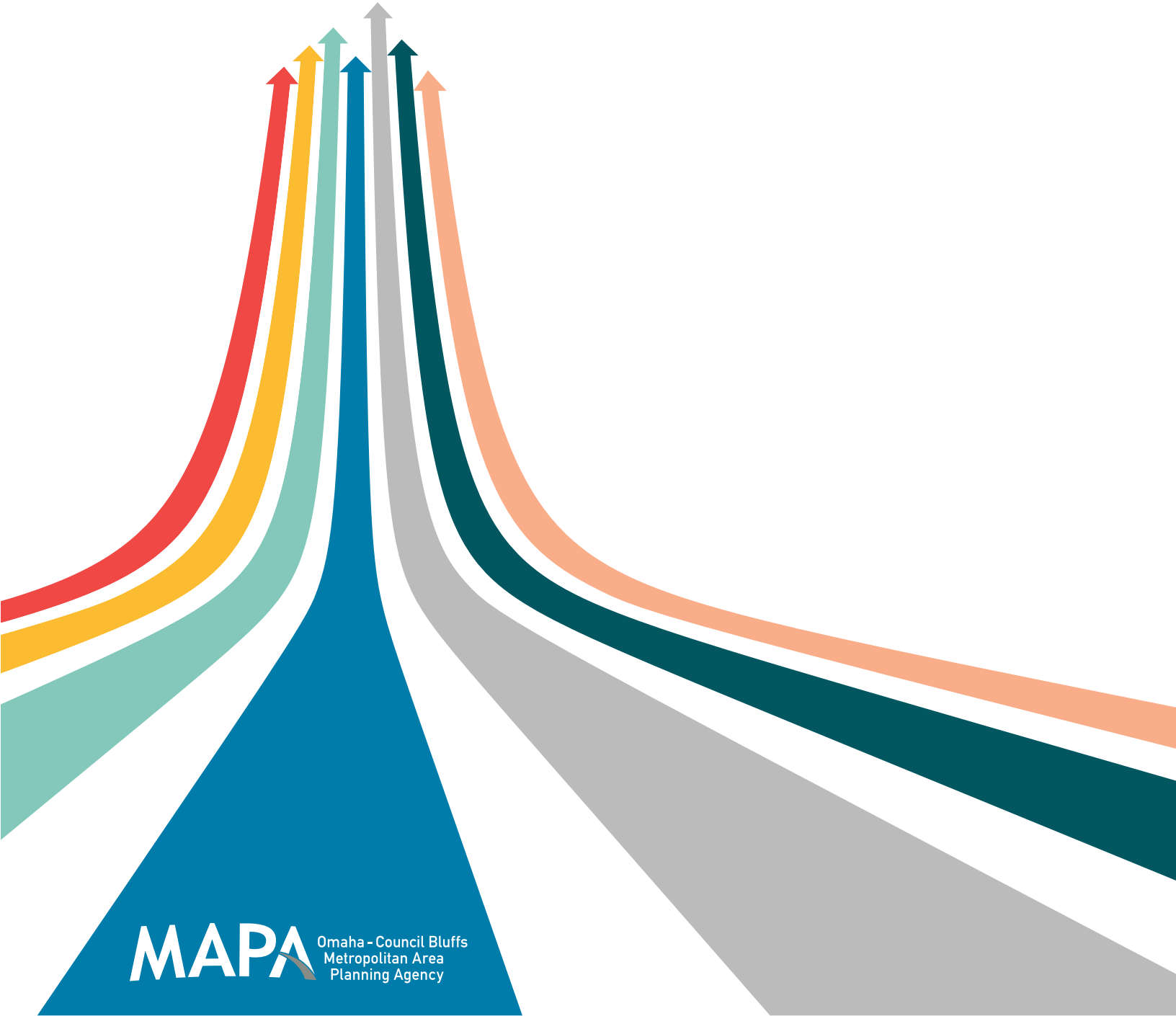
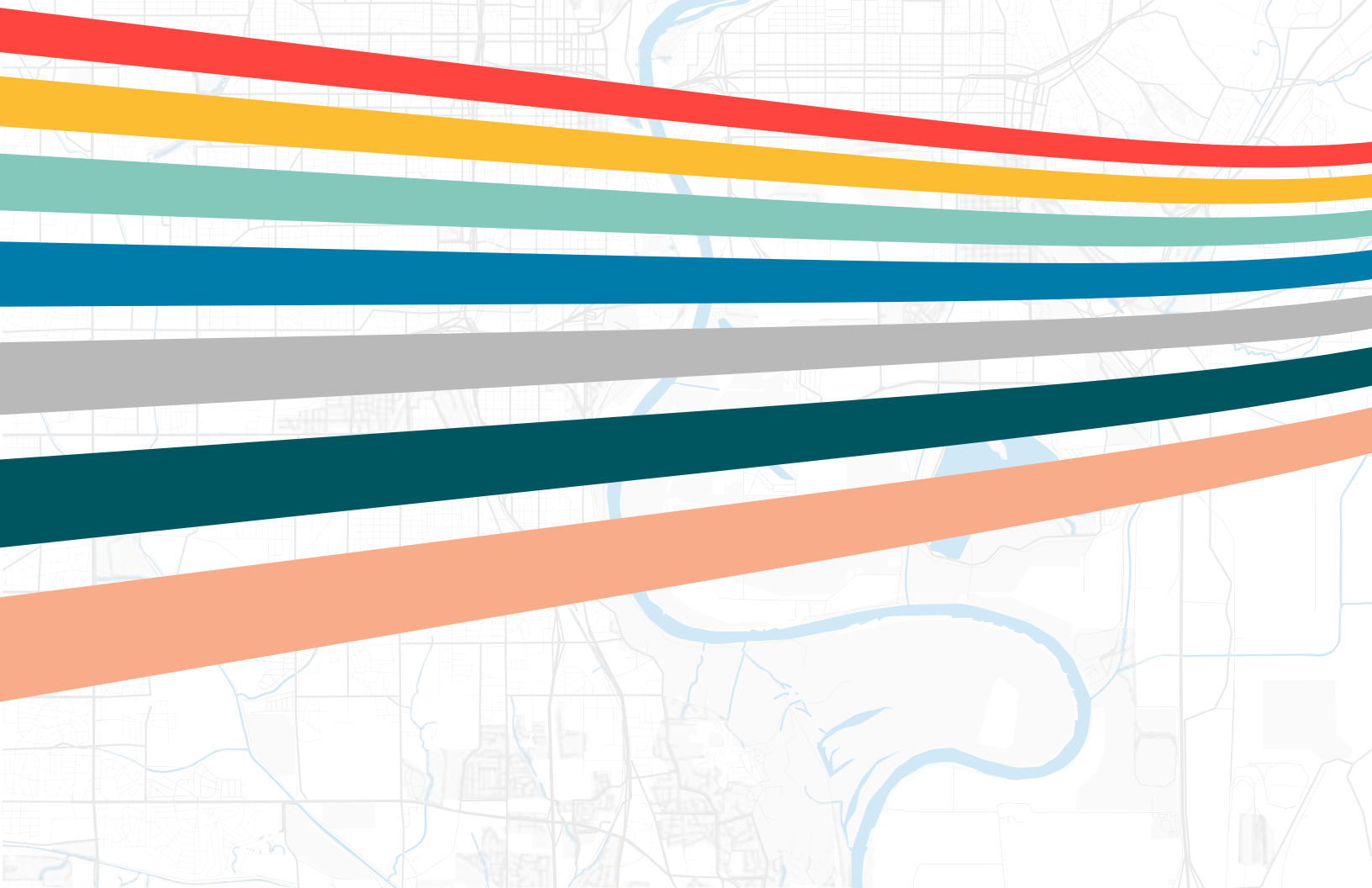


# 2050 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN



2050 GOAL

# INCREASED MOBILITY FOR ALL



# MORE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES, EASIER ACCESS, IMPROVED EQUITABILITY.



## 01

INTRODUCTION

## 02

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

## 03

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENT

## 04

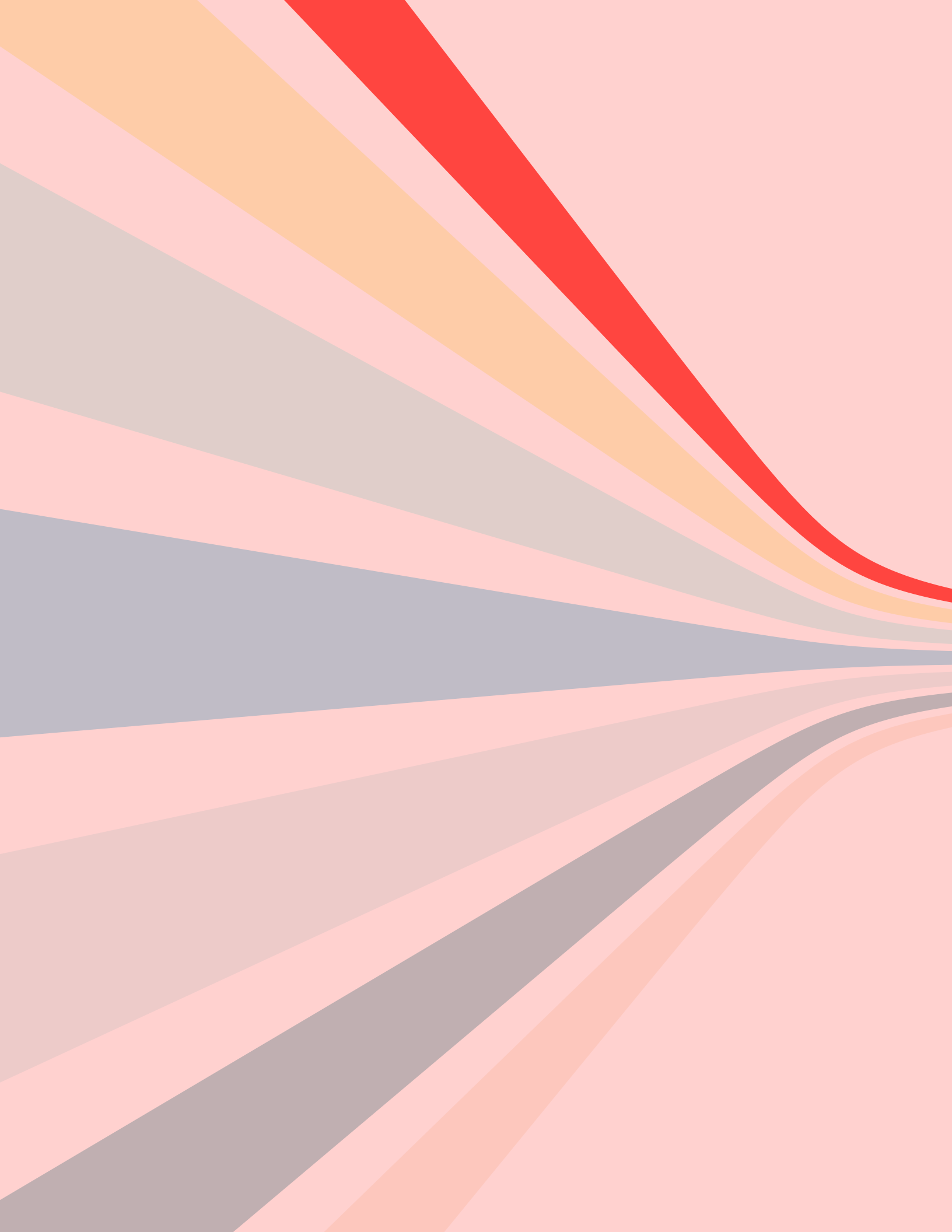
ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGHOUT THE REGION

## 05

STEWARDSHIP OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

## 06

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS



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# 1

# INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The MAPA 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) helps guide 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. Originally adopted in 2020, this 2025 update reaffirms the goals of the plan and increases the focus on ensuring a safe transportation system for all users.

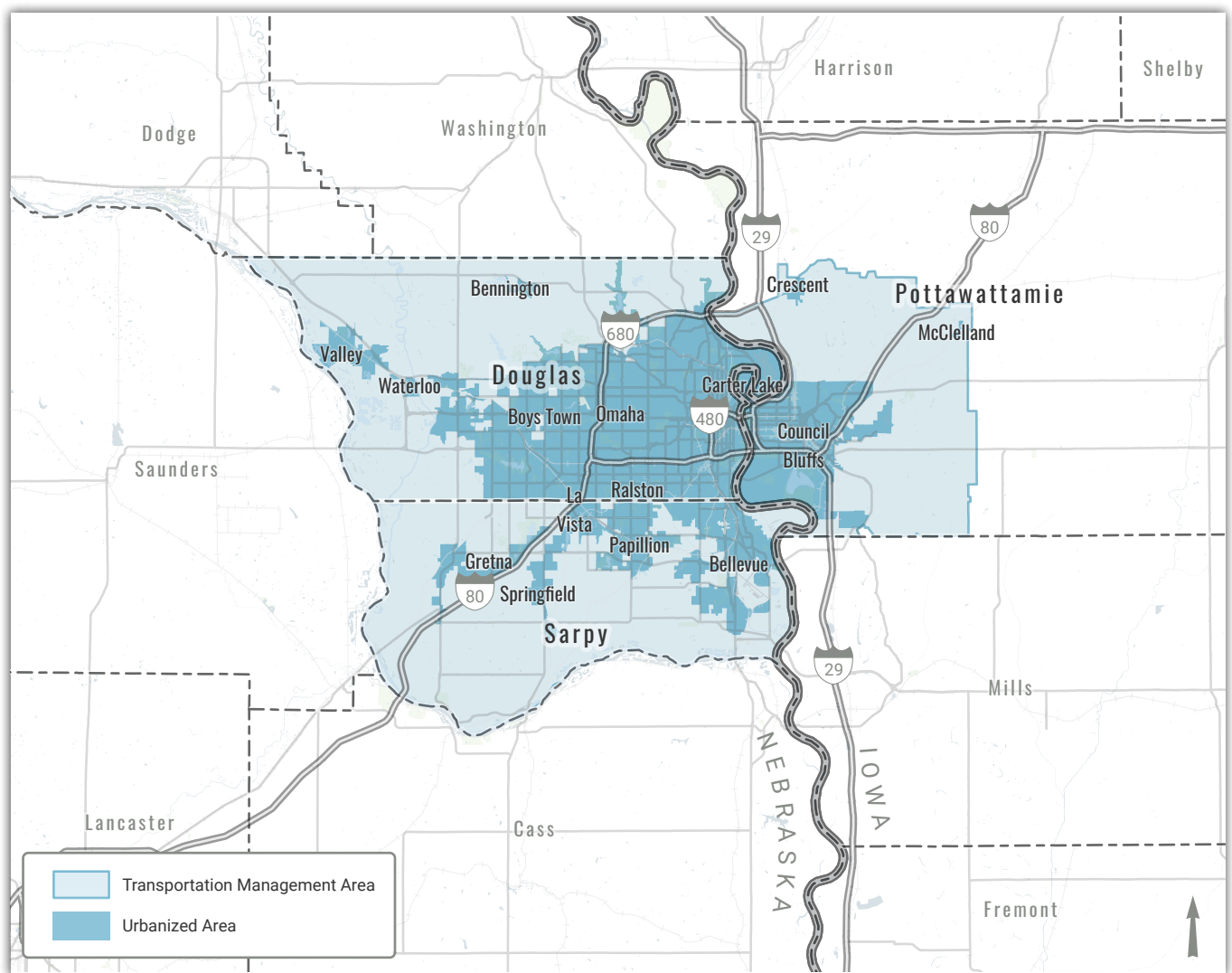
Safety is more than just a goal of this plan, it is the number one priority. It relates to and informs each of the goals in different ways, so each chapter has a section dedicated to safety. With the completion of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan in 2025, MAPA is working on new metrics for success and including project recommendations that will address safety issues throughout the region.



Metropolitan transportation plans cover the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or Transportation Management Area (TMA). The Omaha - Council Bluffs TMA consists of Douglas

and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska, and urbanized portions of Pottawattamie County in Iowa. Figure 1 below shows the current extent of the TMA.

**Figure 1.1:** MAPA Urbanized Area and TMA Boundaries



The MTP is required to include goals and projects with at least a 20-year time horizon from the implementation date. This MTP will have projects and goals for the community spanning 25 years, until 2050. The extended time-frame of this planning initiative is designed to match the Heartland 2050 Study implementation and provide a more cohesive and comprehensive planning framework for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region. This framework will provide an aspirational community-wide vision for the year 2050.

This document contains a demographic, environmental, and infrastructure inventory which serves as the foundation for this planning vision. This framework, coupled with analysis of current transportation needs within the region, will determine the needs of the region moving forward. Based on these needs identified in the planning process, options for future projects, scenarios, and success will be developed.

## Omaha- Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA)

As the regional Council of Governments for Greater Omaha, MAPA exists to provide local governments with planning and technical support, thinking regionally and long range on the core issues that impact the vibrancy of the Greater Omaha-Council Bluffs area. These are issues that extend beyond electoral cycles or traditional boundaries -- including transportation, infrastructure, housing, and natural resources.

MAPA identifies opportunities, helps to bring funding and other resources to the region for critical projects, and works to build consensus among parties with often competing interests. The impact of our work is often tangible— roads, bridges, trails, housing that might not exist otherwise. Other times, the impact of our work is less obvious—things like cleaner air and water and better sanitation.

Our work touches all of these areas and more. We are connectors, facilitators, advisers, and implementers, with a big picture vision and an everyday attention to detail. Data and process-driven, we are a trusted, objective resource to local government and public and private stakeholders, helping to set the public agenda, frame issues, and develop and implement action plans.

MAPA was created in 1967 under the terms of an interlocal agreement to provide a forum for coordinat-

ing local planning and development activities. MAPA is governed by a 79-member Council of Officials and a nine-member Board of Directors.



The Omaha-Council Bluffs TMA (blue) and the RPA-18 region in yellow.



The MAPA Council of Governments region is in blue (lower right map).

## Federal Justification and Requirements

As part of the “continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive” planning process, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act requires MPOs to develop a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). This process was established by the federal government with the intent of fostering better management, operation, and development of the surface transportation system.

The law stipulates that the MTP should provide a comprehensive assessment of the region’s transportation system and its future needs, including

a list of regionally significant transportation projects based on reasonably anticipated local, state, and federal revenues.

Since transportation has a broad impact on society, metropolitan transportation planning must take into account concerns such as impact upon the environment, land use, and economic development, in addition to traditional transportation-related issues such as access and safety.



## Collaborative Planning in the MAPA Region

### HEARTLAND 2050

The 2050 MTP builds upon the work of the previous plan and other major initiatives that have been conducted in recent years. Heartland 2050 serves as the long-term regional vision adopted by the MAPA Council of Officials. It provides the overarching goals and emphasis areas of the 2050 MTP. The 2050 project was unveiled 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 is allocated to conduct local and corridor-level planning that advance the goals of the Heartland 2050 Vision.

### MTIS

The Metropolitan Area Travel Improvement Study (MTIS) (2013 - 2019) is a comprehensive transportation study that recognizes future interstate and freeway system needs are linked intrinsically with local roads and transit system needs and investment decisions in the MAPA region. It was developed as a collaborative effort between the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and MAPA. MTIS was a foundational document for the previous metropolitan transportation plan and continues to inform how the region's development connects with NDOT's system planning needs. Additionally Nebraska is pursuing the development of an infrastructure hub to help finance and accelerate the development of infrastructure in the region.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONNECTGO

Blueprint Nebraska is a statewide vision undertaken by the State of Nebraska to "Grow the Good Life" over the next decade. It focuses on propelling Nebraska to be the most welcoming Midwest state for youth, talent, investment, and commerce, and a national model for continuous growth and prosperity. Focused primarily on issues such as workforce, technology, and education, it devotes a strong emphasis on transportation and its intrinsic connection to broader goals.



## PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

- "Close the Gap" White Paper
- Transit Return on Investment (ROI) Study
- Metro Travel Improvement Study (MTIS)
- Greater Omaha Chamber Prosper 2.0
- Regional Equity Profile
- Sarpy County Transit Feasibility Study
- Affordably Furthering Fair Housing
- Regional Equity Profile

## RECENT PLANNING EFFORTS

- MetroNEXT
- La Vista Active Mobility Plan
- Omaha Active Mobility Plan
- Regional Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
- Western Sarpy Transportation Enhancement Plan
- Neighborhood Expanded Access to Trails Study
- Omaha Vision Zero Plan



The Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce counts more than 3,100 member businesses and serves as the region's leading economic development organization within the region. The Chamber's overarching economic development campaign is Prosper Omaha 2.0, which developed into the Urban Core Plan and 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. Much of the nation's infrastructure, built decades ago, is deteriorating and in need of rehabilitation or replacement. 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. 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 of Greater Omaha.

MAPA is also recognized by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as an Economic Development District, which creates a Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). As of Fall 2020, the MAPA CEDS is being updated in close coordination with the MTP in an effort to better complement transportation and economic development investments in a strategic manner to implement the regional vision.

### **COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

In an effort to achieve the goals of the Heartland 2050 vision, MAPA's Board of Directors created the Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Program. To date, six plans and studies have been completed for local governments trying to improve active and public transportation for their residents. Six more ongoing and future projects will be delivered under this program and additional projects will be identified in the coming years. The largest of these efforts, the Council Bluffs Multimodal Connection and Expansion Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, aims to deliver a plan to connect downtown Omaha with downtown Council Bluffs via active and public transportation.

Outside of the mini-grant program, MAPA has led or coordinated with other efforts to plan for major transportation investments in the region. MetroNEXT, "an aspirational and achievable vision to deliver better transit for a more connected region," was developed in 2021 with a phased approach that will take Metro Transit into 2030. The Sarpy County I-80 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study looked at potential locations for a new interchange in the southwestern part of the county.



## Public Involvement

MAPA prioritized public involvement and input activities that provided key information into the planning process. This outreach activity included collaboration with community partners on initiatives for corridor studies, ConnectGO, Block Talks, and Town Hall meetings around transportation issues to expand outreach efforts.

Through Heartland 2050, MAPA held a series of transportation-related summits and workshops designed to bring a variety of voices to the table that were not a part of the transportation planning process traditionally. Using these strategies MAPA has kept long range transportation at the forefront of the regional planning process and expanded MAPA's outreach to include populations who had not been involved previously in the process.

Input received from these plans has shaped the recommendations and next steps. This extensive

body of public engagement has been incorporated into the 2050 MTP.

Through these plans MAPA developed and continued relationships with stakeholders and the public regarding transportation planning. MAPA's outreach processes and public involvement relies heavily on stakeholder engagement and utilizes stakeholders to conduct outreach on planning efforts within their communities. The nonprofits and human service agencies MAPA works with are instrumental in providing contacts within economically disadvantaged populations and facilitating meetings and online outreach. Through the Coordinated Transit Committee as well as the Heartland 2050 committees, MAPA is able to ensure that marginalized groups are included in the planning process and that materials and strategies are inclusive.



### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES:

- 2050 LRTP & Past Studies
- Regional Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
- Connect Omaha: Active Mobility Master Plan
- City of Omaha Vision Zero Plan
- City of La Vista Active Mobility Plan
- MetroNEXT
- Highway 75 Corridor & Freight Study
- Southside Terrace-Indian Hill Multimodal Study
- Western Sarpy Transportation Enhancement Plan
- Sarpy County I-80 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
- Transportation Demand Management Study

## Goal Setting Phase

The foundational goals around Economic Development, Education, Health and Safety, Housing and Development, Infrastructure, and Natural Resources established for the Heartland 2050 Vision are aligned with the current nature of the work. Today, the region is still working to enhance and improve access, retain existing and future talent, preserve the existing infrastructure, and develop resilient communities. The values have not changed, but how we interact and what we are prioritizing has slightly increased to focus more on safety outcomes.

## Public Surveys

Several statistically significant regional polls and surveys have been conducted in recent years as part of regional planning efforts. The information garnered from these efforts has been used to guide the goals and strategies of both this Metropolitan Transportation Plan and ConnectGO. A brief summary of the focus of each poll is included below.

For the original 2050 MTP the community engagement focused on public engagement through some key outreach strategies:

- **Heartland 2050 (2014)** | Online poll conducted with 400 households in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The poll asked residents about their perceptions of quality of life in the region, their views on the region's potential for growth, and the importance of different transportation and economic issues.
- **Metro Travel Improvement Study (2014)** | Public survey via phone and mail of 524 households in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Region. The purpose of the survey was to identify issues that are important to transportation planning and improvements including: perceptions of current transportation issues, commute issues for those who worked outside of the home, modes of transportation used, interest in potential solutions to easing travel in the future, and preferred sources of funding for transportation improvements.
- **Little Steps Big Impact (2012-2019)** | Phone and online survey of 400 households annually about the awareness and importance of air quality in the MAPA region. Surveys request awareness of various on-going outreach efforts and transportation-related strategies for improving the region's air quality.
- **Connect GO (2020)** | Public surveys (3,300 responses) and a randomized opinion poll of 600 households in the MAPA region. Requested input on perceptions of life in the region and the importance of different transportation needs as well as views on future investment in transportation and preferences for growth in the region.



## Events and Surveys from Other Plans and Studies

Since the adoption of the original 2050 MTP, the following regionally significant planning efforts have provided additional direction and feedback from local residents:

- **City of Omaha Active Mobility Plan (2023):** The project team received input at six pop-up events, two open house events, and an online survey. Respondents helped point out where people want to walk and bike within the city and what would help them feel safe doing it.
- **MetroNEXT Transit Survey (2021):** More than 760 paper and electronic survey responses were collected as part of the development of the plan in addition to other engagement tools.
- **Highway 75 Corridor & Freight Study (2021):** Outreach for this study focused on the impacts of current traffic along Highway 75 through Florence, with two public meetings and a series of stakeholder meetings.
- **Southside Terrace-Indian Hill Multimodal Study (2022):** This extensive public involvement effort included two open houses, a series of focus group meetings, and door-to-door public interviews focused on capturing feedback from non-English speaking populations.
- **City of La Vista Active Mobility Plan (2024):** Nearly 200 survey responses along with feedback from an open house and two stakeholder meetings went into the development of the plan.
- **2050 MTP Update Survey (2024-2025):** MAPA held three pop-up events and conducted a survey asking residents how they get around the region now and how they would like to travel in the future.
- **Western Sarpy Transportation Enhancement Plan (2024):** Nearly 1,000 residents of Sarpy County were engaged through an online public meeting in the spring of 2024 and a series of small group stakeholder meetings.
- **Safe Streets and Roads for All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (2025):** 61 events were held or attended throughout the region engaging more than 1,000 residents with a focus on making transportation safer for everyone.



## Scenario Development Phase

For the original 2050 MTP MAPA utilized the scenario planning conducted in MTIS to get feedback on the various types of investments that could be made in the region's transportation system. Six initial scenario packages were developed to model the effects of investing in different modes of transportation over 20 years. Stakeholder and public input from the goal setting phase was used to weight the performance measures comparing each scenario package and MAPA staff developed workshop materials to help gather the public's feedback on potential investments. MAPA designed activities to help citizens understand how they currently navigate the region, how they would prefer to get around, and what sorts of changes to the current transportation system are needed to make this happen.

In developing this plan, MAPA took the scenario planning done previously and expanded on it. Using the extensive transportation planning completed between 2020 and 2025 by MAPA and its partners, this plan now has a greater focus on safety for all road users. Two Comprehensive Safety Action Plans have been developed so far, one for the City of Omaha as part of its Vision Zero efforts, and another for the urbanized area of the MAPA region (Douglas and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska and a portion of Pottawattamie County in Iowa). These plans will have a significant impact on how future transportation projects are developed and funded and Chapter 6 of this MTP reflects that impact.

A full description of the public outreach efforts for the MTP can be found in Appendix D.



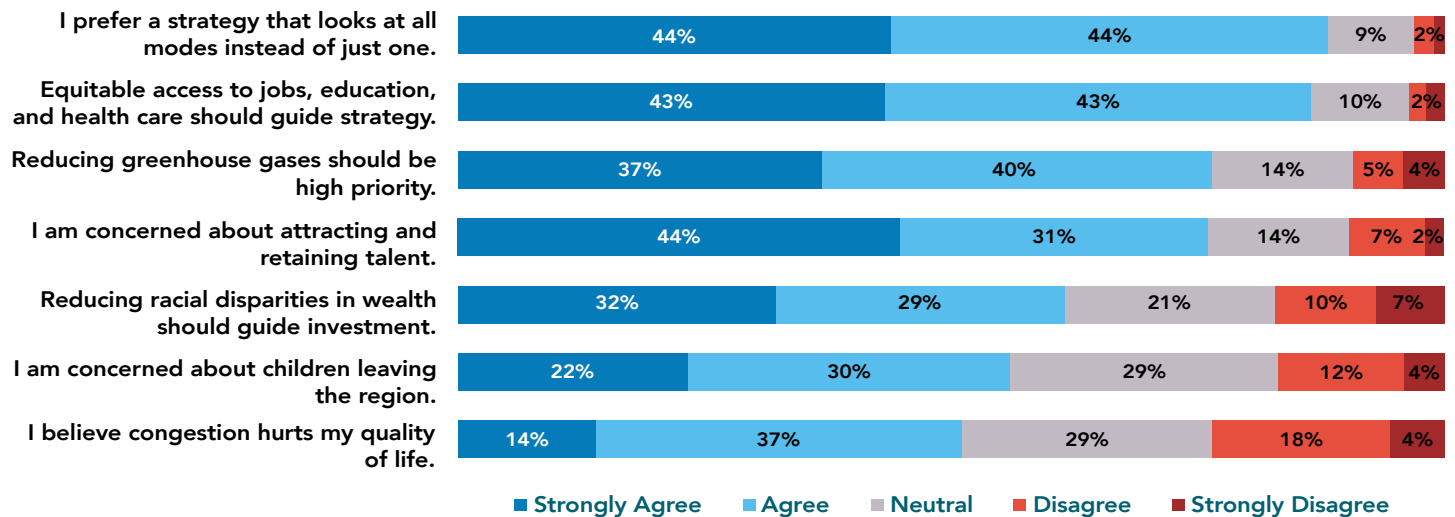
## ConnectGO Outreach

The initial phase of ConnectGO involved outreach to the Greater Omaha Chamber member businesses as well as the broader community. The Chamber initially led outreach to the Metro Smart Cities Advisory Group, a cross-sector committee of civic leaders, to evaluate and prioritize goals identified in past planning efforts throughout the region. The results of this exercise were vetted and expanded upon through a variety of means including the following:

- Presentations and facilitated discussions with 40+ groups including more than 1,500 participants.
- More than 3,300 responses to three surveys.
- 6 focus groups oriented around specific issues (freight, bicycling, public transit) or geographies (Omaha, Council Bluffs, Sarpy County).
- Ongoing work of more than 60 volunteers serving on ConnectGO working groups and committees.
- Numerous 1x1 interviews with philanthropists, industry experts, social service providers, business leaders, and other key stakeholders.

A full summary of the initial outreach phase of ConnectGo can be found in the [ConnectGO Goals and Principles document](#).

**FIGURE 1.2: Public Prioritization of Transportation Strategies, ConnectGO**



## 1.2 THE 2050 VISION

The MAPA 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan is developed in harmony with Heartland 2050, ConnectGO, 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 through: Developing and enhancing access to Opportunities, Leveraging talent attraction and retention, Fostering Economic Growth throughout the Region, and providing stewardship of the transportation system.

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.

### MAPA's Guiding Principles



#### ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

All individuals, regardless of ability, and communities within the region will have full and equal access to the opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential.



#### EFFICIENCY

Public infrastructure and services will be provided efficiently and cost-effectively.



#### INCLUSIVITY

Decision making and the implementation of solutions in the region will be done in a way that ensures that all of the region's residents have an opportunity to participate in the process, implementation and evaluation.



#### LOCAL CONTROL/REGIONAL BENEFIT

It is critical that cities and counties within the region maintain local control over their communities while also working collectively together to ensure that local decisions enhance rather than adversely affect other neighborhoods, communities or the region as a whole.

## Our Goals

The Greater Omaha Chamber Commerce embarked upon ConnectGO, a cooperative effort in coordination with MAPA, key stakeholders and the public, given that 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. And much of our infrastructure, built decades ago, is deteriorating and in need of rehabilitation or replacement. In light of these changing conditions, we are faced with the task of reexamining our current transportation system and reassessing our planned infrastructure projects, programs, and policies to ensure we build a future that meets the needs of all residents of Greater Omaha.



To proactively address our region’s most pressing challenges and position the metro for continued economic growth, MAPA continues to partner with the Greater Omaha Chamber, Metro and local communities to build a new regional transportation strategy– bringing diverse stakeholders together to guide the region’s investment. The goals guiding the ConnectGO strategy and this Metropolitan Transportation Plan 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 & 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.



## Safety

Although not set apart as a specific goal of this plan, a safe transportation system that serves everyone's needs is MAPA's top priority. Safety is a component of each of the four goals identified above and the chapters that follow will explore this. Regional planning efforts always take safety into consideration and this document is no exception.

In 2024, MAPA and its regional partners began developing a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) as part of the USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All program. Completed in 2025, the plan developed a priority network for addressing existing and potential safety issues throughout the region. Focused on the Safe System Approach, the overall goal of the plan is to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2040.

### TRADITIONAL APPROACH

Traffic deaths are **INEVITABLE**

**PERFECT** human behavior

Prevent **COLLISIONS**

**INDIVIDUAL** responsibility

Saving lives is **EXPENSIVE**

**VS**

### SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

Traffic deaths are **PREVENTABLE**

Integrate **HUMAN FAILING** in approach

Prevent **FATAL** and **SEVERE CRASHES**

**SYSTEMS** approach

Saving lives is **NOT EXPENSIVE**

**MAPA's Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is the culmination of efforts throughout the region, drawing from the knowledge and experiences of individuals and groups interested in creating safe streets for everyone."**

## Performance-Based Planning

Effectively addressing current and future transportation needs requires a plan that can be measured and assessed. To that end, performance based planning and programming has been, and will continue to be, used in concert with all relevant stakeholders in planning for and implementing

transportation projects, programs, and policies. Through MTIS and the ConnectGO planning process, several performance measures have been identified to track progress towards our transportation goals. A detailed evaluation of the regional performance measures can be found in Appendix E.

### PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEVELOPMENT

By definition, a measure must be quantifiable—it defines the current condition of a particular aspect of the transportation system or the community it serves, and by setting a future target, provides a framework for identifying potential strategies to achieve the goal. The “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act” (MAP-21) established statewide and metropolitan planning processes to consistently address transportation issues such as

safety, preservation (pavement and bridge), freight and travel time reliability, and transit state-of-good-repair. These performance measures provide a good basis for, but do not adequately consider all the goals of ConnectGO and the 2050 MTP. Using public and focus group input, a detailed list of performance measures was developed, and is described in greater detail in the chart below.

**TABLE 1.1: MAPA Goals & Federal Planning Factors**

		MAPA LRTP 2050 GOALS			
		Goal 1: Access to Opportunity	Goal 2: Talent Attraction and Retention	Goal 3: Economic growth throughout the region	Goal 4: Stewardship of the transportation system
<b>PLANNING FACTORS</b>	Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity & efficiency	x	x	x	
	Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users	x	x		x
	Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users				x
	Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight	x	x	x	x
	Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns	x	x	x	
	Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight	x	x	x	
	Promote efficient system management and operation	x		x	x
	Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system				x
	Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation				x
	Enhance travel and tourism		x	x	
<b>HEARTLAND 2050 GUIDING PRINCIPLES</b>	Equity	x	x	x	
	Efficiency	x		x	x
	Inclusivity	x	x	x	
	Local Control/Regional Benefit		x	x	x
<b>NEBRASKA AND IOWA</b>	Transportation Asset Management Plans				x
	Strategic Highway Safety Plans	x	x	x	
	State Freight Plans			x	
<b>TRANSIT PROVIDERS</b>	Transit Asset Management Plans				x
	Transit Safety Plans			x	x

## Performance Measures and their Relationship to this Plan

Below is a summary of all metrics used to evaluate progress toward achieving the goals of the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Each metric is related to one or more of those goals and is covered in more detail in those chapters. A full list of all metrics is included in Appendix E.

### Federal Performance Measures

- Safety
- Infrastructure Condition
- System Reliability

### Regional Performance Measures

- Public Transportation Performance
- Public Transportation Accessibility
- Job Accessibility
- Healthcare Accessibility
- Taxable Value of Land Along Major Corridors
- Vehicles Miles Traveled
- Asset and Reliability Measures from MTIS

