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**STRATEGIC
VISION AND
PLAN OF ACTION**

5. STRATEGIC VISION AND PLAN OF ACTION

Overview

The community and stakeholder input summarized in Chapter 4, coupled with the data and demographic trends presented in Chapters 2 and 3 form the basis of the 2020 MAPA CEDS Strategic Vision and Plan of Action.

The Heartland 2050 Vision

The 2020 MAPA CEDS is developed in harmony with Heartland 2050, the MAPA 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the other planning initiatives undertaken in the region in recent years. As MAPA's adopted regional vision, Heartland 2050 calls for purposefully probing the fundamental building blocks to community vibrancy. Its mission is to define and promote an actionable course that is closing the gap – in access and opportunity, time and distance, funding and mindshare – while bringing people closer together in a thriving, vibrant community.

Since its inception, Heartland 2050 was developed with a trifurcated focus on People, Places, and Resources. A unique exercise known as “values laddering” utilized a deep dive with focus groups to identify core values of residents. The overwhelming majority of residents enjoy a high quality of life and believe that the region is heading in a positive direction. People note that they enjoy the low cost of living or affordability available. The greatest concerns surround issues of crime and high taxes, particularly property taxes on the Nebraska side.



Ultimately, Heartland 2050 identified 12 Core Values for the region. Many of these apply to the 2020 MAPA CEDS:



12 CORE VALUES

- Retain a high quality of life
- Maintain excellent educational opportunities
- Maintain affordable and fair housing
- Ensure high quality health care
- Use public resources efficiently for low taxes
- Maintain our strong network of neighborhoods and communities
- Enhance safety, reduce crime, and eliminate poverty
- Retain small town values that make our region inclusive, family-friendly, welcoming, and accessible
- Attract good quality jobs
- Expand and enhance transportation choices
- Attract and retain young professionals
- Plan for future which is sustainable and resilient economically



The MAPA 2050 LRTP

Demographic changes and shifting lifestyle preferences in recent years have been driving greater demand for urban, walkable development. And much of the region's infrastructure, built decades ago, is deteriorating and in need of rehabilitation or replacement. To address the region's most pressing challenges proactively and position the region for continued economic growth, MAPA has partnered with the Greater Omaha Chamber and Metro Smart Cities to build a new regional transportation strategy – bringing diverse stakeholders together to guide the region's investments. The goals guiding the ConnectGO strategy and the LRTP are as follows:



ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

- Our multimodal transportation system will enable people to reach their preferred destinations in a reasonable amount of time, regardless of age, ability, or neighborhood.
- We will maximize access to education, employment, and health care for people traveling by any mode.



TALENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

- Our transportation system will contribute to a quality of life that is appealing to local residents and attractive to people living elsewhere.
- Greater Omaha will support a diverse range of lifestyles by offering a variety of enjoyable neighborhoods, from rural to urban.





ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGHOUT THE REGION

- Our transportation system will help us all prosper as individuals, as communities, and as a region.
- Our transportation system will safely and reliably move freight, as well as people.
- We will catalyze higher value real estate development and neighborhood revitalization through strategic infrastructure investment.



STEWARDSHIP OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

- We will take pride in the condition of our existing transportation infrastructure, prioritizing its maintenance and rehabilitation.
- We will account for long-term operations and maintenance costs when planning for future projects.

The 2020 MAPA CEDS vision statement and goals and strategies were created with the values, goals, and guiding principles of Heartland 2050 and the MAPA 2050 LRTP in mind.



2020 MAPA CEDS Vision Statement

The MAPA region is a dynamic, six-county, two-state region embracing growth and diversity where we enjoy a safe, family-friendly, and healthy lifestyle. The MAPA region will build upon the region's economic strengths to stimulate local economies, sustain the positive economic momentum of today and help the region withstand the inevitable economic downturns. The region will work to minimize poverty, especially in disinvested areas. The MAPA CEDS reflects the region's goal to implement a successful economic development planning process that addresses its economic problems and uses its resources to fulfill its economic potential.

Economic Development Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Economic development goals and strategies for the MAPA region are as follows. These goals and strategies are based on the opportunities and constraints identified in the region, and based on information found in capital improvement plans, strategic plans, and comprehensive plans prepared by or on behalf of member jurisdictions. The order in which they are numbered does not imply importance by ranking.



GOAL A

Retain, expand, and attract businesses throughout the MAPA region.

Objective

1. Align business needs with state and federal programs and incentives available to the private sector.

Strategies

- A. Aid local governments, economic development organizations, and private businesses with financial and technical assistance applications to support business and job growth.
- B. Aid recipients of state and federal awards that support business and job growth and fulfill applicable agency/program requirements in which compliance is necessary to implement awarded programs or projects (e.g. environmental reviews, job maintenance, procurement, etc.).

Evaluation Indicators

- Jobs created and retained
- Business start-ups and expansions
- Amount/type of assistance provided



GOAL B

Close the gaps in employment, income, housing, and other indicators of social and economic well-being.

Objective

1. Provide opportunities for growth and redevelopment in both rural and urban areas of the MAPA region experiencing high rates of poverty and unemployment, disinvestment, and environmental challenges.

Strategies

- A. Aid local governments and nonprofit community and neighborhood development organizations that serve low and moderate income populations primarily with financial and technical assistance applications that support business and job growth, workforce development and training, and affordable housing.
- B. Aid rural local governments with efforts to sustain and expand their tax base with emphasis on downtown commercial districts and industrial development where appropriate.
- C. Aid local governments and housing trust funds in rehabilitating existing housing and building new units on vacant or abandoned lots.
- D. Seek alternative means and resources that aid in the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of existing buildings or facilities that have closed due to population loss, relocation, disinvestment, or other circumstances.
- E. Promote the use of policies and/or incentives that mitigate and redevelop brownfields and other sites with contamination concerns.

Evaluation Indicators

- Employment rate
- Wages and per capita income
- Poverty rate
- Jobs created and retained that are held by low and moderate income persons
- Empty or blighted lots converted to support new housing
- Vacant buildings or facilities repurposed to support new housing or community amenities
- Vacant downtown buildings or districts that have been rehabilitated to occupy commercial/retail businesses
- Remediation of properties with known or suspected environmental contamination



GOAL C

Close the racial and ethnic gaps in employment and educational attainment.

Objective

1. Improve equitable access to employment and educational opportunities.

Strategies

- A. Promote existing and proposed programs and strategies that work to educate/train the region's workforce with emphasis on undereducated and low and moderate income workers.
- B. Promote transit-oriented development and employer-sponsored housing where practicable that connects job centers with available workers better.

Evaluation Indicators

- Number of jobs within 30 minutes of home via auto; within 45 minutes via transit
- Percentage of homes/population centers within 60 minutes of colleges and universities via transit



GOAL D

Retain and attract educated, skilled, and well-trained workforce talent.

Objective

1. Create a physical and cultural environment that retains, attracts, and develops a highly-skilled, highly-paid workforce across industry clusters.

Strategies

- A. Promote mixed-use and higher density development where practicable that includes housing, commercial, and office space together with connections to bike, pedestrian, and transit options.
- B. Promote and facilitate efforts to expand the variety and affordability of housing.
- C. Aid local governments and economic development organizations in the planning, promotion, and financing of quality of life amenities.

Evaluation Indicators

- Growth in new housing that accommodates various price points and lifestyle preferences
- Number of new workforce housing units
- Percentage of the population within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of transit service
- Addition of public amenities (e.g., trail miles, acres of open/green space and other recreational facilities, number of cultural, entertainment, and community facilities)
- Health and safety statistics relative to national averages



GOAL E

Improve the efficiency and capacity of local governments in the MAPA region with emphasis on rural communities.

Objective

1. Work with local governments to provide the tools and resources necessary to provide optimal representation and service delivery to their residents.

Strategies

- A. Promote and facilitate training for local elected officials, appointees, and staff to maximize effective leadership, management, planning, and economic development practices.
- B. Develop new or update existing local ordinances for member jurisdictions.
- C. Aid member jurisdictions, either individually or collectively, deliver efficient and cost-effective services to their residents.

Evaluation Indicators

- Number of local government representatives that attend trainings and outreach events
- Local governments with codified ordinances
- Affordability and reliability of utilities and services
- Property tax rates



GOAL F

Provide infrastructure necessary to support community sustainability and growth, and opportunities for business development and expansion.

Objective

1. Plan, finance, and build infrastructure that is modern, efficient and cost effective, and adequate for the needs of residents and local businesses.

Strategies

- A. Aid local governments, economic development organizations, and industrial foundations with site identification, mapping, and other technical assistance necessary to assemble land for business and industrial parks.
- B. Aid local governments, economic development organizations, and private businesses with financial and technical assistance applications to support infrastructure.
- C. Aid local governments in developing strategic plans/infrastructure needs assessments.

Evaluation Indicators

- Priority infrastructure projects funded and implemented
- Failing systems addressed
- Communities with locally approved comprehensive plans and/or strategic plans/infrastructure needs assessments



GOAL G**Emphasize and improve disaster preparedness, economic resilience, and environmental stewardship throughout the MAPA region.**Objective

1. Ensure that local governments and businesses are prepared and equipped to sustain and recover from social and economic disruptions caused by natural and human-caused disasters or other serious events.

Strategies

- A. Aid local governments with financial assistance applications and management of programs intended to acquire and remove residential structures and essential facilities from identified flood hazard areas.
- B. Support regional coalitions and practices that improve wetlands conservation and air and water quality, and reduce flood risk.
- C. Promote local and regional development practices that do not affect flood prone or other environmentally-sensitive lands.
- D. Facilitate or participate in multi-jurisdictional pre-disaster mitigation planning efforts.
- E. Collaborate with economic development organizations in creating strategies and practices intended to help local businesses cope during and recover from disaster events and economic downturns.
- F. Support opportunities for regional cooperation in solid waste management and waste diversion.

Evaluation Indicators

- Number of residential and critical facilities removed from the 100-year floodplain
- Projects/practices installed that preserve or re-establish wetlands, improve air and water quality, and reduce flood risk
- New development/construction built in floodplains or other environmentally-sensitive areas
- Jurisdictions covered by pre-disaster mitigation plans locally adopted and approved by FEMA
- Number of business closures and layoffs
- Continuation of the Heartland 2050 Solid Waste Management Working Group



Implementation Strategy

Goal A - Retain, expand and attract businesses throughout the MAPA region.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments, economic development organizations, and private businesses with financial and technical assistance applications to support business and job growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership Mills County Economic Development Foundation New and expanding businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid recipients of state and federal awards that support business and job growth and fulfill applicable agency/program requirements in which compliance is necessary to implement awarded programs or projects (e.g. environmental reviews, job maintenance, procurement, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments Businesses eligible for state/federal programs
Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private investment EDA State departments of economic development Lead units of local government State/federal grant program budget activity for project administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing



Goal B - Close the gaps in employment, income, housing, and other indicators of social and economic well-being.	
Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments and nonprofit community and neighborhood development organizations that serve low and moderate income populations primarily with financial and technical assistance applications that support business and job growth, workforce development and training, and affordable housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments with LMI populations Nonprofit community that serve LMI populations Community colleges Workforce development organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid rural local governments with efforts to sustain and expand their tax base with emphasis on downtown commercial districts and industrial development where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership Mills County Economic Development Foundation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments and home builders/developers in rehabilitating existing housing and building new units on vacant or abandoned lots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments Nonprofit housing trust funds Omaha Land Bank
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek alternatives means and resources that aid in the redevelopment or adaptive reuse of existing buildings or facilities that have closed due to population loss, relocation, disinvestment, or other circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments Nonprofit community and neighborhood development organizations Nonprofit and private developers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of policies and/or incentives that mitigate and redevelop brownfields and other sites with contamination concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



Goal B cont. - Close the gaps in employment, income, housing, and other indicators of social and economic well-being.	
Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDA • HUD (CDBG program) • Lead applicant organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HUD (CDBG program) • Lead units of local government • Private investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term (5 or more years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead applicant organizations • Nonprofit housing trust funds • Nonprofit and private home builders/developers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDA • HUD (CDBG program) • Nonprofit housing trust funds • Nonprofit and private developers • Lead applicant organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term (5 or more years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDA • EPA • Lead units of local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term (5 or more years)



Goal C - Close the racial and ethnic gaps in employment and educational attainment.	
Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote existing and proposed programs and strategies that work to educate/train the region’s workforce with emphasis on undereducated and low and moderate income workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership Mills County Economic Development Foundation Community colleges Workforce development organizations Private businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote transit-oriented development and employer-sponsored housing where practicable that connects job centers with available workers better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments (planning/public works) Private developers Metro Transit Omaha
Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDA HUD (CDBG program) Community colleges Workforce development organizations Private businesses/employers Private foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private businesses/employers Private foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium-term (2-5 years)



Goal D - Retain and attract educated, skilled, and well-trained workforce talent	
<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Stakeholders</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Promote mixed-use and higher density development where practicable that includes housing, commercial, and office space together with connections to bike, pedestrian, and transit options.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>City governments (planning/public works)</i> <i>Private developers</i> <i>Metro Transit Omaha</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Promote and facilitate efforts to expand the variety and affordability of housing.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>City governments</i> <i>Nonprofit housing trust funds</i> <i>Nonprofit and private developers</i> <i>Private foundations</i> <i>State departments of economic development</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Aid local governments and economic development organizations in the planning, promotion, and financing of quality of life amenities.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>City governments</i> <i>Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership</i> <i>Mills County Economic Development Foundation</i> <i>Private foundations</i> <i>State departments of economic development</i>
<i>Potential Funding Sources</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Medium-term (2-5 years)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Long-term (5 or more years)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ongoing</i>



Goal E - Improve the efficiency and capacity of local governments in the MAPA region with emphasis on rural communities.	
Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and facilitate training for local elected officials, appointees, and staff to maximize effective leadership, management, planning, and economic development practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments Nonprofit community and neighborhood development organizations MAPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop new or update existing local ordinances for member jurisdictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments MAPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid member jurisdictions, either individually or collectively, deliver efficient and cost-effective services to their residents.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City governments Local and regional utility providers State departments of natural resources MAPA
Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local government funds MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium-term (2-5 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing



Goal F - Provide infrastructure necessary to support community sustainability and growth, and opportunities for business development and expansion.	
Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments, economic development organizations, and industrial foundations with site identification, mapping, and other technical assistance necessary to assemble land for business and industrial parks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership and Mills County Economic Development Foundation Private developers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments, economic development organizations, and private businesses with financial and technical assistance applications to support infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership and Mills County Economic Development Foundation Private businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments in developing strategic plans/infrastructure needs assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments MAPA
Potential Funding Sources	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term (5 or more years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium-term (2-5 years)



Goal G - Emphasize and improve disaster preparedness, economic resilience, and environmental stewardship throughout the MAPA region.	
Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid local governments with financial assistance applications and management of programs intended to acquire and remove residential structures and essential facilities from identified flood hazard areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments Private property owners MAPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support regional coalitions and practices that improve wetlands conservation and air and water quality, and reduce flood risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County governments Natural resources and conservation districts Nishnabotna Watershed Management Coalition Private property owners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote local and regional development practices that do not affect flood prone or other environmentally-sensitive lands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments (planning & zoning) Private developers MAPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate or participate in multi-jurisdictional pre-disaster mitigation planning efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All units of local government in designated planning areas including school districts County emergency management agencies Local residents Private businesses/major employers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with economic development organizations in creating strategies and practices intended to help local businesses cope during and recover from disaster events and economic downturns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership and Mills County Economic Development Foundation Private businesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support opportunities for regional cooperation in solid waste management and waste diversion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and county governments Heartland 2050 Solid Waste Management Working Group Local and regional solid waste handlers State departments of natural resources Private foundations



Goal G cont. - Emphasize and improve disaster preparedness, economic resilience, and environmental stewardship throughout the MAPA region.	
<i>Potential Funding Sources</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>FEMA</i> • <i>State emergency management agencies</i> • <i>Lead units of local government</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Long-term (5 or more years)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>FEMA</i> • <i>State departments of agriculture</i> • <i>State departments of natural resources</i> • <i>Private property owners</i> • <i>Lead units of local government</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medium-term (2-5 years)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No identified resources</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ongoing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>FEMA</i> • <i>State emergency management agencies</i> • <i>Lead units of local government</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ongoing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CARES Act funding assistance</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Short-term (within 2 years)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>MAPA membership dues and EDA Partnership Planning funds</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Medium-term (2-5 years)</i>



Public and Private Sector Involvement

The process of developing the MAPA CEDS for the region has been successful due largely to contributions from community and private sector leaders. In order for MAPA to function efficiently and effectively, and to create a coordinated economic development dialogue, continued involvement of the public, local government officials, economic developers, and MAPA staff as facilitators will be essential. Many of the activities identified by MAPA in its Partnership Planning program scope of work will aid in the gathering and sharing of information leading to collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries.

With respect to implementation of specific projects and plans, many of the physical projects listed in the MAPA CEDS cannot be completed without private investment or public/private partnerships. More importantly, the completion of significant local and regional planning initiatives cannot be successful without input and participation from citizens and business leaders. Transparency in processes and in public notification will be encouraged and facilitated by MAPA staff whenever possible.

Plan Evaluation and Program Monitoring

MAPA Community and Economic Development Department staff are responsible for monitoring and updating the MAPA CEDS, and will assume responsibility for regular evaluation of both the plan and the projects recommended with direction from the MAPA Board of Directors. The MAPA CEDS will be reviewed and updated annually, with more frequent updates if significant changes in the regional economy warrant further consideration. This annual monitoring and evaluation will determine progress made in addressing the goals

and strategies outlined in the plan. Goals and strategies may also need to be revised to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the MAPA region. Every five years the plan will be revised fully to ensure accuracy of the information it contains. To ensure continued public participation, notice of the annual review will be announced publicly according to the procedures of MAPA's Public Participation Plan. Interested citizens will be given reasonable opportunity to review and provide comments concerning the MAPA CEDS.



Civil Rights

While MAPA cannot dictate to its members whom to appoint, the agency encourages sponsors to consider appointments of women and minorities when possible.

MAPA and its Board of Directors are committed firmly to providing services and employment opportunities on a non-discriminatory basis. All programs are offered to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, political beliefs, and marital or family status. The MAPA Board of Directors has adopted personnel policies which address equal opportunity and civil rights. MAPA actively encourages women, minorities, and low and moderate income individuals to become involved in its programs.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact MAPA by phone at (402) 444-6866 or by email at mapa@mapacog.org. Normal business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time.

To contact the U.S. Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration (EDA) Denver Regional Office, contact the Economic Development Representative at (303) 844-4715.

