



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 5, 2024 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

MEMBERS:

In-Person: Angie Winqvist, Bruce Fountain, Lindsey Neeman, Chris Gibbons, Chris Shewchuk, Jeff Beiermann, Jeff Spiehs, Keith Station, Kent Holm, Kristine Stokes, Laura Dietrich, Leland Jacobson, Mark Norman, Matt Wyant, Meredith Dillon, Michael Jensen, Michaela Valentin, Mike McIntosh, Vicki Quaites-Ferris

Virtual: Ashley Rae Turner, Dr. Terry Haack

GUESTS: Tim Adams (WSP), Chris Meeks (OPPD), Elsa Aranda (LULAC), Brayden Hicks (Omaha Chamber), Eva Roberts (Front Porch Investments)

MAPA STAFF: Mike Helgerson, Laura Heilman, Sue Cutsforth, Saul Lopez, Charlie Harrington, Carlos Morales, Lindsey Button, Jim Boerner, Rachel Goetsch, Court Barber, Michael Blank, Grant Anderson, Ryan Ossell

A. Welcome and Introductions – Keith Station, Committee Chair

B. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes - Keith Station, Committee Chair - **ACTION**

- a. February 2 2023: Motion to approve by Gibbons, second by Jacobson; motion passed unanimously.

A. FY2025 Draft Work Program Priorities and UPWP/CDWP: Mike Helgerson, MAPA

- a. The annual member survey (generally open in late fall through early January) helps MAPA staff set work priorities for the upcoming fiscal year
- b. MAPA Executive Director reviewed how those priorities have filtered into the budget and the work programs for FY 2025 (July 2024-June 2025)
 - i. Unified Planning Work Program
 1. MAPA's transportation team work
 2. \$8.4 million budget overall
 - ii. Community Development Work Program
 1. MAPA's community development team work
 2. \$1.1 million budget overall
- c. Two comment periods open for
 - i. MAPA MPO Unified Planning Work Program: tinyurl.com/upwpsy25
 - ii. RPA-18 Transportation Planning Work Program: tinyurl.com/tpwpsy25
 - iii. Keith would like the committee to remember to share information and encourage our networks to weigh in when there are opportunities for public input

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B. Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Selection Committee Recommendation: Michael Blank, MAPA - **ACTION**

- a. MAPA's transportation team presented the Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Selection Committee's recommendations for funding
 - i. The Mini-Grant selection committees is made up of two members of RPAC, two members of MAPA's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) and one MAPA staff member
- b. The team presented the scoring rubric used to evaluate projects and answered questions from the committee
 - i. Is there consideration for sustainability of project/program in the scoring?
 - 1. This program mostly funds planning studies, so that is less of a consideration, which is why there is a greater emphasis on community support (local match, inclusion in other plans, etc.)
 - ii. Selection Committee members noted that the projects proposed showed community support
 - iii. The projects selected cost more than the amount of funding currently in the Mini-Grant program
 - 1. The Mini-Grant fund receives about \$330K every year, but MAPA doesn't offer a call for projects every year
 - 2. Additional funding will come from the remaining STBG funding pool
 - iv. Questions:
 - 1. Jurisdictions can apply for multiple projects
 - 2. Committee members do not need to abstain from voting if they are related to or involved in an application for funding
- c. **ACTION:** Motion to recommend that the MAPA Board approve the Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant Selection Committee's funding recommendation by Holm, second by Valentin; motion passed unanimously.

C. Prioritization Process Pilot Program Grant Opportunity: Rachel Goettsch, MAPA - **ACTION**

- a. MAPA plans to apply by May 1st
 - i. USDOT Discretionary funding
 - 1. Notice of funding opportunity: www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/pppp/
 - 2. Limited to states and metropolitan planning organizations (like MAPA)
 - ii. Purpose is "To develop and implement a publicly accessible, transparent prioritization process for the ranking and selection of projects for inclusion in short-range and long-range transportation plans"
 - iii. Asking for the committee to sign a letter in support of the application and that the MAPA Board pass a resolution in support of the application
 - 1. Still working on the final application with a budget
 - a. Can ask for any amount up to \$2 million; likely will ask for over \$1 million
 - b. Would include high levels of community engagement
 - 2. Funding will go towards MAPA staff time, possibly a consultant and potential software to enhance our current processes - end goal is a tool for applicants to submit projects and do their own evaluations

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- b. **ACTION:** Motion for the committee to submit a letter in support of the application and to recommend that the MAPA Board submit a letter in support of the application by Gibbons, second by Stokes; motion passed unanimously.

D. 5-2-1-0 Project Update: Ryan Ossell, MAPA

- a. Council Bluffs was one of four communities selected for a pilot program
 - i. MAPA supported a community health needs asset mapping and project prioritization prior to receiving the funding
- b. Currently in the first year of a three year funding program
 - i. Funding to the City of Council Bluffs through Iowa Department of Health & Human Services
 - ii. To help children and families make healthier food choices and live healthier lifestyles
 - iii. Created a steering committee to help make funding decisions
- c. Currently funding four projects for a total of \$24,000
 - i. Water Fountain and Bottle Filling Station in Bayliss Park: \$10K award
 - ii. Wayfinding Signs for FIRST AVE Trail: \$6K award
 - iii. Increased Food Voucher Program: \$6K award
 - iv. Community Gardens for students: \$2K award
- d. Two additional years of funding after this year, with smaller award amounts each year
- e. Several additional public health opportunities coming through State of Iowa
 - i. ISU Extension Obesity Grant is currently in the works

E. Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A): James Boerner, MAPA

- a. MAPA and City of Omaha were awarded this funding
 - i. Goal is to create a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) to significantly reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries on local roads
 - 1. Projects and programs listed in the plan will be prioritized for MAPA funding and may be eligible for future federal implementation funds
 - a. Looking to include project models and types that can apply broadly to multiple areas or jurisdictions
 - b. Will be looking at existing plans and projects to include
 - c. Will also be looking at how projects could be funded through other funding sources
 - 2. Coordinating with other efforts, including:
 - a. City of Omaha Vision Zero Action Plan
 - b. MAPA is required by federal legislation to follow the Safe Systems Approach, which is a more comprehensive and proactive approach to safety
 - c. Complete Streets focuses on design for multiple transportation modes like biking and walking
 - ii. Study area covers Douglas and Sarpy Counties as well as the cities of Council Bluffs, Carter Lake, Crescent and McClelland in Iowa (other areas are covered by other grants)
 - iii. Find more information at www.mapacog.org/projects/ss4a or email safestreets@mapacog.org

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- b. Additional RPA 13/18 SS4A grant award
 - i. Covers seven cities in the Iowa RPA 13 and RPA 18 areas
 - ii. More information coming soon
- c. Committee comments:
 - i. We should make sure to close the feedback loop and share successes

F. Western Sarpy Transportation Enhancement Plan (WE-STEP): James Boerner, MAPA

- a. Find general project information at www.mapacog.org/projects/we-step
- b. Planning study funded by a Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant
 - i. Fits the Heartland 2050 goal of matching land use decisions with transportation network planning
- c. Develop a structure to determine the future road network in western Sarpy County ahead of anticipated growth and development
 - i. Will help jurisdictions have a unified approach and plan for development to aid in decision-making
 - ii. Goal is consistency in design between jurisdictions
 - iii. Working closely with the Sarpy Wastewater Agency
 - iv. This plan builds on the Sarpy I-80 PEL which worked to determine where a future interchange on I-80 should be located
- d. Current online public meeting is open through April 15th
 - i. www.westernsarpytep.com
 - ii. Visit to provide comments on proposed future street standards

G. Heartland 2050 Learning Site Visit: Laura Heilman, MAPA

- a. A group of 20 will be heading to Charlotte, NC in May 2024
- b. Learning topics for this trip include:
 - i. Regional Planning & Coordination
 - ii. Trail- & Transit-Oriented Development
 - iii. Historic Preservation & Adaptive Reuse
 - iv. Placemaking & Economic Development

H. RPAC Business: Laura Heilman, MAPA

- a. Annual Membership Update
 - i. We will be reaching out to confirm whether you will continue to serve for the upcoming fiscal year, running July 2024-June 2025
- b. Bylaws Committee Update
 - i. The bylaws committee met in February; look for more information coming soon
- c. Future Speakers/Topics
 - i. Let us know if you have any speakers or topics in mind for future meetings

I. Additional Business

1. Heartland 2050 Committee Updates

- a. **Equity and Engagement:** Ashley Rae Turner, Emspace + Lovgren
- b. **Housing and Development:** Jeff Spiehs, Lamp Rynearson
 - i. Attendance and engagement is up
- c. **Infrastructure:** Mike McIntosh, Lamp Rynearson

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- i. Attendance and engagement is up
- ii. Updates on working group activities
- d. **Natural Resources:** Kent Holm, Douglas County
 - i. Currently re-evaluating working groups
 - 1. Intent is to align work with City of Omaha, regional and state Climate Action Plans
 - ii. Next meeting on 4/16
 - iii. Solid Waste working group doing a lot of work toward a
 - 1. LR 163 Legislature study
 - 2. State has some federal funding to evaluate waste

2. MAPA Updates

- a. New FHWA funding opportunity
 - i. Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)
 - ii. Planning, Design, and Construction
 - iii. Active transportation networks and Active transportation spines
 - iv. Due Date June 17, 2024
 - v. \$15 Million Ceiling/\$100,000 Floor
 - vi. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/atiip/

3. Community Updates

- a. Community members in Pottawattamie, Cass, Douglas and Sarpy Counties are invited to participate in the 2024 Community Health Needs Assessment
 - i. Online survey: www.prcsurvey.com/begin/MetroOmaha2024

G. Adjourn

Future Meetings & Events:

Heartland 2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee – June 7, 2024
Council of Officials Meeting – June 12, 2024