



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, August 4, 2023 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

In-person-23: Bruce Fountain, Carol Vinton, Crystal Sierra (Canopy South), Chris Gibbons, Chris Shewchuk, Dr. Terry Haack, Fred Conley, Jason Kubicek, Jeff Beiermann, Keith Station, Kent Holm, Krista Waassenaar, Laura Dietrich, Lauren Cencic, Leland Jacobson, Mark Norman, Meredith Dillon, Michael Jensen, Devin Meisinger (OPPD), Mike McIntosh, Travis Gibbons, Vicki Quaites-Ferris, Wayne Brown

Virtual-3: Chad Kruse, Kitty Amaya, Matt Wyant

GUESTS: Eva Roberts (Front Porch Investments), Scott Tomsu (Nebraska Methodist), Samantha Dahlby (speaker, NewBoCo)

MAPA STAFF: Mike Helgerson, Laura Heilman, Sue Cutsforth, Carlos Morales, Grant Anderson, Court Barber, Saul Lopez, Lindsey Button, Charlie Harrington, James Boerner, Travis Halm

A. Welcome and Introductions – Keith Station, Committee Chair

- a. Welcome to the New Vice Chair - Chris Gibbons, Council Bluffs Planning Department
- b. Welcome to our new committee members for the upcoming year!
 - i. Chad Kruse, UNMC
 - ii. Dr. Terry Haack, Metro Omaha Education Consortium (MOEC)
 - iii. Kitty Amaya, US. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)
 - iv. Laura Dietrich, Douglas County
 - v. Mark Norman, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
 - vi. Mike McIntosh, Lamp Rynearson & Associates

B. Approval of Minutes from April 1 2022 Meeting - Keith Station, Committee Chair - **ACTION**

- a. Motion: Vinton, 2nd: Holm, no discussion - Motion Passed

C. Future City Competition - Samantha Dahlby, NewBoCo

- a. <https://futurecity.org/>
- b. Statewide middle school STEM competition where kids imagine, create and present their ideas for a city 100 years in the future
 - i. National program often run by nonprofits in local areas
 - ii. Different themes every year; this year is a 100% electrically powered city with energy generated from sources that keep citizens and the environment healthy and safe
- c. Can volunteer as a mentor (15-20 hours September-February), judge (2-8 hours on a Saturday in January), or competition support
 - i. They also accept donations!
- d. Contact Samantha Dahlby with NewBoCo at samantha@newbo.co
 - i. Runs the program out of Cedar Rapids, Iowa location
- e. Mike McIntosh used to run the program in Nebraska several years ago through ASCE and found it a very valuable

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- f. City of Council Bluffs has been working with local schools on general planning principles, including imagining their own city
 - i. The top three things kids want are Chik-Fil-A, McDonalds and indoor malls :)

D. MAPA Strategic Plan - Mike Helgerson, MAPA

- a. Guides agency work and serves as the foundation for staff decision-making
 - i. A new plan is created every 5 years and the plan is updated annually with the plan of work for the upcoming fiscal year
 - ii. This plan is effective from July 1 2023 through June 30 2028
 - iii. Includes a detailed plan of work for Fiscal Year 2024
- b. Completed with MAPA's Board of Directors and staff
- c. Five Strategic Directions:
 - i. Refining Strategies to Increase Meaningful & Visible Impact
 - ii. Unifying & Automating our Processes
 - iii. Redirecting Resources to Prioritize Historically Marginalized Communities
 - iv. Enhancing Awareness of MAPA's Services and Resources
 - v. Strengthening MAPA's Mission with a Focus on Excellence

E. MAPA Public Participation Plan - Laura Heilman, MAPA - ACTION

- a. Draft document now available at www.mapacog.org/projects/public-participation-plan/
 - i. 45-Day Comment period from June 22 to August 5
 - ii. Submit written comments via email to: transportation@mapacog.org or via U.S. Mail to MAPA, 2222 Cuming St., Omaha, NE. 68102
 - iii. Last updated in 2019; currently being updated in advance of our Long Range Transportation Plan update (FY 2025)
- b. Outlines how MAPA will work to achieve public participation for regional planning and programming efforts
- c. Updates to this version:
 - i. Efforts made to simplify and clarify the document
 - ii. Added an executive summary for quick reference for staff and public
 - iii. Added language about virtual engagement
 - iv. Added a 5% threshold for language translation
 - 1. Materials will be provided in other languages if 5% or more within a project area speak a language other than English
- d. We are requesting that the committee recommend that the MAPA Board of Directors approve the PPP
 - i. Motion: C. Gibbons, 2nd: Vinton, no discussion - Motion Passed
- e. Local Resources:
 - i. Shelby Seer with All Kinds Accessibility will do an accessibility audit
 - ii. World Speaks is helpful for language translation

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F. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Selection - Court Barber, MAPA

- a. Find general information on the TIP at <https://mapacog.org/projects/tip/>
- b. The Transportation Management Area (Douglas, Sarpy and urban Pottawattamie County) gets about \$25 million per year in federal transportation funding
 - i. As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the TMA, MAPA receives this funding and determines how to spend it
 - ii. Comes through three programs:
 1. STBG: Surface Transportation Block Grant
 2. TAP: Transportation Alternatives Program
 3. CRP (new!): Carbon Reduction Plan
 4. Learn about these programs here:
<https://mapacog.org/services/transportation/programs/>
- c. Process
 - i. Work with advisory committees to determine project selection criteria
 - ii. A Call for Projects is opened in the fall (October) with applications due in January
 - iii. Work with advisory committees to review applications and award funding (spring)
- d. Funding decisions align with local goals
 - i. MAPA's Long Range Transportation Plan sets overall transportation goals
 1. <https://mapacog.org/projects/lrtp/>
 2. Goals are:
 - a. Access to Opportunity
 - b. Talent Attraction & Retention
 - c. Economic Growth Throughout the Region
 - d. Stewardship of the Transportation System
 - ii. MAPA and Project Selection Committees have identified seven internal priorities
 1. Asset Condition
 2. Demand
 3. Equity
 4. Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Air Quality
 5. Leverage (ability to leverage other funding)
 6. Regional Considerations
 7. Safety
 - iii. The RPAC committee voted to weigh these selection priorities:
 1. Equity and Safety were the top two
 2. Air Quality and Leverage were the bottom two
 3. Staff will use this data to inform project selection updates
- e. Discussion
 - i. How do we ensure the things that are said in the project application, like equity, are actually completed during the project process
 1. It's a work in progress; MAPA and US DOT are placing more emphasis on project evaluation and monitoring
 - ii. Could we impact equity through contracting requirements?
 1. Mostly that is left up to local jurisdiction practices, but it doesn't hurt to ask for it or mention it, or include that information in a project application
 2. MAPA is currently having these conversations with NDOT right now
 - a. Difficulty because there is a low number of DBEs in the state, but we're trying to address that issue through partnerships
 - b. Metro is working on this issue as well

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G. Safe Streets for All Project Updates - Jim Boerner, MAPA

- a. Find out more at www.mapacog.org/projects/ss4a/ or email safestreets@mapacog.org
- b. MAPA and the City of Omaha were awarded \$750,000 to develop a regional Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
 - i. This project was funded with Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Discretionary Grant funding
 - ii. Projects listed in the eventual Comprehensive Safety Action Plan will be eligible for additional implementation funding
 - iii. Plan development will start in Spring 2024
- c. Project area includes Douglas and Sarpy counties in Nebraska and the cities of Council Bluffs, Carter Lake, McClelland, and Crescent in Iowa
 - i. The remainder of Pottawattamie County was covered in a separate application that addresses all county roads in Iowa outside of city jurisdictions
- d. MAPA will be releasing two RFQs in September 2023 for project components
 - i. Includes Data Support, Outreach and Comprehensive Safety Action Plan development
 - ii. See open RFPs or RFQs, and sign up to be notified of new ones at <https://mapacog.org/about/rfp-rfq/>
- e. Regional Planning Affiliation Planning Grant Application
 - i. Two local RPAs (18 and 13) are currently submitting a joint Safe Streets for All application
 - 1. Regional Planning Affiliations were created by the Iowa Department of Transportation for transportation planning
 - 2. Will evaluate safety on all roads and identify projects and policies that improve safety on local roads
 - 3. Application includes seven cities in eastern Iowa
 - ii. RPA-18:
 - 1. <https://mapacog.org/projects/rpa-18/>
 - 2. Consists of local governments in Harrison, Mills, Shelby and Pottawattamie Counties in Iowa
 - 3. RPA-18 is administered by MAPA
 - iii. RPA-13: <https://www.swipco.org/rpa-13/>
- f. Upcoming engagement for related transportation safety efforts:
 - i. City of Omaha Vision Zero
 - 1. <https://www.omahavisionzero.com/>
 - 2. Committed to eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries on our streets
 - 3. Open house on Tuesday, August 15th from 5-7 pm at the UNO Community Engagement Center
 - ii. Nebraska DOT Vulnerable Road User Survey
 - 1. <https://dot.nebraska.gov/safety/shsp/>
 - 2. Will inform Nebraska's Strategic Highway Safety Plan

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H. Additional Business

- a. Committee Updates - Committee Chairs
 - i. Equity & Engagement: Ashley Rae Turner
 - 1. No update
 - ii. Housing & Development
 - 1. No update
 - iii. Infrastructure
 - 1. Meeting this past Wednesday
 - a. Omaha Active Mobility Plan
 - b. Denny Blind with Olsson on economic benefit of active transportation investments
 - c. The committee wants to support these types of projects in our community
 - 2. Working Groups
 - a. TIF - working on educational materials
 - b. Reconnecting Communities - received a Thriving Communities grant and will be kicking that work off shortly
 - c. Digital Equity Plan
 - i. Just finalizing the regional digital equity plan
 - d. Responsible Infrastructure Investments
 - i. Safety is a big part of this
 - 3. Also looking for new committee members, specifically young professionals
 - iv. Natural Resources
 - 1. New Committee chair & Vice Chair
 - a. Community Forest Resource Working Group - looking at loss of canopy cover
 - b. Trails, Parks & Green Spaces -
 - i. Supporting Omaha and LaVista Active Mobility Plans
 - ii. Supported two local Transportation Alternatives grant applications
 - c. Solid Waste Working Group
 - i. Legislative Re 163: Increasing Recycling in Nebraska

I. MAPA Updates

- a. Save the Date: Council of Officials Annual Meeting
 - i. Wednesday, October 4th
 - ii. Starting at 5:30 p.m.
 - iii. At Bellevue Berry Farm
 - iv. More info TBD!
- b. Annual Award Nominations
 - i. MAPA announces award winners at our Annual Meeting
 - 1. Regional Citizenship Award
 - a. An individual who recognized regional problems and initiated and supported policies which required a shared regional effort and contributed to the region's quality of life
 - 2. Regional Service Award
 - a. Groups that have contributed to the metropolitan area to help improve or grow it

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- ii. If there is anyone you'd like to nominate for an award, please contact any MAPA staff member to share your thoughts!
 - c. An ADU for U Design Competition
 - i. www.betterlivingdesign.org/aduformaha
 - ii. AARP is sponsoring an Accessory Dwelling Unit design challenge
 - iii. Interested parties are asked to submit ADU designs which will be judged by a panel of experts
 - iv. Hopefully, these designs will become eligible for the new City of Omaha FastTrack permitting program (pre-approved designs that move easily through approval processes in the City)
- J. Community Updates
 - i. None
- K. Adjourn

Future Meetings & Events:

Nebraska Statewide Broadband Summit - Kearney, NE - August 8th

NDOT Transportation Summit - Kearney, NE - August 23rd

Applying for federal funding is a complex process. That's why NDOT's Local Assistance Division is hosting the first-ever Transportation Summit. This free educational summit is intended for cities, municipalities, and counties to learn more about how to apply for different types of funding for their local infrastructure projects. Attendees will leave with the necessary know-how and resources needed for applying for discretionary federal funds. Speakers at the event will include experts from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and NDOT.
<https://dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/conferences/transportation-summit-2023/>

NADTC Transportation Diversity, Equity & Inclusion National Symposium

- Date TBD (August/September)

By invitation only. The Symposium will gather input from communities across the country to learn more about the issues impacting diverse populations and historically marginalized and underserved communities. MAPA was selected as one of six national hosts for the Symposium.

Rural Summit Iowa West Foundation - September 8th, 10-2pm - Carson Community Center

Heartland 2050 Summit: 'Resilience' - Date TBD (September) - The Granary, Ralston

MAPA Council of Officials Annual Meeting - October 4, 2023

H2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee - October 6, 2023

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