

# MOVING FORWARD

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## MAPA’s Executive Director leaving agency for New Career Path

A childhood interest in maps and cities, which expanded later into architecture and planning, fueled the career choice of MAPA Executive Director Greg Youell. Now after more than 18 years with MAPA, and 21 years overall in the field of planning, Youell is setting his sights on a new career path. He will leave the agency in July to become Operations Director for Spirit Catholic Radio Network, which is based in Omaha.

Youell began his career at MAPA in 2002 as an Assistant Transportation Planner, and was promoted to Transportation and Data Manager in 2008. The MAPA Board of Directors hired him as Executive Director in December 2012.

“I truly enjoy getting to visit communities and work with them. While I started out in the field of planning with an urban focus, I have also come to really love small towns and more rural areas.”

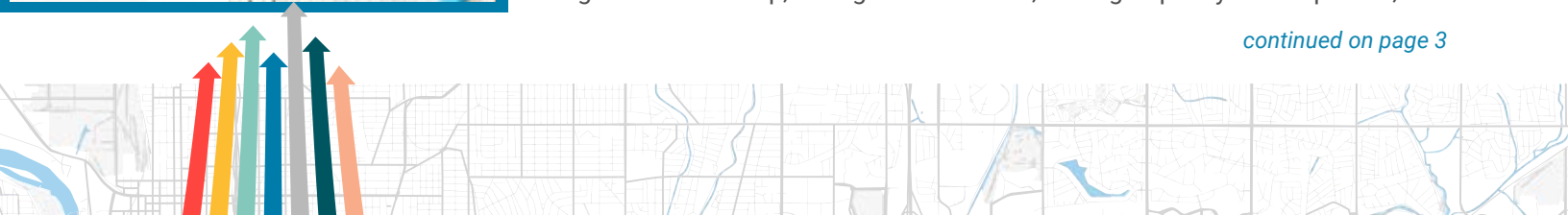
Greg Youell

Building relationships with the communities in MAPA’s six-county region and finding ways the agency can assist them in growing and thriving are key aspects of his role as leader.

“I truly enjoy getting to visit communities and work with them. While I started out in the field of planning with an urban focus, I have also come to really love small towns and more rural areas,” said Youell.

In particular, Youell is proud of MAPA’s growth. “Just watching the agency grow and develop, taking on new areas, adding capacity and expertise, has

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**Green Streets developments are those that result in a high-quality, healthy living and working environment by**

- Lowering utility costs
- Enhancing connections to nature
- Protecting the environment by conserving energy, water, materials and other resources
- Advancing the health of local and regional ecosystems

## Glenwood to add Affordable Housing Rental Units

Forty units of affordable housing will soon be added to Glenwood's housing stock. The Iowa Economic Development Authority awarded the City a \$6 million Disaster Recovery Community Development Block Grant to help construct the Burr Oak Apartments.

The apartments must be rented to households that are at no more than 80% of the federal median family income

limit. In addition, through its construction, the housing will be an Iowa Green Streets development.

MAPA secured the grant funding for this project and will act as grant administrator.

Construction of Burr Oak Apartments is expected to begin in Fall 2020.

## Iowa and Nebraska pass legislation to expand broadband access

New laws passed this year in Iowa and Nebraska aim to bridge the digital divide by expanding high-speed broadband access for each state's residents and businesses.

Iowa's law includes \$100 million to set up a two-tiered statewide grant program giving priority to areas of the state with the lowest broadband speeds. Service providers may apply to have the state pay for 75% of the project cost in these areas when it increases upload and download speeds to 100 megabytes per second.

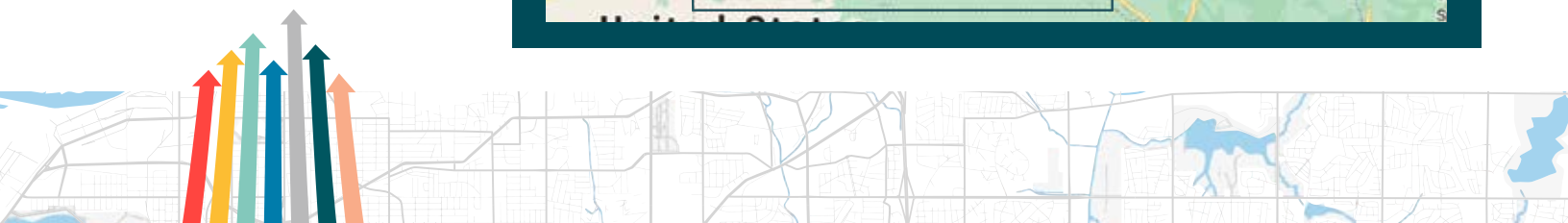
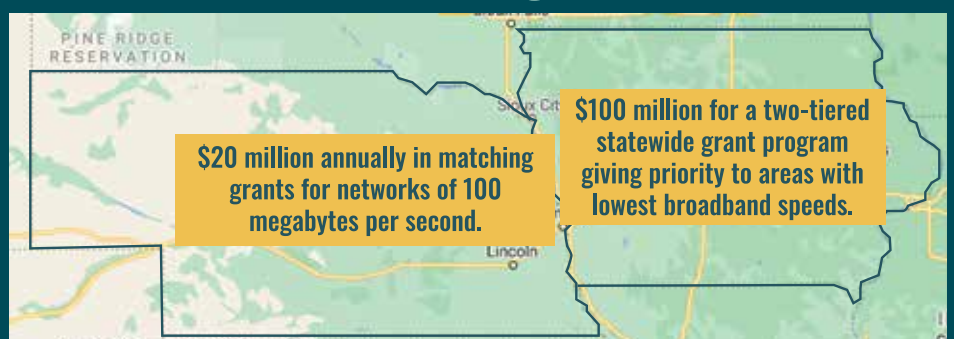
In areas equipped already with internet systems where improvements are needed to speed up the service, the state contribution drops to 35%.

Nebraska's law provides \$20 million annually in matching grants to expand high-speed broadband

access with networks built to upload and download speeds of 100 megabytes per second.

To help determine areas where broadband expansion is needed most, MAPA is a partner in the Broadband Speed Test initiative. The test is open to all Nebraskans and Iowans in Pottawattamie and Mills Counties. Data collected will help inform decision makers on areas that need boosted services. Take the speed test: [speedtestne.org](https://speedtestne.org)

### Broadband Legislation





# MAPA Board approves Transportation Improvement Program

MAPA's Board of Directors approved the FY2022-FY2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at its June 24 meeting.

The TIP is a six-year document, updated annually, which documents the progress toward projects that include federal transportation funding. It includes projects such as highway maintenance and expansion, bicycle and pedestrian trail work, Metro Transit projects and aviation projects.

The TIP also includes updates to projects in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region led by the Nebraska Department of Transportation and the Iowa Department of Transportation during the next four years.



*continued from MAPA's Executive Director leaving agency for New Career Path*

been rewarding. The TIP fee, which provided a new local revenue source, was big in terms of adding financial stability.”

The TIP fee is an administrative fee MAPA collects from local governments for the work involved in securing, allocating and administering federal funding for their projects which are part of MAPA’s Transportation Improvement Program.

and increased revenues,” said LaVista Mayor Doug Kindig, chair of MAPA’s Board of Directors. “Greg has helped build MAPA into a recognized leader in regional collaboration through Heartland 2050, disaster recovery and resilience assistance, transportation planning and community and economic development.”

Some may classify his career change as dramatic; for Youell it’s a decision based on his faith.

**“Greg has helped build MAPA into a recognized leader in regional collaboration through Heartland 2050, disaster recovery and resilience assistance, transportation planning and community and economic development.”**

Mayor Doug Kindig

Youell’s commitment to working with communities is well-recognized by the MAPA’s Board of Directors.

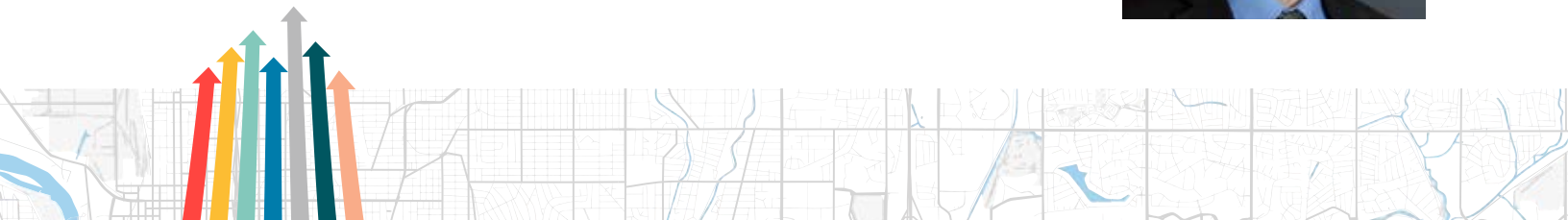
“Greg has been an excellent leader for MAPA. Under his leadership, MAPA expanded its services and assistance to communities in the six-county region it serves in southeast Nebraska and southwest Iowa

“Both my wife and I have been committed to our Christian faith since our high school years, and we considered full-time ministry after college, so the interest has always been there. Spirit Catholic Radio is more than just a radio network, it brings people together to build a positive culture. When the door opened for the Operations Director position, it just felt like the timing was right.”

And he will leave with the Board of Directors respect and gratitude. “The board is grateful to Greg for his service to MAPA and we wish him the best in his future endeavors,” said Kindig.

Youell’s last day at MAPA is July 23.

Good luck, Greg! We will miss you!



# MAPA welcomes Liz Zeller



MAPA welcomes Liz Zeller to the team as Administrative Assistant. She began this position May 10. Her primary job responsibilities involve working with the board and finance meetings, facilitating MAPA’s mail and helping with other tasks around the office.

Liz was raised in Omaha and has lived here for most of her life. The only time she wasn’t living in Nebraska was when she lived in Nashville, Tennessee to be closer to her family.

Previously, Liz held an administrative assistant role for nine years. She also spent time studying at Peru State in Peru, Nebraska.

Liz has a boyfriend and two step children. They enjoy spending time at Hidden Hollow Lake in Plattsmouth on the weekends.

Welcome to MAPA, Liz!

# CALENDAR

## JULY 2021

- 05 Independence Day Observance**  
*MAPA Offices Closed*
- 14 Finance Committee**  
8:30 a.m.  
**RPA-18**  
11:00 a.m.
- 16 NACo Annual Conference**  
(July 16-19)  
**Transportation Committee**  
10:00 a.m.
- 21 Coordinated Transit**  
10:30 a.m.
- 22 MAPA Board of Directors**  
1:30 p.m.

## AUGUST 2021

- 06 Regional Planning**  
**(Heartland 2050 RPAC)**  
10:00 a.m.
- 11 RPA-18**  
11:00 a.m.
- 18 Finance Committee**  
8:30 a.m.
- 20 Transportation Committee**  
10:00 a.m.
- 25 ISAC Annual Conference**  
(Aug. 25 - 27)
- 26 MAPA Board of Directors**  
1:30 p.m.