

# INVESTING IN IOWA'S FUTURE

**Development and Management  
of Iowa's Five-Year  
Transportation Improvement Program**



**Iowa Department  
of Transportation**

# **Investing in Iowa's Highways:**

## ***Development and Management of Iowa's Five-Year Transportation Improvement Program***

**T**he Iowa Transportation Commission (Commission) and Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT) develop Iowa's Five-Year Transportation Improvement Program (Five-Year Program) to inform Iowans of planned investments in our state's multi-modal transportation system. The Five-Year Program is typically updated and approved each year in June.

The Five-Year Program encompasses investments in aviation, transit, railroads, trails, and highways. This brochure describes the programming process used by the Commission and Iowa DOT to develop the highway section of the Five-Year Program.

Each day Iowans are affected by some facet of highway transportation, whether it is to get to work or a medical appointment, receive mail, allow groceries and other goods to be stocked on local shelves, or the many other ways highways keep people, goods and services moving in our state.

Iowa's interstate and primary highways managed by the Iowa DOT are an important part of our personal mobility and state's economy. They also provide essential connections to Iowa's secondary roads and city streets.

The process of making the critical decisions about what investments will be made to preserve and expand the state-managed highway network is complex. It involves input from a wide range of individuals and organizations, and is based on an expansive programming process. The major steps in that process include:

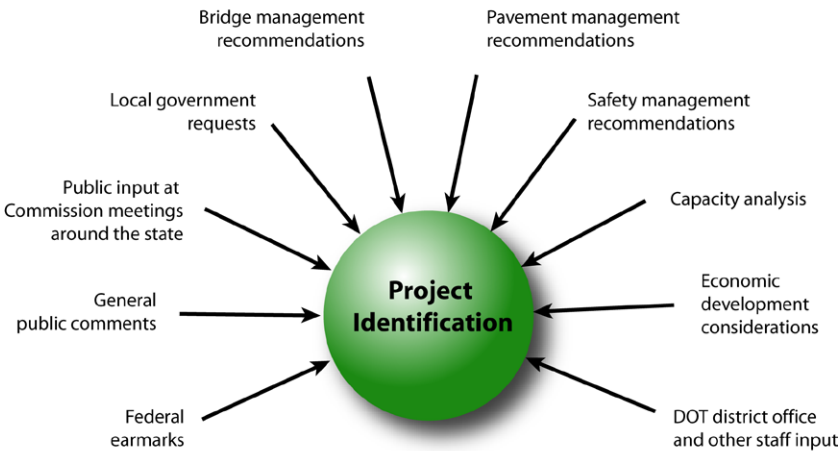
- Identifying projects.
- Establishing programming objectives.
- Evaluating potential projects.
- Developing the final program.

# Step 1: Project identification

This chart illustrates the wide range of sources from which projects are identified. Some requests are generated through the DOT's bridge, pavement and safety management systems that track the needs of these existing systems. Others are garnered through requests from the DOT's district offices, local governments and public input. Additional projects are identified through special federal appropriations, commonly referred to as Congressional earmarks.

The projects compiled in this step are extensive and far exceed funding capabilities; thus, they must be further analyzed and prioritized in accordance with the Commission's investment objectives (see next page).

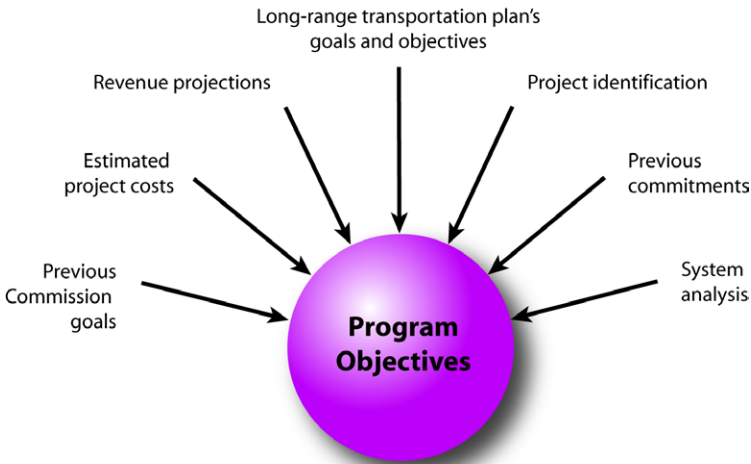
## Project Identification



# Step 2: Establishing the Transportation Commission's annual programming objectives

This chart illustrates the complexity of the programming process. It is during this process when the Commission not only takes into consideration the highway projects identified during Step 1, but also the Commission's previous program goals and commitments to development of highway projects or corridors. Other considerations include estimated project costs, revenue projections, Iowa's long-range transportation goals and objectives (20-year plan), and a highway system analysis.

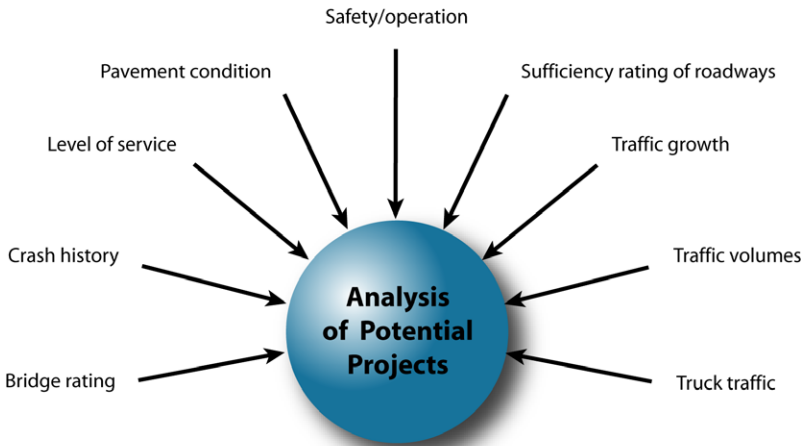
## Program Objectives



## Step 3: Evaluating potential project candidates

After the Commission establishes its programming objectives, DOT staff evaluate potential projects based on technical factors, such as highway safety, engineering, traffic management, and other criteria.

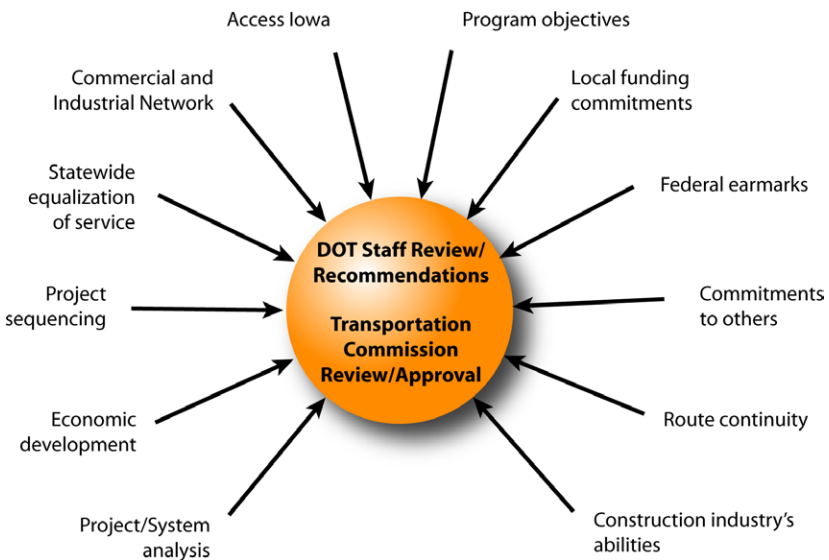
### Project/System Analysis Criteria



## Step 4: Developing the final program

The final step in the process involves DOT staff and Commission review and consideration of additional non-technical factors, including economic development, project sequencing or staging, and statewide equalization of service. Consideration is also given to whether the project is part of Iowa's Commercial and Industrial Network or is an Access Iowa corridor, or if any funding commitments have been made in conjunction with local governments or others. Route continuity and the construction industry's ability to perform the work within the contracting period at a competitive market price are also given consideration.

### Programming Considerations



# The Funding Cycle and Program Monitoring

The transportation programming process is a continuous, year-round effort. After the highway section is approved, its programming cycle begins again.

The DOT's contracting and revenue experiences are closely monitored and monthly updates are reviewed by the Commission. Because Iowa uses a "pay-as-you-go" investment model, adjustments to the Five-Year Program's highway section may be warranted throughout the year to insure the investment plan remains balanced and expenses do not exceed revenues. If revenues or expenses significantly exceed projections, projects may be added or removed.

A copy of the Five-Year Transportation Improvement Program can be found on the DOT's Web site at [iowadot.gov](http://iowadot.gov).





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