



## HEARTLAND 2050 REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (H2050 RPAC)

Heartland 2050 is a community driven initiative pulling in stakeholders from across the region to think big and work towards a common vision for our six-county region anchored by the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area.

### MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 7, 2023 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**ATTENDEES:** Ashley Rae Turner, Bruce Fountain, Carol Vinton, Cesar Garcia, Chris Gibbons, Derek Miller, Heather Gamon, Kristine Stokes, Jason Kubicek, Jeff Beiermann, Mike McIntosh (for Jeff Spiehs), Keith Station, Kent Holm, Krista Wassenaar, Kyle Madsen, Angela Curry (for Leland Jacobsen), Lindsay Neemann, Manne Cook, Mark Stursma, Martha Bruckner, Meridith Dillon, Michael Jensen, Dustin Marvel (for Michaela Valentin), Nancy Pridal, Vicki Quaites-Ferris, Wayne Brown

**GUESTS:** Angel Starks (Spark CDI), Ryan Wishart (Creighton University)

**MAPA STAFF:** Laura Heilman, Saul Lopez, Sue Cutsforth, Isabelle Fleming, Carlos Morales, Lindsey Button, Jim Boerner, Travis Halm

#### A. Welcome and Introductions – Keith Station, Committee Chair

- We took a moment to remember and share stories about Donna Lynam, formerly with Sarpy County and the City of Gretna, who passed away on March 31st after a battle with cancer - read her obituary here:  
<https://www.bethanyfuneralhome.com/obituary/donna-lynam>

#### B. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes - Keith Station, Committee Chair

- Voted to approve minutes from the past two meetings (November 2022 and February 2023): Vote passed unanimously

#### C. RPAC Quorum Vote - Laura Heilman & Saul Lopez, MAPA, Keith Station, Committee Chair

- Discussion was held on changing the committee quorum
  - i. MAPA would like to increase RPAC's decision-making in our work by having the committee vote to make recommendations to the MAPA Board on major MAPA work products and efforts
    - 1. Would also help us meet MAPA's [equity resolution goals](#) and meet recommendations from the MAPA's Federal Certification Review
      - a. Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transportation Agency recommended increased representation from the following groups in our transportation-planning activities:
        - i. Healthcare Experts
        - ii. Housing and Development Experts
        - iii. Persons with Disabilities
        - iv. Persons Under the Poverty Limit
        - v. Equity-focused Groups and Advocates
  - ii. Current quorum is  $\frac{2}{3}$  of members (26 of a 40 member committee), with half of members present plus one needed to pass a vote
  - iii. Per Nebraska Open Meetings Act, only members present at a meeting can vote

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1. Members can send an alternate to vote on their behalf
- iv. Reviewed supporting info:
  1. RPAC meeting attendance for the past year +
  2. Other MAPA committee quorums
- v. Jason Kubicek moved to recommend to the MAPA Board to change the committee quorum to 15; Krista Wassenaar seconded
  1. Great discussion was held on the importance of having a low enough quorum to get business done but a high enough quorum to encourage meeting attendance and represent the committee as a whole
    - a. Seemed to balance that by finally recommending a lower quorum (15) with a high proportion of members present ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) to pass a vote to necessitate broad consensus among the group
  2. In discussion, Meridith Dillon moved to amend the motion to include that  $\frac{2}{3}$  of members present would be needed for a vote to pass; Nancy Pridal seconded
    - a. Vote passed unanimously to amend the motion
  3. Members voted on the amended motion to recommend to the MAPA Board to change the RPAC quorum to 15, with  $\frac{2}{3}$  of members present needed for a vote to pass
    - a. Vote passed unanimously!
- vi. Next steps: MAPA Board will vote to approve the quorum change at their April Board meeting

#### D. RPAC Bylaws Discussion - Laura Heilman & Saul Lopez, MAPA

- MAPA staff suggest the committee complete an in-depth review of committee bylaws as next steps
- It was decided to create a small working group of committee members who will work with MAPA staff on next steps
  - i. Keith Station, Ashley Rae Turner and Bruce Fountain volunteered
  - ii. If you're interested in being in the bylaws review small group, email Saul Lopez at [slopez@mapacog.org](mailto:slopez@mapacog.org)

#### E. Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Project Updates:

- **Southside Terrace:** Jim Boerner, MAPA
  - i. Find out more about the MAPA study here: <https://mapacog.org/reports/southside-terrace-indian-hills-multimodal-transportation-study/>
  - ii. Find out more about the Choice Neighborhoods Grant for this area on the City of Omaha website: <https://planninghcd.cityofomaha.org/cnpgrant>
  - iii. In 2019, the City of Omaha and the Omaha Housing Authority, along with [Canopy South](#) received a \$1.3M, 2.5 year Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant to develop a Transformation Plan which would unlock future implementation funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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- iv. MAPA awarded the City of Omaha this Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant to support the development of multi-modal transportation options
    - 1. Work completed between September 2021 and May 2022
    - 2. Developed a list of potential projects and programs
      - a. Two major roadway changes
        - i. Q Street Road Diet (proposed project for LB 1024)
        - b. 30th Street Streetscape changes, adding shared use pathway
  - v. In September 2022, the City of Omaha was awarded a \$50 million [Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant](#) to complete the Transformation Plan
  - vi. This work will flow into Omaha's Active Living plan and Vision Zero work
    - 1. Q street has been identified as a high-risk corridor
    - 2. Vision Zero emphasizes engagement with public and residents
      - a. A lot of this has been done through Canopy South and these studies
- o **Neighborhood Enhanced Access to Trails (NEAT):** Court Barber, MAPA
    - i. Link to StoryMap: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5e72479739984937ba80efd96655573d>
    - ii. Link to Study: <https://mapacog.org/reports/neat/>
    - iii. Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District was awarded this Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant
    - iv. Intention was to develop a list of priority projects for short connections between neighborhoods and existing trail systems
      - 1. 15 originally identified, 8 finalized
      - 2. Understand which ones could be implemented quickly
        - a. Low right-of-way acquisition, etc.
      - 3. Created an implementation plan for the NRD
      - 4. Intend to do another study for additional locations
    - v. Each project is unique:
      - 1. Variety of different barriers to address
        - a. Roadways, waterways, rail, natural features
      - 2. Cost ranges from \$250K to \$1.5 million (most \$500-800K)
      - 3. Some are multijurisdictional and have intercity or city-County connections
        - a. Part of the study was evaluating need for interagency coordination
    - vi. Douglas County is currently working with the NRD on updating the Trails Plan for Western Douglas County with Eric and the NRD
  - o Potential upcoming mini-grant projects:
    - i. City of Omaha and LaVista Bike Ped Master Plan
    - ii. SW Sarpy County Arterial Study
    - iii. Bellevue Transit Feasibility

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**F. Additional Business - Keith Station, Committee Chair**

1. Updating Committee Members for FY 2024
  - a. The RPAC membership list is presented to the MAPA Board of Directors for approval at their May Board Meeting
  - b. Everyone should be receiving an email from Saul in the next few days to confirm RPAC membership and contact information; please reply directly to that email by 4/21
2. Committee Updates - Committee Chairs
  - a. Equity and Engagement - Ashley Rae Turner
    - i. Did strategic planning to determine work for upcoming 1-2 years
    - ii. April 11 meeting: Presentations on bills in the current legislature as they relate to equity
    - iii. May 9 meeting: Presentation by Spark CDI
  - b. Housing and Development - Jeff Spiehs
    - i. Just did strategic planning for the committee as well
    - ii. May 18 meeting: A look at three Housing Affordability Action Plans (Omaha, Bellevue and Western Douglas County)
  - c. Infrastructure - Derek Miller
    - i. Just met Wednesday of this week
      1. Presentations from Google Fiber & ALLO Communications about their expansion into the region
    - ii. Working Group updates
      1. Digital Equity - work is continuing, led by MAPA
      2. Reconnecting Communities
        - a. MAPA, City of Omaha and Spark were just awarded a Thriving Communities technical assistance grant!
          - i. Focus on negative impacts of North freeway to the North Omaha community
          - b. Will pair us with national consultants and other communities
          - c. Will prepare us for applying for planning or implementation grants
            - i. Some communities have torn down interstates, built bridges, build lids, etc.
            - ii. Rondo neighborhood in St Paul is a great example
        3. Next meeting June 7
    - d. Natural Resources - Kyle Madsen
      - i. Next meeting April 18; speaker is Mercy Manzanares with Monarch Joint Venture
      - ii. Solid Waste Working Group
        1. Next meeting April 19 at 2 pm virtual
        2. Sustainable funding for household hazardous waste facilities
          - a. Currently funded through grants
          - b. Working to educate elected officials
        3. Extended producer responsibility
          - a. Bringing private sector to the table and giving life-cycle responsibility for their products
        4. Looking at potential partnerships with State of Iowa and other

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### 3. MAPA Updates

- a. Welcome new MAPA staff member Saul Lopez!
  - i. Communications Project Coordinator on the Communications & Outreach Team
  - ii. Joined MAPA in February 2023
  - iii. He worked previously with the City of Omaha,
  - iv. Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance and Open Door Mission
  - v. He received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Benito Juarez State University and master's degree in Business Administration from Mexico's Institute of Technology
  - vi. In his free time, you can find Saul cooking up new recipes or traveling the world
- b. Now Hiring! MAPA is currently hiring for:
  - i. Grants & Agreements Specialist
  - ii. Accountant I or II
  - iii. Communications & Outreach Intern (paid)

### 4. Community Updates

- a. City of LaVista
  - i. Received a Heartland 2050 Grant for an Active Mobility Plan
    - 1. Benesch selected
    - 2. Will kick off in July
    - 3. Looking at bike paths and sidewalks, as well as linking Southport to City Center development
  - ii. City Center project is moving forward on schedule - first concerts expected in August
- b. Cass County
  - i. Working on master plan/corridor development plan for the Greenwood 420 exit off I-80
    - 1. Mostly focusing on getting utilities to the area
  - ii. East side of Cass County working on ped bridge across Platte River with connection to Plattsmouth
  - iii. Updated regulations for commercial solar and are looking for an application coming soon; will be one of the largest solar farms in Nebraska
- c. Gretna:
  - i. Kicking off comprehensive plan update
    - 1. Year-long process
    - 2. Comp Plan is updated often because Gretna has grown significantly due to annexation and census data update
    - 3. June 13 opening of largest Hy-Vee
      - a. 370 & 192nd Street Area (Aspen Creek)
    - 4. Gretna Landing
      - a. Also at 370 & 192nd Street Area (Aspen Creek)
      - b. Over 60 acres of Commercial property
      - c. Will be the largest retail, restaurant and mixed use project in Gretna
    - 5. Gretna Logistics - large spec warehouse now

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- ii. Creighton's Data Lab has location-based data that could be useful for upcoming planning or grant applications
  - 1. Currently doing some demographic analysis
  - 2. Find out more at <https://socialsciencedatalab.com/>

**Adjourn**

**Future Meetings & Events:**

H2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee – June 2, 2023