

# What's Happening

*For Community Leaders*

March/April 2020

Dear Communities and Partners,

As I write this, MAPA staff are in week six of working remotely. **Who could have fathomed just a little more than a month ago how much our lives would change?** We moved from gearing up for another busy spring full of work tasks and family activities to watching the very foundations of our society shake before a threat to public health unlike many of us have seen in our lifetimes, and its resulting economic chaos.

**These past weeks have certainly been unprecedented**, and it is understandable that some are feeling concerned, fearful, and even angry. After all, this region takes pride in our high quality of life and relative insulation from the extreme economic swings that have affected other parts of the country.

**The COVID-19 crisis is reminding us of many things that we often take for granted:**

- No one of us is guaranteed tomorrow so make the most of today, especially with those dearest to us.
- Society is more fragile than we think, and it's up to each of one of us to do our small part to strengthen and grow our communities and circles of influence.
- In a time of crisis, just about everyone desires competent and effective government that is responsive to the people and businesses that help make this the thriving region that it is.

**It is our privilege at MAPA to work together with your communities and organizations** to connect, plan and thrive. We are happy to serve by providing technical and administrative support, and we are currently reviewing our own programs and priorities to identify opportunities to better serve you as we go through this and move eventually into a recovery phase. Specifically, we are tracking the funds that will be available through the CARES Act and are following the discussions regarding future potential stimulus bills. Many of the programs that your communities utilize will receive funding and MAPA and our staff are here to assist you to achieve your goals.

**Don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance** (email or cell phones are currently the quickest way to reach us). We look forward to working with you and to the day when we can greet you again at a distance of less than six feet apart!

Take Care and Stay Hopeful,



# Congress acts on COVID-19 economic stimulus bills

In the past month, Congress passed, and President Trump signed into law, **stimulus packages designed to help states, businesses, hospitals, and individuals impacted financially** by the COVID-19 public health crisis. These include a \$2 Trillion Coronavirus stimulus package known as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security or CARES Act and an additional \$484 billion package.

The most recent economic stimulus package provides another \$310 billion for small businesses through the **Paycheck Protection Program**, includes \$75 billion for hospitals and health care providers stretched thin by the pandemic, and \$25 billion for expanded coronavirus testing.



Below is a breakdown of the **funding available related specifically to community and economic development, transportation, and business assistance**. Most notably, is a **Coronavirus Relief Fund** through the U.S. Department of Treasury.

## The Coronavirus Relief Fund includes:

- \$150 Billion for States with set-asides for Tribal governments and U.S. territories
  - \$1.25B to both Iowa and Nebraska. Jurisdictions over 500,000 population, including Douglas County, may receive a direct allocation.

This Coronavirus relief **funding is for "unbudgeted expenses"** that have arisen as a result of the pandemic, beginning March 1, 2020 until the end of 2020. It can be tapped later for future expenses also.

## Housing & Urban Development (HUD)

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) \$5 Billion
  - \$2B Standard allocation formula (entitlement communities, states)
  - \$1B Goes to States for distribution and each state has the option to allocate to entitlement communities as a supplement
  - \$2B HUD Secretary may direct this specific funding based on the severity of impact (similar to disaster aid)

**There are administrative waivers for this funding; and changes to the public hearing process. The changes encourage experimenting with virtual hearings.**

- Homeless Emergency Solutions Grant \$4 Billion - includes similar waivers as CDBG
- Tenant Based Rent Assist \$1.25B
- Project Based Rent Assist \$1B
- Public Housing Operating Funds \$685 Million

The funding also provides smaller amounts to other HUD housing programs.

## Economic Development Administration (EDA)

- \$1.5B - Grants available

## Health & Human Services (HHS)

- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) \$1B

## Department of Transportation (DOT)

- Transit \$25B - Standard formulas, but allows use for operations and maintenance
- Amtrak \$1B - Split between NE corridor and other interstate service
- Airports \$10 Billion

The Federal Reserve will be supporting the municipal bond market. Language in the package codifies this approach. The Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department will establish a lending line to state and local governments for emergency liquidity.

## Small Business Administration (SBA)

- Assistance for private business (Federal definition of small business: Less than 500 employees)
- New provisions in SBA 7a programs if businesses keep people on their payroll
- 2-year payroll tax deferral for "small businesses," etc.

Congress is out of session, but conversations are taking place about a future stimulus bill that may include infrastructure. MAPA will be monitoring any developments and will assist local communities with their community and economic development needs related to this funding.

# PottCoHTF Awards \$203,213 to Housing Projects

Eight housing-related projects will receive a total of \$203,213 in funding this year through the Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund. The Trust received 11 applications totaling \$324,827 in requests for its 2020 application cycle.

The following applicants will receive funding:

- **712 Initiative - \$20,000** for down payment assistance associated with an acquisition/rehabilitation program
- **Council Bluffs Municipal Housing Agency - \$35,000** for bathroom renovations at Regal Towers in Council Bluffs
- **Heartland Family Service - \$50,000** for rental rehabilitation at the Iowa Family Works Facility in Council Bluffs
- **Hawkeye LP - \$10,000** for window replacement at the Hawkeye Apartments in Carson, Iowa
- **Connections Area Agency on Aging - \$24,000** for continuation of barrier removal and emergency repairs for elderly homeowners in Pottawattamie County
- **Pottawattamie County General Assistance - \$25,000** for emergency rental assistance in Pottawattamie County
- **Timothy House Supportive Housing - \$29,213** for flooring replacement and security improvements
- **Interfaith - \$10,000** for emergency rental assistance in Pottawattamie County

All funding must be expended on projects benefiting persons at or below 80% of the federal median family income limit.

“The Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund is pleased that we were able to expand our service area to include all of Pottawattamie County starting with grant year 2020, and have allowed our grant recipients to expand their service areas to improve affordable housing for more households,” said Gloria Ruesch, Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund President.

Each year the Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund allocates funding to organizations or individuals that serve the housing needs of low to moderate income residents within Pottawattamie County, Iowa.

Since 2011, the Trust Fund has funded more than \$1.5 million in grants, with projects including both rehabilitation and expansion of housing units available.



## CALENDAR

### May 2020

- May 5th – Cinco de Mayo
- May 10th – Mother's Day
- May 12th – Primary Election (Nebraska)
- May 13th – RPA-18\*  
11:00 a.m.
- May 15th – Transportation Committee\*  
10 a.m.
- May 16th – Armed Forces Day
- May 20th – Finance Committee\*  
8:30 a.m.  
Coordinated Transit\*  
10:30 a.m.
- May 25th – Memorial Day  
MAPA Offices Closed
- May 28th – MAPA Board of Directors\*  
1:30 p.m.

### June 2020

- June 2nd – Primary Election (Iowa)
- June 5th – Regional Planning\*  
(Heartland 2050 RPAC)  
10:00 a.m.
- June 7th – NARC 54th Annual Conference\*  
Detroit, MI  
(June 7-10)
- June 10th – RPA-18\*  
11:00 a.m.
- June 14th – Flag Day
- June 17th – Finance Committee\*  
8:30 a.m.  
Coordinated Transit\*  
10:30 a.m.
- June 18th – Council of Officials\*
- June 19th – Transportation Committee\*  
10 a.m.
- June 20th – Summer Begins
- June 25th – MAPA Board of Directors\*  
1:30 p.m.

\*meeting may be virtual