were asked to discuss the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) organization’s request to join with MRPC. Committees mostly agreed that this is not something to rush into.

Great River Road Logo
Edith reported that Iowa DOT is confirming all approved uses of the State logos and has asked MRPC to provide a letter to document permissions. Edith has prepared a letter for MRPC to approve. Moved to approve DOT’s limited use of the GRR logo and Edith’s letter. Regan Second: Tunnicliff
*Approved
Other Actions

Support the 2018 Annual Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiatives (MRCTI) in the Quad Cities Moved Dan, Second Martin
*Approved

MRPC participation with a booth in the Henry Farnum Dinner March 18th. Members will pay their own tickets. Edith will coordinate filling a table. Moved Regan, Second Walsh
*Approved

Review of Workshop CMP Implementation priorities from the August meeting.
Budget request of $301,435 was forwarded through DOT and shared with Gov. Branstad.
Jane History of contributions $2 per capita for economic development. Commissioners reported on their progress in delivering CMP Materials and making presentations to local stakeholders. Members discussed this would include the county supervisors, city councils and other entities.

Iowa DOT Report
Mary provided a printed list of the National Scenic Byways grant projects still underway on the Iowa GRR.

Meeting with the Governor
Jane and Edith reported on their visit with Governor Branstad. Discussed the economic impact and opportunities on the Great River Road. Reported on the Viking Cruise Line. Spent 55 minutes and discussion of commission activities. Governor was surprised with all of our work. In regards to the implementation of the CMP, we are to continue to discuss with staff for funding. Staff person will follow up about sources. CMAQ funds suggested. Followed up with DOT and MRPC would not qualify. Governor will re-assign someone from parks.

Assignments:
Edith reminded commissioners that Interpretive Center visits are needed for all in order to get the survey completed and turned in. Flash drive distribution and training on the sites should be accomplished. Contact Edith with any questions or for more flash drives.

Future Commission Meetings
2nd Mondays
February 8th next meeting in Camanche or on East 15th near Bishop’s house in Davenport. Dec 1 or 3 Jane and Edith will meet with a Governor’s Staffer.

Adjournment
The business meeting was adjourned
Networking Lunch

Informal Meeting with Stakeholder Legislators

Welcome and Introductions
Chair Pfeffer welcomed all attendees and described the reasons for the meeting, including the Iowa GRR 2015 Corridor Management Plan and Implementation and collaboration expectations for the GRR communities.

Guests
- Tom Sands – Louisa and Muscatine
- Dave Heaton - Lee, Henry, Washington and Jefferson (Mt. Pleasant)
- Norlin Mommsen - #97 Clinton and Scott
- Gary Carlson - Rural Muscatine, Fruitland
- Cindy Winkler – Davenport Scott County
- Mary Wolfe - #98 Clinton and NE Clinton Co.
- Rita Hart – Clinton County and north rural Scott

MRPC Presentation to Invited Guests
Edith Pfeffer and Jane Regan Presented information in the printed materials shared.

Location: The place is the Great River Road. East Coast of Iowa. Introduction via the Iowa Byways Travel Guide. West Coast Loess Hills and Iowa Great River Road national scenic byways. With 328 miles of GRR along the Mississippi River, Iowa is the only state with 2 national byways.

MRPC Founding
In 1939 the president commissioned the Secretary of the Interior to establish the 10-state Great River Road and directed states to send appointees to the 10-state MRPC. Jane explained the 2 annual meetings and additional quarterly state meetings. $40,000 annual budget: $15,000 dues from Iowa for every year. Each commissioner serves on a committee at the national level.

Iowa GRR Corridor Management Plan
MRPC lead the effort to complete the GRR CMP and now as individuals have taken the report to each county supervisors, conservation boards and cities in their county. CMP described including GIS, maps and sign inventory and the six intrinsic values located items. CMP covers the corridor as a county - wide corridor. Jane highlighted the visitor and resident survey results as an illustration of the draw of the Mississippi River and related historic and national sites. More maps, more restrooms, better direct signs were requested by our visitors.

Resources
Iowa Tear sheets, 10-state maps.

Handouts
GRR Economic Impact Study sheet with the GRR county facts pulled out. Using the Economic development approach- attributing dollars spent, employees in travel industry etc. Scott County is one of the largest river counties and ranks #3 in the state. Most remarkable is the impact of visitors in the smaller population counties. Allamakee is #1 in the state in per capita of travel-related income. These numbers illustrate the huge impact of the Mississippi River on visitors. 2 countries over $4 Billion and Allamakee the smallest $40 million.
The Challenge
Many local organizations on the river fail to recognize the Mississippi River and its influence. 

Budget
The Iowa GRR is the only byway that does not have an RC&D supporting it. Jane shared the budget letter sent to Craig Markley, Office of Systems Planning, Iowa DOT. Jane and Edith visited with Governor Branstad, requesting a higher appropriation. This is a beginning. No one has come before.

Request
This Iowa MRPC is asking for your help in how to implement this CMP. (Refer to the CMP, P 67-68 description of support services needed.)

Q&A
- Question: what are the other byway budgets? Rep Dale
- What was the Governor’s response?
  He was surprised about the Viking Cruises and now the counties are needing to build new dock facilities. US Dept. of Commerce grant of <$200,000 for the Japanese traveler APP. The request is already in for a Chinese version.
- Viking cruise impact after the ships, there is a bounce return of interested travelers. MRPC doesn’t feel the river communities are ready. Each city is negotiating their own deal.
- Senator Rita Hart: Carrie with Eastern Iowa Tourism- are they collecting data? Yes.
- Dave Heaton - Who’s addressing the boats and the new docks? American Queen
- Dave Heaton - Montrose broken riverfront link. Pursuing federal funds should be not be an issue. State and federal funds should be available. Senator Grassley’s staff has been contacted.
- Kurt Hanlon with a family member previously on the Clinton Admin. Lives near the Montrose washout.
- Mary Wolfe- May need discussion related to the proposed flat tax on the Governor’s agenda.
- Dave Heaton Strategy? DH where will you go for the funding? Economic development? That should be DOT.
- MS asserted that in the DOT Scenic Byways Program role by statute DOT duties do not include economic development and tourism.
• Appropriation Committee?

• Cindy Winkler - Schedule a meeting and invite the key legislators on a Monday?
  o 29 legislators represent the GRR.
  o Present to the Transportation Committee? Joint Transportation budget sub Committee. Or another
  o Meet with the Governor’s liaison for the committee you need.

• Muscatine will have a Chinese Interpretative Center in Muscatine.
Call to order:
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.
Roll call was taken with a quorum of the nine-members 2016 roster present.
  Commissioners:
  Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC.; Jane Regan, Treas.; Lisa Walsh, John
  Goodmann, Secretary
  Tech Members: Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program
  Guests: Former CVB Director, Former Clinton Chamber Director and current Acting Chamber
  Director Julie Allesee; and City Council member Tom Determann

Welcome and Announcements:
Former CVB and former Chamber Director and acting chamber director and current council
member Julie Allesee described the value of the river and the GRR to Clinton. Clinton is main
supporter for GRR.
Growth and grants. The most important thing is the view of the Mississippi River. #3
attractions globally and 4 longest. Widest river point is at Clinton on the Upper Mississippi
River. Eagle Point Park Lodge renovation by Clinton Rotary and road re-development.

Business:
  Minutes –
  November meeting minutes as distributed were reviewed.
  Motion to accept minutes as distributed and read: Regan, Second: Peterson
  *Approved.

  Treasurer reports
  Jane Regan reported the MRPC Foundation balance is $632.40
  Motion to accept MRPC Foundation balance and activity as described: Goodmann
  Second: Peterson
  *Approved.

  Mary Stahlhut Reported the MRPC DOT appropriation budget balance at $15,788.27
  Commissioners received detailed lists of the claims processed. Motion to accept MRPC
  DOT report as distributed: Peterson Second: Goodmann
  *Approved.

  Reports of pending expenses.
  Regan presented the Travel Iowa billing for first ad published just last week.
  $2,650. Moved Goodman, Second Peterson.
  *Approved.
Other Reports
-GRR Events:

- Harry Farnam Dinner at St. Ambrose: The 13th annual Farnam Dinner to be held March 18 will focus on the 200th anniversary of Fort Armstrong. George Eaton, local historian, will talk about the Centennial Celebration of the fort held in 1916. The main speaker for the evening will be Dr. Samuel Watson, professor of history at the United States Military Academy, West Point History Instructor. MRPC will have a booth and use the two Banners established last year. For further details on the event, contact Curtis C. Roseman at 309-764-6122 or by email: croseman@usc.edu.

- Travel Federation Event: Dan Peterson reported on the training luncheon and the booth at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in January. Senator Sodders wants to use ending balance funds and apply it to efforts like Byways. Connections made with Senator Mike Gronstall, Debbie Durham, Representative Upmeyer, and many other legislators. Good response from the legislators. Discussion to consider have a separate booth next year.

- The Great Race: Chair has sent a request to the Governor to be present on the GRR day of the race which falls on a Sunday, June 26th.

-Iowa Byways sustainability

- Motorcycle Safety Forum- not yet announced
- Travel Iowa Conference in October 19-21st. Discussion of any speaker ideas, partial sponsorship, or a booth. Regan offered a speaker idea on use of “Thank You.”
- July 23, 2017 Edible Iowa GRR article due.
- Heartland Byways Conference: April 3-5 in Council Bluffs. Sunday, Monday, Tuesday. MRPC will not be able to participate due to lack of funding.
- Mary reported that the Iowa Byways are now using matching banners and stands. DOT can produce the graphics and order them from the MRPC budget if approved. Discussion. Moved: Peterson, Second: Goodman. *Approved

-Byways of Iowa Coalition:

- Conference call 3PM Tuesday 2/9. Need representation. Move to ask Julie Allesee from Clinton and John Sutton or other Interpretive Center managers. Moved: Peterson, Second: Walsh. *Approved

-Byways of Iowa Foundation- Casey’s pinup three-week project was the first effort to raise funds for the statewide Iowa Byways.

-Iowa Great River Road Signing Project- Stahlhut reported on progress toward installation this spring-summer.
President’s Report
Pfeffer reported on the national MRPC budget and provided copies of the budget. National surveys on the national office are underway. National Geographic project continues. Web site live later this year? Rollout in June. www.Mississippiriver.geotourism.com We are to Develop itineraries, nominate events that are “grand.” Each state should submit their route. Bylaws will be amended.

Suggested that Iowa nominate the Driftless area. Goodmann to nominated the Iowa GRR. MRPC National Meeting Natchez September 14-16.
MRPC Semi-Annual Meeting, La Crosse April 27-29

Eastern Iowa Tourism Events: March 2nd. Design on a Dime, Power of Travel, Roundtable Palooza.

Interpretive Centers Surveys must be in or they will not be in the next map. Burlington Aldo Leopold site in Burlington is moving toward being a National Park Service attraction.

Edith: Stewardship Award needs to be submitted. Pfeffer proposed nominating MJ Smith, former MRPC Commissioner. Moved to nominate MJ Smith for honors: Regan second: Goodmann
*Approved

National Committee and Strategic Plan priorities
-Culture and Heritage
-Marketing
-Transportation
-Agriculture
-Semianual MRPC meeting April 27-29, 2016, La Crosse, Wis.
-Annual MRPC meeting Sept. 14-16, 2016, Natchez, Miss.

Committee Reports: http://mrpembers.com/
Culture and Heritage Committee: Edith Pfeffer, Martin Graber and Scott Tunnicliff.

Communications and Marketing: Jane Regan and Lori Wallace
Drive the Great River Road September-October 2016. Jane reported on a number of issues and efforts of the committee. Land’s End is now the product provider for the GRR brand. Jane took some names of possible bike ride promoters.

Sunday, June 26th- Great Race needs workers at Walcott. Edith, John, Dan and Jane volunteered. Jane will request use of the two canopies from national and bring Pilot pins and key chains to hand out.

Radio promo discussion for the Drive the Great River Road in the fall. Goodmann suggested using KUNI for promo. KMAQ in Maquoketa. Earned media can be done by interviews. Regan will pursue coordinating this.

Environment, Recreation & Agriculture (ERA): Dan Peterson and Jay Schweitzer: Peterson will forward information on Cinnamon Ridge Farms to National.
http://www.tourmyfarm.com/ Commissioners discussed nominating CIPCO for
preserving and restoring land along the river. Peterson will complete and forward the nomination.

Transportation: Lisa Walsh, John Goodmann and Mary Stahlhut
GIS mapping is the first step toward inventoring the needs for infrastructure improvements in all ten states.

Commissioner Walsh reported on the Aldo Leopold project in Burlington.

General
All committees were asked to discuss the Mississippi River Train (MRT) organization’s request to join with MRPC. Committees mostly agreed that this is not something to rush into.

Great River Road Concerns
In Clayton County, the sand mine has asked to rezone 800 acres too industrial and the below ground mining is now above ground. The County commissioners have not approved this.

Other Actions

Review of Workshop CMP Implementation priorities from the August meeting.

Iowa DOT Report
Mary provided a printed list of the National Scenic Byways grant projects still underway on the Iowa GRR.

Assignments:
Edith reminded commissioners that Interpretive Center visits are needed for all in order to get the survey completed and turned in. Flash drive distribution and training on the sites should be accomplished. Contact Edith with any questions or more flash drive needs.

Possible assistance models:
Regan moved to discuss with MPO’s / RPA’s as a potential partner implementing the Corridor Management Plan. Seconded: Tunnicliff.
* Approved

National Strategic Plan
Chair Pfeffer led the commissioners through the priorities and noted what had been accomplished and what commissioners had agreed to accomplish.

Interpretive Centers
National notify and invite all interpretive Centers to the annual and semi-annual meetings.
Moved: Goodmann Second Regan.
*Approved

Also discussed inviting interpretive centers to the quarterly meetings. Members agreed to include this in the minutes for the next meeting.

Future Commission Meetings
3rd week in March in Burlington. Mary will do a doodle poll. Invite the 5 southern counties CVB’s and Chambers. 10- Noon Workshop. Utilize Joe Taylor, Holly / Shawna as available.
Potential topics for engaging locals in using the GRR brand:
- New Signs
- Shawna help with a 1-pager.
- Use the GRR and to promote
- GRR brand National Scenic Byway
- Use the brand to promote your important place on this phenomenal road.
- What is your most important asset for travel visitors?

Adjournment
The business meeting was adjourned
MRPC Call to order:
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.
Roll call was taken with a quorum of the nine-member 2016 roster present.
Commissioners: Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC.; Jane Regan, Treas.; Scott Tunnicliff, Lisa Walsh, Martin Graber.
Guests: Burlington Mayor Shane McCampbell and Jason Huddle, DOT District 4 Planner

Welcome to the Great River Road Hospitality Workshop
Edith welcomed CVB members, business owners, elected officials, and other stakeholders from Lee, Des Moines, and Louisa counties to our Great River Road Hospitality Workshop. She and Jane Regan discussed: Economic impact of tourism on GRR counties, new signing projects, corridor management plans, and then led a question/answer discussion of how we can help each other in promoting the GRR. About 15 guests attended. Those in attendance appreciated the information and stated they liked being "in the loop."

Adjourn workshop

Lunch

MRPC Reconvened:
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken with a quorum of the nine-member 2016 roster present. Commissioners: Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC.; Jane Regan, Treas.; Scott Tunnicliff, Lisa Walsh, Martin Graber. Guest: Jason Huddle, DOT District 4 Planner

MRPC National Map Revisions Conference Call
Phone call too national MRPC office to give corrections on GRR Road Map - a few changes were made to more accurately place GRR towns in relationship to the river. Interpretive Centers phone numbers and addresses were also checked.

Business:
Minutes –
February 8, 2016 meeting minutes as distributed were reviewed.
Motion to accept minutes as distributed and read: Regan Second: Walsh
*Approved.

Treasurer reports
The printed report of the MRPC DOT appropriation budget was shared with a current balance of $13,138.37. We need to be aware of unspent advertising dollars and could possibly buy some advertising in May. Also, some costs could be incurred for the DOT banners to be given to various interpretive centers. Their costs would be $40 for a stand.
Fundraising discussion:
Lisa W. moved, 2nd by Jay S. to table the fundraising discussion at this time. Passed.

Other Reports
- Farnam Dinner in Davenport on March 18. It was a good way to promote GRR to Quad Cities area having a table display with various items to hand out. Edith, Jane and Dan went.
- Ragbrai bike ride coming to Columbus Jct. and Muscatine in late July.
- Iowa Byways sustainability and By-Ways of Iowa Coalition, 25 new signs put up.
- Report submitted by Mary Stahlhut. Construction will begin in June in Allamakee Co. for the new GRR signing project.

President’s report
Various Committee meetings coming at Lacrosse, Wisconsin, National meeting in late April. Discussion followed on the Agriculture Committee and trying to list various day trips. Those mentioned were: Ardon Creek Winery, Odessa Vineyard, Wide River Winery, Wapsie Farms corn maze, Cinnamon Ridge, Harvestville, Homestead Dairy, Eagle's Nest Winery, Syngenta Seed Corn and Pioneer.
- Semi-annual MRPC meeting on April 27-29, 2016, at La Crosse, Wisconsin. Deadline for registration is Friday, March 25 and hotel deadline in March 27.
- Annual MRPC meeting is September 14-16, 2016, in Natchez, Mississippi with no details yet.

Iowa MRPC Corridor Management Plan Implementation
We then spent some time going over the Planning Meeting Report prepared by Terry Buschkamp, IEDA:
- We will set up a November meeting with legislators in 2016.
- RPO's, there are 4 we could talk with-Bi-State, SE Iowa, NE Iowa, and Dubuque. Our goal is to attend some of their meetings and learn how we can work with them. Jason Huddle, DOT, thought that TAP Funds could be a possible source of revenue for us.
  Jane R. moved to invite Exec. Directors of these RPO's to our June meeting. 2nd by Jay S, passed.
- Contact with locals; Edith then asked each Commissioner present to report on who they had been in contact with: Louisa-Bd. of Sup. Clinton-Bd. of Sup., city of Camanche, city of Clinton. Des Moines-Burlington Cons. Bd. Bd of Sup., CVB. Muscatine-CVB. Jackson-Bd. of Sup. Lee-Bd. of Sup., CVB. Allamakee-Bd. of Sup., Co Cons. We need to follow up with Lori, John, Scott as to their contacts.

New Business:
Jason Huddle from DOT suggested we appear before DOT Commissioners in Oct. 2016. We need to invite Shawna to our June meeting in an effort to make an IDEA tourism grant. We need to consider stakeholder meetings in 2017.

Moved, 2nd, passed a motion to table the National Strategic Planning Report. Need to encourage local entities to publicize their different activities on TravelIowa.com. Discussed the Hometown Pride Program that has paid staff from the Keep Iowa Beautiful Program in Columbus Junction. Could this be some help in the future?

Adjournment
The business meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Dan Petersen, Secretary Pro-Tem.
SYSTEMS PLANNING

MUNUTES OF MEETING OF IOWA MISSISSIPPI PARKWAY COMMISSION

May 2, 2016

Martin Graber, Jane Regan, Jay Schweitzer, Scott Tunnicliff and Lisa Walsch met at the Lacrosse Radison at approximately 7:00 a.m. on the 29th of April, 2016. Jane chaired the meeting.

Martin reported on the activities of his committee but no other committee reports were given.

Jane had previously distributed the multi-state maps. More were distributed to Allamakee because of the need at Effigy Mounds.

Jane reported that because we are not going to receive any help from the legislature in regard to administrative staff we should each contact our COG to see if we can't get assistance from them. We believe that there are four different groups with Scott's entailing some of Illinois. The game plan is to see if we can't receive administrative assistance from one or all of them. Jane suggested that we go to the director of the COG or the transportation director and ask them for help to implement our corridor management plan.

Because of Edith's illness Martin was going to deliver Iowa's state report.

Jane tentatively set the next meeting for June 20, 2016 in Davenport or Bettendorf Iowa. Scott is to make arrangements for the exact location. Because of the 8:00 meeting on the bicycling event, the meeting was adjourned.
MRPC Call to order:  
Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.  
Roll call was taken with a quorum of the nine-member 2016 roster present.  

Commissioners:  
Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC.; Jane Regan, Treas.; John Goodmann, Secretary; Scott Tunnicliff, Lisa Walsh, Martin Graber and Jay Schweitzer.  
Tech Members: Ron Diess and Wendy Frolich, Army Corps of Engineers; Nicole Shalla, Travel Iowa, IEDA; Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program  

Guests:  
Daryl Parker, Chandra Ravada, Jerry Schroeder, Beth Peters, Connie Cutlott, Bob Schiffke, Brian Ritter, Jess Wegmann, Jenna Pollock, Matt Parbs, Jean Peiton, Senator Rita Hart, Mike Norris, Denise Bulatt, Rachel Howe  

Welcome and Announcements:  

Business:  
Minutes:  
March 21, 2016 meeting minutes as distributed were reviewed. Motion to accept minutes as distributed and read: Goodmann, Second: Graber  
*Approved.  
April 29, LaCrosse Motion to accept minutes as distributed and read: Regan Second: Walsh  
*Approved.  

Treasurer reports  
The printed report of the MRPC DOT appropriation budget was shared with a current balance of $5777.56. Commissioners received detailed lists of the claims processed. Motion to accept MRPC DOT report as distributed: Peterson Second: Schweitzer *Approved.  

National MRPC Committee reports  
W:\Planning\SystemsPlanning\Scenic Byways\1 Individual Byway Files\Great River Road\MRPC Meeting Items\Meeting Minutes\2016\2016 Draft MRPC Minutes June Maquoketa (2).docx  

Culture and Heritage-  
Iowa Interpretive Center staff present reported on their current events:  
- Old Ft. Madison: Jean Peiton  
- Motor Mill: Jenna Pollack and Jessica Wegman
• **Hurstville Interpretive Center**: Daryl Parker-on the Grant Wood Scenic Byway. It highlights marsh, prairie, lime mine and kiln, 20 miles off the Mississippi and draws 10,000-12,000 visitors annually.

• **Nahant Marsh**: Brian Ritter Just off the river. Pollinator conference Thursday and Friday this week in Davenport drawing 300 coming up. Booth space available.

• **Clinton Sawmill**: Matt Parbs. Summer event is Milling around with the Wind Mill, Saw Mill, other events including a free ride on the Blue Herron eco tour boat at Camanche, water table on the river and a rafting event. Admission is $4 and $3-7 days a week 'til 6 PM. Heritage Day is in September.

• **Buffalo Bill Museum in Le Claire, Iowa**: Bob Schiffke, Beth Peters, and Connie Curlott. The museum includes regional History- rather than just Buffalo Bill. On the Mississippi River including local inventors. Feature is the 1890 river tow boat. About 20,000 visitors a year. Open all but major holidays. Quad City museums feature “Museum Week” this week with a mystery theme. Also Native American items including 13 Native American cradle boards. Admission is $5, $4 seniors $1 children- student and teacher groups are free.

• **Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District**: Ron Deiss is an archeologist on staff. We are the Rock Island District, Mississippi River Project, Recreation and Natural Resource Management Section. The Visitor center focuses on the Upper Mississippi River. Part of their mission is Environmental compliance. Mississippi River Master Plan. USACE. Mississippi River Project is in the process of updating its Master Plan (MP). They feature military engineer’s history at the site in Moline. Clock tower tours etc. The Arsenal Museum has been threatened with closing and advocates are working to keep it open.

• **Our Mississippi River education materials**: Ron and Wendy reported Navigation studies were not funded, but concern about the historic riverfront continued. There is an Our Mississippi River home page online and the program has been well received, successful and award winning. All of the naturalists along the GRR have received these. Commissioners reported the schools have reported excellent use and Camanche has won awards for using it. It is a great resource and especially well-received as the Army Corps is highly regarded and trusted for quality research and education.

• **Osborne Welcome Center**: Jenna Pollock reported they have a roomful of materials and then have added a computer for easy access to information.

Commissioner Graber reported that National needs the new surveys completed and each commissioner should help their county’s I-Centers complete and return them.

**Marketing**

This is the Year of birding; and Drive the Great River Road Month September and October 2016. National Geographic: Please visit your I-can ters and locals to post on this. Google analytics on the performance are improving. New 10-state maps are out and have been delivered to the I-centers. If you don’t need them all, please pass them on. Bike the Great River Road Facebook give-away is underway. Please promote. Camping is the theme for next year.

Iowa: The Great Race Sunday, June 26th at noon at the I-80 Interstate Museum. Commission workers should arrive at 10:00 a.m. to set up. The route includes Mason City,
Cedar Rapids, lunch at Walcott and finishes at Moline. Dan and Edith will participate. Others should confirm with Edith.

**Transportation**
Commissioner Walsh reported from the published committee minutes and a committee conference call is scheduled tomorrow. (June 21, 2016.)

**Environment, Recreation & Agriculture** –
Commissioner Schweitzer reported that the committee is looking to do an inventory of agriculture and environmental assets. Only 2 members attended and there were no minutes.

**Chairwoman’s Report**

**MRPC Board Meeting April 27-29, 2016, La Crosse, Wisconsin**
No Board report published yet but the Annual MRPC meeting is Sept. 14-16, 2016, in Natchez, Mississippi. The city is celebrating its 300th year.

**Iowa Byways Sustainability:**
Commissioner Pfeffer reported on the collaboration and developments in shared resources including an audio interpretation "mobile app" that may be adaptable for Iowa GRR interpretive centers. One of the byways is testing it and will pursue how to use or share the product among the 11 Iowa Byways.

**Iowa State Fair:** including the Iowa State Fair Booth scheduled for August. All Iowa byways will be promoted and most will participate. DOT will provide the statewide materials and assistance. The MRPC and its stakeholders on the GRR will staff Sunday, August 14th and Friday, August 19th. Schweitzer, Graber, Walsh, Pfeffer and Regan indicated they would assist.

**Byways of Iowa Coalition:** The Coalition will meet July 6th. Pfeffer requested additional stakeholders to represent the Iowa Great River Road.

**Tourism grants and marketing – Nicole Shalla, Iowa Tourism Office, IEDA**
Nicole reported on the Travel Iowa Web site analytics produced by staff in her office that are showing great visits and low bounce rate for the Iowa GRR on these pages. Nicolle passed around the ads that MRPC placed in the Travel Iowa and Iowa Outdoors publications. Casey’s topper marketing impact bay not be trackable. MRPC could ask to confirm the date these went up and look at the analytics for that period. The numbers will be tracked through this month for the year. The Google promotions are showing results. The Iowa byways and the Great River Road are higher performers on the Travel Iowa web site. The economic impact of the River and GRR is well documented. Regan commented that MRPC needs monthly reports and an annual summary to track the impact of marketing efforts.

IEDA Partner ad purchases for fiscal year 2016 were discussed along with changes/options available for Fiscal Year 2017.

**2016**
- $2,600 ½ page Travel Iowa
- $1,000 promo clicks
- $225 Iowa Outdoors
- $1,350 Casey’s
- $495 for ¼ page Eastern Iowa

**2017**
2017 Marketing Discussion

- Best of the Midwest $900 140,000 circulation
- Midwest Living $3,500 (950,000)
- Family Package $1600- 2 publications Kansas City
- Trip Advisor $2000 – 147,059 impressions- Branded banners come up on Midwest search
- You Tube $1000 – Midwest region 15/30 second commercials before videos play
- Sponsored listings - $1,800 on the Travel Iowa.com web site. (Promo spaces on the top of the page.
- Leads- emails on Travel Iowa
- Billboards – $800 Digital for 2 months at a time, Moline March-April John Deere and 60th /(confirm)

Brian Ritter suggested using Iowa Public Radio. They had been successful $600 for 2 weeks to promote an event and a key feature is that you can target geographically.
Beth Peters- Trip Advisor works- personal experience.
Matt- Billboard is a quick option
Daryl- East into Illinois is a good target area.

Le Claire $45,000 budget to market Peoria and into Chicago. Cost are higher for Chicagoland.

Nicole administers the Travel Iowa Grant Program. Grants: Available online now. $5,000 max Applications are due July 6th. A 25% match is required with a limit of two applications per applicant. These are often awarded for an event, advertising, a web site, a publication, training or conferences. Applicant could be a stakeholder. September 2017. These are always posted on the Travel Iowa web page. Scroll to the bottom and find this and other partnership information for tourism advocates. Commissioner Tunnicliff suggested visiting Iowa grants.gov. It contains all other state grant opportunities as well.

Break for Lunch

Reconvene

Other Business:

Marketing Budget:
Commissioners discussed the IEDA Partner Program opportunities that should be decided soon.
Motion to commit again for ½ page in the Travel Iowa publication and ¼ page in the Eastern Iowa Tourism publication: Schweitzer, Second: Peterson
* Approved
Motion to purchase web page remarketing: Goodmann. Second: Schweitzer
*Approved
Motion to have Goodmann and Regan proceed with researching and purchasing with FY2016 marketing budget: billboards and NPR and other opportunities as a marketing working committee: Tunnicliff; Second: Graber

MRPC would like to have monthly stats from the Travel Iowa website to know more about the activity. Regan will request more detailed reports from Amy Zeigler, IEDA.

**Introductions:**
Additional guests present for the afternoon session were introduced. Commissioner Regan provided a presentation about MRPC responsibilities and the economic impact of the Mississippi River and the Iowa Great River Road. She stated that the MRPC goal is to partner with MPO’s / RPA’s to support this effort and
- the interpretive centers along the Iowa GRR
- the infrastructure of the road and the signing
- better communication including constant comment, web site, Facebook The MRPC is going to need assistance with funding or staffing to strengthen and support the Iowa GRR in terms of transportation and economic development.

Regan presented the draft models that Zach James prepared after attending the MRPC Iowa Great River Road Corridor Management Plan rollout meeting in June 2015. Each model would include local match. Discussion with the planning organizations present followed.

**Discussion summary:**
- The planning organizations affirmed that the Iowa GRR CMP could be integrated into their plans.
- To provide assistance in other ways, if MRPC can come forward with a finite list of what they want from the organization, the conversation could go forward within the regular mission and practices of the organizations to consider. Come forward with smaller issues we could start discussing what we can do. If you give us a list of what you would ask someone to do… we can go through the list.
- We do not do marketing. That piece is not in our scope. That is more appropriate for the Chambers and CVB’s
- Transportation and economic development are more in our bailiwick. The information in the CMP can be presented to the organization boards.
- Assistance would not be for staff and operations support.
• We may be able to help with destination signing for attractions.
• It seems the communications is the key and there needs to be a simple and consistent communication. You could have a meeting with all the CVB directors.
• On occasion, a COG will do a contract to organize and manage a project (e.g., a trail project.
• Trails- Being aware of the GRR and the MRT for the needs toward projects that benefit both when we have more information.
• Bi-state is pushing to put up bike trail signing with free signs from IDOT and local posts and installation.
• Commissioners and attendees agreed that Interpretive Centers should be invited to attend all MRPC meetings.

Adjournment
The business meeting was adjourned
The FY2015-2016 budget for the Iowa MRPC was approved by the Iowa DOT for $40,000.00. The budget includes 2015 National MRPC dues, Iowa Byways Coalition Membership, Eastern Iowa Tourism Dues, Marketing expenses, MRPC conferences and Iowa Commission meetings and travel expenses, and Administrative expenses.

**Figure 1: Iowa MRPC State Fiscal Year Budget**

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<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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<td>2 Annual Meeting NOLA</td>
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<td>5 Iowa Byways Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Eastern Iowa Tourism Dues</td>
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IOWA ACTIVITIES AND WORK PLAN

Iowa MRPC Website Development

The Iowa MRP website continues to evolve. www.iowagreatriverroad.com

Our site is now hosted by the Iowa Department of Tourism at www.traveliowa.com and then clicking on the Great River Road Link. By linking with Iowa Tourism, we have leveraged web site traffic with over a million viewers who annually navigate the Iowa Tourism web pages. Many corridor attractions are also featured in companion byways and communities’ links.

Features of our web site include:

- Fantastic photography and panoramic photos of the Mississippi River.
- Schedule of events that can be sorted by date, location, type, etc.
- Mapping ability and ability to zoom in on maps and select location links.
- An itinerary or trip planner that prints an agenda – by city, type of event, etc.
- Ability to feature links with maps and icons and print a route with mileage.
- Community pages for each city and town along the route where events and dates can be posted and amended by the CVB’s. Events and an on-line calendar of the same are also included.
- Inspirational content with beautiful views from a number of scenic overlooks.

Interpretive Centers along the route are each described in detail including directions to them and hours of operation.

Iowa’s Byway Collection also has an Iowa Byways web site that also points to the Iowa Great River Road site (www.iowabyways.org).

Travel Iowa staff have tracked the web activity for this site since adopting the dormant web content a year ago. It is performing at or above the standards expected or set by the web team.

- 21,838 sessions.
- 18,883 user
- 15,025 were new users.
- 122,190 page viewers
- 5.6 pages/session with an average for view 3.02
- Bounce rate is only 34%. (Bounce rates can be as high as 90%...goal is below 50 %.)
- Visiting 4.53 minutes per visitor. Generally, goal is 2.5 minutes.
- Travel Iowa has seen traffic grow from 1 million to 1.5 million in a year.
- Highest users on Travel Iowa are women 55-65.

Travel Iowa buys search engine marketing words that are seasonally changed including scenic drive, fall colors and other GRR assisting terms.

In addition, Interpretative Centers and CVB’s have been encouraged to use experiencemississippiriver.com. Interpretative Centers using this website have found it has dramatically increased visitors this past year. The centers are using the calendar to list events.

Visitors to this site can also click a link to “Get a Printable Guide” on demand. http://www.traveliowa.com/UserDocs/getinspired/GRR_printable_map.pdf
Iowa MRPC Social Media and Communications

No Iowa MRPC newsletters were produced this fiscal year.

We do have a Facebook page and will be using Constant Contact ® to email important updates to our GRR stakeholders.

https://www.facebook.com/IowaGreatRiverRoad?ref=aymt_homepage_panel
Figure 3: Iowa GRR Facebook
Iowa Great River Road Traveler Map

The Iowa MRPC approved and reprinted our new colorful tear-off byway map to include the updated Interpretive Centers. A copy is included in this report. (See Figure 4). The 11 X 17 map has been distributed to our welcome centers, interpretive centers, CVB and other tourist attractions along the byway. The colorful map was developed in a tear-off format for the convenience of travelers and users. The new format was produced by the Iowa DOT and allows for easy updating in the years ahead.

Figure 4: Iowa Great River Road Traveler map

The Iowa MRPC in cooperation with Iowa’s other designated byways and the Iowa Department of Transportation re-printed the high quality travel guide showcasing the Iowa Great River Road in four pages and the other ten designated Iowa scenic byways first printed in May 2014. This visitor friendly guide invites travelers to extend their Iowa visits and experience more of Iowa’s nearby attractions that complement the GRR experience. The guide is free and can be viewed and ordered at www.iowasbyway.org. Commission members have worked hard to distribute this guide to the welcome and interpretative centers, CVB’S and other tourist attractions in their counties.
Corridor Management Plan Implementation Workshop

A Corridor Management Plan Implementation Workshop was held on July 7, 2015. Facilitator for the Workshop was Terry Buschkamp, Main Street Program, Iowa Economic Development Authority. Six of our seven current 2016 commissioners, two 2015 commissioners, tech member Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program, and David Rose, Iowa DOT Commissioner participated in the workshop. The goal of the workshop was to think strategically where the Commission will focus their efforts in the coming year to implement the Corridor Management Plan accomplishing three or four priorities. The workshop opened with comments on the 2015 Corridor Management Plan we had received before lunch. We decided to use the duties of the commission that are found on the State of Iowa web page: “The Mississippi River Planning Commission is responsible for the continued development, preservation, and promotion of the byway and its amenities” as our mission. Workshop began with attendees working independently to list work that they had done in the past year to promote this mission of the commission. Individuals were asked to list and share their activities for the last 12 months. The facilitator then introduced a series of four questions designed to be reflective of the four areas that were identified in the Corridor Management Plan.

Level 1: Existing Level of Appropriation
Level 2: Existing Administration and Communications
Level 3: Effective promotion and Interpretation
Level 4: Facilitator for Capital Investment.

Attendees worked individually, then shared their responses for project ideas. Attendees were then asked to indicate their first four top choices and their four second choices for each of the above levels. Creation of a Timeline to Implement Commission Priorities in each of the four levels was discussed. Each commissioner was asked what actions would need to be taken to implement the projects in the next 12 months and identify their willingness to follow through with the action items on the list. The following Projects were selected:

**Project #1:** Request increased allocation from the state via the Iowa DOT (by October 2015)
**Project #2:** Present the Corridor Management Plan to local authorities – City and County – at public meetings.
**Project #3:** Create an ad campaign challenging folks to visit each of the Interpretive Centers.
**Project #4:** Ask local governments for money.

Each commissioner selected specific items they would work on in their county to accomplish these four projects. The facilitator provided a summary of the workshop and Recommendations for Next Steps. (Full report on p. 13).

MARKETING

At our August 10th meeting, a marketing workshop was held with Shawna Lode, Director of Iowa Tourism, as the Facilitator. Commissioners were sent eight questions in advance to think about. During the workshop, we talked about our primary target audience, where travelers are drawn from, what are our goals, how will they be measured, what are we selling, what is the message, what is the best delivery method for this message, and what is the budget. Shawna explained the Travel Iowa Partnership Program advising they purchase advertising and then remarket it to groups such as ours.

At the end of the discussion, the following marketing purchases were made:

Eastern Iowa Tourism ¼ page once a year $495.00, Iowa Outdoors – DNR magazine ad $225.00, Iowa Travel Guide ½ page $1,350, Casey’s General Store -Out of Home – 10 gas
We also reserved some of our marketing funds for graphic development and Fall promotion. Our marketing chair, Jane Regan did local radio “103.5” program buy which was $103.50 ad cost and tag words. Trivia about GRR was on the air all week with a Friday prize of $103.50. In June 2016, we again took to air making media buys in the area promoting the Great River Road in Eastern Iowa. Scripts were written by Commissioner Regan, our marketing chair and our IAA MRPC Chair Edith Pfeffer. Commissioner Goodman worked with Commissioner Regan on a billboard in Dubuque. All of these media buys were under $500 to each entity to meet state requirements. (Appendix p. 74) The Commission feels this was a successful project as we work to make more people aware of the Great River Road.

Marketing is an area that we continue to struggle with as a commission. No one on the commission is a marketing major. We continue to try to determine who the targeted audience is, where is the traveler drawn from, and what are they looking for. We constantly remind ourselves that this national scenic byway is home to history, the river, scenery, and charming riverfront communities with unique culture and recreation opportunities. It is our duty to promote the road.

Great River Road Interpretive Centers

Visits were made to each of the sixteen Interpretive Centers in the State of Iowa. Local commissioners visited each interpretive centers in their county. The checklist was completed. Commissioners trained the staff at our Iowa Interpretive Centers using the jump drive provided by Dr. Ruth Hawkins and the Cultural and Heritage Committee. Pictures and script were added to the jump drive talking about each of the sixteen Interpretive Centers in Iowa. During the visit, commissioners distributed our Great River Road tear sheets, Iowa Byways Travel Guide, the Cultural Traveler and the new MRPC National Maps. Each Interpretive Center received a box of these maps. The Interpretive Centers were encouraged to list their center and weekly activities on the Iowa Tourism website – www.iowatourism.com/greatriverroad. The Interpretive Centers were also encouraged to list events on experiencemississippiriver.com. In addition, Commissioners contacted centers regarding the National Geographic GEO Tourism project. Each center was encouraged to enter their center at mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com website and keep it up to date. Finally, the Iowa Great River Road was nominated for the National Geographic GEO Tourism Project. The new MRPC Ten State National Map was also delivered to the Iowa Welcome Center at Sabula and I-80 Welcome center at Wilton.

Iowa Participation in Meetings and Events

The Iowa Chair and or her proxy participated in all National MRPC Board meetings and Executive Board meetings, as well as the Annual Meeting. The majority of Iowa Commissioners also participated in the National MRPC meetings.

The MRPC has been representative at the monthly meetings of the Iowa Byways Coalition by our Chair. Up-dates on projects have been provided to commission members as all Iowa Byways work together to promote the great State of Iowa.

The Iowa Commission participated in September Drive the Great River Road Month activities. Several commissioners appeared on local radio talk shows promoting the Great River Road. In addition, commissioners attended local city council meetings and county board of supervisor meetings gathering and reading proclamations declaring September Drive the Great River Road Month. Governor Branstad also declared September 2015 Drive the Great River Road in Iowa.

pump – toppers (April – June) $2650.00 and Travel Iowa – Web site – Remarketing reminders guaranteed 50,000 impressions – and 1,000 clicks Jan thru March $1,000.
month. Press Releases, proclamations etc. were distributed to local media in their jurisdictions by each commissioner. Each interpretive center received some key tags to use in their local media. We were extremely proud an Iowa couple from Tipton won the National online sweepstakes $500 gift card. Our chair forwarded the information to the CVB’s and Shawna Lode at Iowa Tourism. Information about the event was posted on traveliowa.com.

Commission members have worked hard encouraging our interpretative centers and welcome centers to enter information about their attraction on the National Geographic GEO Tourism Website. John Goodman, nominated the Iowa Great River Road for the site. In addition, we have contacted other tourist attractions and businesses in our counties to enter their information on this national website.

Commissioners continue to contact their key local people encouraging them to input tourism data at Travel Iowa website and bring all their local attractions and events up to date. It is imperative that local concerns populate their own data to be best represented in the statewide guide. They are also encouraged to use experiencemississippiriver.com for events and festivals. The interpretative centers that have used experiencemississippiriver.com are receiving visitors identifying with this website and traveling the Great River Road.

2016 is the year of Birding, Biking and Driving the Great River Road. Information has been shared by Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT, with commission members regarding Audubon birding maps for the State of Iowa. Commissioners have shared these resources with their local interpretative centers. Several birding events were held in the Spring by our interpretative centers. More events are anticipated this fall with the interpretative centers hosting events.
Birds of the Upper Mississippi River

Follow the Great River Road to Great Birding!

Imagine how the bird habitat and bird life along the Mississippi River must change as the river changes. Witness how seasonal alteration through the ebb and flow of water and temperature affects the birds along the Upper Mississippi River. From the migratory routes of birds the Upper Mississippi River flows through all the way to the wetlands of its mouth, the birds are changing with the seasons. They change as the water level rises and falls, and as the seasons change.

We can now add a well-planned birding route for the researchers and birders who enjoy the Upper Mississippi River. The Great River Road Birding Trail provides a unique birding experience along the Upper Mississippi River. From Iowa to Illinois, the birds you can see change as you travel north to south.

The Upper Mississippi River: A Globally Important Bird Area and Migratory “Flyway” for Birds

The Upper Mississippi River flows through the heart of the Midwest. It carries millions of miles each year all over the world, who can experience the wonder and magnificence of the river. It is a river that is known for its beauty, diversity, and productivity. It is home to many species of birds and mammals. The river flows through numerous states and is a major contributor to the Great Lakes.

The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge covers a significant portion of the river’s length. The Upper Mississippi River flows through Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. It is a major bird migration route for many species. The river is a popular destination for birders and nature enthusiasts.

Success Stories

Conservation and restoration efforts have helped to recover populations of many species. The Bald Eagle is one of the species that have made a comeback. The Bald Eagle was on the brink of extinction in the 1960s, but thanks to conservation efforts, the population has increased significantly.

Species of Concern

The Upper Mississippi River is home to many species of birds that are of concern. Some of the species that are of concern include the Whooping Crane, the Anhinga, and the Mississippi Kite.

Connecting People to the Mississippi River

The Great River Road Birding Trail is a great way for people to connect with nature. It is a great way for birders and nature enthusiasts to explore the Upper Mississippi River. The trail provides a unique opportunity to explore the river and its surrounding areas.

IBA’s Take Flight: Identifying and Conserving Essential Habitat for Birds

The Illinois Bird Atlas (IBA) is a tool that birders can use to identify areas of important bird habitat. The IBA is a bird atlas that identifies areas of significant bird habitat. The IBA is a valuable tool for birders and conservationists.

Birds of the Upper Mississippi River Refuge Checklist

Provided below is a checklist highlighting the 100 species of birds that can be found within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge. It is a great resource for birders and nature enthusiasts.

1. American Mink
2. Peregrine Falcon
3. Osprey
4. Bald Eagle
5. Snowy Owl
6. Canada Goose
7. Mallard
8. Ring-necked Pheasant
9. Mallard
10. Canada Goose

Abundance and Nesting Status:

- Sh - Shallow
- M - Medium
- H - High
- N - None

Scientists from the Audubon Society and the University of Minnesota conducted a comprehensive study of the bird species found within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge. The study was conducted over a period of several years, and the results were published in a report called "Birds of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge."
Birds of the Upper Mississippi River

Follow the Great River Road to Great Birding!

The Upper Mississippi River offers some of the best birding in the Midwest. The river attracts a wide variety of birds, making it a popular destination for birders. The river's diverse habitats, including wetlands, forests, and fields, provide an ideal environment for different species of birds. The river is known for its large numbers of waterfowl, including ducks and geese, as well as various species of shorebirds and wading birds. The river's location also makes it a key stop on the migration routes for many bird species, including warblers and songbirds. The river's riparian forests and wetlands provide habitat for a variety of bird species, including raptors and songbirds. The river's diverse habitats and favorable conditions make it a great place to go birding. The Upper Mississippi River is a birding hotspot and a must-visit for birders. The river is a perfect place to enjoy the beauty of nature and the diversity of bird life.
The National MRPC Annual meeting was held in New Orleans with five commissioner and Iowa DOT support staff from the Iowa commission present. Four Commissioners and support staff from Iowa DOT attended the Semi-Annual Meeting in La Crosse in April.

Iowa MRPC Stakeholder Meetings

MRPC stakeholder meetings took place twice this past year. The purpose of the first meeting was to meet with Governor Branstad and his staff. At this meeting, the sixteen-page Executive Summary and the eighty page 2015 Corridor Management Plan for the Iowa Great River Road was distributed and discussed. A one page, summary: “What does the 2015 Corridor Management Plan Offer?” was also distributed. During this meeting, a request for additional funding was made to implement the plan. Documents detailing the work of each commissioner were given to Governor Branstad and his staff. (Appendix p. 72). A budget request of $301,435 was forwarded through IDOT and shared with Governor Branstad. While we did not receive additional funding, our funding was not cut by the Governor nor his staff in the 2016 Transportation Bill. The economic impact and opportunities on the Great River Road were discussed at length (Appendix p. 76, 77). Opportunities including the American Queen 2015 fall visits and plans for 2016 visits and the Viking Cruise Line for 2017 were mentioned. Governor was surprised with the implementation of these events on the Mississippi River and asked us to keep him advised of future growth. He encouraged continued discussion with his staff for additional funding. Several funding sources were suggested by his staff. Follow up with IDOT stated IA MRPC would not qualify for those funds. This was a first meeting with Governor Brandstad by the IA MRPC and we were encouraged to come back and meet with him again with our plans for implementation of the Corridor Management Plans.

The second stakeholders meeting was held on November 9, 2015 with members of the Iowa Legislature who joined us for lunch. Invited guests included twenty-nine State Representatives and State Senators who represent the ten river counties along the Great River Road. Reasons for this meeting included the 2015 Corridor Management Plan, Implementation of the plan and Collaborative expectations for the Great River Road Communities. Duties of commissioners (Appendix p. 72,73) and uses of the current funding were discussed. It was pointed out commissioners have taken the 2015 Corridor Management Plan to each county board of supervisors, county conservation boards and city councils, convention and business bureaus, chamber of commerce, Rotary Clubs and economic development officials and legislators. Each group has also been provided with a copy of the 2015 IA MRPC Annual Report.

Great River Road Economic Impact Study sheet with the GRR county facts pulled out were distributed. Using the Economic development approach –attributing dollars spent, employees in travel industry etc. Scott County is one of the largest river counties and ranks #3 in the state. Most remarkable is the impact of visitors in the smaller population counties. Allamakee is #1 in the state in per capita of travel related income. These numbers illustrate the huge impact of the Mississippi River and the Great River Road on visitors. Two counties are over $4 million and Allamakee $40 million (Appendix p. 76).

Discussion followed including the challenge to local organizations along the river who fail to recognize the Mississippi River and the Great River Road and their influences, the importance of the Education tool: Our Mississippi River prepared by the Core of Engineers for teaching about the river; the riverboat cruises from New Orleans to St. Paul, and the new websites including
Iowa Great River Road, [www.experiencemississippiriver.com](http://www.experiencemississippiriver.com) and [www.mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com](http://www.mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com) - the National Geographic new geo-tourism web site as well as travellowa.com - iowagreatriverroad. According to the Code of Iowa “The Mississippi River Planning Commission is responsible for the continued development, preservation, and promotion of the byway and its amenities.”

Budgeting issues were shared with the legislators and a copy of the letter sent to Craig Markley, Office of Systems Planning, Iowa DOT. A question and answer discussion closed the meeting. Our goal of educating legislators about the Great River Road and they educating us about funding has begun. (Additional information may be found on pages 34 and 35).

**Great River Road Hospitality Workshop**

CVB members, business owners, elected officials and other stakeholders from Lee, Des Moines, and Louisa counties attended our Great River Road Hospitality Workshop. Topics discussed included economic impact of tourism on GRR counties, new signing projects, corridor management plans, and finally a question/answer discussion on how we can help each other in promoting the GRR. Twenty-two guests attended and stated they appreciated the information and stated they liked being “in the loop.” The jump drive prepared by Dr. Ruth Hawkins and the Culture and Heritage Committee was shown with the Iowa additions showing all sixteen centers. As a result of this workshop, staff at the interpretative centers and CVB have been invited to attend our meetings. Staff of the interpretative centers were extremely helpful and we worked on marketing dollars spending for 2016-2017. A joint hospitality workshop was also done in Clinton with the CVB. Invited guests included representatives from tourist attractions, motels, restaurants and interpretative centers. Participants were encouraged to use the brand to promote their place on this phenomenal Great River Road. They were encouraged to use the GRR brand – National Scenic Byway. All participants were challenged “What is your most important asset for travel visitors?”

**New Interpretative Center**

Iowa was pleased to welcome our sixteenth national Mississippi River interpretative center, the Motor Mill Historic Site Interpretative Center along the Turkey River between Elkader and Guttenberg. The majestic old Mill is nearly 90 feet tall, and is believed to be the tallest structure of its kind in the Midwest. The stately old structure boasts six full stories and measures 60 feet by 45 feet. Other attractions at the site include the Cooperage, Stable, Inn, Ice House, and a replica of the 1895 pin and truss bridge completed in 2012, complementing the scenic history of the Motor Mill Site.

**Economic Impact Report**

Jane Regan has reported data from the document titled The Economic Impact of Travel on Iowa Counties 2014. This document has been prepared by the U.S. Travel Association. She has specifically targeted the 10 Mississippi River Counties in Iowa. She has also listed the adjoining counties at the bottom of the data chart. The impact is staggering and it will be helpful for legislators and the CAT (Community Attraction and Tourism) Grant Economic Authority grant application of the Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center. (Additional charts Appendix p. 76, 77).
TRAVEL EXPENDITURES

Domestic traveler spending in Iowa totaled close to $8.1 billion (in current dollars) during 2014, representing an increase of 4.0 percent from 2013.

Auto transportation, foodservices, and lodging are the top three spending categories for domestic travelers in Iowa. Domestic travelers spent $3.3 billion on auto transportation, up 1.2 percent from 2013. This sector accounted for 41.1 percent of total domestic travelers’ spending in Iowa.

Accounting for 20.2 percent of the state total domestic traveler expenditures, spending on foodservice rose 5.5 percent to $1.6 billion in 2014. Domestic travelers’ spending on lodging was up 9.4 percent to $902.1 million in 2014.

In 2014, domestic travelers’ spending on public transportation was up 5.3 percent from 2013 to $864.9 million. Domestic travelers spent $788.9 million on entertainment and recreation sector in 2014, up 4.4 percent from 2013. Domestic travelers’ spending on general retail increased 5.8 percent to $365.7 million in 2014.

Domestic Travel Expenditures in Iowa in 2014
by Industry Sector

1. Foodservice sector includes restaurants, grocery stores and other eating and drinking establishments.
2. Lodging sector consists of hotels and motels, campgrounds, and ownership or rental of vacation or second homes.
3. Public transportation sector comprises air, intercity bus, rail, boat or ship, and taxicab or limousine service.
4. Auto transportation sector includes privately-owned vehicles that are used for trips (e.g., automobiles, trucks, campers or other recreational vehicles), gasoline stations, and automotive repair.
5. General retail trade sector includes gifts, clothes, souvenirs, and other incidental retail purchases.
6. Entertainment and recreation sector includes such items as golf, skiing and gaming.
Impact on the 10 Mississippi River Counties
2014 DATA: U.S. Travel Association

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<th>County and Rank in State Per Expenditure $$$ Spent</th>
<th>Visitor Expenditures $ in Millions &amp; Per Capita</th>
<th>% Increase over 2013</th>
<th>Payroll $Millions</th>
<th># Employed</th>
<th>State Tax Revenue $ Millions</th>
<th>Local Tax Revenue $ Millions</th>
<th>Population in 2013 &amp; Rank by Population in State</th>
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<td>Scott 3</td>
<td>621.67 M 3,648 PC - 6</td>
<td>3.89%</td>
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<td>1.69</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>17,773 (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson 36</td>
<td>31.15M 1,590 PC</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>19,587 (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisa 6</td>
<td>14.23M 1,261 PC</td>
<td>.70%</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>11,282 (67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,459,930M</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.396%</strong></td>
<td><strong>219.14</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,910</strong></td>
<td><strong>71,060,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,220,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>496,309</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjoining counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Visitor Expenditures $</th>
<th>Payroll $</th>
<th># Employed</th>
<th>State Tax Revenue $</th>
<th>Local Tax Revenue $</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winneshiek</td>
<td>29.52</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>9.449</td>
<td>20,768 (30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>20,343</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fayette</td>
<td>17.72</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>12,264</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chickasaw</td>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>0.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Buren</td>
<td>6.49</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>8,761</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>8,761</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>21.58</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>20,217</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>40.61</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>17,325</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>16.25</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>0.11</td>
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<td>4.95</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>10,231</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Iowa Population: 3,092,341
16% of Total Iowa Population Lives in the Great River Road (496,625 population of 10 River Counties).
Example: If we closed off the Des Moines County boarders to our Visitors each citizen (40,480) would have to spend $3,261 each, to put back into our economy the $131,990,000 expenditures brought in by the visitors to our lodging, restaurants, and gas stations. How many of the 1,030 jobs would disappear?
DISCUSSION WITH MPO’s / RPA’s

Discussion has begun with the four MPO’s / RPA’s in Iowa along the GRR. At our June 20, 2016 meeting, Commissioner Regan provided a presentation about MRPC responsibilities and the economic impact of the Mississippi River and the Iowa Great River Road. She stated that the MRPC goal is to partner with MPO’s and RPA’s to support this effort and
- the interpretive centers along the Iowa GRR
- the infrastructure of the road and the signing
- better communication about the road including constant contact, web site, Facebook etc.

The MRPC is going to need assistance with funding and staffing to strengthen and support the Iowa GRR in terms of transportation and economic development. Discussion with the planning organizations present followed.

Discussion summary:
- The first point made was they do not do marketing.
- Assistance would not be for staff and operations support.
- Transportation and economic development are more in their bailiwick.
- Might be able to help with destination signing for attractions.
- On occasion, a COG will do a contract to organize and manage a project (i.e. a trail project).
- Trails—Being aware of the GRR and the MRT needs toward projects that benefit both when we have more information.
- Bi-state is pushing to put up bike trail signing with free signs from IDOT and local posts and installation.
- Information in the Corridor Management Plan may be presented to their boards.
- Any requests for money must go thru their boards for any project.

Commissioner and General Activities

Commission members were involved in a number of activities over and above our regular meetings and stakeholder meetings.

Current and former Iowa MRPC Commissioners have contributed $1500.00 to the Great River Road Driftless Area Education and Visitor Interpretive Center being built on the Columbus Bridge property along the Great River Road, just south of Lansing, Iowa. The Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center, a three-story, 10,000 square foot building situated between Village Creek and Columbus Road, will offer experiences and exhibits reflecting the cultural, recreational, environmental and historical significance of the Driftless Area, which encompasses northeast Iowa, southwest Wisconsin, southeast Minnesota and portions of northwest Illinois. Chairman Pfeffer, of the Iowa MRPC, made the presentation at the ground breaking ceremony on November 3, 2015. She was joined by Sherry Quamme, chair of Wisconsin MRPC. This project received a National Scenic Byways Grant in 2012. Commissioner Jane Regan, treasurer Iowa MRPC, is a member of the fundraising committee. (Additional information p. 30).

Commissioners Pfeffer and Petersen attended the Travel Federation of Iowa Training Luncheon in Des Moines on January 24th. In the evening, the Iowa MRPC partnered with Byways of Iowa and participated in Iowa Tourism Legislative Show Case at the Knapp Building located on the Iowa State Fair Grounds. Commissioners Pfeffer, Petersen and Goodmann shared the story of the Iowa Great River Road with our legislators. Each legislator was given a pilot’s wheel pin and
invited to visit Iowa’s Eastern Gold Coast when the session was completed. This venue provided an opportunity to tell the story of the Great River Road to our State Senators and State Representatives as well as state elected officials.

February 2016, found us again partnering with Fort Madison and Keokuk, Iowa and Nauvoo, Illinois providing promotional materials to be taken to the State of Utah for three trade shows. The Great River Historic Loop has been developed by the Keokuk CVB, Fort Madison Tourism and Nauvoo Tourism Office. The Great River Historic Loop is a fifty-mile drive along some of the most scenic shorelines of the Mississippi River. Many visitors come to Nauvoo – the City Beautiful, a National Historic Landmark District, to experience what the pioneer life of the 1840’s and to visit the Nauvoo Temple. This historic loop provides an excellent opportunity to show case the Great River Road in Iowa and Illinois. (See Appendix page 77, 78).

The 13th Annual Henry Farnam Dinner March 18th focused on the 200th anniversary of Fort Armstrong. Speakers for the evening included George Eaton, local historian, who talked about the Centennial Celebration of Fort Armstrong held in 1916 and Dr. Samuel Watson, professor of history at the United States Military Academy, West Point, who shared the historical context of Fort Armstrong in 1816. Iowa MRPC booth showcased our new banners and the Iowa Great River Road Interpretative Centers. MRPC key rings, MRPC pins, Great River Road Tear sheets and the Iowa Byways brochure were distributed. This venue also provided a great opportunity to tell the story of the Great River Road, its many attractions and opportunities for day trips. Three commissioners, Pfeffer, Petersen, Regan and guests attended this informative evening.

The Great Race returned to Iowa on Sunday, June 26th. Promoting the Great River Road for future races was our goal at the Iowa I-80 Truck Stop Museum. Later, drivers drove a small portion of the Iowa and Illinois Great River Road to the Moline Commons. Pilot pins, key chains, Great River Road maps and Great River Road tear sheets were distributed. Attractions in the area along the GRR were promoted by three commission members Petersen, Pfeffer and Tunnicliff.

Individually, commissioners have been telling the Great River Road story in their individual counties including Commissioner Regan, who made a presentation on the Great River Road to Clinton Rotary during our February meeting, (commissioners were noon guests of Clinton Rotary). Commissioner Regan also appeared on radio stations and at the Great River Rumble telling the story of the Iowa Great River Road. She has also been busy raising funds for the new Driftless Area Education and Visitor Interpretative Center just south of Lansing, Iowa. In addition, Commissioner Goodmann has been doing newspaper interviews including the Cedar Rapids Gazette. “Community Attractions”. Our chair has been busy promoting Birding, Biking and Hiking along the Great River Road in newspaper and radio stations in Jackson and Clinton Counties. Casey’s gas stations did a promotion to raise funds for an Art Project along the Iowa ByWays with two projects proposed along the Great River Road in Bellevue and Guttenberg. Commissioners provided local press releases and took information about the GRR to Casey’s stores in our area. Lisa Walsh, our new commissioner from Burlington, is working on an interpretative center for Des Moines county. Watch for exciting news as the Aldo Leopold project develops in Burlington with Commissioner Walsh’s determination.

We continue to promote “Our Mississippi” resource in our local school in each county. These materials have now been distributed to all the naturalists along the GRR. Camanche Middle School received an award for use of these materials in fifth, sixth, and seventh grades science by science teacher Whitney Veenstra.

**Signage**
Figure 6:

We look forward to the Iowa DOT implementing the new Iowa GRR pilot's wheel signs and incorporating them into the new Iowa Byway Signage project in the coming year. Commission members have been busy assisting the IDOT identifying locations in their respective counties for the new byway signs.

Great River Road Concerns

In Clayton County, the sand mine has asked to re-zone 800 acres too industrial for frack mining. The below mining is now above ground. The Clayton County Zoning Commissioners have not approved this at this time. (Voted to approve 8/22/2016).

Two portions of the Iowa Great River Road have serious infrastructure challenges. Both are in Iowa towns. We continue to remind Iowa DOT that we would like to have these areas opened and fixed.

BURLINGTON

In Burlington’s bluff top Crapo Park, the bridge spanning Cascade Ravine has been closed to motor and pedestrian traffic. The bridge built in 1896 connects downtown Burlington with Crapo Park via South Main Street and is the recognized route for the Iowa Great River Road. It is now showing its age. Burlington stopped letting vehicles travel across Cascade Bridge in 2008, but does currently allow pedestrian traffic. A preliminary study has been completed and the City of Burlington has this on their list of bridges to be replaced. There is currently no timeline or funding available.

Figure 7:

MONTROSE

MONTROSE – A portion of River Road near Montrose is closed to through traffic until further notice. Heavy downpours have eroded the hillside and roadway.

- Michael Hoenig and Police Chief Jordan Maag deemed the road unsafe for travel, as the lane on the bluff side has sunk at least 4 to 5 feet. Some motorists chose to drive around the barricades, so Hoenig
placed a large pile of gravel in the intact lane to prevent traffic from traveling in the washed-out area.

- The city has made temporary repairs to River Road several times since it first washed out in 2010, according to Hoenig. He’s seen the road sink as far as 8 feet in the past. He estimates the washed-out area stretches about 100 feet long and 30 feet wide this time. We need a permanent fix. The city faces several obstacles to financial assistance for repairs.
  - Homeowners in the Bluff Park housing development that sits above River Road own the ravine that extends to the city right-of-way, as well as the bluff area between the road and Burlington Northern Santa Fe’s right-of-way.
  - The Federal Emergency Management Agency doesn’t fund recovery projects for privately-owned property, according to Reid.
  - Jordon Moser has determined that Montrose doesn’t qualify for Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance for this project for several reasons.
  - The road first washed out in 2010. The city qualified for funding in 2010 and 2013, but declined because it did not believe it could afford the grant matches.
  - According to Moser, River Road is exempt from additional funding offers because of pre-existing damage.

- The affected area of River Road is under the jurisdiction of the Federal Highway Administration. Roadways that are considered major collectors are not eligible for FEMA funds.

### Figure 8:

May 2013       June 2015

- Re-opening this important historical section, part of the oldest Iowa land grant, near the start of the famous Mormon Pioneer Trail is extremely important.
Appendix
Iowa MRPC Commissioner Responsibilities 2015-2016

Attend all Quarterly and special State Business Meetings. Attend two National Commission Meetings (New Orleans and LaCrosse).

Culture and Heritage Committee Work:

1. Visit all Interpretive Centers (I-Centers), Conduct Training Session with all staff.
2. Provide the 10 State MRPC Maps and Iowa Tear Off Maps to the 15 I-Centers.
3. Communicate the importance of the I-Centers with our Chambers and CVBs to partner their promotions.

Condition of the Road and Signage

1. Communicate to local County Engineers and District Engineers on the condition of the road and the MRT bike trail condition.
2. 2016 will be the Year of Birding and Biking.
3. 2016 will see the replacement of the Great River Road Signage.

Communications

1. Regular communication with local Governmental entities and State officials, update them on activities of MRPC and partnering on projects for the greater economic good of our communities.
2. Newsletters to our Stakeholders and hold meetings with the Stakeholders.
3. Facebook updates regularly to show work and projects of the Great River Road.
4. Writing press releases to support and promote events and projects for the greater economic good of all along the Great River Road.

Website and Social Media

1. Iowa Great River Road website hosted by Travel Iowa. iowagreatriverroad.com
2. 10 State National Website: experiencemississippiriver.com
3. National Geographic Website: mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com
4. Update photos, itineraries for day trips, locate and add Agri-tourism sites.

Advertising

1. Ten State Map Update and reprint, update Iowa Tear Off Map and reprint, and deliver said materials to Interpretive Centers.
3. Purchasing ads in tourism guides, outdoor and travel magazines, Casey’s Poppers, and Google remarketing.
Other Promotion:

1. Quad Cities Henry Farnam Dinner
2. Legislative Showcase – Des Moines
3. Transportation Day at Capitol
5. The Lumberjack Festival

Funding:

1. Requesting increased funding for a Staff Person.
2. Additional funding to promote The Great River Road National Scenic ByWay.
3. Reinstate Scenic ByWay Funding and National Scenic ByWay Funding.
4. Approach Iowa Legislature for increased funding to the Iowa MRCP Commission for promotion of The Iowa Great River Road.

Proposed Projects:

1. Develop Water Trails on Mississippi River and Tributaries located in the Corridor.
2. MRT (Mississippi River Trail) and requested to join MRPC.
3. 2016 Birding and Biking Events.
4. Prepare to Host Fall 2017 MRPC National Meeting in Iowa.
5. Implementation of New Iowa Great River Road Signs.
6. Approach Iowa Legislature for increased funding of the Iowa MRCP Commission.
TEXT FOR RADIO ADS:

THE IOWA MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION CHALLENGES THE ADVENTURE SEEKING TRAVELER TO EXPLORE IOWA’S EAST COAST NATIONAL SCENIC BY-WAY THE “GREAT RIVER ROAD” AND VISIT ALL OF IOWA’S 16 NATIONAL INTREPRETATIVE CENTERS. IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR HIKING OR BIKING TRAILS, BACKWATER EXCURSIONS AND STEAMBOAT PADDLE WHEELS, HISTORIC MUSEUMS AND WATER SPORTS, OR GREAT EATS AT THE MANY LOCALLY OWNED RESTAURANTS, THE GREAT RIVER ROAD HAS ALL THAT ADVENTURE, CULTURE AND MORE. PICKUP YOUR GREAT RIVER ROAD TRAVEL MAP AT ANY LOCAL MUSEUM AND

VERSION 1

LEARN THE HISTORY OF THE LUMBER INDUSTRY THAT MADE CLINTON, IOWA IN THE EARLY 1900’S, THE ECO TOURISM INTERPRETATIVE CENTER SOUTH OF CAMANCHE HAS THE LARGEST DISPLAY OF IOWA FISH, AND FOR RIVER HISTORY VISIT BUFFALO BILLOS MUSEUM IN LE CLAIRE, LOCATED 25 FEET FROM THE MIGHTY MISSISSIPPI AND MAQUOKETA’S HURTSTVILLE INTERPRETIVE CENTER AND LIME KILNS. VISIT US ON LINE AT IOWAGREATRIVERROAD.COM OR EXPERIENCEMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM AND ENTER THE BIKE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD SWEEPSTAKES TO WIN $250.00 AND MORE.

VERSION 2

VISIT THE GRIST MILL AT WILDCAT DEN STATE PARK, MUSCATINE’S HISTORY AND INDUSTRY CENTER OFFERS A GLIMPSE OF MUSCATINE’S RICH HISTORY INCLUDING THE BUTTON INDUSTRY AND IN LOUISA COUNTY THE HOPEWELLIAN MOUNDS AT TOOLESBORO VISITORS CENTER ARE AMONG THE BEST PRESERVED REMNANTS OF AN ANCIENT CULTURE THAT FLOURISED FROM 200 BC TO 400 AD. VISIT US ON LINE AT IOWAGREATRIVERROAD.COM OR EXPERIENCEMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM AND ENTER THE BIKE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD SWEEPSTAKES TO WIN $250 AND MORE.

VERSION 3

SEE HOW HISTORY LIVES OBN, BY WAY OF AUTHENTICALLY DRESSED HISTORIC INTERPRETERS AT OLD FORT MADISON, AN ACCURATE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FIRST MILITARY GARRISON ON THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI FROM 1808-1813 AND THE GEORGE M. VERITY RIVERBOAT MUSEUM IN KEOKUK FEATURES THE VERITY, THE FIRST OF FOUR STEAMSHIPS BUILT IN 1927 FOR REVIVAL OF CARGO TRANSPORTATION ON THE MISSISSIPPI. TOUR THE ENGINE ROOM, SLEEPING QUARTERS AND GALLERY. VISIT US ON LINE AT IOWAGREATRIVERROAD.COM OR EXPERIENCEMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM AND ENTER THE BIKE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD SWEEPSTAKES TO WIN $250.00 AND MORE.

VERSION 4

EXPLORE EFFIGY MOUNDS NATIONAL MONUMENT AND HIKE THE NATIVE AMERICAN TRAILS TO FIRE POINT LOOKOUT. TOUR THE RESTORED BRIDGE AND MILL AT MOTOR MILL ALONG THE TURKEY RIVER NEAR ELKADER. WHILE IN GUTTENBERG STOP BY LOCK & DAM 10 AND VIEW THE AQUATIC FISH AND WILDLIFE DISPLAYS AT THE FISH HATCHERY & AQUARIUM AND THE MINES OF SPAIN AND E.B. LYONS INTERPRETIVE CENTER. VISIT US ON LINE AT IOWAGREATRIVERROAD.COM OR EXPERIENCEMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM AND ENTER THE BIKE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD SWEEPSTAKES TO WIN $250.00 AND MORE.
Great River Road
Jul 1, 2015 - Jun 30, 2016

Sessions

Great River Road

21,838
% of Total: 1.58% (1,379,263)

Users

Great River Road

18,833
% of Total: 1.82% (1,034,192)

New Users

Great River Road

15,025
% of Total: 1.47% (1,020,257)

Pageviews

Great River Road

122,190
% of Total: 2.93% (4,171,180)

Pages / Session

Great River Road

5.60
Avg for View: 3.02 (85.02)

Avg. Session Duration

Great River Road

00:04:53
Avg for View: 00:02:23 (105.34%)

Avg. Time on Page
## How The Travel Impacts The Counties Along The Mississippi River

| Counties Along Mississippi River in the Great River Road Corridor | County's In Iowa | County & Rank in State Per Expenditure $48 Per Capita | Visitor Expenditures $6 in Millions | % Increase Over 2015 | Payroll $ Millions | # Employed | State Tax Revenue $ Millions | Local Tax Revenue $ Millions | Population in 2013 & Rank by Population in State |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scott | 3 | 621.67 M 3,649 PC | 3.89 | 95.42 | 6,100 | 31.61 | 9.34 | 170,385 (3) |
| Dubuque | 6 | 329.01 M 3,438 PC | 3.07 | 50.58 | 2,830 | 14.72 | 4.28 | 95,697 (7) |
| Des Moines | 13 | 131.99 M 3,261 PC | 5.52 | 22.60 | 1,030 | 5.23 | 1.82 | 40,480 (16) |
| Clinton | 14 | 117.33 M 2,423 PC | 4.34 | 16.19 | 970 | 5.67 | 1.46 | 48,420 (11) |
| Muscatine | 18 | 80.25 M 1,873 PC | 4.29 | 11.73 | 700 | 4.33 | 0.95 | 42,836 (14) |
| Lee | 21 | 60.93 M 1,708 PC | 4.33 | 8.82 | 510 | 3.14 | 0.84 | 35,682 (19) |

### Allamakee

- **Rank:** 28
- **Visitor Expenditures:** $4.12M
- **Visitor Expenditures Per Capita:** $26.832
- **% Increase Over 2015:** 2.84%
- **Payroll:** $3.76
- **# Employed:** 200
- **State Tax Revenue:** $1.94
- **Local Tax Revenue:** $0.94
- **Population:** 14,167 (57)

### Counties Surrounding Allamakee County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counties Surrounding Allamakee County</th>
<th>Visitor Expenditures $6 in Millions</th>
<th>Payroll $ Millions</th>
<th># Employed</th>
<th>State Tax Revenue $ Millions</th>
<th>Local Tax Revenue $ Millions</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winneshiek</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29.52</td>
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<td>178</td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

- **Visitor Expenditures:** $1,459,930 B
- **% Increase Over 2015:** 3.36%
- **Payroll:** $219.4
- **# Employed:** 12,910
- **State Tax Revenue:** $71,060,000
- **Local Tax Revenue:** $21,220,000
- **Population:** 496,309

---

*Travel Expenditures = Revenues from the Transportation Retailers (gas stations), Hotel/Motel/Campgrounds and Restaurants and Grocery Stores.*

**40.12 Million / 14,167 = $2,832.00**

(Amount each man, woman, and child in Allamakee County would need to contribute to maintain this economic stimulus.)
The 2015 Corridor Management Plan Library for the Iowa Great River Road

A comprehensive collection of data, research findings, reports, maps, and presentations which provide additional detail and support for the 2015 Corridor Management Plan of the Iowa Great River Road. Each document is referenced with a lettered icon and title. Document files can be downloaded at www.iowadot.gov/iowasbyways/AGRP-CMP.html and www.ddaforum.com/DocumentLibrary.aspx.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Iowa Great River Road Designated Route Update</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map atlases for the ten Iowa Great River Road counties illustrating the routing of the Byway.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Summary Report of Representative Intrinsic Qualities and Resources, Tabulation and Map Sets</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report, tabulations and map county atlases of the intrinsic resources of the Iowa Great River Road.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Condition of the Road Report</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A review of the existing conditions associated with the Iowa Great Road using 14 key topics recommended by the Federal Highway Administration.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Iowa Great River Road Route Traffic Data and Safety Report</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A tabular presentation of traffic data and safety indicators for segments of the Iowa Great River Road prepared by the Iowa Department of Transportation.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Iowa Great River Road Document Library</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An extensive listing of a wide variety of reference documents pertaining to the Mississippi River as well as the National and Iowa Great River Road.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Report of Spring 2012 Stakeholder Meetings</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A complete report of the production, results, and public direction provided during the Spring 2012 Stakeholder Meetings.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The 2013 Iowa Great River Road Visitor Survey</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Summary report, detailed result tabulation, and survey instrument for the 2013 Iowa Great River Road Visitor Survey.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission Stakeholder List</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A tabular presentation of the contact listing for the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission current as of January 2015. (Available upon request to the Commission)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Core Management Directions, Actions, and Financial Considerations</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detailed background and descriptions of Actions and financial considerations supporting the Core Management Directions of the Iowa Great River Road.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Great River Road Interpretive Plan and Tool Kit</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A comprehensive guide for themes and stories for interpreting the entire Great River Road.</td>
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