



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 2, 2024 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

MEMBERS:

In-Person (13): Ashley Rae Turner, Chris Gibbons, Chris Meeks, Derek Miller, Jeff Beiermann, Keith Station, Kent Holm, Kristine Stokes, Laura Dietrich, Mark Norman, Meridith Dillon, Michael Jensen, Stephanie Mueller

Virtual (6): Brian Lodes, Bruce Fountain, Buey Ray Tut, Jerrod Bley, Lindsay Neeman, Dr. Terry Haack

GUESTS: Jason Carbee, HDR; Sydney Embray, City of Omaha; Joanie Swanson, Ashland Area Economic Development Corporation; Marcus Chaffee, Omaha Documentors

MAPA STAFF: Laura Heilman, Sue Cutsforth, Saul Lopez, Helen Corrigan, Lindsey Button, Carlos Morales, Grant Anderson

A. Welcome and Introductions – Keith Station, Committee Chair

- a. Welcome to new committee members!

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

- a. No quorum present so no vote taken to approve past meeting minutes.

C. City of Omaha Active Mobility Plan: Derek Miller, City of Omaha Planning Department

- a. This agenda item was skipped during the meeting due to time constraints.

D. City of Omaha Comprehensive Plan Update: Derek Miller, Sydney Embray and Lynsey Byers, City of Omaha Planning Department

- a. City of Omaha is updating their entire Comprehensive Plan
 - i. Check out the website at www.wemakeomaha.org
 - ii. Take their survey now! <https://wemake.omaha.gov/event/opening-survey/>
 - iii. Follow @wemakeomaha on Facebook Instagram, LinkedIn and X/Twitter
 - iv. Sign up for email updates
- b. Main Goals: Manage Growth, Reinvest and Quality Design
- c. Three phases:
 - i. Listen + Learn - started May 2024
 1. Lots of upcoming engagement opportunities
 - ii. Visioning + Goal Development - starting November 2024
 - iii. Scenario Development - starting May 2025

E. Western Sarpy County Transportation Enhancement Plan (WE-STEP): Jason Carbee, HDR

- a. Find project info at <https://mapacog.org/projects/we-step/>
- b. City of Gretna was awarded a Heartland 2050 Mini-Grant to study long-range transportation network needs
- c. Partners are MAPA, Sarpy County, City of Gretna, City of Papillion and City of Springfield

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- d. Builds on the I-80 Planning & Environmental Linkages Study to determine best placement for a potential new I-80 interchange in Sarpy County
 - i. Find more info at <https://mapacog.org/projects/i80pel/>
- e. WE-STEP looked at future development in the Sarpy County area south of Schram Road that is now possible due to the sewerage of the area
- f. Coordinated with multiple jurisdictions and partners to develop roadway and development standards so that investments align across jurisdiction boundaries
- g. Plan allows for flexible design of lower capacity roadways that can expand to fit increased need over time; mostly accomplished this by setting aside the ROW needed for full build-out at the beginning of the project

F. Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG): Lindsey Button, MAPA

- a. Visit www.mapacog.org/projects/cprg for more information
- b. City of Omaha and State of Nebraska were awarded Climate Pollution Reduction Grants by the EPA to design climate action plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in six areas
 - i. MAPA is supporting the City of Omaha in creating a regional Climate Action Plan for the eight-county Metropolitan Statistical Area, in addition to the Omaha and Nebraska Plans
- c. Project deliverables
 - i. Submitted a Preliminary Climate Action Plan in March 2024
 - ii. Currently working on a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan due August 2025
 - iii. Will also follow up with reporting for two years after the Action Plan is submitted
- d. Currently working with individual cities and counties to incorporate their projects into the plan; projects included in the plan will be eligible for future implementation funding
- e. Please contact cprg@mapacog.org with any questions or to get involved!

G. Additional Business

1. Heartland 2050 Committee Updates

- a. Reach out to Saul Lopez with MAPA to get involved! slopez@mapacog.org
- b. **Equity and Engagement & Housing and Development:** Ashley Rae Turner, Omaha Municipal Land Bank; Jeff Spiehs, Lamp Rynearson
 - i. The Equity and Housing Committees have been holding joint meetings and will be working on joint projects
 - ii. The next meeting is August 13th at 3 pm at MAPA
- c. **Infrastructure:** Mike McIntosh, Lamp Rynearson
 - i. Upcoming meeting on August 7th with speaker Steve Jensen about the Omaha Streetcar
- d. **Natural Resources:** Kent Holm, Douglas County
 - i. Working to restructure working groups to support City of Omaha Climate Action & Resilience Plan and the regional CPRG implementation
 - ii. Solid Waste Working Group working on issues related to lithium ion batteries
 - 1. There are safety issues due to excessive heat and fire when these batteries (often found in disposable vapes) are crushed, especially in garbage trucks, recycling plants or landfills

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2. Working with state senators on potential extended producer responsibility legislation

2. MAPA Updates

- a. MAPA Strategic Plan
 - i. MAPA creates a strategic plan every five years, and an annual plan of work; see the latest strategic plan at <https://mapacog.org/projects/strategic-plan/>
- b. MAPA Equity Assessment
 - i. MAPA creates an annual equity assessment to review their work across eight equity-related categories; see more at <https://mapacog.org/projects/equity-assessment/>
- c. Save the Date: Council of Officials Annual Meeting
 - i. Council of Officials Annual Meeting will be held Wednesday, October 9, 2024
 - ii. Featuring keynote speaker Kevin Belle, Project Manager of the Great American Rail-Trail
 1. <https://www.railstotrails.org/site/greatamericanrailtrail/>
 - iii. Registration opening soon!

3. Community Updates

- a. Omaha by Design Open Omaha Event: August 3rd and 4th
- b. 2024 Iowa Trails Summit: October 4th
- c. Council Bluffs
 - i. Received a 2025 Iowa Thriving Community designation
 1. <https://www.iowafinance.com/iowa-thriving-communities/>
 - ii. Has 1200-1500 units of planned and permitted housing in the next 3 years
 - iii. Working with Mills County to annex some property for upcoming large development
- d. Cass County is excited for upcoming large-scale solar farm
- e. Leadership Omaha is looking for speakers; reach out to Keith Station if you are interested
- f. Land Bank and Spark are planning a second Reignite to Unite conference for June 2025

G. Public Comment

H. Adjourn

Future Meetings & Events:

- Heartland 2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee – October 4, 2024
Council of Officials Annual Meeting – October 9, 2024

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