

MOVING FORWARD



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Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund announces awards

Home repairs and renovations which allow seniors to age in place, a program which works to prevent people from being evicted from their homes and rental assistance for struggling low-to-moderate income residents. These are some of the 10 projects that will receive funding from the Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund's 2023 application cycle.

The trust fund awarded a total of **\$359,015 in grants**.

The following organizations will receive funding:

- **Pottawattamie Co. General Assistance - \$30,227** for continued funding to provide deposit and first month's rental assistance
- **Connections Area Agency on Aging - \$45,000** for housing repairs and renovations on units to remove accessibility barriers for seniors
- **Interfaith Response - \$50,000** rental assistance for households in need
- **Habitat for Humanity - \$33,000** for down payment assistance for three Habitat homebuyers
- **Habitat for Humanity - \$50,000** for home repairs to 15 units in the homeowner repair program
- **Family Housing Advisory Services - \$25,000** for interest rate buydown project
- **Heartland Family Services - \$46,191** for replacing countertops in 23 Heartland Homes units
- **Iowa Legal Aid - \$28,597** for an eviction diversion program
- **Micah House - \$11,000** for installation of an ADA accessible door at the Micah House shelter
- **New Visions Homeless Services - \$40,000** for a homelessness prevention program targeting 75 households

Organizations must expend all funding on projects which benefit people below 80% of the federal family median income limit.

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Council of Officials focuses on OPPD's growth

In the next few years Omaha Public Power District will focus on doubling the amount of electricity it supplies to its 13-county service area to meet the demands of growth and development and regulatory requirements.



"We're anticipating at least 100 megawatts per year in new growth," said Brook Aken, Director of Economic Development and External Relations for OPPD.

Aken made the remarks as the keynote speaker

at MAPA's Council of Officials meeting in Ft. Calhoun on June 14.

Aken said OPPD has seen a great deal of growth in biotech, manufacturing, data centers, food processing and agriculture processing.

MAPA's next Council of Officials meeting will be its annual dinner meeting on Oct. 3, 2023, at the Bellevue Berry Farm.



MAPA cohosts Valley Town Hall

The City of Valley and MAPA hosted a Town Hall on June 21 to get feedback from residents about their community needs, wishes and concerns.

The Town Hall meeting follows a Community Needs Assessment survey MAPA conducted for the City and Valley's Community Collaboration Group to guide local planning efforts. Two-hundred ninety households responded, representing more than 900 people – nearly 1/3 of Valley residents. The survey allowed MAPA to identify issues for improvement in Valley.

Survey results boasted generally positive remarks of Valley. Hiking and biking trails and sports amenities were noted as areas for improvement. At the Town Hall, people had the opportunity to voice their opinions in small group discussions.

This was MAPA's first community needs assessment. If you think this would be helpful in your town or city, contact Julie Smith (jsmith@mapacog.org), Community & Economic Development Planner or Grant Anderson (ganderson@mapacog.org), Community & Economic Development Manager.



RPA-18 and MAPA approve Transportation Improvement Programs

Iowa Regional Planning Association-18's (RPA) Policy and Technical Committee approved the RPA-18 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) at its meeting on July 12. The TIP was open for public comment in June and includes improvements to the counties of Harrison, Mills and Shelby as well as the eastern, non-urbanized region of Pottawattamie County. The projects include not only highway expansion but also bike and pedestrian trail work. View the full report at tinyurl.com/FY2024RPATIP.

MAPA updated its six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for the greater Omaha-Council Bluffs area. Following a public comment period, the MAPA Board of Directors approved the plan at its meeting June 22. The MAPA TIP includes federally-funded improvements to highways, pedestrian and bike trails and transit projects in the greater Omaha-Council Bluffs region. Find the full report at tinyurl.com/MAPATIPFY24.

MAPA Mini Retreat to Top Golf

MAPA staff teed off with their coworkers at an office-wide retreat to TopGolf. The staff took advantage of the bus system to get from downtown to TopGolf. Not only did the staff hit plenty of golf balls into the range, they also participated in friendly competition in a relay-style race.



Lindsey Button and Jodi Woolery tee off at the staff mini retreat to TopGolf.



The whole office joined in the fun at TopGolf.

continued from Pottawattamie Co. Housing Trust Fund announces awards

“Since 2011, the Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund has been able to grant more than \$2 million to help make a difference in affordable housing,” said Courtney Harter, Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund President. “We could not do it without the support of local businesses and residents who believe in our mission and donate to support our work.”

Each year the Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund allocates funding to organizations or individuals that serve the housing needs of low to moderate-income residents within Pottawattamie County, Iowa.

MAPA is the grant administrator for the Pottawattamie County Housing Trust Fund and provides staff services including annual housing assistance plans and grant applications, project and fiscal management and compliance with Iowa Finance Authority requirements

MAPA Board of Directors Vice-Chair elected President of NARC Board

Mills County Supervisor Carol Vinton, who serves as Vice-Chair of MAPA’s Board of Directors, is taking on a new leadership role.

Supervisor Vinton was elected President-Elect of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Board of Directors.

Vinton has served in several roles on the NARC board since being named to MAPA’s Board of Directors.

Congratulations, Supervisor Vinton!



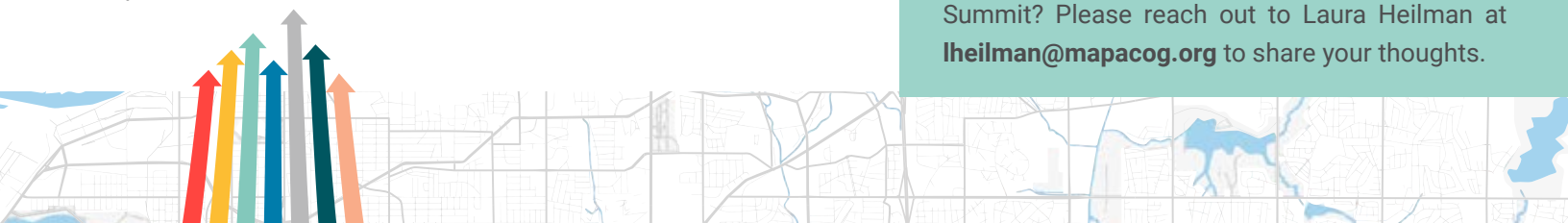
Heartland 2050 Summit coming in August

MAPA is working to host a Heartland 2050 Summit this August!

Heartland 2050 Summits are a great way to connect with community leaders from throughout the region, hear about current and upcoming projects, and help move the Heartland 2050 vision forward. Find out more about the Heartland 2050 vision at www.heartland2050.org/about

The theme of this year’s Summit will be Resilience. We will be talking about all of the ways that local communities can be prepared for upcoming changes, whether that be demographic shifts, climate change or meeting the workforce needs of the future.

Have an idea for a topic or speaker for the Summit? Please reach out to Laura Heilman at lheilman@mapacog.org to share your thoughts.



MAPA staff updates

A big welcome to Connie Viner who joined MAPA's Finance team June 13 as an Accountant!

Prior to working for MAPA, Connie helped run her family's trucking business. She is the head volleyball coach at East Mills High School and coached both the basketball and volleyball teams simultaneously for several years.

She played basketball at Peru State College while earning bachelor's degrees in Accounting and Business Management.

Connie is a Iowa native and has three sons. In her free time she enjoys golfing, watching movies and spending time with family.



MAPA's new Communications & Outreach Intern is Charlie Harrington!

Charlie joined MAPA on May 30 as a recent graduate from Creighton University with a degree in Journalism.



Charlie is interested in contributing to MAPA's work in creating equitable communities and sees the role of communications as a convener of community.

Charlie hails from Des Moines, Iowa, and when he isn't working, enjoys reading and exploring Omaha with friends. Welcome, Charlie!

CALENDAR

JULY 2023

- 19 Finance Committee**
8:30 a.m.
- Coordinated Transit**
10:30 a.m.
- 21 Transportation Committee**
10:00 a.m.
- 27 MAPA Board of Directors**
1:30 p.m.

AUGUST 2023

- 04 Regional Planning (Heartland 2050 RPAC)**
10:00 a.m.
- 09 RPA-18**
11:00 a.m.
- 16 Finance Committee**
8:30 a.m.
- 18 Transportation Committee**
10:00 a.m.
- 24 MAPA Board of Directors**
1:30 p.m.

Congratulations to our interns, Isabelle Fleming and Rachel Goetsch!

In May they added college graduate to their resumes. In June, they found jobs!

Isabelle, MAPA's former Communications & Outreach intern, earned a Bachelor degree in Art History and Economics from Creighton University. Rachel, formerly MAPA's GIS intern, graduated from the University of Nebraska Omaha with Bachelor degrees in English, Environmental Science and Music with minors in Language Studies, Geography & Planning and Entrepreneurial Studies.

Rachel is now MAPA's newest Transportation Planner.

Isabelle started July 6 with Omaha by Design as its Communications & Programming Coordinator.

