

What's Happening

For Community Leaders

July/August 2020

MAPA releases 2050 LRTP for public comment

In a work that's been underway since 2016 with an unprecedented level of public outreach, MAPA released its Draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for public comment on Aug. 27. The LRTP is a 30-year vision for the future of transportation in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region. The public comment period runs until Sept. 28, 2020.

MAPA's 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan is developed in conjunction with Heartland 2050, ConnectGO and other planning initiatives. Much of the plan builds off the Metro Travel Improvement Study (MTIS), a collaborative effort between the Nebraska Department of Transportation and MAPA. The plan includes more than \$10 billion in transportation investment during the next 30 years.

In 2016, MAPA began seeking out public input on goals for the region's transportation system which would guide the 2050 LRTP. This was accomplished through public meetings across what was then five counties which MAPA served.

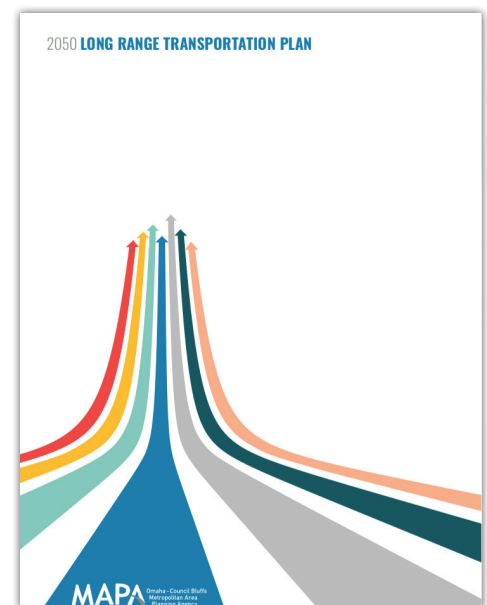
MAPA partnered with the Greater Omaha Chamber and Metro Smart Cities to build a new transportation strategy to address the region's most pressing challenges proactively and position it for continued economic growth. This effort, ConnectGO, will result in an actionable strategy that includes implementation plans for policy, programs and specific transportation projects. The development of this broader strategy is scheduled to be completed in late 2020.

The goals guiding ConnectGO and the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan are:

- **Access to opportunity**-Having a multimodal transportation system which allows all people to reach their destinations in a reasonable amount of time regardless of age, ability or neighborhood and maximizes access to education, employment and healthcare.
- **Talent attraction and retention**-Having a transportation system which contributes to a quality of life that appeals to local residents and is attractive to people living elsewhere. The region supports a diverse range of lifestyles and offers a variety of enjoyable neighborhoods, rural to urban.
- **Economic growth**-All individuals, communities and the region are able to prosper because of the transportation system which moves people and freight efficiently and safely and helps boost higher value real estate development and neighborhood revitalization through strategic infrastructure investment.
- **Stewardship of the transportation system**-Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure is prioritized and planning for future projects includes long-term operations and maintenance costs.

View the Draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan at mapacog.org/reports/lrtp-2050/.

Written comments must be received by **4:30 p.m. September 28, 2020** via email to lrtp2050@mapacog.org or U.S. mail: MAPA, 2222 Cuming St., Omaha, NE 68102.



MAMA program loses volunteer in tragic crash

On July 30, the Metro Area Motorist Assist (MAMA) program lost one of its dedicated volunteers in a tragic crash. John Holcomb, 70, of Omaha was working with another volunteer to remove debris from the roadway along southbound U.S. Hwy 75, between Q Street in Omaha and Chandler Road in Bellevue, when a passing motorist struck and killed him.

John had served as a MAMA program volunteer since 2014, logging thousands of hours in volunteer service. John Holcomb served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam War and earned a Purple Heart for being injured in combat. He carried that same unwavering service and dedication into his work as a volunteer as noted by Col. John Bolduc, Superintendent of the Nebraska State Patrol.

“All of NSP was saddened at John’s death. His service to the state of Nebraska over the last several years was valuable for the thousands of people he interacted with,” said Col. Bolduc. “That service in MAMA was just part of a life spent caring for others, highlighted by his service to our country as a United States Marine. Our continued thoughts are with his family.”

The MAMA program began operating in April 1998 and is coordinated by MAPA, the Nebraska State Patrol and the Nebraska Department of Transportation. From its inception through 2019, volunteers had logged more than 25,000 service hours.

MAMA volunteers provide a variety of services to

the motoring public including: automotive fluids (such as fuel and oil), helping with flat tires, providing jump starts, providing directions, arranging to have vehicles towed and clearing debris from driving lanes.

“Anyone who has met the Metro Area Motorist Assist volunteers or read the thank you letters we receive about the help they provide knows they are examples of selfless service,” said Greg Youell, MAPA Executive Director.

John Holcomb is survived by his wife, son, step-daughter and four grandchildren.



Virtual Benson Block Talk will evaluate walkability

Help assess the walkability of the Benson neighborhood and ways to improve it through MAPA’s Virtual Block Talk.

We’re joining with our Benson partners: Benson Neighborhood Association, Benson First Fridays and

the Benson Business Improvement District for a Virtual Block Talk where we explore community improvements and connectivity!

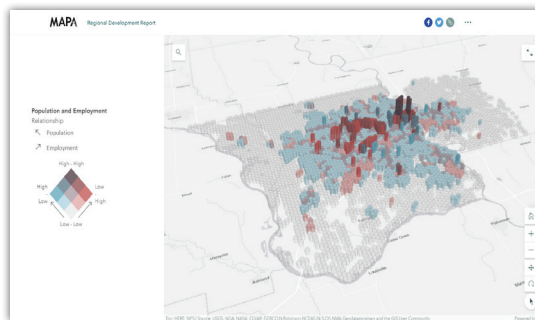
Block Talks are a way MAPA engages community residents and gathers information about street conditions to inform the planning and traffic safety projects. Through virtual photography and their smartphones, participants will survey a planned route, evaluate and document the street on a scale which helps the current walkability and identify ways to make it better for people of all ages and abilities, and submit their findings.

There are 3 easy steps to take! Participate and submit comments by **September 7!** Results will be unveiled during a Zoom meeting on **September 15.** To register and get the Virtual Block Talk Materials go to: tinyurl.com/Virtual-Benson-Block-Talk.



In the Spotlight

A shoutout to MAPA's GIS Team! The team's hard work was featured recently at the ESRI User Conference as part of a plenary session hosted by the CEO. The images included a story map from MAPA's Regional Development Report and an image from the Traffic Safety Dashboard.



Recent Community & Economic Development Awards

MAPA has secured the following funding for community assistance:

U.S. Economic Development Administration Award (EDA) to Council Bluffs - \$8.4 million

The grant will help improve the levee system in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, located near a designated Opportunity Zone. The project supports long term recovery efforts from severe storms that devastated the region by adding a robust seepage/stability berm along the city's existing flood risk reduction levee system.

EDA COVID-19 grant to MAPA - \$400,000

The CARES Act Recovery Assistance grant will fund staffing to coordinate activities related to recovery from the economic impact of COVID-19 including:

- Development of a resource tool kit, best practices and regional strategy
- Partnership with economic development organizations on technical assistance and capacity building to assist economic recovery

Wellmark Foundation Small Match Grant to Malvern - \$25,000

The City of Malvern will receive a grant of \$25,000 to redevelop the Bohner Pond Park. The project will create a connection from the north side of the park to the Wabash Trace Nature Trail.

If your community needs assistance with a project, MAPA staff is available to help. Contact Don Gross, MAPA Community & Economic Development Manager at dgross@mapacog.org or 402-444-6866, ext. 3230 for more information.

CALENDAR

September 2020

- Sep. 7th – Labor Day
MAPA Offices Closed
- Sep. 9th – RPA-18*
11:00 a.m.
- Sep. 10th – MAPA Board of Directors*
1:30 p.m.
- Sep. 16th – IA League of Cities
Annual Conference*
(Sept. 16-18)

League of Nebraska
Municipalities
Annual Conference*
(Sept. 16-18)

Finance Committee*
8:30 a.m.

Coordinated Transit*
10:30 a.m.
- Sep. 18th – Transportation Committee*
10 a.m.
- Sep. 24th – MAPA Board of Directors*
1:30 p.m.

October 2020

- Oct. 2nd – Regional Planning*
(Heartland 2050 RPAC)
10:00 a.m.
- Oct. 7th – MAPA Annual Meeting
11 a.m.
- Oct. 12th – Columbus Day
MAPA Offices Closed
- Oct. 14th – Finance Committee*
8:30 a.m.

Coordinated Transit*
10:30 a.m.

RPA-18*
11:00 a.m.
- Oct. 16th – Transportation Committee*
10 a.m.
- Oct. 17th – NADO Annual
Training Conference
(Oct. 17-20)
- Oct. 22nd – MAPA Board of Directors*
1:30 p.m.

*meeting may be virtual