

MOVING FORWARD



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Community & Economic Development staff lead grant workshops



READ ARTICLE >>

MAPA updates its interactive bicycle map



READ ARTICLE >>

MAPA and partners host Brownfields workshop



READ ARTICLE >>

Bicycling projects highlight May as National Bike Month



READ ARTICLE >>

Council of Officials set for June 14 in Ft. Calhoun



READ ARTICLE >>

MAPA Assistant Planner receives ICOG Prometheus Award



READ ARTICLE >>

MAPA staff member celebrates 10-year service anniversary



READ ARTICLE >>

Thriving Communities Grant to study Highway 75 impact on North Omaha

A new technical assistance grant awarded to the City of Omaha, MAPA and Spark CDI will support work to study the impacts of Highway 75 on North Omaha and how to reconnect the community that was separated by this infrastructure project.

When it was built, Highway 75 separated the historically Black community of North Omaha. The decision to build the highway through the community displaced families and businesses and destroyed buildings.

Through the Thriving Community Program, the U.S. Department of Transportation selects and funds teams to provide technical assistance, planning, and capacity building support to under-resourced and disadvantaged communities across the United States.



Explore how Highway 75 impacted the North Omaha community through our interactive maps at: tinyurl.com/Hwy75maps

The goal is to help ensure these communities have the technical tools and organizational capacity to plan for and deliver quality infrastructure projects and community development projects that enable their communities and neighborhoods to thrive.

The City of Omaha, Spark, MAPA and community members are part of the team that will work on this project funded by a Thriving Communities program grant. For more information about the project or how to get involved, contact Carlos Morales, MAPA Transportation & Data Manager at cmorales@mapacog.org or 402-444-6866, ext. 3220.



Community & Economic Development staff lead grant workshops

MAPA Community & Economic Development staff offers training opportunities for local partners.

On March 16, MAPA presented grant writing training and pre-application planning to municipal clerks at the Nebraska Clerk's Institute and Academy annual conference in Kearney.

MAPA offered similar training to local officials in Henderson, Iowa, on April 13.

If your community would be interested in training opportunities MAPA can provide, contact Grant Anderson, MAPA Community & Economic Development Manager at ganderson@mapacog.org or 402-444-6866, ext. 3222.



MAPA and partners host Brownfields workshop

Identifying brownfields and finding resources to help mitigate environmental contamination were some of the topics covered during a brownfields workshop presented by MAPA and a host of partners on March 30 at the Nebraska Urban Indian Health Coalition.

The workshop was designed to educate residents, economic developers and community leaders on how to identify brownfields, locate resources to address any environmental concerns, and return them to developable parcels of land.

In addition to MAPA, staff from the Kansas State University Technical Assistance for Brownfields program, Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 7 also hosted the workshop.

Participants had an opportunity to present possible contaminated sites in their communities and received guidance from the experts at the various agencies.



Nebraska residents needing guidance about potential brownfields sites should contact Taryn Reed, NDEE at taryn.horn@nebraska.gov or 402-471-6411. Iowa residents should contact Mel Pins, IDNR, mel.pins@dnr.iowa.gov, or 515-729-4616.

MAPA updates its interactive Bicycle Map

MAPA updated its interactive Omaha Metropolitan Area Bicycle Map web application, the first time since it was released in 2016.

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team collaborated with the City of Omaha Planning Department, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District, and GIS teams in Sarpy and Pottawattamie Counties to update the map's information.

New features are concentrated in the trail network, including real time updates on trail closures and "in development trails" in addition to "proposed trails."

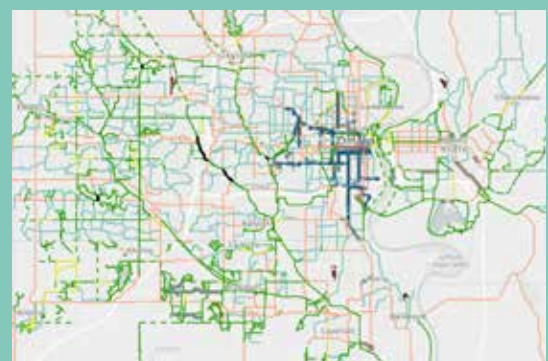
"We hope users can see that action is happening in the Omaha metro area's bike network," said Owen Stuckey, MAPA GIS Analyst.

Many trails that were labeled as "proposed" previously are in development now or completed. Other updates include expanded Heartland Bikeshare and fix-it stations, bike rack locations and a more user-friendly color scheme.

Connect to the interactive bike map at: <http://bikemap.mapacog.org/>.

The Metro Area Bike Map is meant to provide safety and efficiency in route options, presenting all the necessary information for users to choose their own biking adventure.

MAPA hopes to include a user-input section in the bike map soon, so that features can be improved with crowd participation. In the meantime, feedback can be sent to ostuckey@mapacog.org.

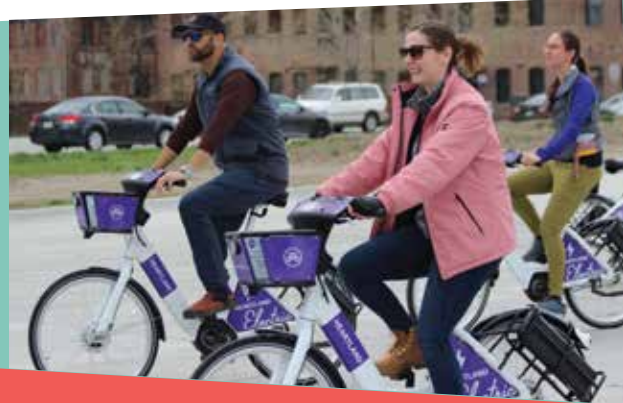


Bicycling projects highlight May as National Bike Month

May is National Bike Month. This year the League of American Bicyclists is promoting individual and community well being for Bike Month. At its meeting on April 27, the MAPA Board of Directors passed a proclamation declaring May 1-31, 2023, as Bike Month in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region. MAPA staff support Bike Month and participate in bike activities throughout the year. Here is an update on a few bike projects in the region.

Heartland Bike Share

In April, Heartland Bike Share announced the conversion of its entire fleet of bicycles to electric-assist bikes. Previously, half of its bikeshare bikes were ebikes. In recent years, MAPA secured nearly \$1 million in federal funding to assist the Heartland Bike Share conversion to ebikes.



North Omaha Trail

Phase 2 of the North Omaha Trail is being planned. Phase 1 of the trail which begins at 31st and Sprague was completed last fall. The North Omaha Trail, an investment in public health infrastructure and a catalyst for community development, will connect several neighborhood anchors and eventually North Downtown.

Photo Courtesy: Spark CDI



Beltline Trail

Phase Two of the Beltline Trail in North Omaha is underway through Adams Park and is expected to be completed this summer. The trail creates a connection from the intersection of Hamilton St. at Military Ave., to the North Omaha Transit Center. The proposed trail alignment follows the former Missouri Pacific Railroad corridor.



US 34/75 Trail

The next phase of construction of the US34/75 Trail is anticipated to begin in Spring 2024. All design work for the project is complete. Once finished, the trail will create a connection across the Platte River from Bellevue to Plattsmouth.



FIRST AVE Trail

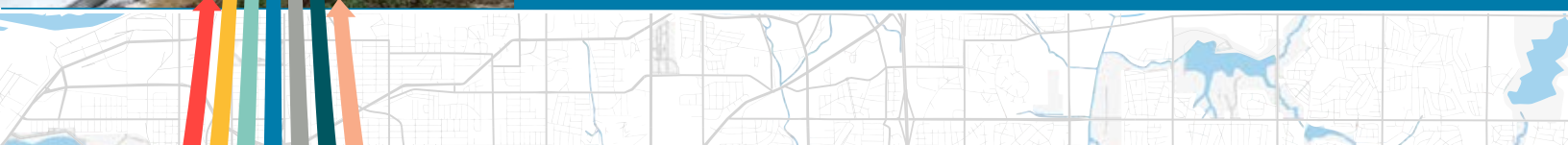
The City of Council Bluffs will host a ribbon cutting on May 19 to celebrate completion of the FIRST AVE trail. The trail spans east to west from 35th to 16th Streets. It connects with an existing trail and the Bob Kerry Pedestrian Bridge, allowing trail users to travel from downtown Council Bluffs to downtown Omaha.



Railroad Highway Trail

Pottawattamie County Conservation and Pottawattamie County Trail Association will host a ribbon cutting at 12 p.m. May 13 to open the new segment of the Railroad Highway Trail. Recently, crews poured concrete trail panels between the two bridges which span Mosquito Creek near Weston to close a gap in the trail. With this project completed, there is an uninterrupted trail from Smith Nature Preserve to just outside Weston. The next planned phase will build south from the nature preserve to Council Bluffs city limits.

Photo Courtesy: Pottawattamie Co. Trails Association



Council of Officials set for June 14 in Ft. Calhoun

Join us for MAPA's Council of Officials meeting on June 14. The meeting in Ft. Calhoun will feature keynote speaker Brook Aken, Director of Economic Development and External Relations at the Omaha Public Power District (OPPD).

Brook will present on "Powering the Future in Washington County and Beyond- OPPD Growth and Plans."

The Council of Officials meeting will take place at Northern Lights Venue in Ft. Calhoun.

Lunch begins at 11 a.m. and includes a \$15 registration fee. The meeting begins at 11:30 a.m.

Register at tinyurl.com/COOJune2023.



MAPA Staff Updates

We have some exciting news about one of our team members! Rafael Corrales, a Community & Economic Development Assistant Planner, received the Prometheus Award from the Iowa Association of Council of Governments on May 4.

The Prometheus Award is given to a staff member at one of Iowa's Councils of Government who was instrumental in making progress to a community project or endeavor.



Rafael is being recognized for his work in helping Pacific Junction's homeowners, impacted by the 2019 floods, through the home buyout process.

He has demonstrated great patience and empathy, and an unyielding commitment, during the long post-disaster work process. Rafael is helping residents turn the page on a very difficult chapter in their town's history.

Congratulations to Amanda Morales, MAPA Fiscal Officer, on celebrating her 10th anniversary with the agency!

The MAPA Board of Directors recognized Amanda for her dedication and service at its monthly meeting on April 27.



Amanda is a master at detailed accounting work and a crucial part of our Finance Team!

Thank you, Amanda, for all you do for MAPA, and Happy Anniversary!

CALENDAR

MAY 2023

- 17 Finance Committee**
8:30 a.m.
- 19 Transportation Committee**
- 25 MAPA Board of Directors**
1:30 p.m.

JUNE 2023

- 02 Regional Planning (Heartland 2050 RPAC)**
10:00 a.m.
- 14 Finance Committee**
8:30 a.m.
Council of Officials
11:00 a.m.
- 16 Coordinated Transit**
10:30 a.m.
- 22 Transportation Committee**
10:00 a.m.
- 27 MAPA Board of Directors**
1:30 p.m.



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