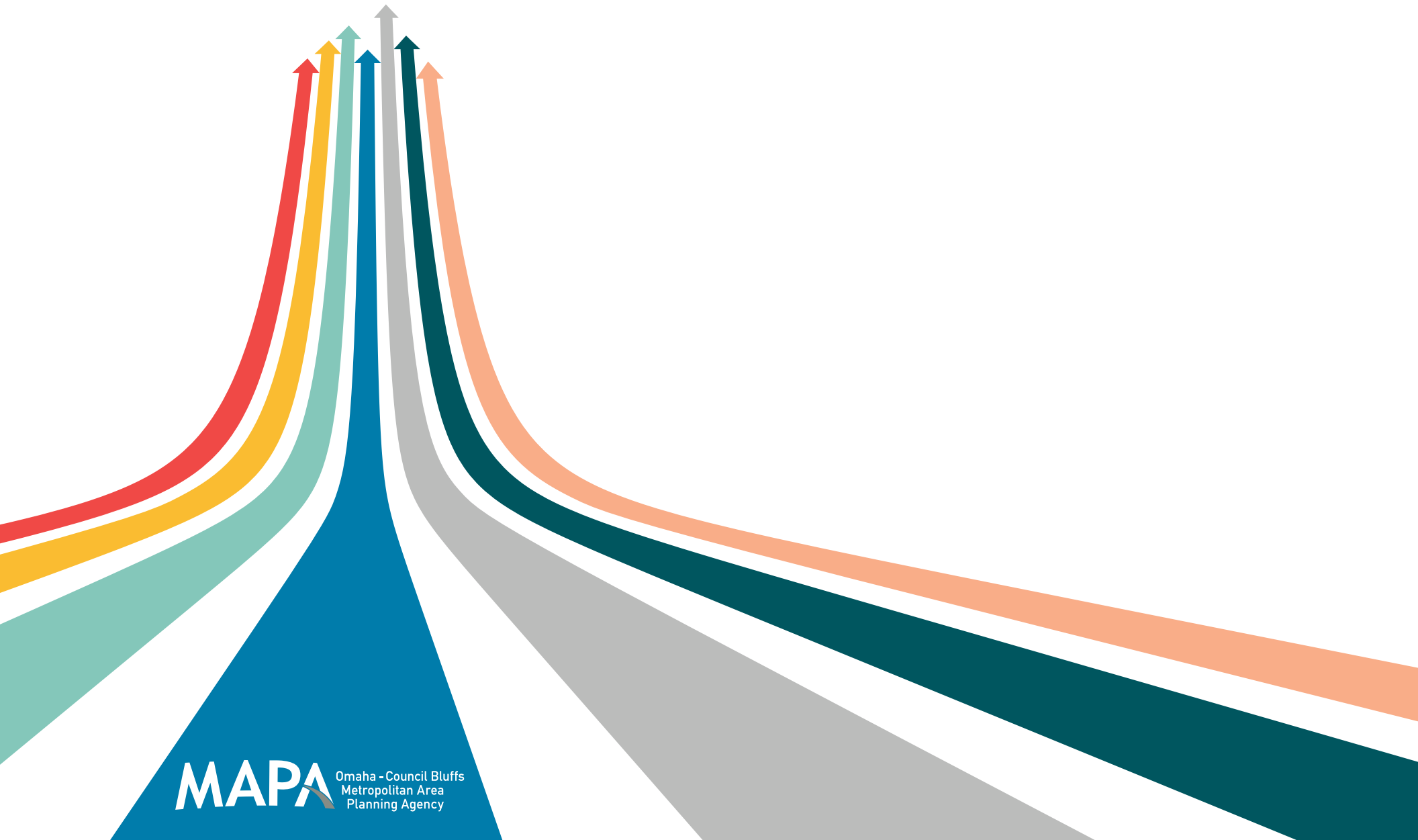


2020 **COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**



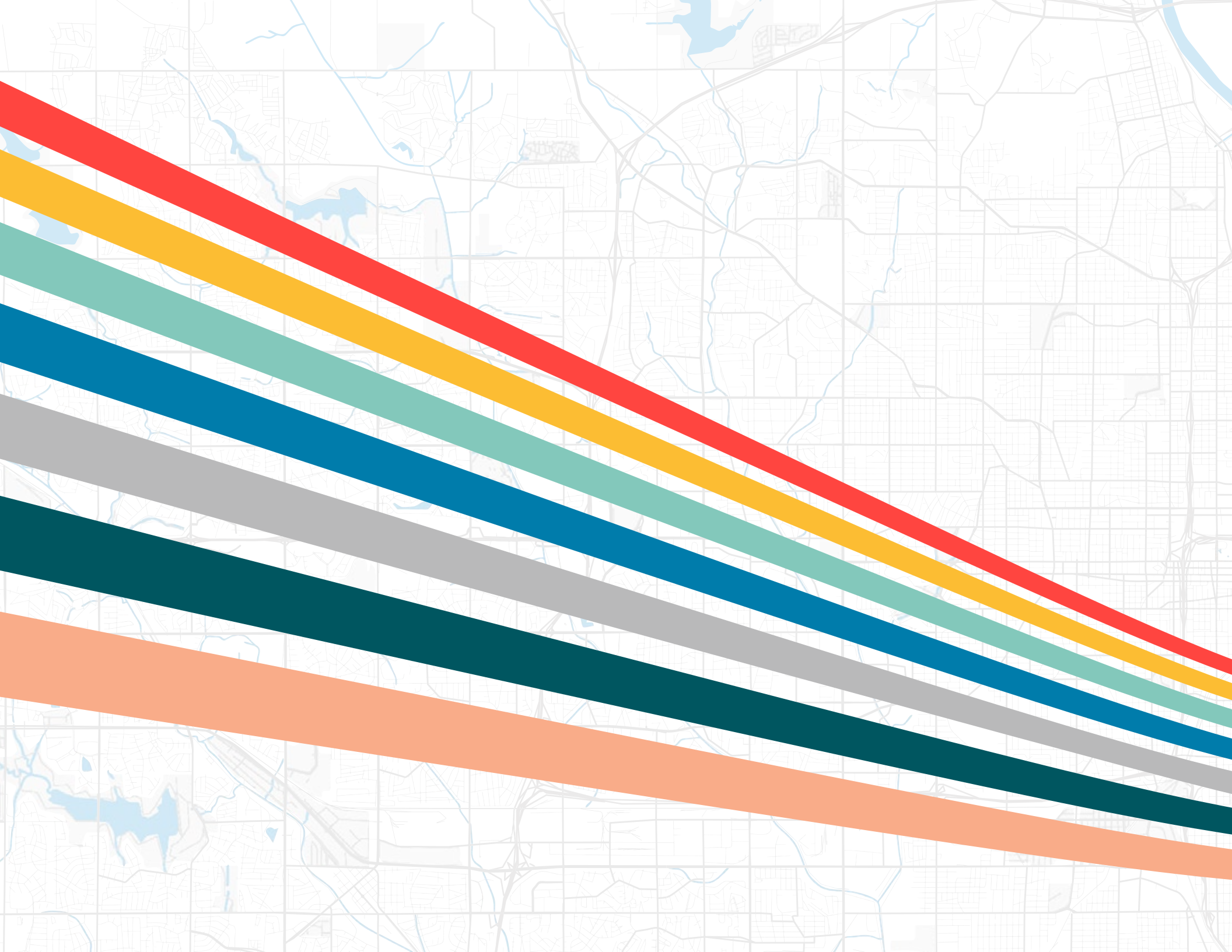


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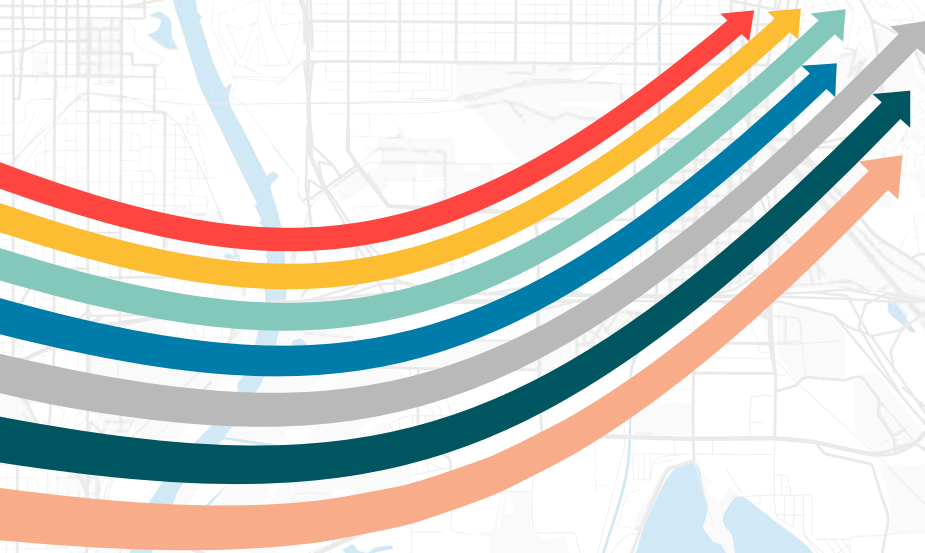
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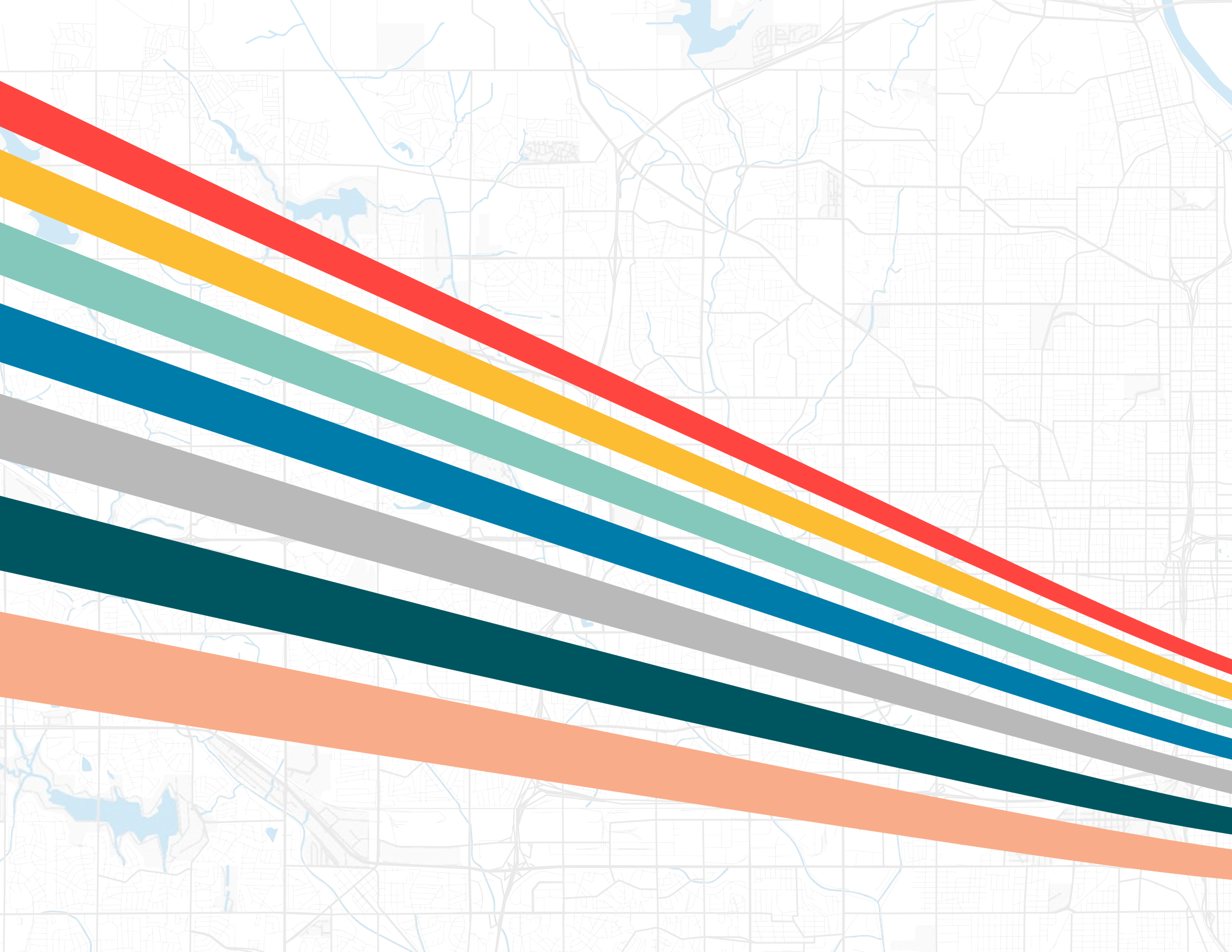
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The background is a light gray map of a city, likely St. Louis, showing a grid of streets and a winding river. In the bottom left corner, there are seven thick, curved arrows pointing towards the center of the map. The arrows are colored red, yellow, green, blue, gray, dark blue, and orange from top to bottom.

1

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

MAPA CEDS

The MAPA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed to create an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies through the collaboration of public and private sectors. The purpose of this CEDS is to establish a process that will help to create jobs, foster a more stable and diversified economy, and improve living conditions within the MAPA region. In addition, this CEDS should provide useful benchmarks by which the regional economy can evaluate opportunities with other regions in the national economy.

This CEDS document:

- Describes the challenges, opportunities, and resources of the MAPA region;
- Presents the MAPA region's goals and strategies; and
- Establishes priority programs and projects for implementation.

The Economic Development Administration Reform Act of 1998 identifies a CEDS as a requirement to apply for assistance under the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) Public Works and Economic Adjustment programs. In 2007, EDA designated MAPA as an Economic Development District (EDD). With this designation, MAPA is the principal planning organization for the greater Oma-

ha-Council Bluffs region and is eligible for EDA planning investment assistance. MAPA is responsible for submitting a new CEDS to EDA at least every five years.

EDDs play a key role in local economic development. In order to foster collaboration and streamlining with the nation's more than 2,000 county economic development organizations, EDDs assist EDA in establishing regional priorities for projects and investments. Boards composed of local elected officials and private sector representatives from cities and counties govern these multi-county or other regional planning organizations.

As part of the engagement process, this CEDS document will be accessible readily to the economic development stakeholders in the MAPA region. A continuing program of communication and outreach, which encourages broad-based public engagement, participation, and commitment of partners, will be conducted. The general public, government decision makers, and business investors should be able to use this document as a guide to understanding the regional economy and to take action to improve it. The strategy should take into account and, where appropriate, incorporate other planning efforts in the MAPA region. The aim is to create a useful tool for local decision-making.

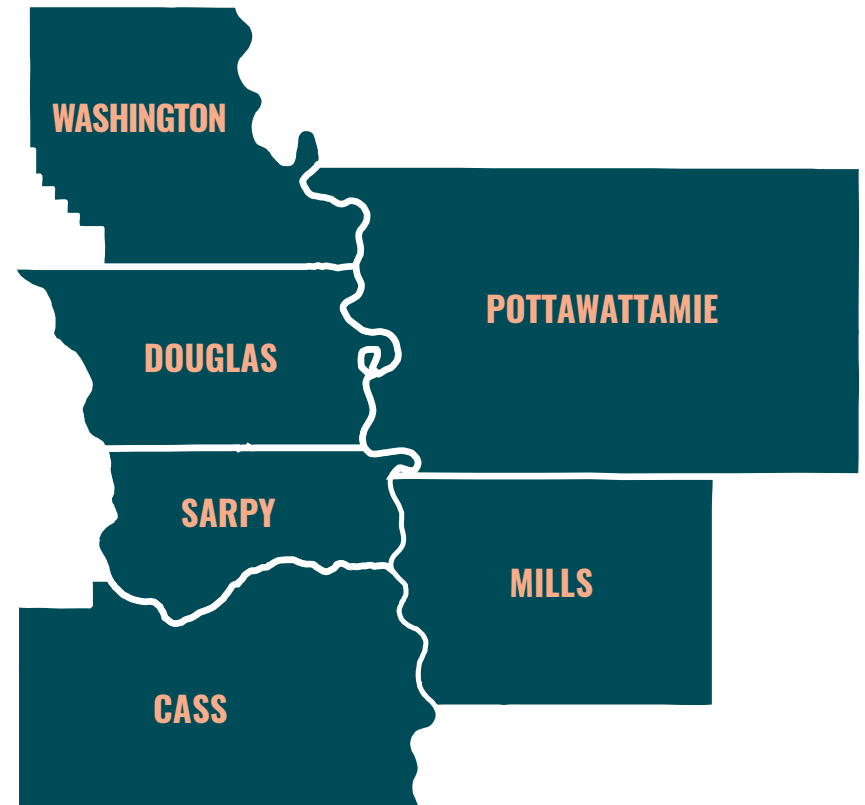


Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA)

MAPA exists to provide local governments with planning and technical support, and to think regionally and long range on the core issues that impact the Greater Omaha-Council Bluffs area.

These are issues of mutual benefit such as transportation, infrastructure, housing and natural resources. We work with communities to identify opportunities, secure funding and other resources for critical projects, and build consensus. Our purpose is to promote and preserve the quality of life for a more happy, healthy and vibrant region. As a forum for inter-governmental cooperation, we are uniquely positioned to fill in the gaps as connectors, facilitators, advisors, implementers, with a big picture vision and an everyday attention to detail. Data and process-driven, we strive to be a trusted, objective resource to local government and public and private stakeholders. MAPA was created by local governments in 1967 to serve as the regional planning agency. We serve a six-county region, including Cass, Douglas, Sarpy and Washington Counties in Nebraska, and Mills and Pottawattamie Counties in Iowa. MAPA is led by a 79-member Council of Officials, all of whom are appointed by local governments, which meets quarterly and sets policy for the agency. A 9-member Board of Directors is comprised of elected officials and meets monthly to carry out those policies and oversee agency activities.

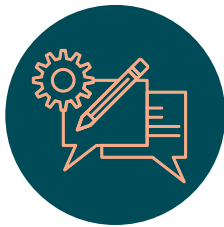
Any governmental entity within MAPA's six-county area can become a member. Current membership consists of six counties, 53 towns, 19 special purpose governmental entities, and one city council. MAPA is governed by a 79-member Council of Officials and a nine-member Board of Directors. All activities established in the agency's work program are carried out by professional and support staff, led by an executive director.



See Appendix E for Organizational Charts.



Functions of MAPA



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MAPA has two principal planning functions: transportation and community development. Community development assistance includes activities such as grant writing and project administration for various state and federal programs, comprehensive planning, strategic planning and capital needs assessments, professional facilitation, hazard mitigation, and review or updates to local codes. MAPA also assists member communities with a variety of economic development tools such as tax-increment financing, tax abatement, and revolving loan funds in an effort to improve local economies.



TRANSPORTATION

MAPA serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or Transportation Management Area (TMA) for Douglas, Sarpy and a small portion of northeastern Cass Counties in Nebraska as well as the western-most portion of Pottawattamie County in Iowa. An MPO is an organization which forms policy and allocates funding for transportation, which is mandated and funded by the federal government. The formation of an MPO is required for any urbanized area in the United States with a population greater than 50,000. As an MPO, MAPA produces these primary work items regularly:

- Long-Range Transportation Plan (25-year transportation plan for the MPO area)
- Transportation Improvement Program (six-year program)
- Unified Planning Work Program (annual description of work activities)
- Public Participation Plan (public outreach strategy and document guides)
- Civil Rights Plan (special outreach and considerations for high minority areas, limited English proficiency, and Americans with Disabilities Act)

MAPA also serves as the facilitator for Regional Planning Affiliation-18 (RPA-18), which is one of 18 RPAs throughout Iowa that provide transportation planning on a regional level outside of urbanized areas. MAPA RPA-18 is composed of Harrison, Mills, Pottawattamie (excluding Council Bluffs), and Shelby counties in southwest Iowa.





HEARTLAND 2050

The Heartland 2050 plan is a vision for the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan area. It involves gathering community members and key stakeholders from throughout the region to help grow and unite the region in the decades to come. Heartland 2050 incorporates a variety of topics, such as economic development, education, health and safety, housing, infrastructure, and natural resources. The signature initiative of Heartland 2050 is Close the Gap, which focuses on transportation and land use as a way of creating a positive impact on the future of the region. Some of the ways the Heartland 2050 looks to “close the gap” is to increase transportation access to jobs and education, attract and retain more local talent, decrease the disparities in income and educational attainment between races and ethnicities, and increase the options for multi-modal transportation.



OTHER MAPA SERVICES

MAPA also offers services that do not fall under community development or transportation but can be used in either function. These services are data and information based primarily, and include community profiles, data and information distribution, and geographic information systems (GIS).



Collaborative Planning in the MAPA Region

The MAPA CEDS builds upon the work of several major planning initiatives that have been conducted in recent years. **Heartland 2050** serves as the regional vision adopted by the MAPA Council of Officials. This long-term regional vision provides the overarching goals and emphasis of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. The 2050 project was unveiled initially in December 2014, following two years of extensive public engagement and committee work. Since 2015, the project has moved to an implementation phase, focused on promoting best practices through events, speakers, site visits, demonstration projects, and other activities. Federal transportation funding available through MAPA has been allocated to conduct local and corridor-level planning that advance the Heartland 2050 vision goals.

The **2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** is a vision which guides future infrastructure projects in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area. This planning initiative creates a vision for a stronger, safer, more vibrant region moving into the future. Long range plans cover the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or Transportation Management Area (TMA). The Omaha-Council Bluffs



TMA consists of Douglas and Sarpy Counties and a small portion of Cass County in Nebraska, and urbanized portions of Pottawattamie County in Iowa. The MAPA CEDS was updated in close coordination with the LRTP in an effort to better complement transportation and economic development investments in a strategic manner to implement the regional vision.

The Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce counts more than 3,100 member businesses and serves as the region's leading economic development organization. The Chamber's overarching economic development campaign is **Prosper Omaha 2.0**. This plan aims to grow the Greater Omaha-Council Bluffs region, with a focus on economic competitiveness, which includes a strong emphasis on place-making and infrastructure.

Metro Smart Cities is a collaborative that is focused on developing and implementing pilot projects to see whether ideas that solve mobility and accessibility challenges do in fact work in real life. The Advisory Committee is co-chaired by Omaha Mayor Jean Stoth-

ert and Werner Trucking CEO Derek Leathers. MAPA is a key member in this partnership.

Momentum from these planning efforts led to **ConnectGO**, a cooperative effort led by the Greater Omaha Chamber in coordination with MAPA, Metro Smart Cities, as well as key stakeholders and the public. The initiative was developed as the region faces a key juncture with regard to infrastructure and community planning. Technological advances like autonomous vehicles appear to be on the verge of widespread adoption, while demographic changes and shifting lifestyle preferences in recent years have been driving greater demand for urban, walkable development. Much of the nation's infrastructure, built decades ago, is deteriorating and in need of rehabilitation or replacement. In light of these ever-changing conditions, ConnectGO aims to reexamine the current transportation system and reassess the planned infrastructure projects, programs, and policies to ensure the future that meets the needs of all residents.

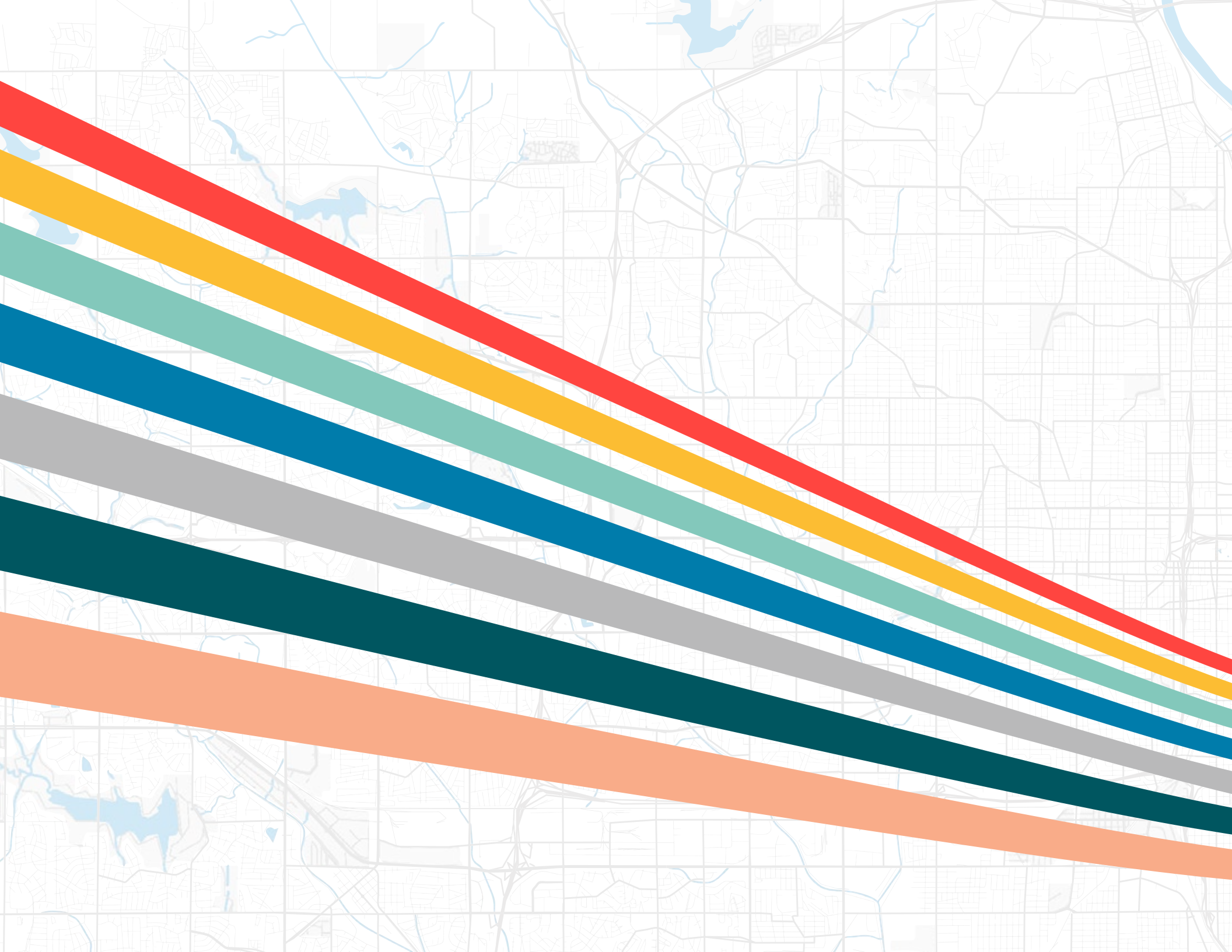
The CEDS Process

MAPA's initial CEDS was developed in 2002. Subsequent updates followed in 2004, 2008, 2014, and 2020. This current MAPA CEDS was completed by MAPA Community and Economic Development staff throughout the summer and fall of 2020.

Prior to formal adoption, the MAPA CEDS was made available for public comment and review for 30 days beginning on November 4, 2020. Public notices were posted outside MAPA's offices and on the agency's website and social media accounts. The finalized CEDS was approved by the MAPA Board of Directors on December 10, 2020.

In fulfillment of the agency's Partnership Planning agreement, MAPA will submit an updated CEDS performance report to EDA on or before September 30 of each year, highlighting accomplishments and reflecting changes to regional economic development priorities. MAPA will initiate a new comprehensive update per federal requirements within five years of EDA's approval of this CEDS.







2

**POPULATION AND
DEMOGRAPHIC
SUMMARY**

2. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Overview

This chapter summarizes and illustrates population and demographic data for the MAPA region. Topics of focus include population, age, race, household and housing characteristics, and educational attainment. Supplemental data and demographic information for the MAPA region is located in Appendix A.

Population

The MAPA region comprises six counties that represent the eight-county Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Omaha-Council Bluffs region is an important economic center in the Midwest, and the largest MSA in Nebraska and Iowa with an estimated current population of 949,442, which places it 57th among the U.S.'s metropolitan regions. The MAPA region is home to 913,815 of the MSA's residents according to the U.S. Census (Table 2.1). Figure 2.1 illustrates the population distribution of the region by county. Since the 2010 decennial census, the MAPA region's population is estimated to have grown by 109,414 additional residents.



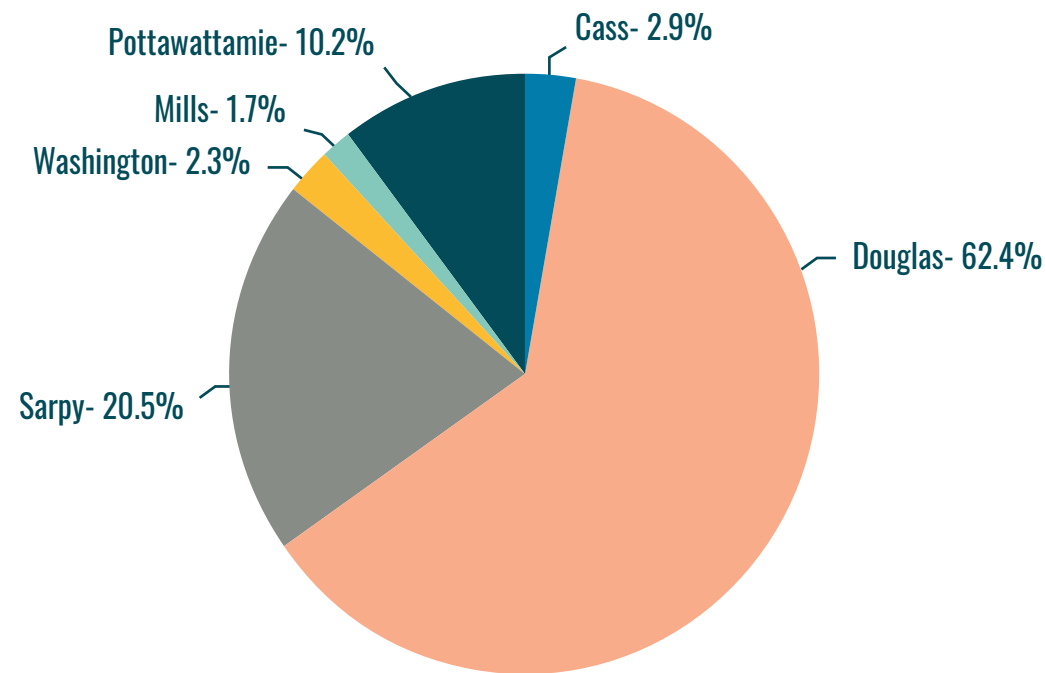
Table 2.1: Historic Population of the MAPA Region

JURISDICTION	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	% CHANGE (2010-2019)
Cass County	18,076	20,297	21,318	24,334	25,241	26,248	4.0%
Douglas County	389,455	397,038	416,444	463,585	517,110	571,327	10.5%
Sarpy County	66,200	86,015	102,583	122,595	158,840	187,196	17.9%
Washington County	13,310	15,508	16,607	18,780	20,234	20,729	2.4%
Mills County	11,832	13,406	13,202	14,547	15,059	15,109	0.3%
Pottawattamie County	86,991	86,561	82,628	87,803	93,158	93,206	0.1%
MAPA Region Total	585,864	618,825	652,782	731,644	804,401	913,815	13.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year Estimates



Figure 2.1: Population Distribution of the MAPA Region

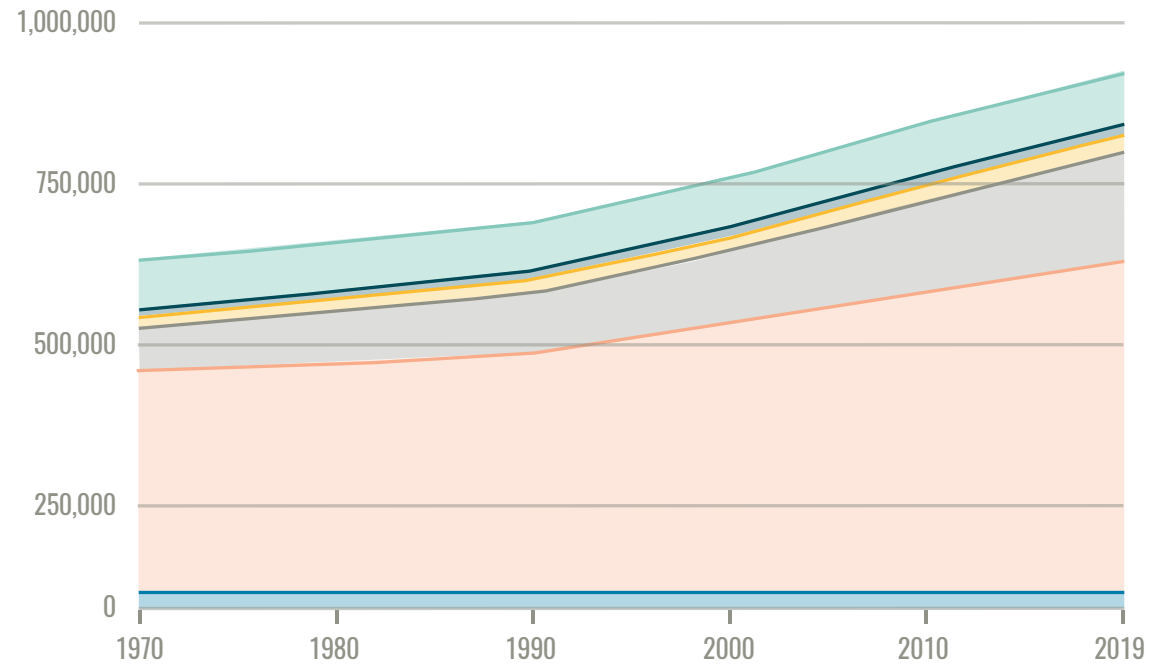


The six-county region's total population increased by 55 percent from 1970 when the population was 585,864. This population growth has not been shared equally among all counties. The population of Sarpy County has increased rapidly since 1970, averaging more than 20 percent growth each decade (and nearly 18% since 2010), while Douglas County's population has tracked closely with the MAPA region, ranging between 5 and 12 percent growth per

decade. In contrast, the counties surrounding the core urban area have grown at a much slower rate. Pottawattamie County saw a population decline during the 1970s and 1980s but rebounded back to consistent growth from the 1990s through the 2010 census. Whereas Figure 2.2 shows the growth trend by decade for each of the six MAPA counties as a share of the region's overall growth.

Figure 2.2: Population Growth of the MAPA Region

■ Cass
■ Douglas
■ Sarpy
■ Washington
■ Mills
■ Pottawattamie



The population declines and slowing growth that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s were due largely to shifts in domestic migration. Table 2.2 shows the trends in net migration from 1950 to 2010. Following a half century of industrial growth driven by industries such as the stockyards and railroads, many residents left the region for other areas of the country, including the “Sun Belt.” Since 1990,

the overall trend of net migration has reversed largely. Between 2000 and 2010, more than ___ new residents migrated to the MAPA region – supporting a significant portion of the region’s population growth. Combined with a high rate of natural increase (more ___ net births between 2000 and 2010), the region’s total population has continued to grow.

Table 2.2: Total Net Migration by Decade, 1950 to 2010

JURISDICTION	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Cass County	-577	-1,551	899	-558	-1,845	-95
Douglas County	7,844	-8,756	-33,721	-14,883	6,020	8,116
Sarpy County	10,378	24,183	7,024	2,516	3,112	18,553
Washington County	-672	466	1,460	377	1,706	870
Mills County	-1,950	-2,460	Data not available	270	1,690	1,167
Pottawattamie County	1,680	-6,787	-8,203	-9,274	-248	1,887
MAPA Region Total	16,703	5,095	-32,541	-21,552	10,435	30,498

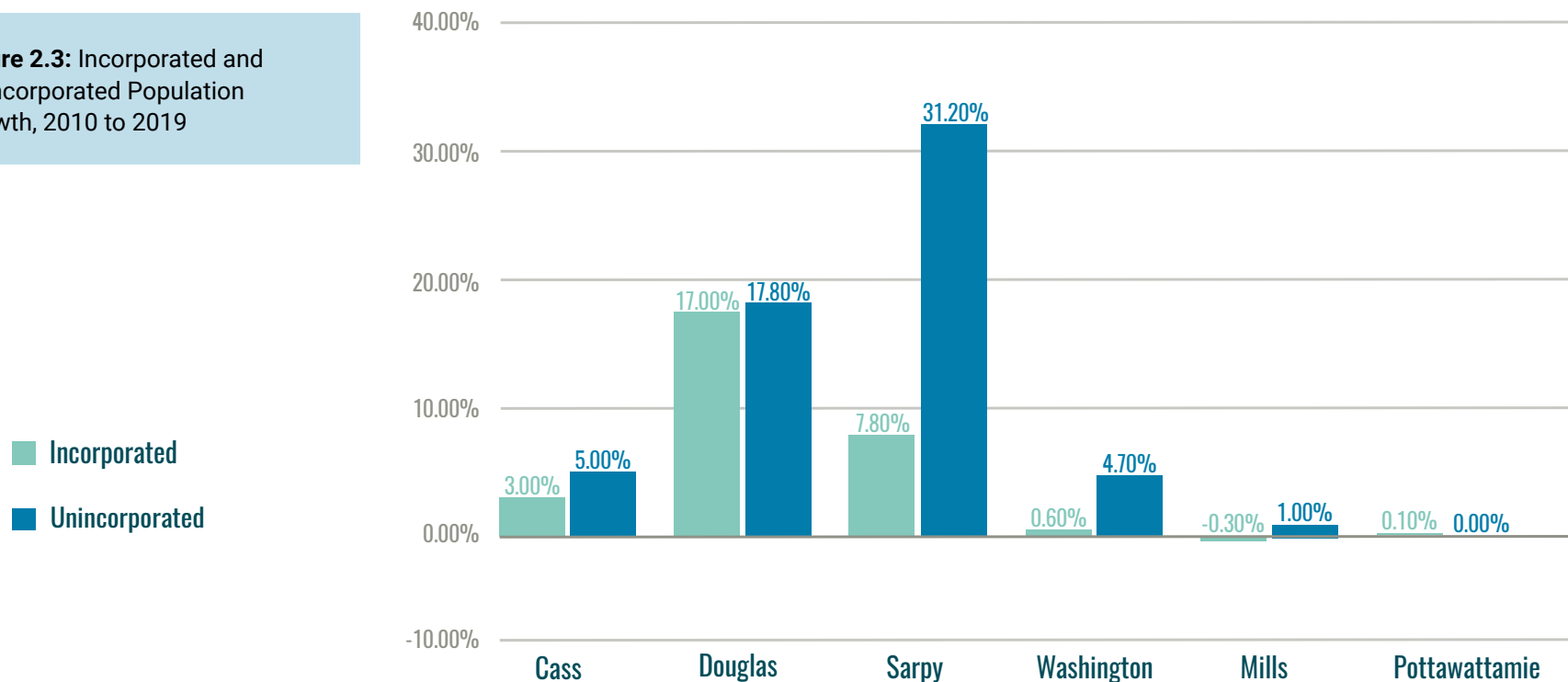
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County-to-County Migration Flows



Population change within the MAPA region has increased in suburban and exurban areas, while population decline and economic disinvestment have occurred in many urban neighborhoods during the last 40 years. Smaller rural communities located outside of the urbanized area have also experienced population decline. Between 2010 and 2019, nine communities outside of the MPO planning area (Douglas, Sarpy, and western Pottawattamie counties) saw declines in residents. In that same period, four of six MAPA coun-

ties saw higher growth in unincorporated areas vs incorporated cities (Figure 2.3). Sarpy County experienced an unincorporated growth rate of 31 percent compared to 7 percent among its urban communities. These trends indicate that there is continued and strong demand among a segment of the population to reside in less densely populated locales outside or on the fringes of established communities.

Figure 2.3: Incorporated and Unincorporated Population Growth, 2010 to 2019



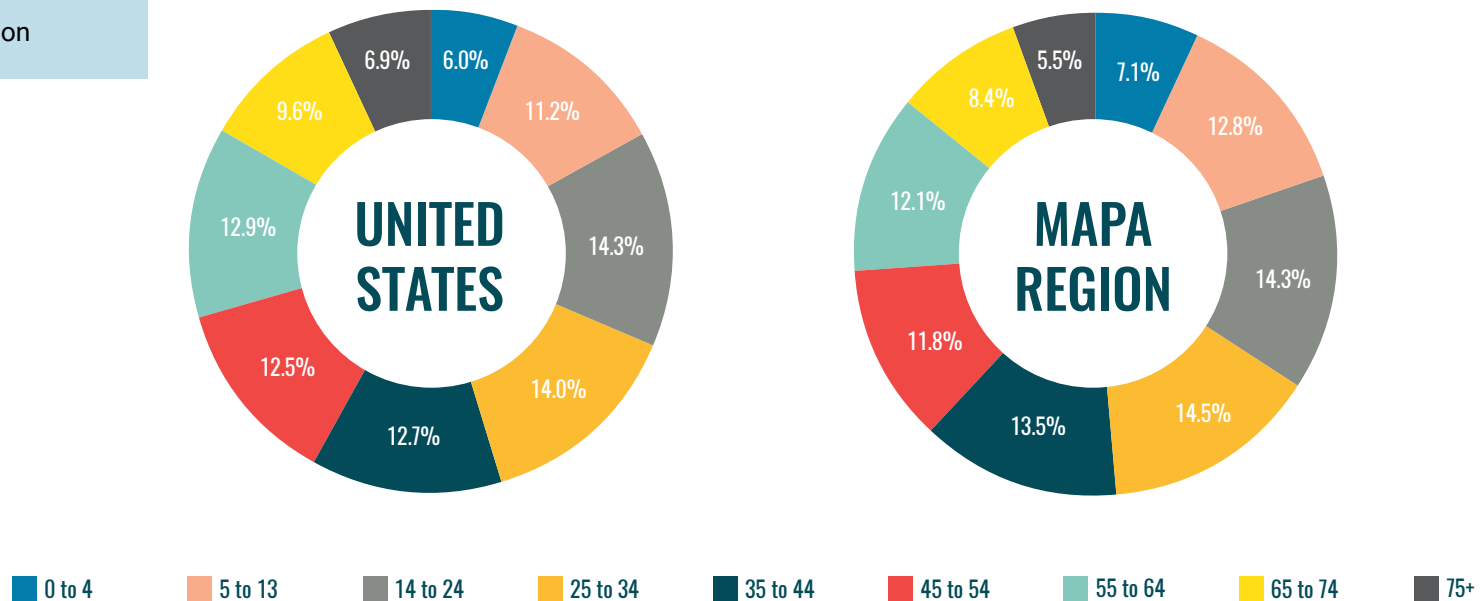
Age

The median age of U.S. residents is 38 based on 2019 ACS one-year data. Douglas and Sarpy Counties are the youngest counties in the region by median age, which is 35 for both jurisdictions. The remaining counties in the MAPA region have a median age that ranges between 40 and 43.

The age cohorts (Figure 2.4) of 14 to 24 and 25 to 34 represent 28 percent of the MAPA region's total population. Individuals 13 and younger constitute 19 percent of the regional population, two points

higher than the same age group within the U.S. The MAPA region's younger population can be attributed partially to individuals deciding to return home after time away in college or elsewhere, whether for financial reasons, lack of job opportunities, or other considerations. There is also anecdotal evidence that suggests younger families are returning to the region due to a stable job market, low cost of living, and perceived quality of life features such as schools, public safety, etc.

Figure 2.4: Age Distribution



The region's population aged 65 and older is 127,639, an increase of almost 41 percent from 2010. The large baby-boomer generation has now entered largely into retirement years, resulting in older persons constituting a greater share of the total population, almost 19 percent of the MAPA region based on 2019 data. By 2050, persons older than 65 years of age will comprise at least 16 percent of the region's population. As a result, a smaller percentage of the total future population will be in the workforce, even though all age ranges are expected to increase in population by 2050.

It has been observed that baby-boomers' social and economic behaviors have departed from previous generations, maintaining a greater level of activity into their later years and often continuing to work, at least on a part-time basis. It is likely these changing behaviors and preferences will impact how communities accommodate the aging demographic in the coming years with regards to housing, service delivery, and transportation among other considerations.

Race

The population of the MAPA region is predominantly white with concentrations of minorities located in higher density urban areas. The MAPA region has a non-white population of 16 percent, although 79 percent of non-whites reside in Douglas County, mainly in Omaha. The region as a whole has a Hispanic population of 11

percent, which is up from 9 percent in 2010. All MAPA counties have seen growth in their Hispanic populations since the last decennial census. Figure 2.5 illustrates the MAPA region's racial composition compared to the U.S.

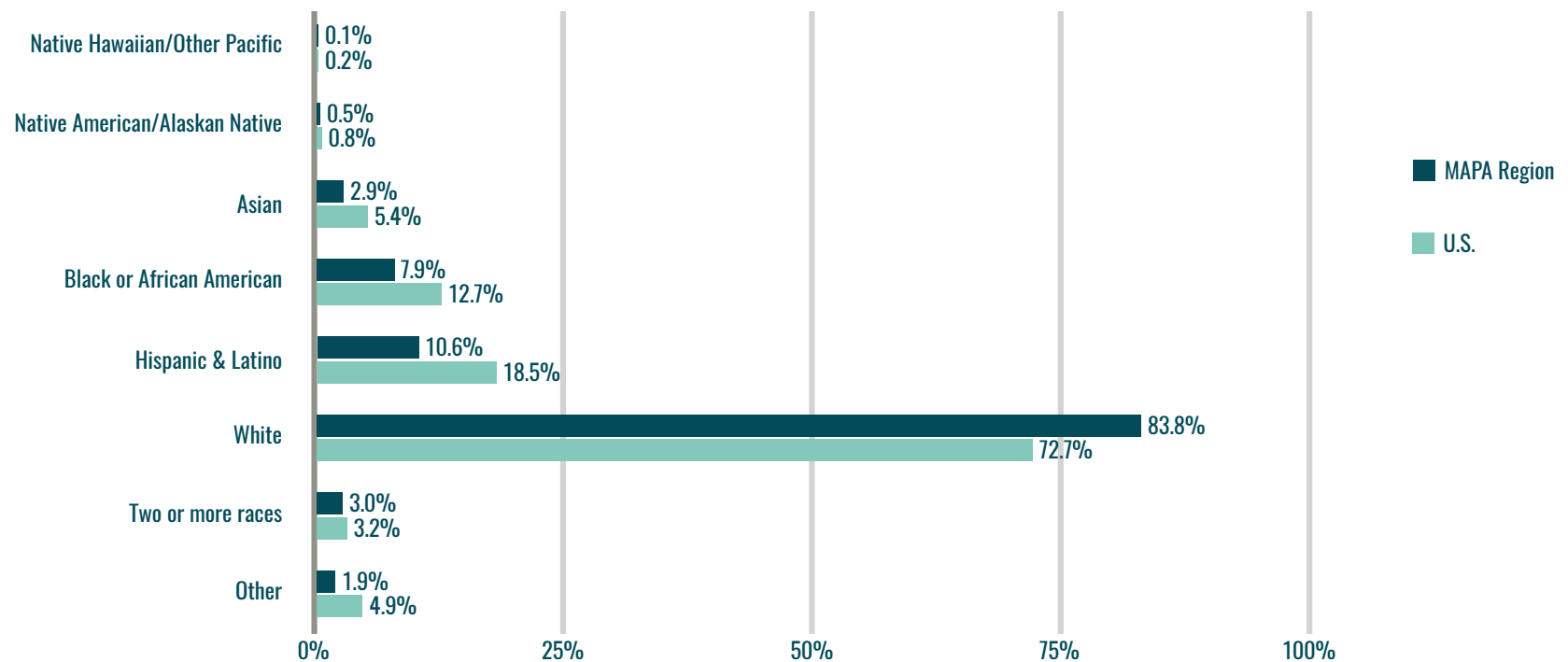


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Figure 2.5: Racial Composition



Households and Housing

A household is defined as including all people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. A family household is defined as a householder living with one or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A non-family household is defined

as a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only (e.g. foster children, domestic partners). Table 2.3 shows total households, households by type, and average household and family size for each MAPA county, the total region, and the U.S.

Table 2.3: Household Characteristics

JURISDICTION	Total Households	% Family Households	% Non-Family Households	Average Household Size	Average Family Size
Cass	10,005	70.7%	29.3%	2.54	3.02
Douglas	215,787	61.9%	38.1%	2.51	3.19
Sarpy	65,045	72.8%	27.2%	2.72	3.20
Washington	8,125	71.4%	28.6%	2.45	2.90
Mills	5,587	70.5%	29.5%	2.58	3.11
Pottawattamie	36,881	65.4%	34.6%	2.47	3.04
MAPA Region	341,430	65.0%	35.0%	2.55	3.15
U.S.	121,520,180	65.2%	34.8%	2.63	3.23

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Sarpy County has the highest proportion of family households and the largest average household and family size of counties in the MAPA region. By contrast, Douglas County has the lowest proportion of family households. Both average household and family size of the MAPA region are less than the U.S. averages slightly. It is expected that both household and family size will decline over time, yet it is likely there will be continued growth in total number of

households, especially in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. This probably indicates that future household growth will consist of more householders and families with fewer children and dependents. The following table shows that the rates of households in the MAPA region with related and non-related persons under 18 years of age have been in decline since 2010, similar to the U.S.

Table 2.4: Percent of Households with People Under 18 Years of Age, 2010 and 2018

JURISDICTION	Total Households (Includes Related & Non-Related Children)		Households w/ Own (Related) Children	
	2010	2018	2010	2018
Cass	33.5%	33.8%	31.9%	30.8%
Douglas	33.6%	33.0%	31.2%	30.6%
Sarpy	40.8%	40.2%	38.5%	37.2%
Washington	31.7%	30.1%	30.3%	28.3%
Mills	32.3%	31.2%	30.7%	28.3%
Pottawattamie	32.4%	29.9%	29.3%	26.9%
U.S.	33.9%	31.4%	30.6%	27.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Single-family residential homes are the dominant housing type in the MAPA region. The early concentration of housing in the MAPA region's urbanized area and incorporated cities has given way over time to lower-density, decentralized development. Land consumption for new development in the region is outpacing population

growth. As the region's largest county by population, Douglas County has been the center of housing activity in the MAPA region historically; however, Sarpy County has gradually accounted for a greater share of new housing over time. Table 2.5 and the proceeding graphic present housing growth trends from 1950 to present.

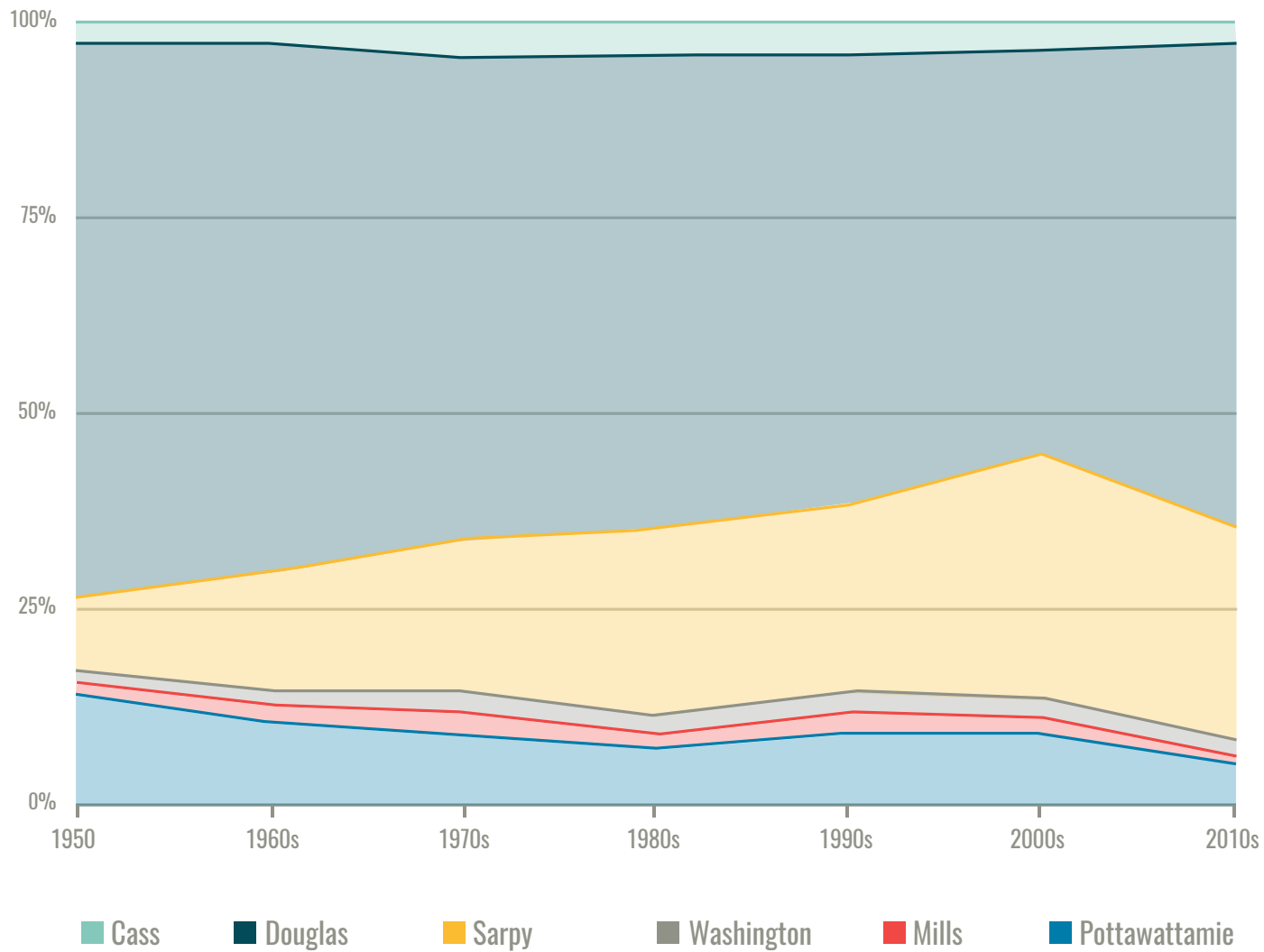
Table 2.5: Housing Growth, 1950 to Present

Decade	Beginning Inventory	Ending Inventory	Net Growth	Growth Rate
1950s	74,517	107,560	33,043	44.3%
1960s	107,560	152,238	44,678	41.5%
1970s	152,238	206,289	54,051	35.5%
1980s	206,289	243,390	37,101	18.0%
1990s	243,390	290,859	47,469	19.5%
2000s	290,859	345,785	54,926	18.9%
2010s	345,785	366,137	20,352	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Figure 2.6: Share of Housing Growth by County, 1950 to Present



Education

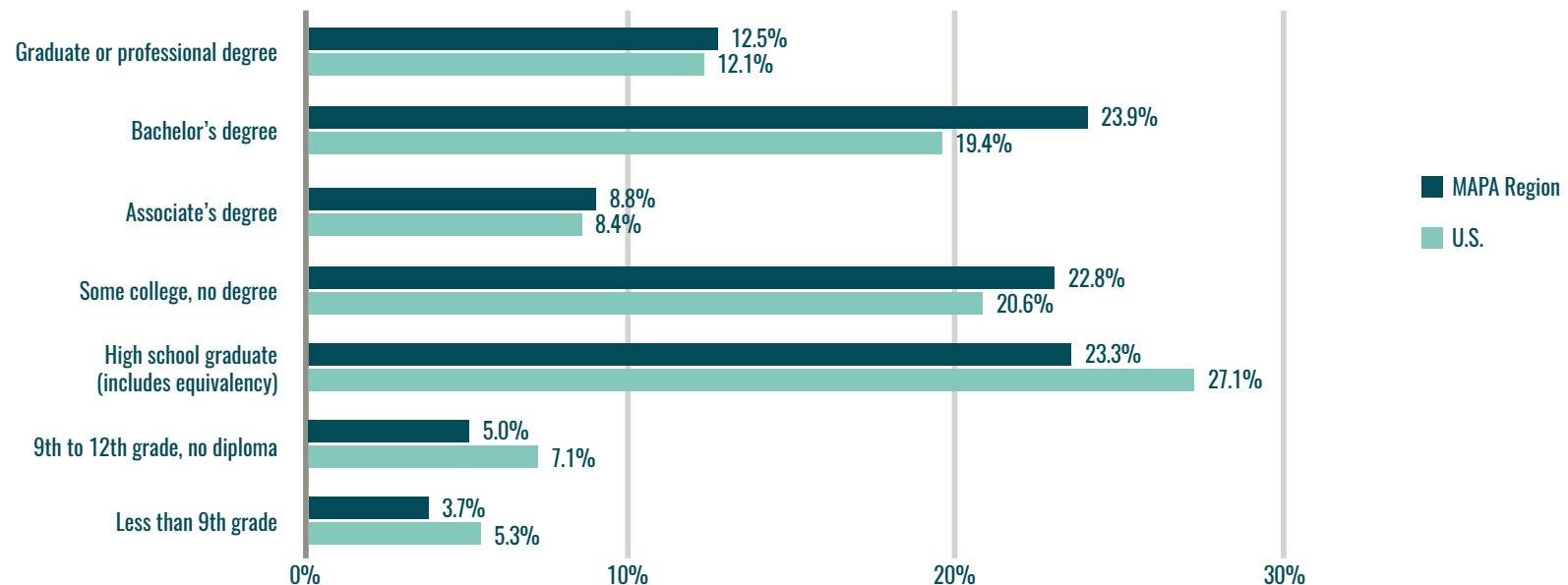
An educated workforce is significant to the prosperity of a region's economy, and an important aspect of regional competitiveness. Employers require access to a reliable and skilled workforce. For local governments, a well-trained and educated workforce is vital in attracting potential employers that may be looking for communities in which to invest.

There are 29 public school districts in the MAPA region, both urban and rural. The MAPA region is also home to a number of parochial schools and post-secondary institutions that include Creighton University, the University of Nebraska Omaha, and the University of Ne-

braska Medical Center, the latter two being part of the University of Nebraska system. A full listing of the MAPA region's school districts and post-secondary institutions is located in **Appendix A**.

Educational attainment in the MAPA region is comparable generally to the U.S. For the population 25 years of age and older, 91 percent have attained at least a high school education or equivalent, higher than the national rate of 87 percent. The MAPA region's proportion of the population with at least a bachelor's degree, 36 percent, is also higher than the national rate of 31 percent. Figure 2.7 illustrates educational attainment in the MAPA compared to the U.S.

Figure 2.7: Educational Attainment



Similar to much of the country, educational attainment in the MAPA region has been higher historically among whites. Almost 93 percent of the white population 25 years of age and older have attained at least a high school education or equivalent compared to 82 percent among minorities and 59 percent among Hispanics and

Latinos. For the population in the MAPA region with a post-secondary degree, nearly 38 percent of whites have at least a bachelor's degree compared to 27 percent of minorities. The following graphics illustrate high school and bachelor's degree attainment by race in the MAPA region and U.S. according to 2018 ACS five-year data.

Figure 2.8: Educational Attainment by Race, High School Graduate or Higher

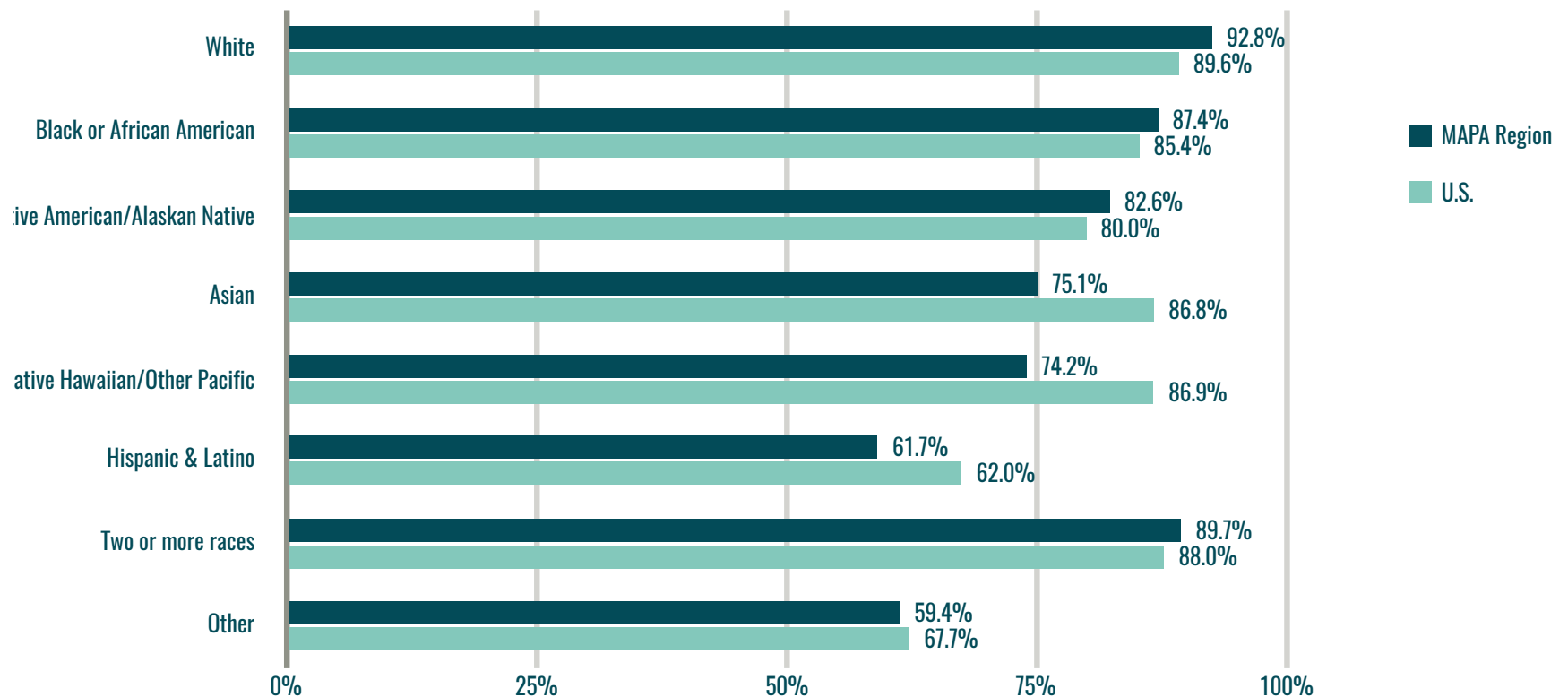
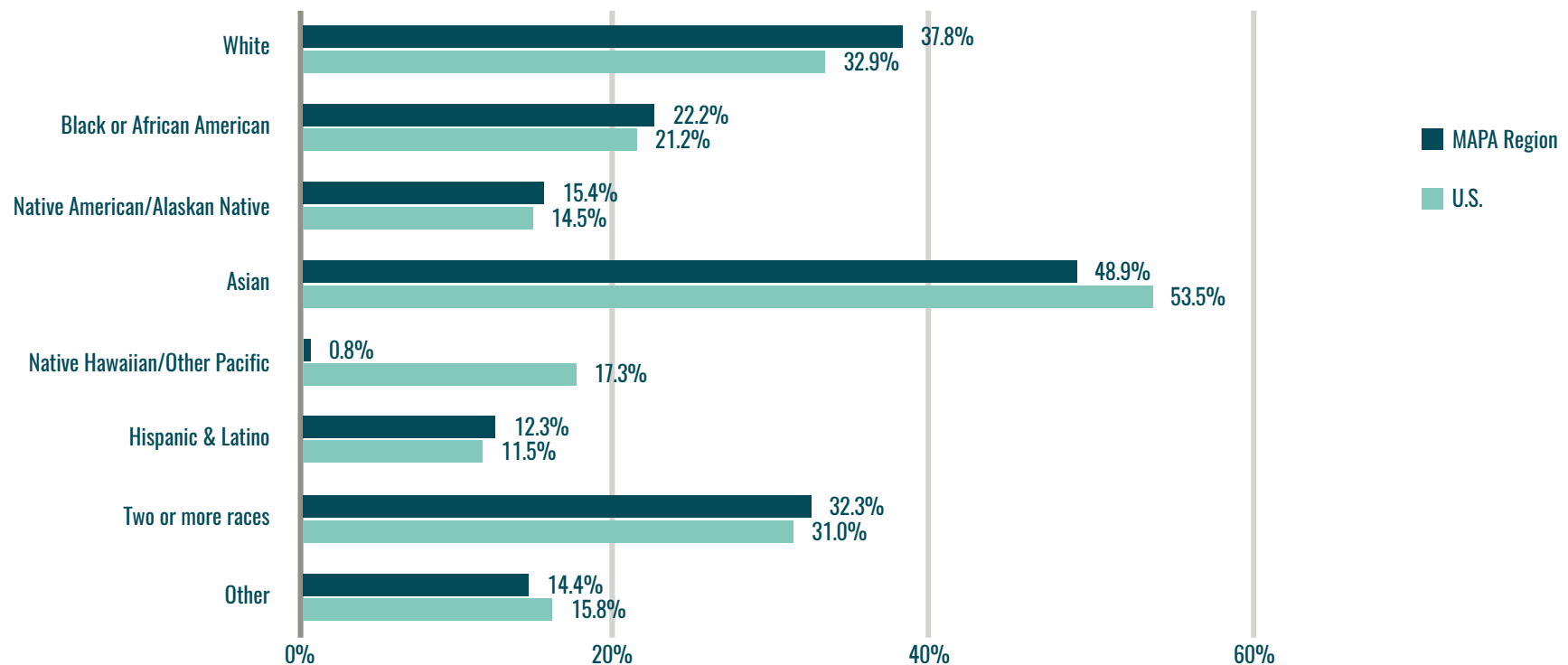


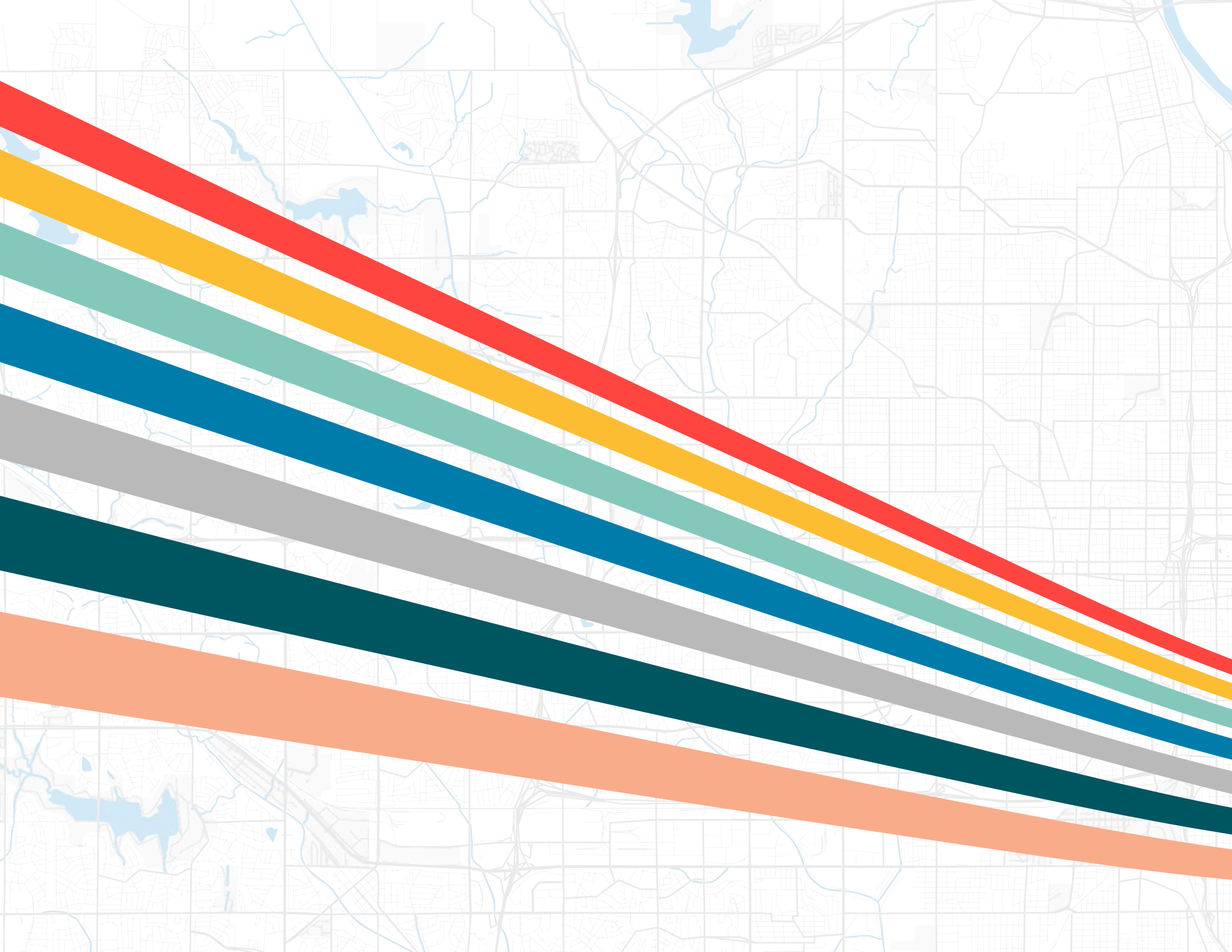
Figure 2.9: Educational Attainment by Race, Bachelor's Degree or Higher



There is a strong correlation between education and income. Many of today's high paying jobs require an advanced degree and a knowledge-based skills set. The following chapter will examine income and other financial indicators of economic well-being, as

well as circumstances with regards to social and economic equity throughout the MAPA region and among the region's minority and vulnerable populations.





The background is a light gray map of a city, showing a grid of streets and a winding river in blue. In the bottom left corner, there are five thick, curved arrows pointing towards the right. The arrows are colored red, yellow, green, blue, and orange from top to bottom.

3

**ECONOMIC
INDICATORS**

2. ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Overview

Economic development is an important element in community planning. It is a tool used to foster job creation, increase wages, and expand the local tax base. This chapter examines the data and conditions useful in assessing the MAPA region's economy. Factors discussed in this chapter include labor force characteristics, employment, wages and income, poverty, and cost of living.

Labor Force

Labor force is defined as the population of persons employed and those looking for and available to work. The MAPA region's average labor force total in 2019 was 477,843, an increase of 4.0 percent since 2015. Table 3.1 summarizes the MAPA region's labor force based on 2019 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Table 3.1: MAPA Region Labor Force Summary
(2019 Annual Averages)

Jurisdiction	Labor Force	# Employed	# Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Cass	13,570	13,117	453	3.3%
Douglas	299,587	289,816	9,771	3.3%
Sarpy	96,599	93,801	2,798	2.9%
Washington	11,279	10,950	329	2.9%
Mills	7,509	7,334	175	2.3%
Pottawattamie	49,299	48,101	1,198	2.4%
MAPA Region	477,843	463,119	14,724	3.1%

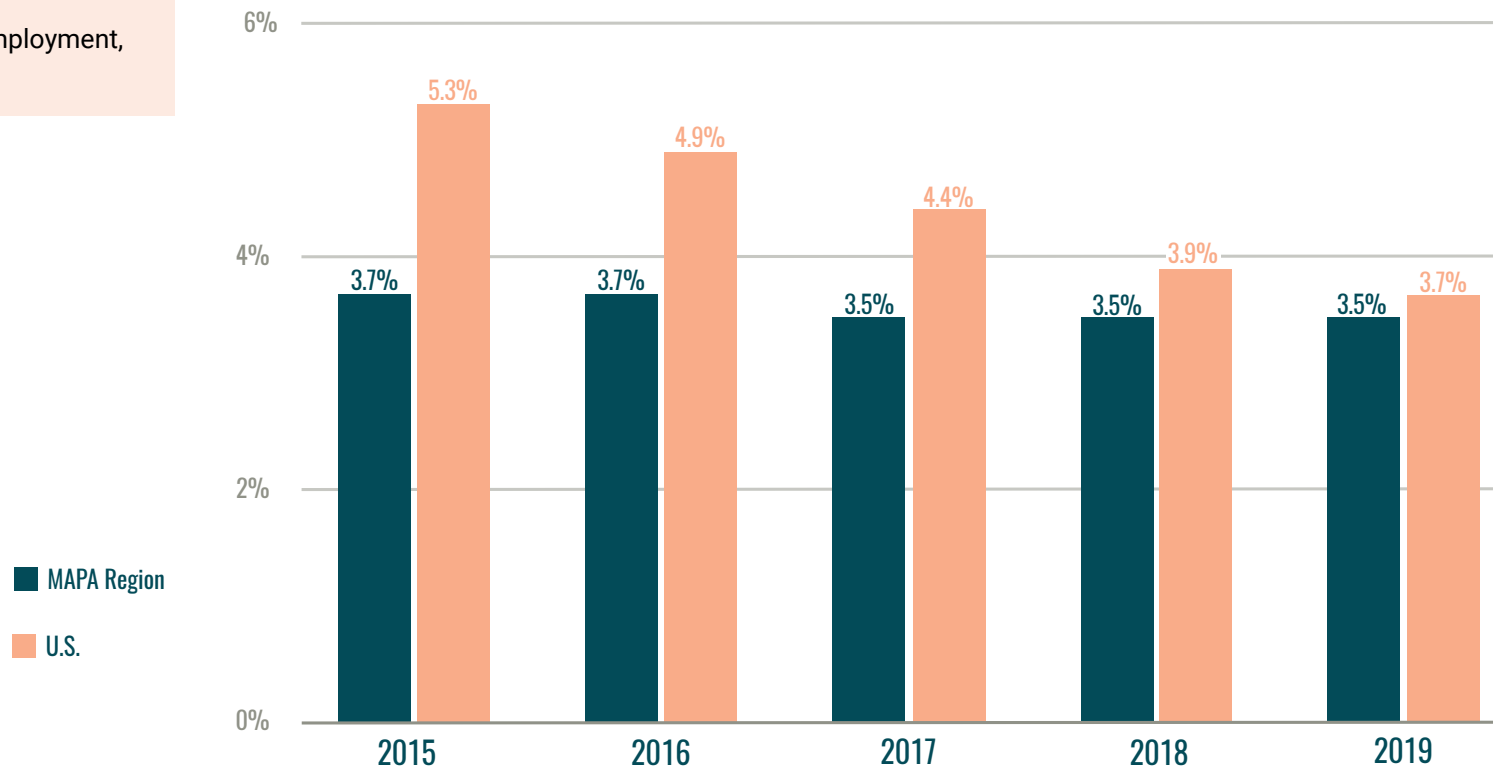
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Historically, the MAPA region has maintained an unemployment rate below the national average. Even in the years following the economic recession that began in 2008, unemployment in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area was at times half that of the U.S. Jobs were shed during the recession years but overall, the MAPA region's economy has demonstrated resilience and an ability to weather economic turmoil relatively well.

The average unemployment rate in the MAPA region in 2019 was 3.1 percent – mainstream economists have identified 4.0 percent as an acceptable rate of unemployment generally. Four of the region's six counties had rates below 3.0 percent; Cass and Douglas Counties each had a rate of 3.3 percent. Figure 3.1 compares the MAPA region's average annual unemployment rate to the U.S. over a five-year period.

Figure 3.1: Five-Year Unemployment, 2015 to 2019

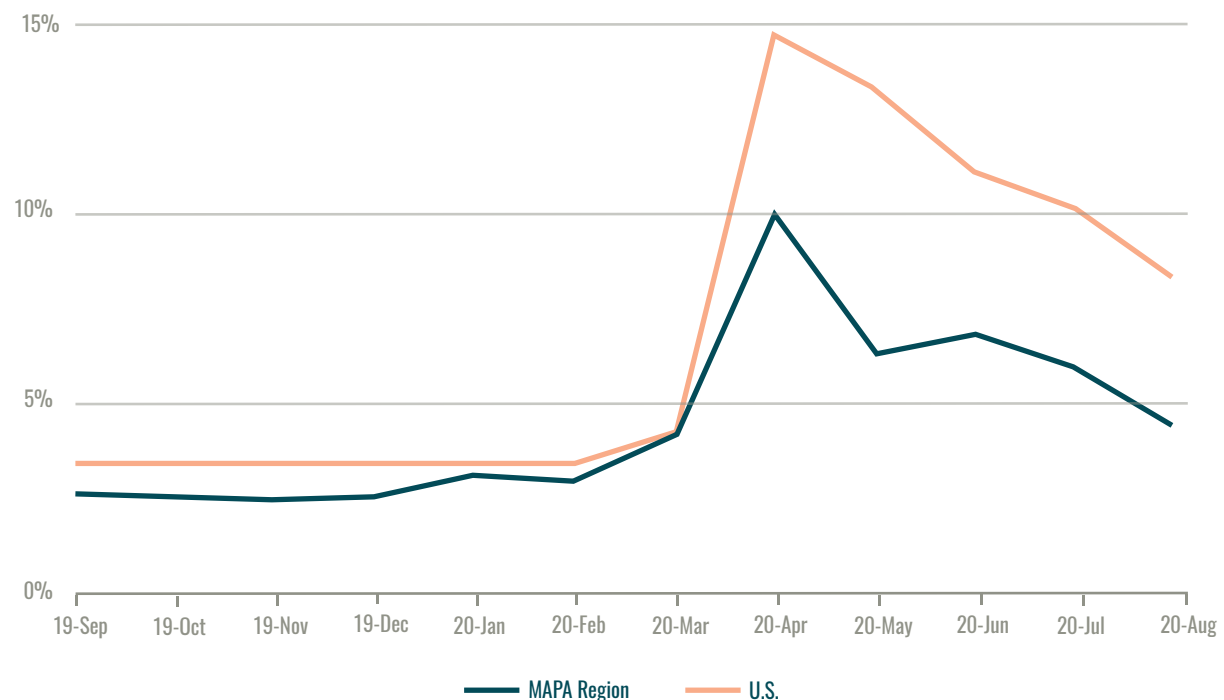


Although low unemployment is generally what state and local governments strive to achieve, there are some adverse consequences to employers and long-term economic growth, the most significant of which is a labor shortage. Companies that are growing in regions with low unemployment have difficulty finding new employees to fill jobs, even jobs that offer higher wages and benefits. This challenges local governments and economic developers in their ability to invite business expansion and attraction.

Despite resilience in previous economic downturns, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has not spared the MAPA region from hardship

experienced similarly across the U.S. COVID-19 has resulted in the unemployment or furlough of thousands in the MAPA region. In April 2020, one month after the implementation of government-issued restrictions and temporary business closures, unemployment spiked to slightly more than 10 percent in the six-county region. Although monthly unemployment has not been as severe as that recorded nationally, the MAPA region has experienced joblessness at a rate that is unprecedented to local governments. Figure 3.2 compares the region's monthly unemployment with the U.S. over a 12-month period that data is available.

Figure 3.2: 12-Month Unemployment, September 2019 to August 2020



COVID-19 has increased unemployment to record levels as shut-downs and social distancing have impacted the economy. It is unclear currently how long-lasting the effects of the current recession will be on the MAPA region's economy. Many people experiencing unemployment struggle to pay for crucial needs like rent and utilities, causing ripple effects through the economy.

Employment

The economy of the MAPA region is very diversified, thanks largely to regional assets that include centralized location, availability and cost of energy, high labor force participation, and affordable cost of living. Much of the labor activity and production output in the MAPA region can be associated with the following industry clusters.

Omaha is the corporate headquarters to four companies listed on the Fortune 500, which is an annual list compiled by Fortune magazine that ranks the nation's largest 500 corporations by total revenue. Omaha's Fortune 500 companies include Berkshire Hathaway, Mutual of Omaha, Peter Kiewit Sons', and Union Pacific. Four corporations listed on the Fortune 1000 are headquartered or maintain significant operations in Omaha – these include Green Plains, TD Ameritrade, Valmont Industries, and Werner Enterprises.

The industry clusters referenced are frequent among the major employers of the Omaha-Council Bluffs region. Table 3.2 lists these major employers with a workforce of at least 1,000 employees. The majority of major employers in the MAPA region are based in Omaha or urban Pottawattamie and Sarpy Counties. Figure 3.3 illustrates the county-to-county commuter flows for the MAPA region. Douglas County represents the largest share of jobs in the region and has the largest in-flows of commuters on a daily basis.



Agribusiness	Located in two Midwestern states, the Omaha-Council Bluffs region is a significant agriculture and value-added agriculture hub. Agribusiness companies located in the MAPA region include Cargill, ConAgra Brands, Gaviola, Kellogg's, Novozymes, Omaha Steaks, Scoular, Syngenta, Tyson, and Valmont Industries among others.
Finance and Insurance	Four of the region's top 10 major employers are anchored in the finance and insurance industry. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the finance and insurance industry represented 14 percent (\$8.8 billion) of the Omaha-Council Bluffs region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) output in 2018.
Health Care	CHI Health, Nebraska Medicine, and Methodist Health System each employ at least 5,000 workers in the region. The University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) in Omaha is Nebraska's public medical and research university – UNMC and its teaching hospital partner Nebraska Medicine have an annual economic impact of \$4.5 billion on Nebraska according to an independent study.
Logistics	Major U.S. markets that can be reached in a day's drive from the MAPA region include Chicago, Denver, Kansas City, Minneapolis, and St. Louis. Other markets on both U.S. coasts and Canada and Mexico can be reached in two to three days via interstate and rail. The region's centralized location is advantageous to transportation and distribution firms like Union Pacific and Werner Global Logistics, both headquartered in Omaha.
National Defense	Offutt Air Force Base, which is the largest employer in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, houses U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) and the 55th Wing of the U.S. Air Force. The military presence in the region has attracted defense contractors such as Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin. There are approximately 8,000 military and civilian personnel working at Offutt and roughly 4,400 secondary jobs attributed to the base's operation according to the Greater Omaha Chamber.



Table 3.2: Omaha-Council Bluffs Major Employers in 2020

Company	Number of Employees	Industry
Offutt Air Force Base	5,000 and over	Public Administration
CHI	5,000 and over	Health Care and Social Assistance
Nebraska Medicine	5,000 and over	Health Care and Social Assistance
Methodist Health System	5,000 and over	Health Care and Social Assistance
Fiserv	2,500 to 4,999	Information
Union Pacific Railroad	2,500 to 4,999	Transportation and Warehousing
First National Bank	2,500 to 4,999	Finance and Insurance
TD Ameritrade	1,000 to 2,499	Finance and Insurance
PayPal	1,000 to 2,499	Finance and Insurance
Creighton University	1,000 to 2,499	Educational Services
Boys Town	1,000 to 2,499	Health Care and Social Assistance
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska	1,000 to 2,499	Finance and Insurance
Horseshoe Casino Council Bluffs	1,000 to 2,499	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
Valmont Industries	1,000 to 2,499	Manufacturing
Harrah's Council Bluffs Casino	1,000 to 2,499	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation



Children's Hospital	1,000 to 2,499	Health Care and Social Assistance
WholeStone Farms	1,000 to 2,499	Manufacturing
Kiewit Corp.	1,000 to 2,499	Construction
Baxter Auto Group	1,000 to 2,499	Retail Trade
Ameristar Casino Hotel	1,000 to 2,499	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
CSG International	1,000 to 2,499	Information
ConAgra	1,000 to 2,499	Manufacturing
Omaha Steaks	1,000 to 2,499	Retail Trade
Nebraska Furniture Mart	1,000 to 2,499	Retail Trade
Physicians Mutual Insurance Co.	1,000 to 2,499	Finance and Insurance
Werner Enterprises Inc.	1,000 to 2,499	Transportation and Warehousing
Intrado	1,000 to 2,499	Administrative and Support
Bank of the West	1,000 to 2,499	Finance and Insurance
Lozier Corp.	1,000 to 2,499	Wholesale Trade
Lincoln Financial Group	1,000 to 2,499	Finance and Insurance
Cox Communications	1,000 to 2,499	Information
HDR, Inc.	1,000 to 2,499	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
Nebraska Beef	1,000 to 2,499	Retail Trade

Source: Greater Omaha Chamber



Figure 3.3: County-to-County Commuting Flows, Omaha-Council Bluffs MSA

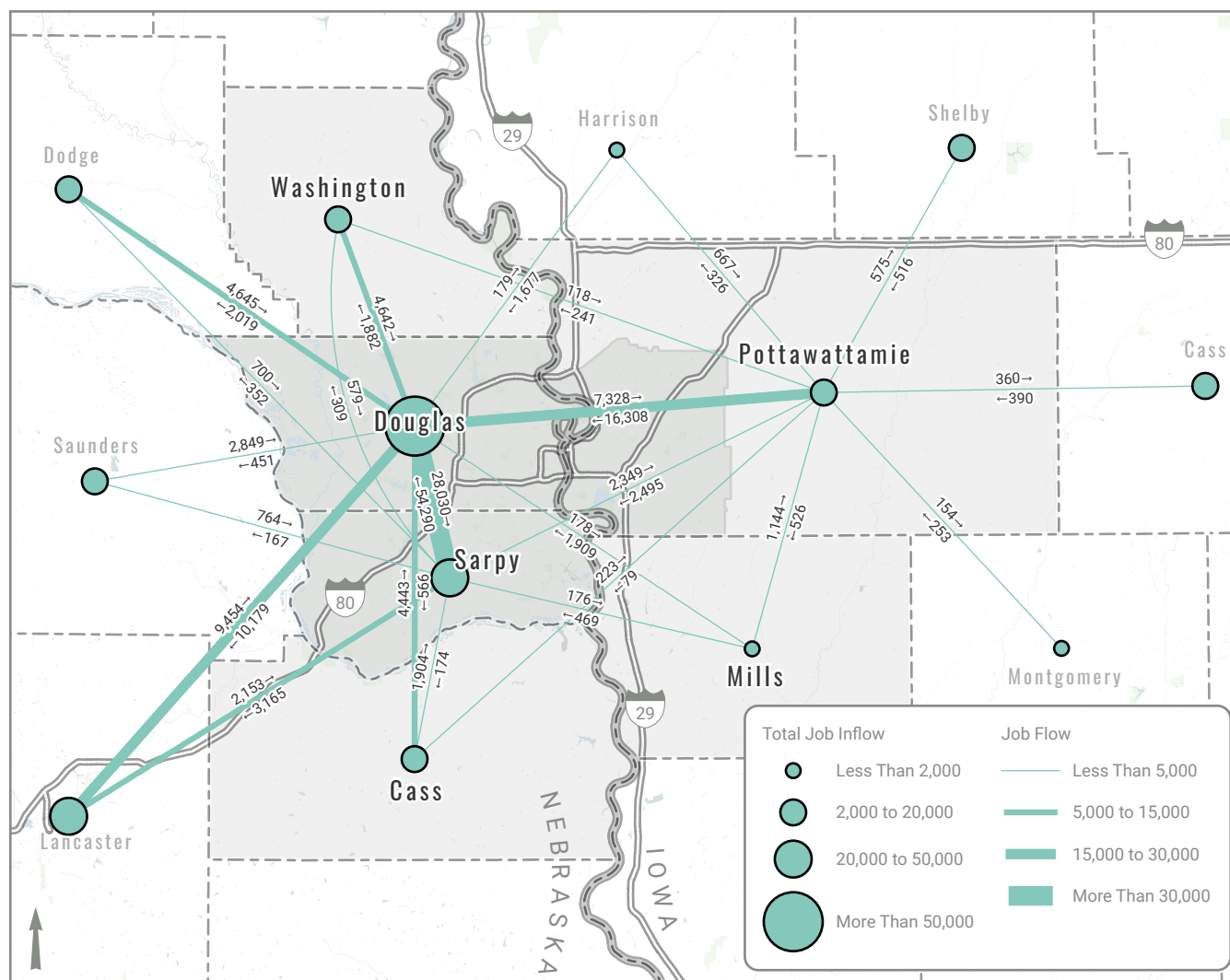


Table 3.3: Employment by Industry (Ages 16+)

Industry	MAPA Region	% of Employed Population (MAPA Region)	% of Employed Population (U.S.)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining	5,105	1.1%	1.8%
Construction	32,429	7.0%	6.5%
Manufacturing	37,663	8.2%	10.2%
Wholesale trade	12,791	2.8%	2.6%
Retail trade	53,911	11.7%	11.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	27,001	5.9%	5.2%
Information	10,104	2.2%	2.1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	46,102	10.0%	6.6%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	51,906	11.3%	11.4%
Education services, and health care and social assistance	110,228	23.9%	23.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	37,681	8.2%	9.7%
Other services, except public administration	19,443	4.2%	4.9%
Public Administration	16,749	3.6%	4.6%
Total Employed Population	461,113	100.0%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



The distribution of employed workers by industry in the MAPA region is similar generally to the employed population of the U.S. The MAPA region has a higher concentration of its employment in financial activities, 10.0 percent compared to 6.6 percent in the U.S. This is offset by a relatively smaller share of total employment in manufacturing (8.2% vs. 10.2%) and public administration (3.6% vs.

4.6%). Overall, the largest percentage of employment in the region is in education, health care, and social assistance at 23 percent. The figures shown in Table 3.3 reaffirm what was noted in previous pages – much of the region’s employment is centered in education, health care, and finance.

Underemployment and Labor Availability

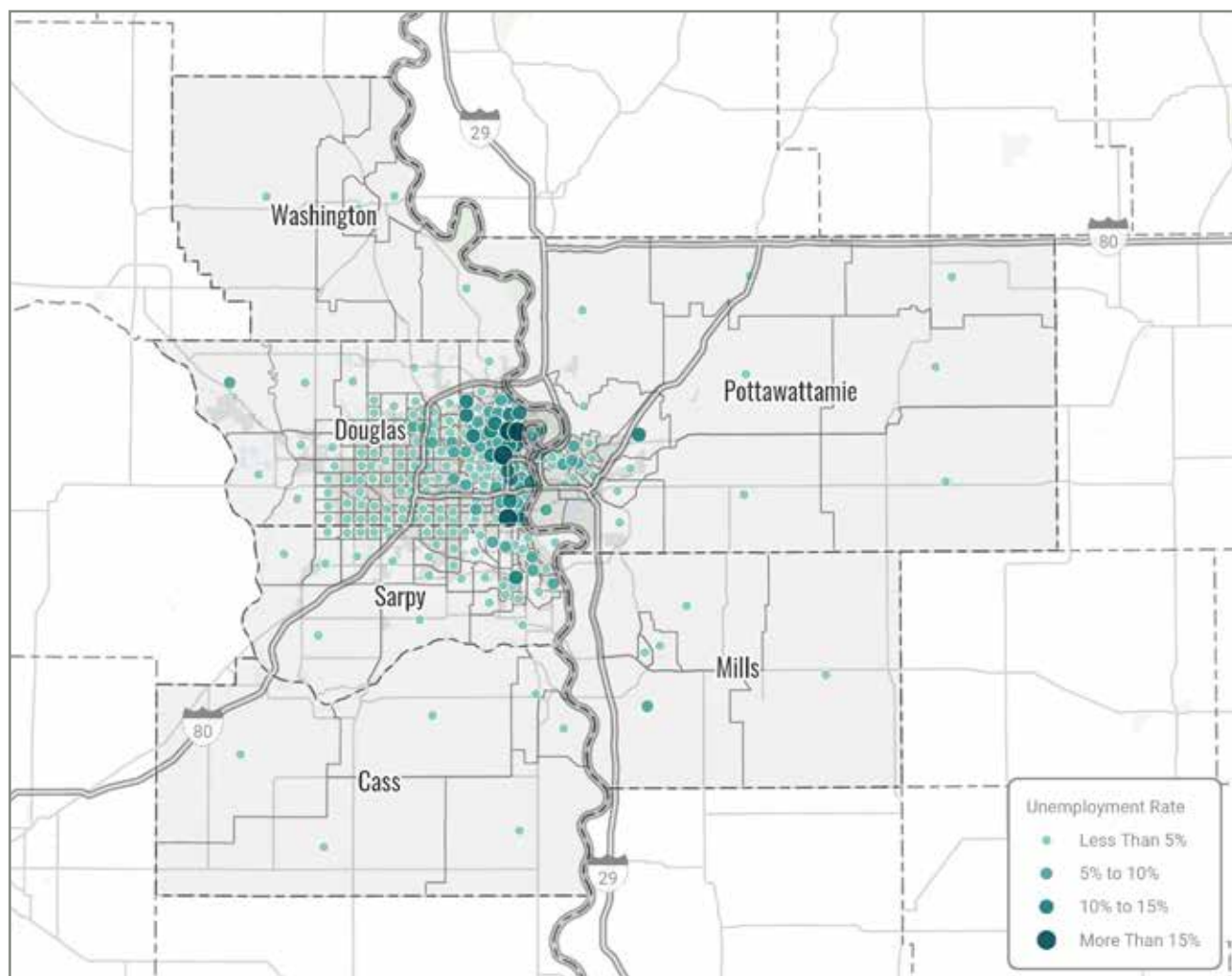
Low unemployment has been a positive attribute mostly of the MAPA region, but the prevalence of underemployment has been prominent. Many people either lack the skills for higher-paying jobs, or have the skills or degree necessary but cannot find a job within their desired career path. The Prosper 2.0 initiative by the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce has made underemployment a key priority in business development within the region. Prioritized initiatives to alleviate the existence of underemployment include skills training, continuing education, and recruitment of new businesses to the region.

Challenges to finding employment are very common in certain areas of the region even during periods of economic growth, most notably North Omaha, South Omaha, and in an area west of down-

town Council Bluffs. While the region’s unemployment is normally low and stable, particular census tracts have rates of unemployment more than 20 percent. Figure 3.4 illustrates the distribution of unemployment in the urbanized portion of MAPA region in December of 2019. Certain socioeconomic hurdles exist for persons living in these neighborhoods, many of which do not have reliable transportation to commute to work, or cannot find employment opportunities within the existing transit service area. These barriers have been identified in numerous planning efforts, including MAPA’s **Fair Housing Equity Assessment**, the **Equitable Growth Profile**, and the regional **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing** efforts among the cities of Omaha, Bellevue, and Council Bluffs.

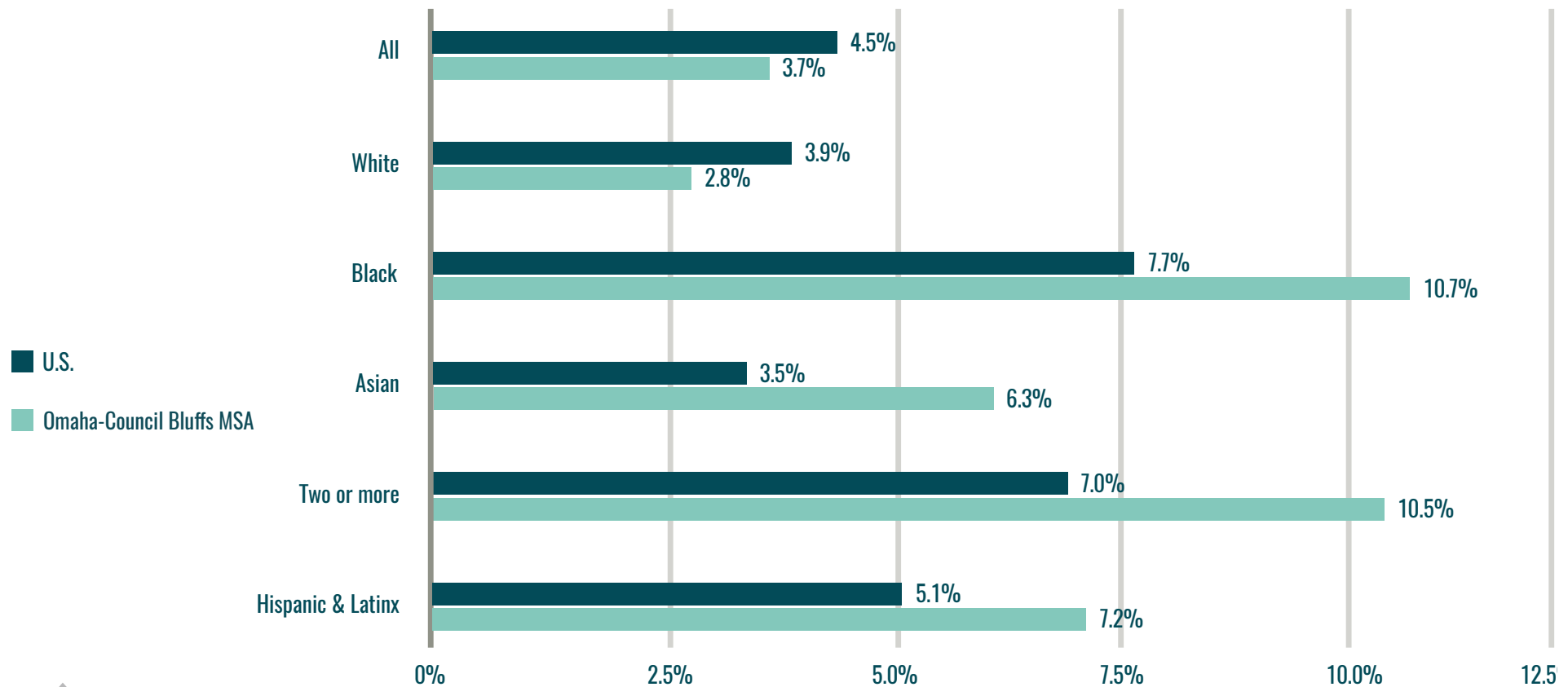


Figure 3.4: Distribution of Unemployment in the MAPA Region



Racial inequities in employment persist when looking at unemployment by race and ethnicity. Total unemployment and unemployment among Whites in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan area are below the national average. However, unemployment for every minority group in the region is higher than the U.S., especially among Blacks (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5: Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, Omaha-Council Bluffs MSA (2019)



Jobs and Wages

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the total number of jobs in the MAPA region has increased gradually from more than 456,000 in 2015 to more than 472,000 in 2019, a five-year increase of 3.4 percent. By comparison, the number of jobs in the U.S. increased by 6.4 percent in the same period. The average annual wage per job in the MAPA region in 2019 was \$47,029, an impressive increase of

9.1 percent since 2015. The region's wages have been behind generally those in the U.S. In 2019, the average annual wage in the MAPA region was 79 percent of the U.S. This is balanced somewhat by a higher purchasing power due to a relatively low cost of living. Table 3.4 provides an overview of jobs and wages in the MAPA region and by county.

Table 3.4: Jobs and Wages by Jurisdiction, 2019

Jurisdiction	2019 Jobs	5-Year % Change	2019 Average Annual Wage	5-Year % Change	Average Annual Wage as % of U.S. in 2019
Cass	5,811	6.2%	\$39,518	13.0%	66.7%
Douglas	341,762	2.9%	\$54,281	10.6%	91.7%
Sarpy	73,183	7.9%	\$48,742	14.9%	82.3%
Washington	7,720	-5.5%	\$51,255	-2.2%	86.6%
Mills	3,593	-6.7%	\$44,389	8.0%	75.0%
Pottawattamie	40,229	2.8%	\$43,989	13.7%	74.3%
MAPA Region	472,298	3.4%	\$47,029	9.1%	79.4%

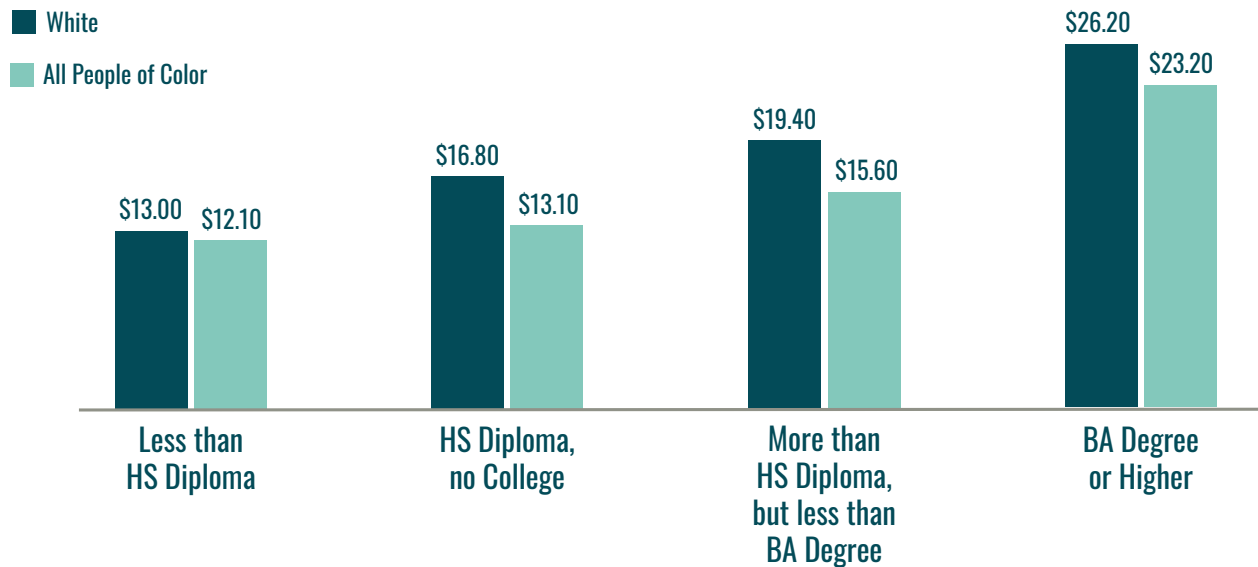
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



For the typical worker in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region – the one right in the middle of the wage distribution – wages have been stagnant (at \$19.90/hour) since 2000 according to an equity analysis conducted by PolicyLink in 2015 on behalf the Heartland 2050 Equity and Engagement Committee. Looking at wage growth by race, the analysis found that wages were stagnant for White workers (median wage of \$20.50/hour), and increased just barely for Black workers (from \$16.30 to \$16.70/hour), while wages decreased for Latino workers (from \$15.00 to \$13.80/hour), and increased substantially for Asian or Pacific Islander workers (from \$18.50 to \$21.20/hour).

The PolicyLink analysis also concluded that racial gaps remain even among workers with similar education levels. People of color with a bachelor's degree or higher earn \$3.00 less per hour than their White counterparts, which adds up to about \$6,000 less per year. The fact that racial economic gaps remain even after controlling for education reveals the persistence of racial barriers to economic opportunity – including forms of exclusion that are embedded into institutions and systems.

Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Source: IPUMS Universe includes civilian non-institutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.

Future Employment Growth

By 2050, the MAPA region is expected to have more than 603,000 total jobs. This represents an increase of more than 43 percent, which is lower slightly than the total anticipated population growth. It is likely the majority of these jobs will be in Douglas County, although it is also probable Sarpy County will gain an increasing

share as it continues to grow during the next 25 years. The total employment in Sarpy County is forecasted to grow by more than 129 percent, from greater than 60,000 jobs in 2010 to close to 151,031 in 2050.

Personal Income

Per capita income is a common indicator used typically by local governments to measure the economic well-being of its population. Per capita income consists of the sum of amounts reported separately for wages or salary income, interest, dividends, social security and retirement income, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), public assistance or welfare payments, and other income types. Per capita income is tracked by the Census Bureau.

As of 2018, the per capita income of the MAPA region is \$33,550, which is 102 percent of the U.S. No single county in the MAPA region has a per capita income below 80 percent the U.S. (Table 3.5), which is an eligibility criteria for certain EDA grant programs. However, similar to unemployment, there are specific census tracts in the MAPA region – concentrated in parts of Omaha and Council Bluffs – whose residents have much lower per capita income than county, state, and national averages (Figure 3.6).



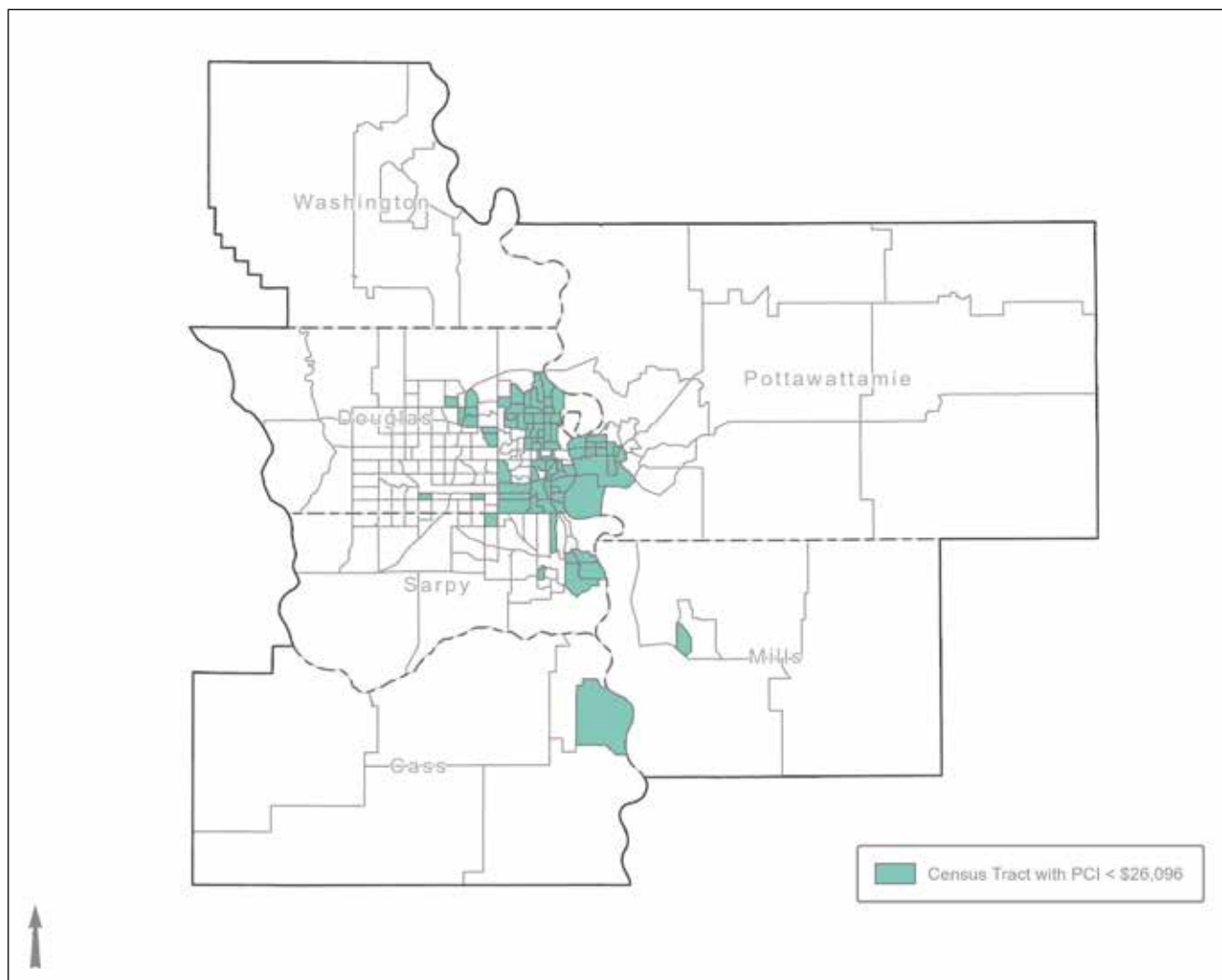
Table 3.5: Per Capita Income by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	2018 PCI	% of U.S.
Cass	\$33,178	101.7%
Douglas	\$33,734	103.4%
Sarpy	\$34,928	107.1%
Washington	\$34,178	104.8%
Mills	\$32,867	100.8%
Pottawattamie	\$29,729	91.1%
MAPA Region	\$33,550	102.8%
U.S.	\$32,633	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Figure 3.6: Per Capita Income by Census Tract in the MAPA Region



A different and more comprehensive indicator of economic well-being is per capita personal income, which is derived from the income received by persons from all sources. This measure of income is calculated as the personal income of the residents of a given area divided by the area's total population. Per capita personal income

is tracked by U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. The MAPA region's per capita personal income between 2008 and 2018 did grow by a combined 33 percent, but its percent of the national rate declined marginally by 1.4 percent (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6: Per Capita Personal Income by Jurisdiction, 2008 and 2018

Jurisdiction	2008 PCPI	% of U.S. (2008)	2018 PCPI	% of U.S. (2018)	% Change (2008-2018)
Cass	\$38,722	94.7%	\$53,602	98.4%	38.4%
Douglas	\$47,907	117.1%	\$63,435	116.5%	32.4%
Sarpy	\$40,273	98.5%	\$50,333	92.4%	25.0%
Washington	\$41,798	102.2%	\$56,640	104.0%	35.5%
Mills	\$44,159	108.0%	\$56,647	104.0%	28.3%
Pottawattamie	\$34,766	85.0%	\$45,604	83.8%	31.2%
MAPA Region	\$41,271	100.8%	\$54,377	99.4%	31.8%
U.S.	\$40,946	100.0%	\$54,685	100.0%	33.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



Household Income

Household income is a measure of the combined incomes of all people sharing a particular household or place of residence. It includes every form of income (e.g. salaries and wages, retirement income, investment gains, etc.), and it is another metric that can be referenced to assess economic welfare. Although there was a slight

decline between 2000 and 2018, the region's median household income was still 12 percentage points above the U.S. in 2018. Similar to personal income, Pottawattamie County's household income is below the U.S. and MAPA region.

Table 3.7: Median Household Income by Jurisdiction, 2000 and 2018

Jurisdiction	2000 MHI	% of U.S. (2000)	2018 MHI	% of U.S. (2018)	% Change (2000-2018)
Cass	\$48,981	116.6%	\$75,177	121.4%	53.5%
Douglas	\$47,522	113.2%	\$64,580	104.3%	35.9%
Sarpy	\$56,704	135.0%	\$79,358	128.1%	40.0%
Washington	\$50,686	120.7%	\$77,838	125.7%	53.6%
Mills	\$42,625	101.5%	\$64,271	103.8%	50.8%
Pottawattamie	\$40,722	97.0%	\$56,337	91.0%	38.3%
MAPA Region	\$47,873	114.2%	\$69,594	112.4%	45.4%
U.S.	\$41,918	100.0%	\$61,909	100.0%	47.7%

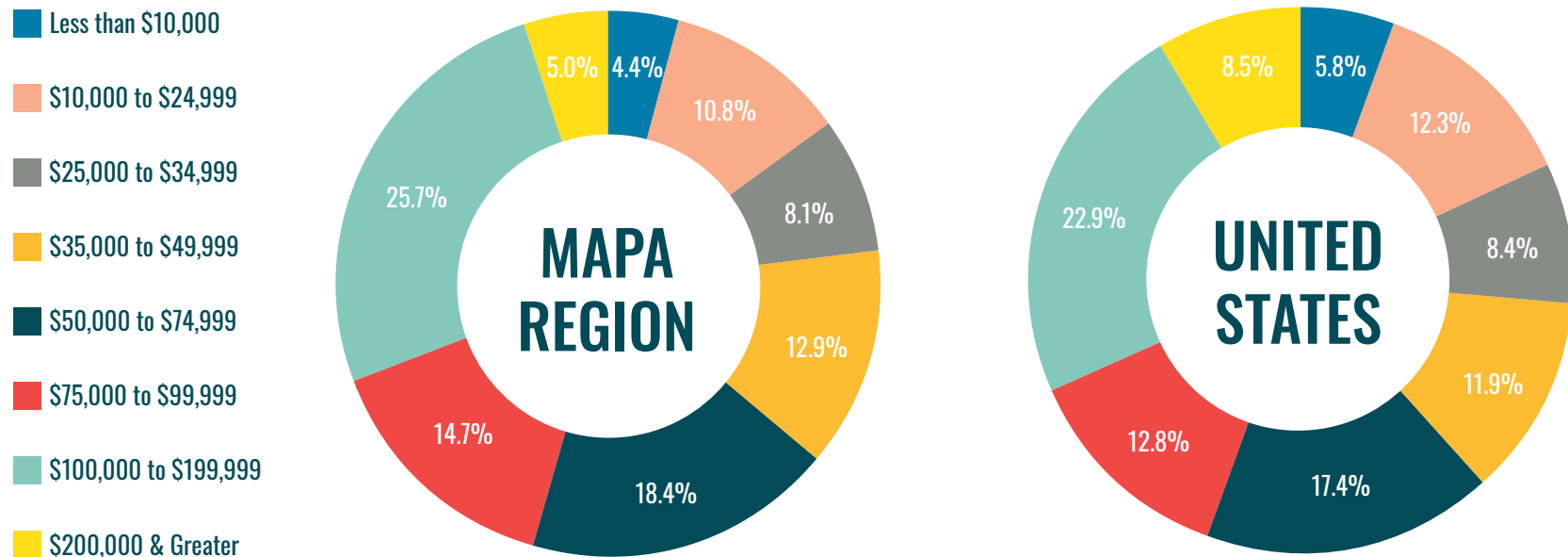
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Household income data collected by the Census Bureau are further delineated into income range cohorts (Figure 3.7). 2018 estimates show that a quarter of the MAPA region's households have an income approximately between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

Approximately 5.0 percent of the region's households earn more than \$200,000 compared to 8.5 percent of the U.S. household population.

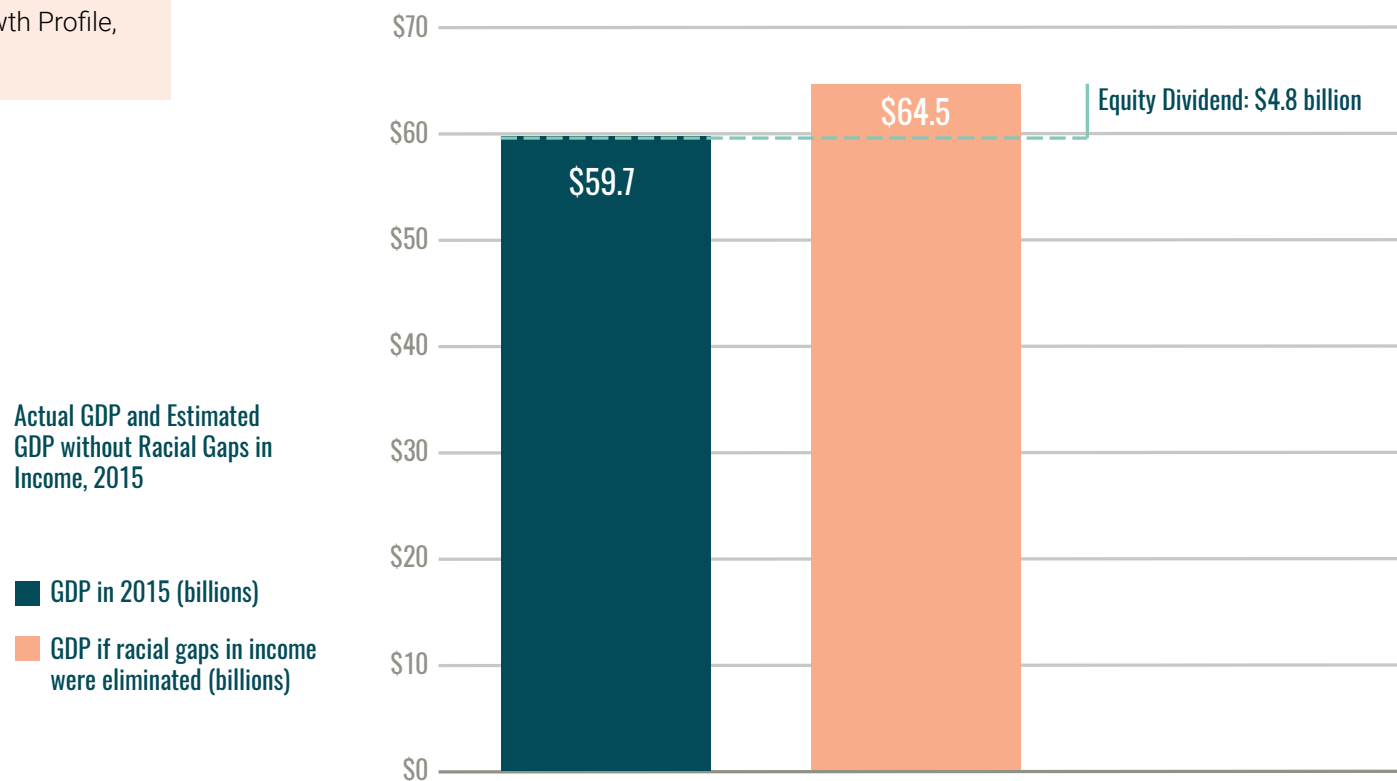
Figure 3.7: Household Income Distribution



Of the estimated 341,000 households in the MAPA region, 15 percent of households make \$25,000 of income or less and are considered to be experiencing poverty. Another eight percent make between \$25,000 to \$34,999. The inequality in the region and its racial gaps in income, wages, education, and poverty not only are bad for communities of color but they also hinder the whole region's

economic growth and prosperity. According to MAPA's analysis, if there were no racial disparities in income, the region's GDP would have been \$4.8 billion higher in 2015. This equity dividend is illustrated with a graphic from MAPA's Equitable Growth Profile in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8: Equitable Growth Profile, Regional Equity Dividend



An inclusive, growing middle class is the hallmark of a prosperous region, but, following the national trends, fewer households earn middle-class incomes in Omaha-Council Bluffs now than in 1979 (40 percent in 1979 vs. 37 percent in 2015), while an increasing share of households are in the lower-income bracket (30 percent in 1979 vs. 36 percent in 2015). Middle-wage jobs, which have provided pathways traditionally to the middle class, are growing at a much higher rate in the region (16 percent) than the U.S. overall (6 percent). The manufacturing sector; however,

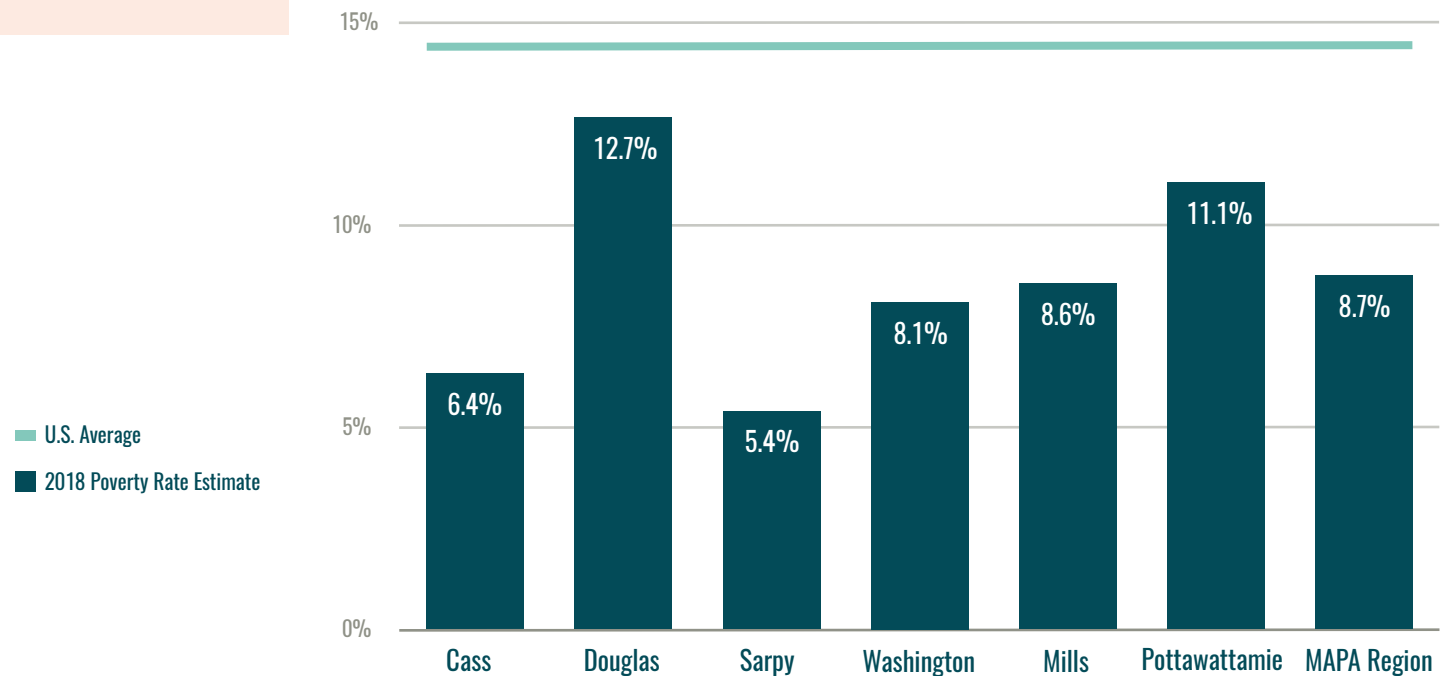
which traditionally provided many good, middle-skill jobs for people without college degrees, has seen a decline in jobs since 2006, which, fortunately, has not been as severe as in most other regions. Although middle-wage jobs are growing, earnings growth for those in these jobs is slower than for those in high- and low-wage jobs. The middle class also have become more diverse, shifting from 8 percent people of color in 1979 to 15 percent people of color today, yet its composition still does not reflect the region's racial and ethnic diversity fully.

Poverty

The rate of poverty among the total population in the MAPA region is commonly well below that of the U.S. However, poverty in Douglas and Pottawattamie Counties has been aligned more closely with the national rate over time (Figure 3.9).



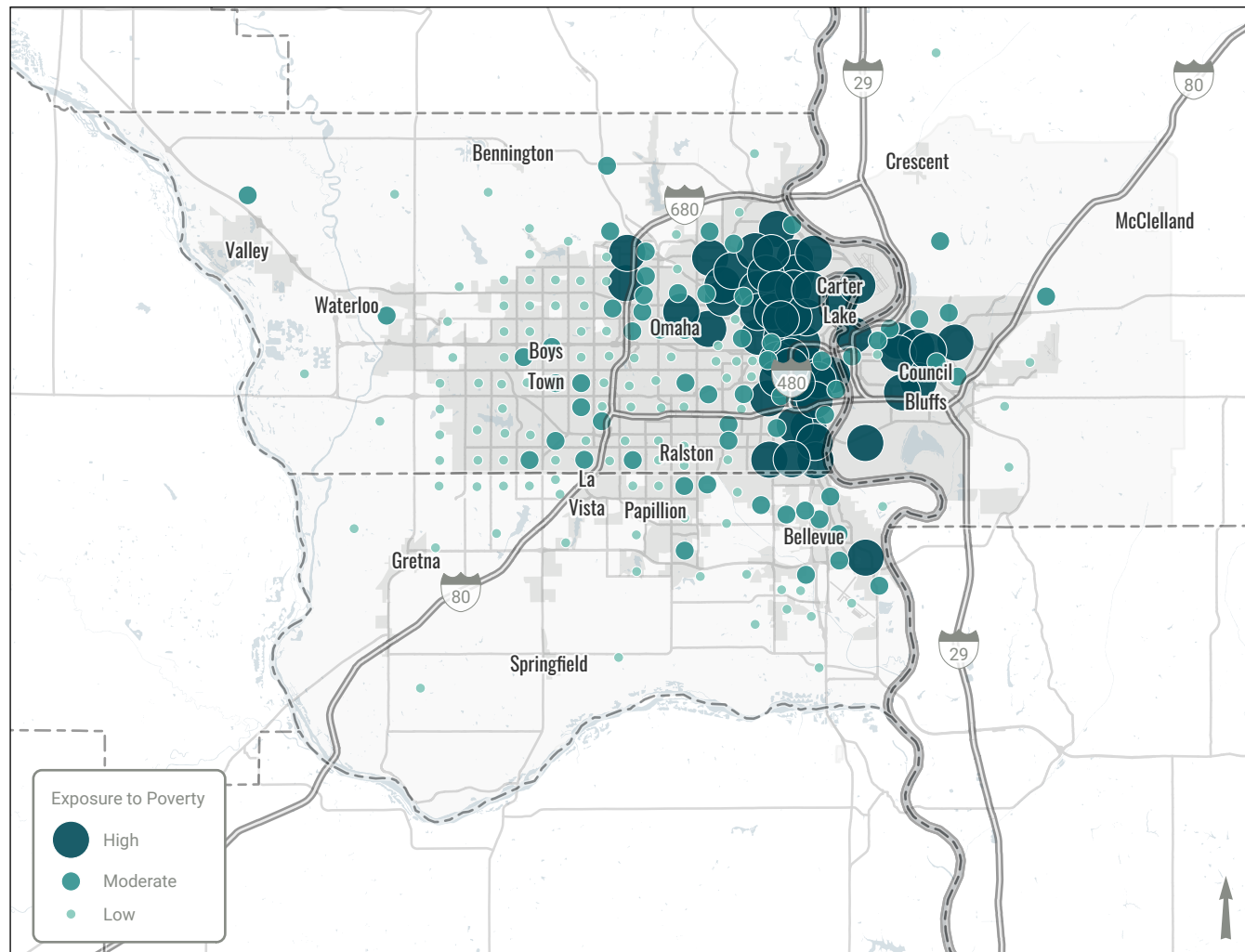
Figure 3.9: Rate of Individuals in Poverty by Jurisdiction, 2018 Estimates



There are an estimated 186,128 people living at or below the poverty line, representing approximately 8.7 percent of the population. The highest concentrations of these low-income individuals are found in northeastern Omaha. Figure 3.10 illustrates HUD's Poverty Index, which captures the depth and intensity of poverty in a given neighborhood. The index uses both family poverty rates and public assistance receipt, in the form of cash-welfare, such as Temporary

Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). For populations in poverty in Omaha, access to job centers is a critical need. The area of northeast Omaha that has the highest concentration of poverty is very well served by transit at present. Additionally, high poverty areas of south Omaha and Council Bluffs have low and moderate levels of transit accessibility, limiting the access that residents have in those areas to jobs and educational opportunities.

Figure 3.10: HUD Poverty Index, Omaha-Council Bluffs Urban Area



Cost of Living

Earnings and personal income are tied closely to the ability of people to pay for essential needs such as housing and transportation. The Midwest region of the U.S. is often known for its affordable cost of living. While this generally remains true in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, some areas remain unaffordable for persons to live, especially if immobility requires them to live near where they

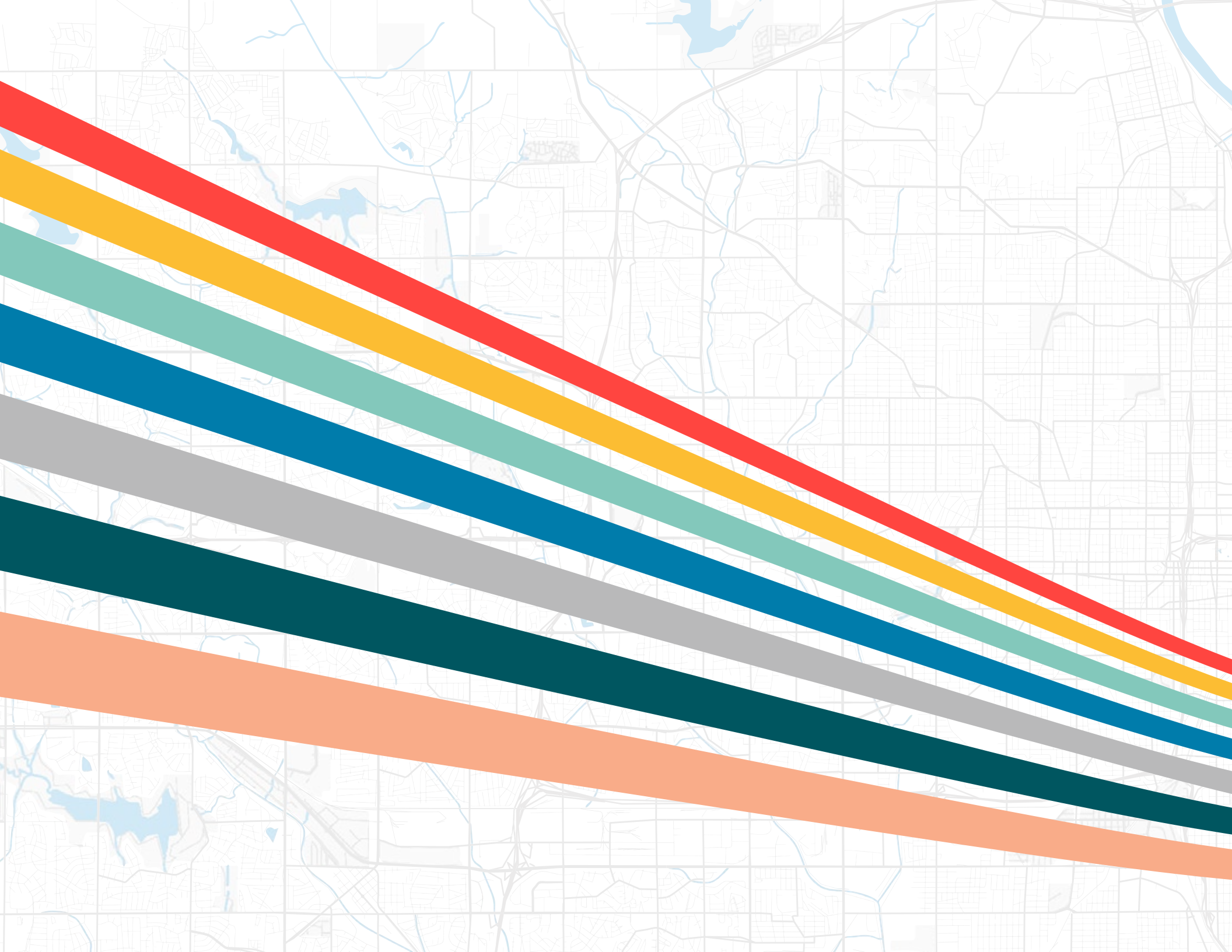
work. As the urban area of Omaha and Council Bluffs redevelop, concerns of gentrification and persons being forced to relocate due to housing costs become a major concern. Table 3.8 shows the 2019 cost of living index for the eight-county MSA and select metropolitan areas in proximity to Omaha-Council Bluffs.

Table 3.8: Cost of Living Comparison, Omaha-Council Bluffs and Select MSAs

	Omaha	Des Moines	Kansas City	Oklahoma City
Overall Cost of Living*	91.9	89.6	95.5	86.8
Grocery Items	96.5	95.0	102.2	90.6
Housing	82.6	79.3	81.7	83.8
Utilities	99.5	90.2	100.7	73.8
Health Care	96.3	95.3	105.9	89.4
Miscellaneous Good & Services	93.2	92.2	101.6	88.6
Transportation	98.1	98.9	92.4	95.8
*-The U.S. average equals 100.0. Anything below 100.0 is less expensive than the U.S.				

Source: Greater Omaha Chamber

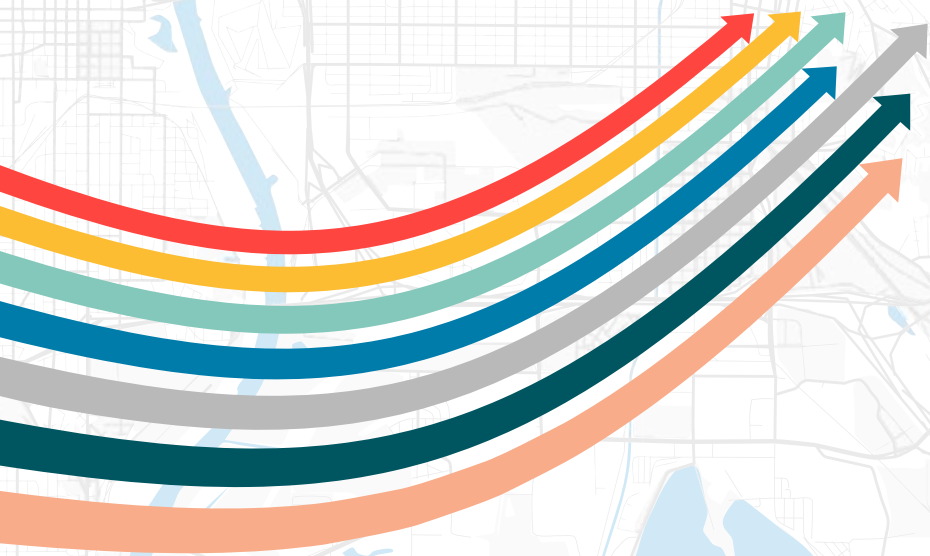






4

**REGIONAL
ASSESSMENT**



4. REGIONAL ASSESSMENT

Overview

Based on the current data and trends assessed in Chapters 2 and 3, a number of assumptions can be drawn concerning the overall economic and social welfare of the MAPA region. However, data alone are not sufficient to capture a well-rounded assessment. MAPA solicited input from its member communities and stakeholders to collect qualitative information in order to validate and supplement the quantitative findings.

MAPA distributed a community and economic development survey to the municipal jurisdictions in the agency's region. MAPA staff also facilitated focus groups and conducted interviews with economic developers and stakeholders in an effort to seek out anecdotal views and attitudes regarding the current state and future outlook of the region.

Community Surveys and Stakeholder Interviews

An online survey was distributed to the municipalities within the MAPA region's six counties. The survey asked 19 questions relevant to local economic development and community planning. One question asked responders to identify perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (also known as a "SWOT"

analysis) concerning their communities and the greater region. The following responses do not represent every individual submission. Instead, responses have been condensed into general themes for the purposes of reducing redundancy and limiting misinterpretation.



COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

- Location (i.e. ability to live in suburban or rural communities near a mid-sized urban metro; access to rural and urban amenities)
 - Productive workforce with strong work ethic
 - Affordable cost of living
 - Quality of life amenities (e.g., parks and green space, entertainment and cultural amenities, and safe communities among others)
 - Strong sense of community engagement among residents
 - Quality local schools and nearby presence of community colleges and public and private universities
-

COMMUNITY WEAKNESSES

- Aging infrastructure or lack of adequate infrastructure to support new growth
- Aging/dilapidated rural downtowns
- Cost to acquire land and build new housing
- Declining/aging population – and subsequent decreases in local tax revenue
- Deteriorating housing stock in certain neighborhoods and rural communities
- Lack of affordable housing in certain neighborhoods and rural communities
- Lack of varied housing types for different resident demographics
- Lack of new housing in rural communities – developers/builders are occupied primarily in the suburbs and urban fringes
- Lack of incentives/resources to attract businesses (locally and/or at the state level)
- Maintaining affordable utility rates in communities with declining or stagnant growth



COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Continued investments in transportation infrastructure and regional trails systems
 - Rehabilitation of downtown commercial districts to retain and attract small businesses
 - Adaptive reuse of buildings or spaces that no longer have function (e.g. shuttered school buildings closed due to population decline, district consolidation)
 - Young families relocating or returning to communities throughout the region
-

COMMUNITY THREATS

- Location (i.e. difficulty retaining local businesses and services when in proximity to a larger population center)
- Lack of buildable land due to urban and/or natural geography
- Lack of workforce (or non-speculative) housing to accommodate would-be residents
- Maintaining and growing local economies outside of the urbanized metro area
- Maintaining local identity in the face of changing community and economic dynamics
- Small workforce pool from which to fill open jobs and support local business expansion
- Retaining youth / limiting “brain drain”
- Slow or stagnant growth
- Uncertainty with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the economy



The survey also asked communities to identify and rank at least their top three topics or issues by importance. Infrastructure development (water, sewer, roads, etc.) received the highest number of overall selections and the most first place selections. Housing and broadband/telecommunications ranked second and third, respectively. Downtown revitalization and land use planning were also selected frequently. Other topics that were ranked in the top three but with less frequency included: financing economic development, flood protection, transportation issues, incentive programs (TIF, tax abatement, etc.), and tourism/marketing. Communities that specified their infrastructure needs most necessary to increase or ensure continued economic investment cited downtown building repair and rehabilitation, fiber internet, water and wastewater treatment capacity upgrades, water and wastewater treatment facility improvements or new construction, and street repair/resurfacing.

MAPA facilitated discussions with executive directors and support staff from the five economic development organizations that represent each county in the MAPA region. These organizations compose part of the **Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership**, which is a consortium that leads many of the economic

development efforts throughout the MAPA and larger Omaha-Council Bluffs regions. The Partnership's economic development activities concern business attraction and intelligence, entrepreneurship and innovation, public policy, and talent and workforce among other areas. The Partnership members which MAPA frequently collaborates with and solicited input for the 2020 CEDS update include the **Greater Omaha Chamber** (City of Omaha), **Cass County Nebraska Economic Development Council**, **Gateway Development Corporation** (Washington County), **Sarpy County Economic Development Corporation**, and **Advance Southwest Iowa Corporation** (Pottawatomie County). The **Mills County Economic Development Foundation**, though independent of the Partnership, was also consulted in this latest CEDS development process.

Professional development stakeholders were asked to convey insights on the current state of the region in an attempt to add further context to the data presented in the preceding chapters and the input received from participating communities. This feedback has been classified and presented under six focus areas which were determined to be the most applicable. They include:



EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR

- The region has a productive, well-trained labor force.
 - The region benefits by having two community colleges and various workforce development resources that provide training for trades and other skills that do not require a four-year degree.
 - Efforts must continue to align today's workforce training needs with educational pathways and curriculums.
 - Immigrants with professional skills and backgrounds have difficulty finding opportunities in the region. Cultural and language barriers contribute to the problem, but social factors are responsible as well.
 - The challenges of an aging workforce are becoming more present. In the coming years, it is anticipated that the number of workers leaving the labor force will equal, if not exceed, the number of new entrants, creating staffing capacity concerns and gaps in organizational leadership.
-

FINANCING AND COST OF DOING BUSINESS

- Cost of living is below the national average and competitive with regions of similar size and demographics.
- There are well-established philanthropic resources throughout the region that aid in social and economic development.
- The lack of large incentive packages and venture capital programs place the region at a competitive disadvantage in attracting outside investment.
- Most economic incentives available in the region are relatively rigid and do not adequately address economic development needs in areas of disinvestment.
- Few incentives or resources (e.g. micro-lending) exist for small businesses.



HOUSING

- There is a lack of affordable housing throughout the region, especially where job centers are located.
 - There is limited mixed housing development in the region, both in the urban and rural areas.
 - There is not enough workforce housing available or being built for residents who desire to live in or near the communities they work.
-

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORTATION

- Eppley Airfield has capacity to expand both passenger and cargo service. Passenger service is provided to both coasts and has added the number of direct flights to more than 30 destinations.
- The presence of Interstates 80 and 29 provide continued opportunities for development in jurisdictions where those corridors traverse.
- Infrastructure in many parts of the region is inadequate to support new businesses and business expansion.
- Although improvements have been made, reliable and affordable broadband is not consistent throughout the entire region.



LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

- There is limited availability of industrial park space and state-of-the-art industrial areas/buildings, particularly large-scale industrial sites served by rail.
- Soil contamination due to lead in eastern Omaha continues to pose health and safety risks to residents. Remediation continues but it is a painstaking process.
- Brownfields remediation and wetland mitigation are often detriments to development.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

- The Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership network exists and includes a public/private cooperative for unified marketing of the region.
- The local governments in the region support cooperative agreements for services including law enforcement and emergency medical response, joint purchasing, and exchange of water and sewer resources.
- Doing business and providing services in two states can be challenging – intergovernmental cooperation is required.



Summary of the Economic State of the MAPA Region

Overall, the economy of the MAPA region has demonstrated growth and resilience since the last five-year CEDS update. Unemployment is below the national average consistently, personal and household incomes are in range with U.S. averages – despite lower than average annual wages, and cost of living remains low and competitive. The region's success can be attributed to a productive, skilled, and educated workforce, a diversified economy anchored by successful companies, strong educational and health care institutions, the presence of Offutt Air Force Base and U.S. Strategic Command, as well as a centralized location with a serviceable transportation network in proximity to various major national markets. These and other factors have enabled the MAPA region to see continued population growth, almost 14 percent overall since the 2010 census. Douglas and Sarpy Counties are at the center of that growth and will continue to be so in the foreseeable future, although natural development barriers exist in both jurisdictions that will influence land use and development decisions.

Although growth in the MAPA region's most populous counties has been strong, rural areas have experienced population stagnation or decline. As referenced in Chapter 1, 12 communities have seen trending population decline since 2010 and earlier. Smaller rural communities in the MAPA region are challenged to retain popula-

tion, businesses, and services when the bulk of jobs and employment opportunities are more and more centered in Omaha and adjacent communities. Furthermore, many segments of the population have migrated out of small towns and denser, older neighborhoods to more subdivisions developed recently in the suburbs and rural areas used previously for agriculture. The viability of rural communities is complicated by the age, condition, and availability of housing. Attracting or incentivizing new housing – particularly workforce housing – has been a common concern among communities in the MAPA region's rural counties.

While much of the MAPA region's new growth is in areas undeveloped previously, urban communities like Omaha and Council Bluffs have seen a resurgence in infill redevelopment and adaptive reuse. The movement toward and prevalence of infill redevelopment caters to changing demographics and preferences. Young professionals – generally white-collar professionals in their 20s and 30s – are a coveted demographic that cities and regions strive to retain or attract by fostering more transit-oriented and mixed-use development that offers cultural, economic, and social amenities. Strides have been made in the efficiency and reliability of the urban area's public transit system operated by **Metro**, and the region's first Bus Rapid Transit line (**ORBT**) that is set to launch in November of 2020



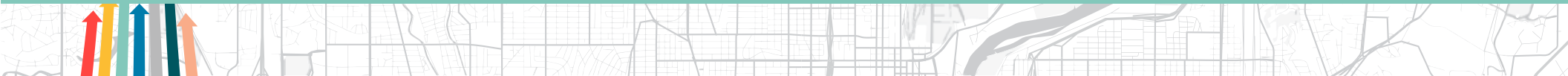
should make the region more competitive in attracting workforce talent and innovative businesses, and improve connectivity to employment opportunities for low-income individuals.

Infill redevelopment, like in most other cities, is prevalent in neighborhoods where there has been disinvestment, and where there is a higher concentration of minority and low income residents. This is true in the MAPA region's urban communities. Redevelopment, although a boon to the local tax base, raises the cost of living for housing typically, which prices out residents who are more likely to be vulnerable socially and economically. Those most vulnerable to rising costs and economic uncertainty reside predominantly in the older and more densely populated urban center of the MAPA region, which encompasses eastern Omaha, western Council Bluffs, and pockets of Bellevue. This area has experienced educational attainment, employment, and personal and household incomes far below the region as a whole historically. The continued disinvestment over time can be attributed to the changing economy and location of job

centers, lack of transportation options to those job centers, and the proliferation of suburban growth among other social and economic factors. Economic conditions in these urban neighborhoods are often overshadowed by the overall success demonstrated on a region-wide scale.

Aside from the issues of urban disinvestment and economic equity, the greater MAPA region has experienced other prominent challenges recently. Like the rest of the country, the region's communities, residents, and businesses are grappling with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In March of 2020, the states of Nebraska and Iowa issued measures that shut down effectively the majority of "nonessential" businesses. Although neither state issued stay at home orders, normal daily business and commercial activities were hindered to an extent never before seen by current generations.

The commercial sector has absorbed the greatest brunt of the economic downturn throughout the ongoing pandemic. Businesses



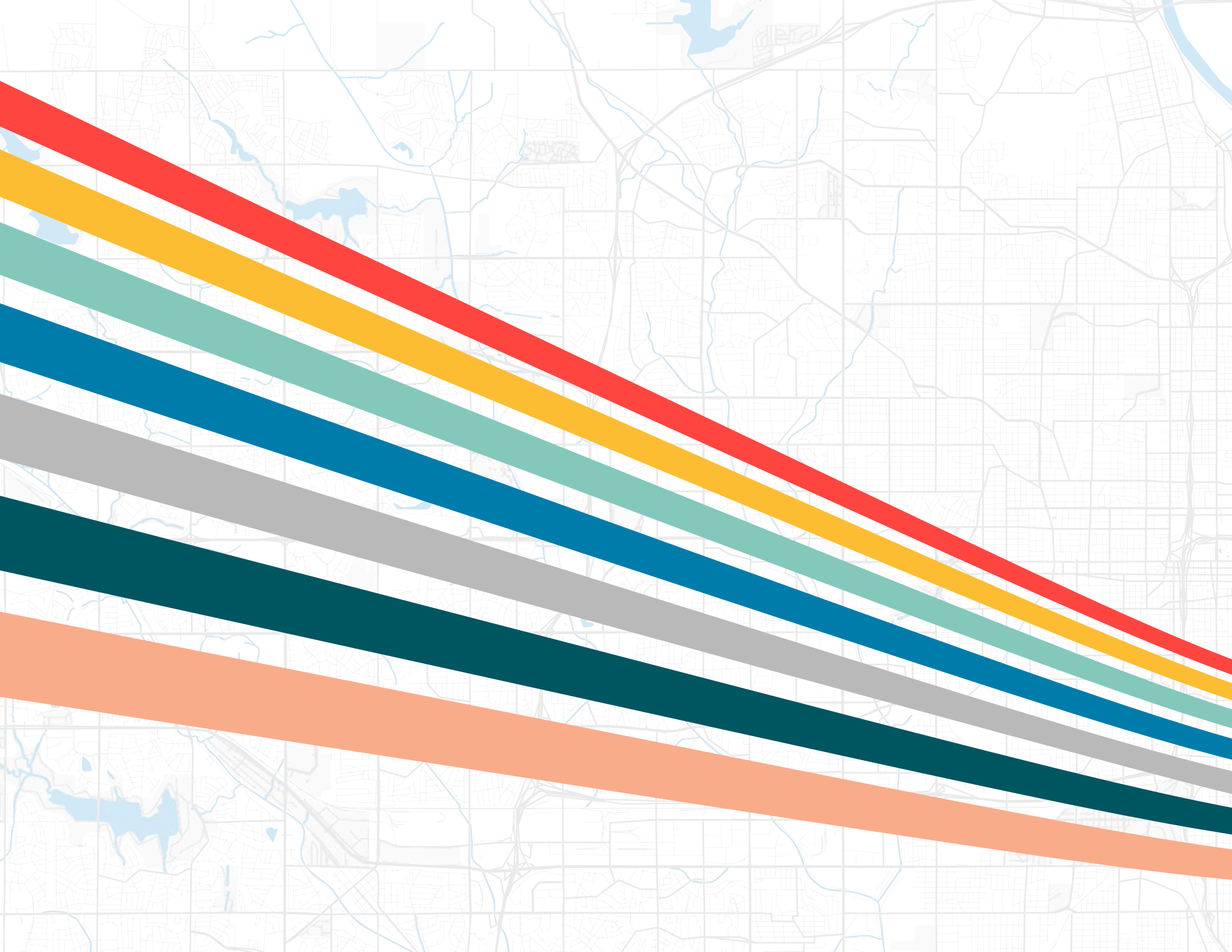
that were forced to shutter entirely between mid-March and early May included retail, food services and drinking establishments, leisure and hospitality, entertainment and gaming venues, and businesses that rely generally on foot traffic and where consumers spend disposable income typically. COVID-19 has resulted in the unemployment or furlough of thousands and potentially the permanent closure of numerous small businesses all throughout the region. Local government sales, hotel/motel, and restaurant taxes have declined. Restrictions have been eased gradually in order to stimulate commerce and avoid further economic harm, but most businesses are operating under controls that limit occupancy thus reducing revenue and the need to hire at normal capacity. It is uncertain how long it will be until normal or near-normal resumption of economic activities reach pre-pandemic levels.

MAPA communities in Nebraska and Iowa are still recovering from 2019's historic floods that resulted in statewide Presidential Disaster Declarations. Several communities in the MAPA region such as

Arlington, Bellevue, Plattsmouth, Valley, and Waterloo, Nebraska, and Glenwood and Pacific Junction, Iowa, experienced significant damage to infrastructure, residential properties, and local businesses. Reports from local jurisdictions and FEMA estimate that 2,675 residential properties and 545 business properties sustained flood-related damage.

Recovery and flood mitigation planning are priorities for communities like Pacific Junction in Mills County and Plattsmouth in Cass County. Projects for which affected communities have received or will require funding assistance likely include floodplain property acquisitions, infrastructure repair or replacement, and long-range planning and emergency coordination. This most recent flood event – the second in less than a decade – underscores the need to facilitate planning and to implement projects that increase the resiliency of infrastructure, neighborhoods, and businesses against future flooding and other potential hazards.







5

**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 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.
- 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 ¼ 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)



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



<i>Goal D - Retain and attract educated, skilled, and well-trained workforce talent</i>	
<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"> • FEMA • State emergency management agencies • Lead units of local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term (5 or more years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA • State departments of agriculture • State departments of natural resources • Private property owners • Lead units of local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium-term (2-5 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No identified resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEMA • State emergency management agencies • Lead units of local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARES Act funding assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (within 2 years)
<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)



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.

