

# MOVING FORWARD



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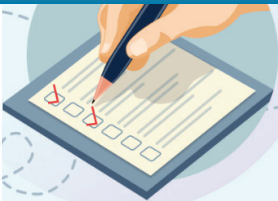
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## A Farewell to 2024

With the year coming to a close and the holiday season in full swing, I wanted to provide a brief update and word of thanks to our members and partners who have supported our work throughout the year. The MAPA team simply can't do what we do without the time, talent and support of our local community leaders.

We're fortunate to continue to find new areas to partner with organizations and communities across the region, paving the way for new partnerships to be forged and new relationships to be built. With an ever-changing landscape at the state and federal level, our team works hard to put the pieces of successful projects together. Each new year brings new challenges and opportunities and we're thankful to each of you that has worked alongside us over the last 12 months.

The region was once again affected by multiple disaster events, from tornadoes to flooding to windstorms that left hundreds of thousands of people without power. Local governments play such an important role in both the response and the recovery efforts that follow from these disasters. We've engaged with many communities and partners affected by these events and will continue to support the work to recover and build communities more resilient to these recurring disasters.

I am honored to lead an agency with such a vital role in shaping the quality of life of residents throughout the region. Thank you to all our members and partners who have given their time to the various committees, public meetings and conversations that have moved our work forward this past year. The MAPA team is grateful to have the opportunity to serve community leaders through the region and we look forward to connecting with you all again in the new year.

With gratitude,

Mike Helgersen  
Executive Director



## MAPA awarded \$2 million TRIPS grant

In December 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) awarded MAPA a \$2 million grant to implement a prioritization process project known as Transformative Regional Investment Prioritization System (TRIPS).

The program provides funding to develop and implement a publicly accessible, transparent prioritization process for the ranking and selection of projects for inclusion in short and long-range transportation plans.

The USDOT awarded a total of \$10 million through the program for this fiscal year, with MAPA receiving the maximum award amount of \$2 million.

This pilot program will bring a revolutionary decision-making model to Nebraska's largest transportation planning organizations, the Nebraska Department of Transportation and MAPA, and will enhance selection efficiency and ensure that projects align with community needs and values.

Website: [mapacog.org/projects/trips](https://www.mapacog.org/projects/trips)

## MAPA releases Civil Rights Policy for public comment

We're taking public comments on our Draft 2024-2027 Civil Rights Policy. The public comment period runs December 12, 2024 to January 6, 2025.

The Civil Rights Policy details our agency's policies to ensure nondiscrimination in all of our programs and services, and to encourage participation for residents who have limited proficiency in English. It also outlines the procedures for submitting complaints and the steps which will be taken to address and resolve them.

Access the Draft 2024-2027 Civil Rights Policy at [www.mapacog.org/projects/civilrightspolicy](https://www.mapacog.org/projects/civilrightspolicy)

Submit written comments to us by January 6, 2025, via email at [civilrights@mapacog.org](mailto:civilrights@mapacog.org) or mail at: MAPA Civil Rights Policy Public Comments, Transportation, 2222 Cuming St., Omaha, NE 68102.

## Calls for Projects open until mid-January

MAPA has two open calls for projects for Fiscal Year 2026 federal transportation funding programs.

One is for MAPA's Transportation Management Area (TMA), which covers Douglas, Sarpy and the urbanized portion of Pottawattamie County. Local units of government including cities, counties and public transit agencies can apply for this funding.

Projects selected will be part of the FY2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding cycle.

**The TMA call for projects is open until January 17, 2025.**

The types of funding available:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) - Iowa communities/agencies only
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) - Iowa & Nebraska communities/agencies
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) - Iowa & Nebraska communities/agencies

Project applications for the FY2026 funding cycle must be submitted no later than **4:30 p.m. January 17, 2025.**

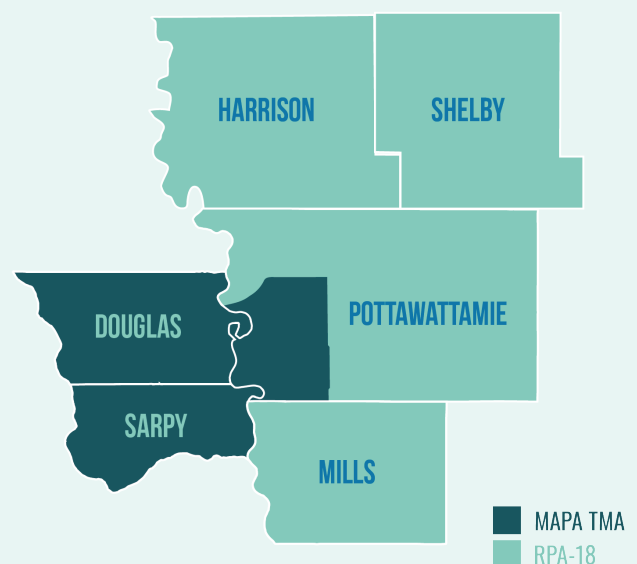
Access the policy guide, which contains applications and instructions on how to apply, at FY2026 [Transportation Improvement Program](#).

Regional Planning Affiliation-18 (RPA-18) is taking applications for Regional Transportation Alternatives (TA-Set Aside/TAP) funding.

Regional Planning Affiliation-18 covers Harrison, Shelby, and Mills Counties and the rural portion of Pottawattamie County. Local units of government including cities, counties and public transit agencies are eligible for this funding.

Applications for the RPA-18 Regional Transportation Alternatives funding are due by **January 24, 2025.**

Go to [mapacog.org/reports/rpa18callforprojects](https://www.mapacog.org/reports/rpa18callforprojects) for more information and application forms.





## Council of Officials focuses on Offutt Air Force Base

MAPA's quarterly Council of Officials meeting took place Dec. 11th at Bellevue's Beardmore Events Center. Guest speakers included Col. Patrick Kolesiak, Commander of the 55th Mission Support Group at Offutt Air Force Base, and Randy Norwood of the Greater Omaha Chamber.



## TTAC & RPAC host joint meeting

MAPA's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and Heartland 2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee hosted a joint meeting on December 6th at Bellevue University. This is the second time in two years both committees have hosted a joint December meeting as a way to collaborate on key planning issues.



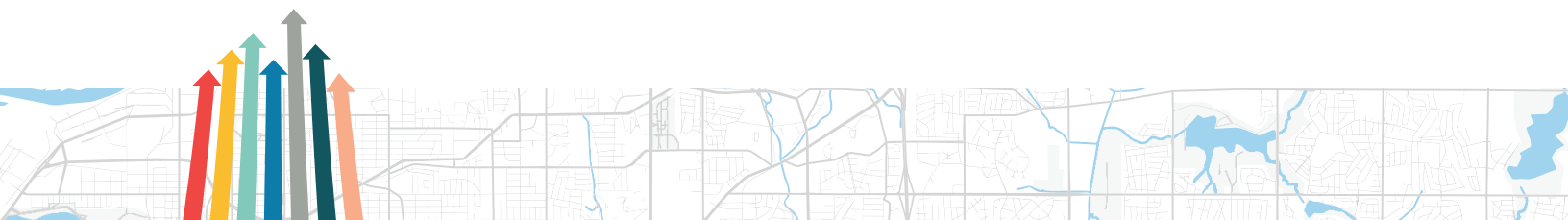
## MAPA Executive Director receives 2024 40 Under 40 Award

Mike Helgerson, MAPA's Executive Director, was honored on December 4th as one of the Midlands Business Journal's 2024 40 Under 40 Award winners.

The 40 Under 40 Awards recognize emerging leaders who are reshaping the Omaha-Council Bluffs metro area's professional landscape.

Award recipients are selected from a competitive pool of nominated professionals under the age of 40. Nominees represent diverse industries across the metro - from entrepreneurs and executives to nonprofit visionaries and innovators.

Congratulations, Mike!





## MAPA hosts Indianapolis planning agency for peer exchange

In November, MAPA hosted staff from the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the designated MPO for Central Indiana, for a peer exchange.

Like MAPA, the Indy MPO plans and programs federal transportation funds for a variety of regional projects such as roads, transit, trails and pedestrian infrastructure.

During the peer exchange, MAPA staff shared information about the agency's structure, projects and programs and arranged tours of regional community development projects.

MAPA's relationship with the Indy MPO began in 2022 when the MPO hosted a Heartland 2050 Learning Site Visit.



## In the Spotlight: Paratransit coordination helps CTC member

We want to give a shout out to recent coordination of paratransit services between MOBY and Council Bluffs Special Transit Service (STS).

MOBY is Metro's complementary paratransit service for people who cannot access conventional, fixed-route bus network due to a disability or disabling health condition.

Thanks to this coordination, the co-chair of MAPA's

Coordinated Transit Committee, who is a paratransit user, was able to attend an off-site meeting of our Transportation Technical Advisory Committee.

It can be difficult for riders to navigate between services offered by a variety of agencies to get the transportation they need. We look forward to more paratransit service coordination in the future.





# Heartland 2050 December Social

Heartland 2050 hosted a December Social on Dec. 10th. The event gave members of different committees the opportunity to meet and enjoy some fellowship over food and bowling at Blue Sky Bar & Patio.



## Joyful Wishes

from the MAPA team!

MICHAEL HELGERSON

LINDSEY BUTTON

BRADLEY GREFE

CARLOS MORALES

GRANT ANDERSON

HELEN CORRIGAN

RACHEL GOETTSCH

JULIE SMITH

COURT BARBER

SUE CUTSFORTH

MIA HASCHENBURGER

OWEN STUCKEY

NATASHA BARRETT

MATTHEW EASH

LAURA HEILMAN

CONNIE VINER

JIM BOERNER

ELISE EMANUEL

SAUL LOPEZ

JODI WOOLERY

CHRISTINA BROWNELL

AYODELE FADOJU

AMANDA MORALES

ELIZABETH ZELLER

# CALENDAR

## JANUARY 2025

- 01

**New Year's Day**  
MAPA Offices Closed
- 08

**RPA-18**  
11:00 a.m.
- 15

**Finance Committee**  
8:30 a.m.  
**Coordinated Transit Committee**  
10:30 a.m.
- 17

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee**  
10:00 a.m.
- 20

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**  
MAPA Offices Closed
- 23

**MAPA Board of Directors**  
1:30 p.m.

## FEBRUARY 2025

- 07

**Heartland 2050 Regional Planning Advisory Committee(RPAC)**  
10:00 a.m.
- 12

**RPA-18**  
11:00 a.m.
- 17

**Presidents' Day**  
MAPA Offices Closed
- 19

**Finance Committee**  
8:30 a.m.  
**Coordinated Transit**  
10:30 a.m.
- 21

**Transportation Technical Advisory Committee**  
10:00 a.m.
- 27

**MAPA Board of Directors**  
1:30 p.m.

U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Highway Administration**

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