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PUBLIC/PRIVATE COLLABORATION RESULTS IN TRANSIT FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Long-term funding strategy outlined for transit in fast-growing Greater Des Moines

GREATER DES MOINES, IA (November 7, 2017) — The Transit Future Work Group, in collaboration with Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), today released the comprehensive Greater Des Moines Transit Funding Study to provide a long-term investment strategy for the region's public transportation system. The Transit Future Work Group is managed by the Greater Des Moines Partnership and made up of business and community leaders. It was formed as a proactive strategy to address potential transportation challenges while identifying opportunities for solutions for transit in the region.

Noting the vital role of transit for growth, development and economic success, the Transit Future Work Group, DART and numerous funders developed the study to determine funding options for transit in the region. HNTB Corporation, a firm specializing in planning around infrastructure and related financial and operational challenges, was selected to conduct the study and shared its evaluation of future transit funding and mobility options for the region.

The [12-page report](#) provides an overview of the Greater Des Moines Transit Funding Study process used by the 51 stakeholder organizations during three meetings held from July through October 2017.

The report documents significant agreement among participants that the region grow transit service and seek a dedicated funding source to pay for it, while in the short term continuing to raise property taxes and expanding public-private partnerships. Other implementation recommendations include engagement and educational campaigns and investment in emerging mobility options.

When choosing between maintaining service levels versus supporting moderate growth, 80% of the stakeholders preferred growth.

“It is crucial we work collectively to ensure Greater Des Moines’ mass transit system meets the needs of the community for continued growth and development,” said Eric Crowell, President and CEO of UnityPoint Health – Des Moines, and a quad-chair of the Transit Future Work Group. “The business community is supportive of a transit system that is efficient, affordable and accessible to improve quality of life for all DSM residents.”

“We must continue to cultivate support for mass transit in Greater Des Moines if we are to meet the needs of our fast-growing community,” said Jeff Rommel, SVP of Property and Casualty Sales at Nationwide Insurance, and a quad-chair of the Transit Future Work Group. “Providing a means for all residents to access employment opportunities improves quality of life and helps stimulate the regional economy.”

“The breadth of the stakeholders involved – including 12 communities – the depth of analysis provided and the clear support we have is truly energizing,” added Tom Gayman, DART Commission Chair. “We would like to thank The Partnership, the analysis funders and participants, DART staff, and HNTB for providing the DART Commission the benefit of such a thorough process, options for our consideration and encouragement in our shared pursuit of a well-funded transit service for our region.”

The DART Commission and communities will review the Transit Funding Study Report recommendations and determine how best to move forward as they plan for the future. The recommendations will provide a roadmap for the DART Commission, DART communities and the region’s business, civic, community and elected leaders to make decisions on transit as the region continues to grow.

About the Greater Des Moines Partnership

The Greater Des Moines Partnership is the economic and community development organization that serves Greater Des Moines (DSM), Iowa. Together with 23 Affiliate Chambers of Commerce, more than 6,000 Regional Business Members and 320 Investors, The Partnership drives economic growth with one voice, one mission and as one region. Through innovation, strategic planning and global collaboration, The Partnership grows opportunity, helps create jobs and promotes Des Moines as the best place to build a business, a career and a future. Learn more at DSMpartnership.com.

About DART

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is the public transportation provider in and around Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services that connects thousands of people every day to jobs, school, medical appointments, entertainment and more. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit the website at ridedart.com or call 515-283-8100.

About HNTB

HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors. Celebrating a century of service, HNTB understands the life cycle of infrastructure and addresses clients’ most complex technical, financial and operational challenges. Professionals nationwide deliver a full range of infrastructure-related services, including award-winning planning, design, program management and construction management. For more information, visit www.hntb.com.

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