UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
CENTER FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH

Data and Research Series for Community Impact

PART ONE
MAY 7, 2025

Using Data to Drive Growth in Planning and Economic Development:

Planning and Development Panel

Mike Helgerson

Executive Director

Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

Center for Public Affairs Research

Data & Research Series

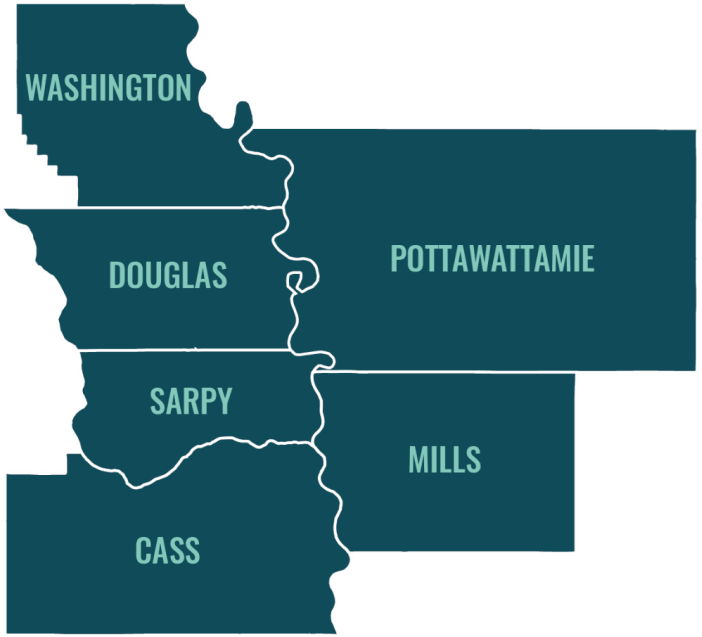
Mike Helgerson, Executive Director

May 7, 2025

MAPA Omaha - Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

MAPA Background

- Council of Governments
- 79 Members across six counties
- 9-member Board of Directors composed of local elected officials



Headed Towards a Future of More Congestion, Higher Taxes & Fewer Opportunities

Without a clear plan, we're growing by outward expansion, and the gaps between neighborhoods widen. We're slowing down and spreading out. We'll end up walking less and driving more. We'll sit in bumper to bumper traffic and wait longer for the bus. We'll also face a serious budget shortfall to pay for the infrastructure needs in our sprawling metro area. Meanwhile, poverty rates will continue to climb, and areas of the urban core will continue to lose population unless we close the opportunity gap.

By 2050 We'll Have:

500K
more people in the region

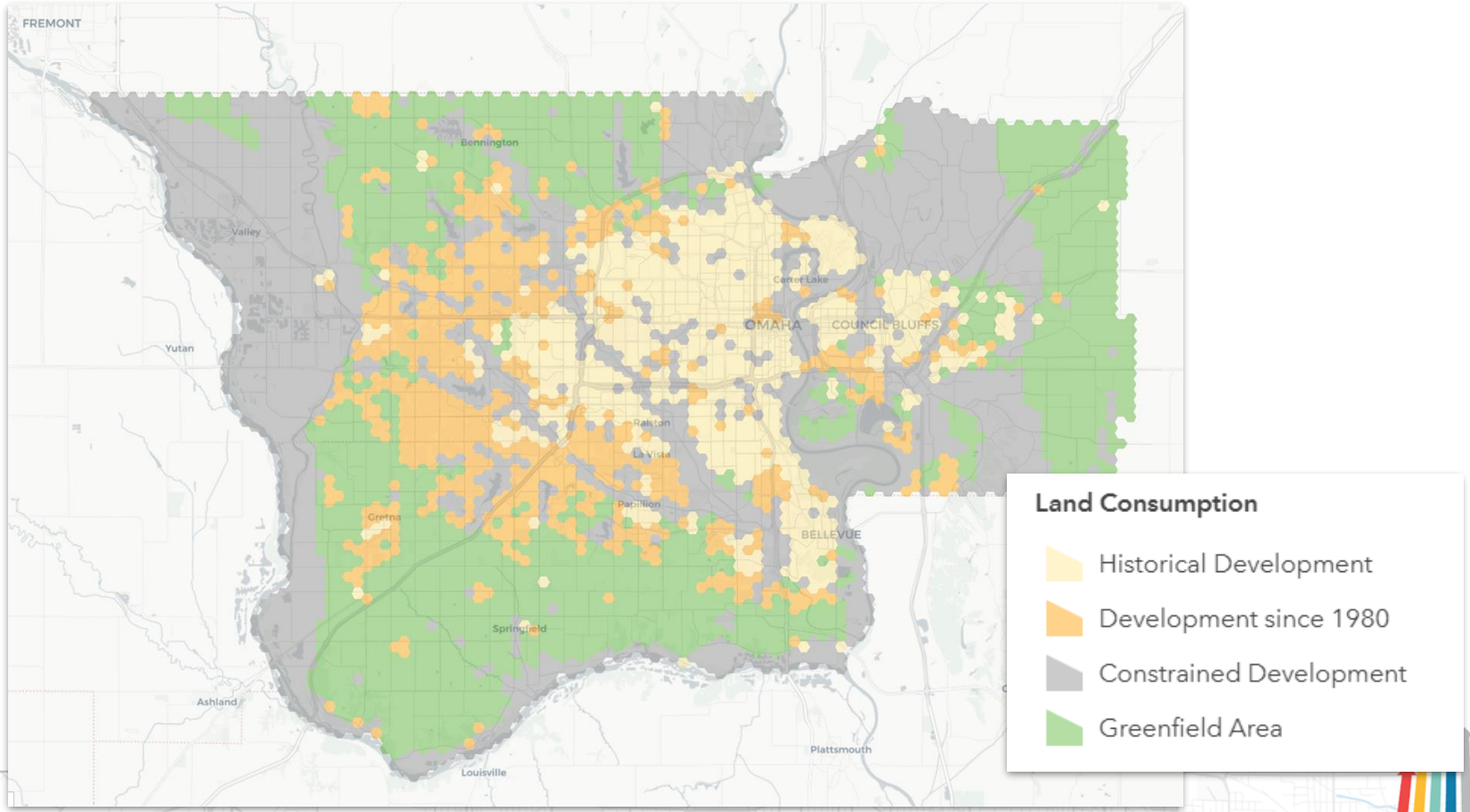
ANOTHER
OMAHA
in developed land area

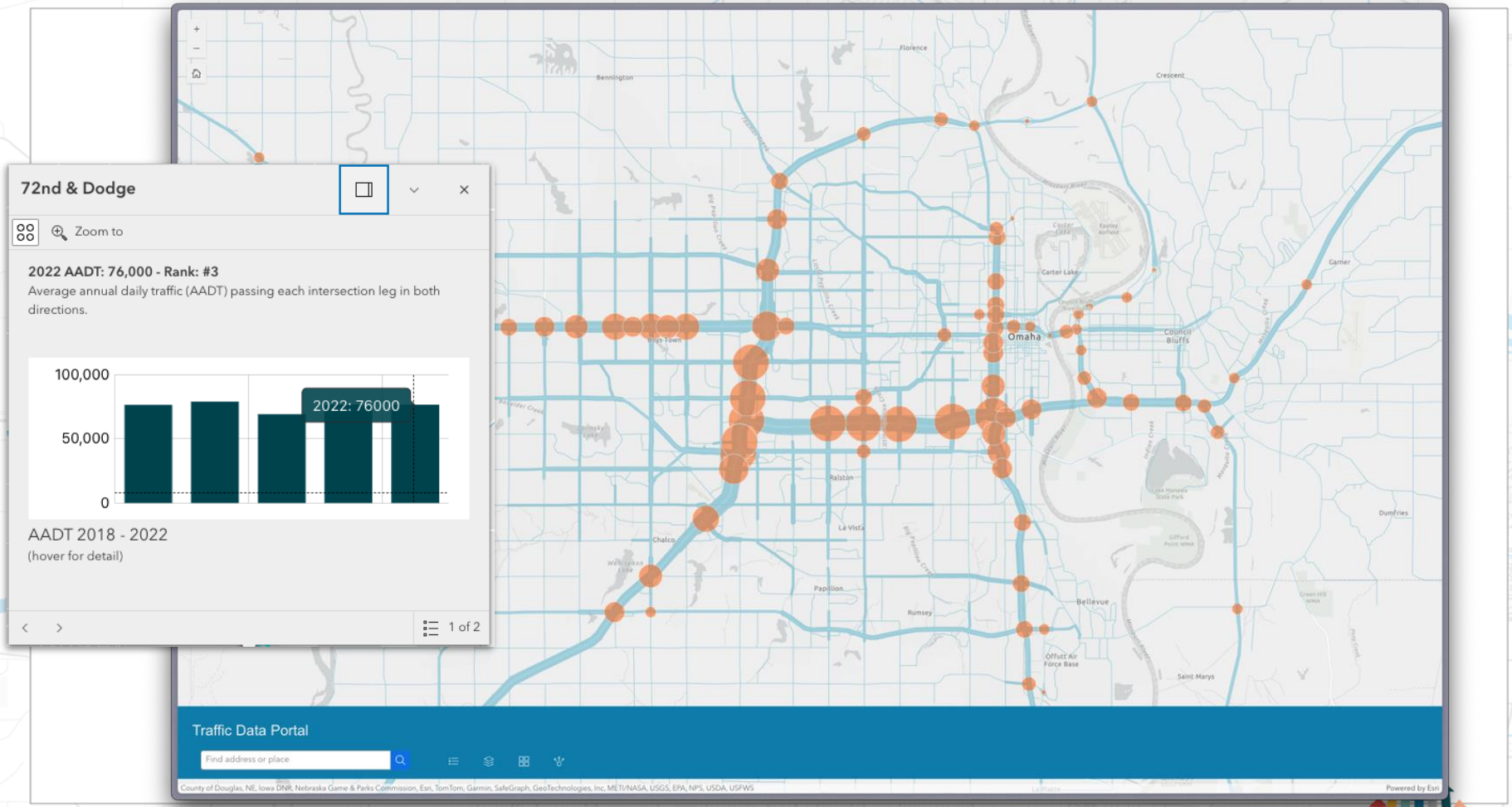
$1.3B
projected budget shortfall

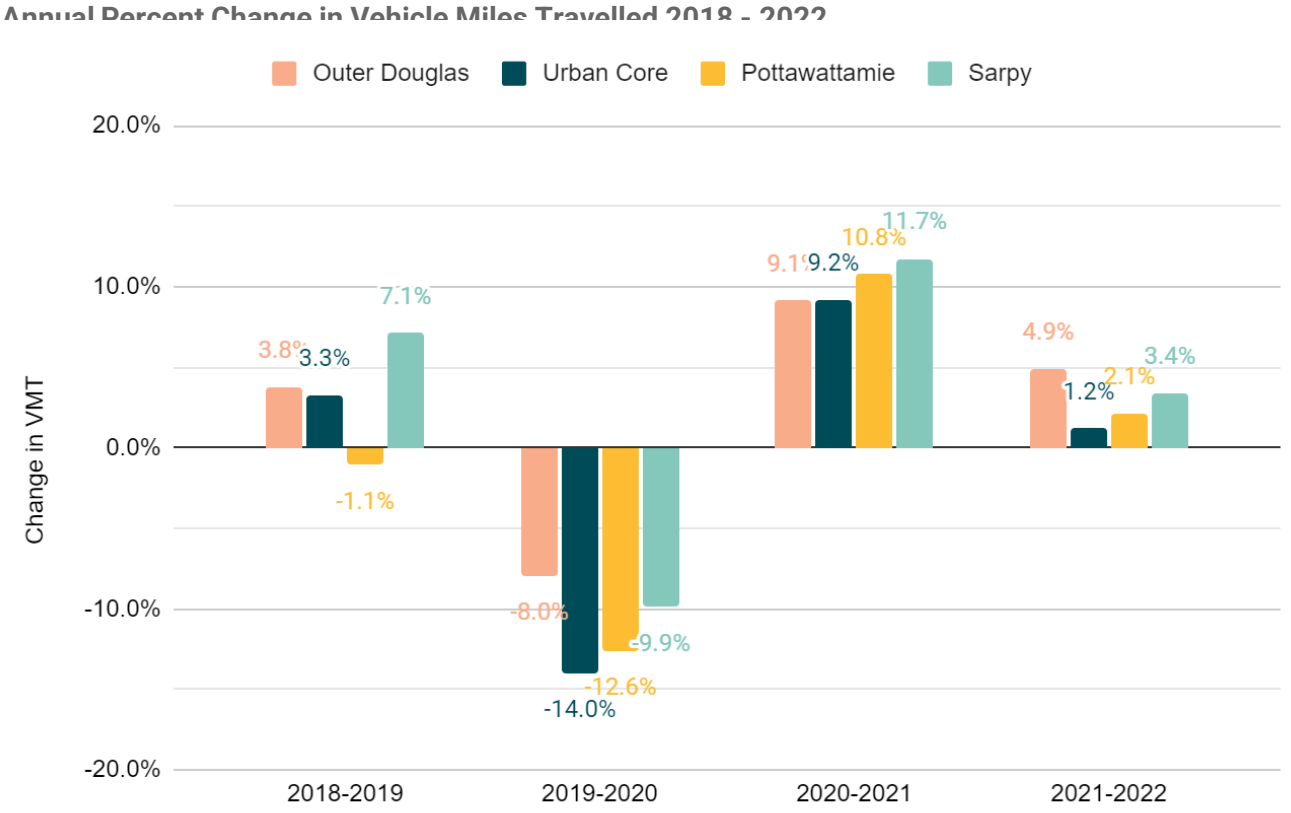
Heartland 2050
Heartland2050.org

CLOSE THE **gap**

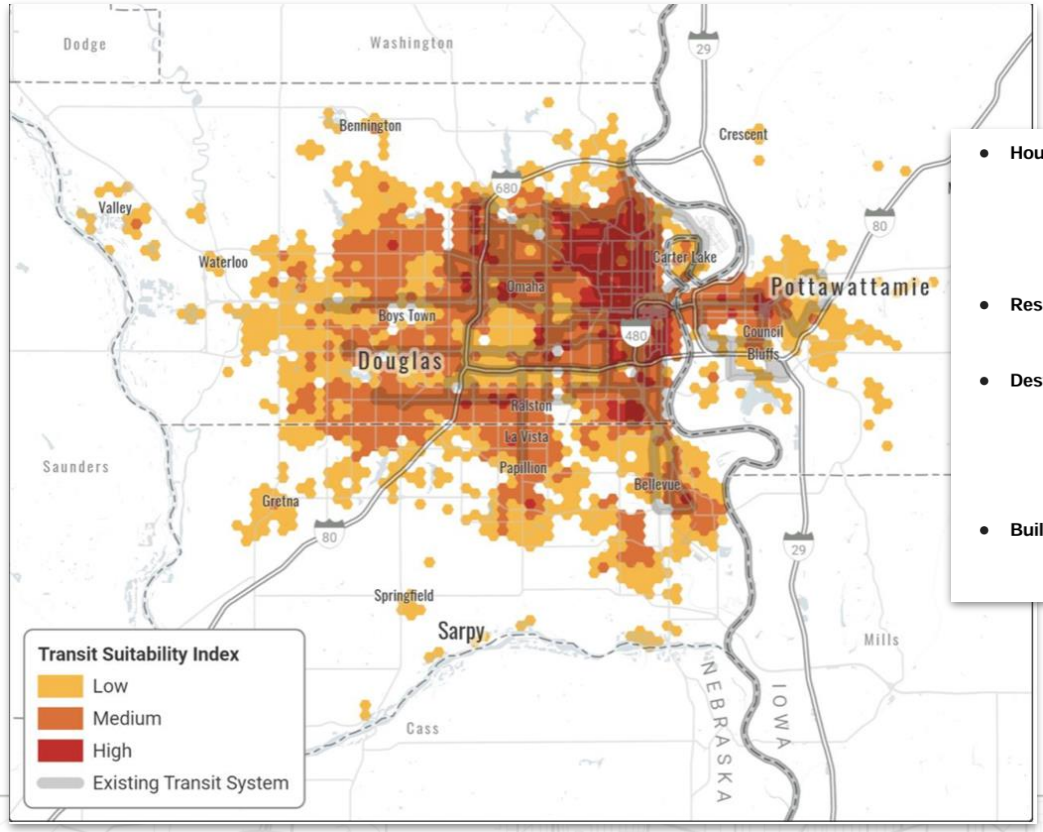
A clear plan for a more walkable, livable region


FREMONT
Bennington
Valley
Yutan
Center Lake
OMAHA
COUNCIL BLUFFS
Ralston
La Vista
Papillion
Gretna
BELLEVUE
Springfield
Ashland
Louisville
Plattsmouth
Land Consumption
Historical Development
Development since 1980
Constrained Development
Greenfield Area


72nd & Dodge
Zoom to
2022 AADT: 76,000 - Rank: #3
Average annual daily traffic (AADT) passing each intersection leg in both directions.
100,000
50,000
0
2022: 76000
AADT 2018 - 2022
(hover for detail)
1 of 2
Traffic Data Portal
Find address or place
Florence
Bennington
Crescent
Carter Lake
Omaha
Council Bluffs
Garner
Boys Town
Ralston
La Vista
Chalco
Papillion
Rumsey
Bellevue
Offutt Air Force Base
Saint Marys
Dunfries
County of Douglas, NE, Iowa DNR, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS
Powered by Esri


Annual Percent Change in Vehicle Miles Travelled 2018 - 2022
Outer Douglas
Urban Core
Pottawattamie
Sarpy
Change in VMT
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
-10.0%
-20.0%
3.8%
3.3%
-1.1%
7.1%
-8.0%
-14.0%
-12.6%
-9.9%
9.1%
9.2%
10.8%
11.7%
4.9%
1.2%
2.1%
3.4%
2018-2019
2019-2020
2020-2021
2021-2022

Transit Suitability Index | Metro Transit



- **Household Characteristics (30 Points)**
  - Low income population (10%)
  - Minority Population (5%)
  - Households with more workers than vehicles (5%)
  - Households without a vehicle (5%)
  - Population with a disability (5%)
- **Residential Density (30 Points)**
  - Existing Population Density (25%)
  - Future Population Density (5%)
- **Destination Density (25 Points)**
  - Existing employment Density (10%)
  - Future employment Density (5%)
  - Essential employment areas (5%)
  - Presence of other major destinations (retail, entertainment, airport, universities, hospitals, public services, etc) (5%)
- **Built Environment (15 Points)**
  - Existing Sidewalk/Trail Connectivity (10%)
  - Future Bike/Trail network (5%)

ORBT | Transit-Oriented Development

Transit Return on Investment Study

21%

of transit commuters report they could not get to work without transit

Our Growth Impacts the Bottom Line

SPRAWL

$13 BILLION

» Spread out development built at lower densities results in higher infrastructure costs.

H2050

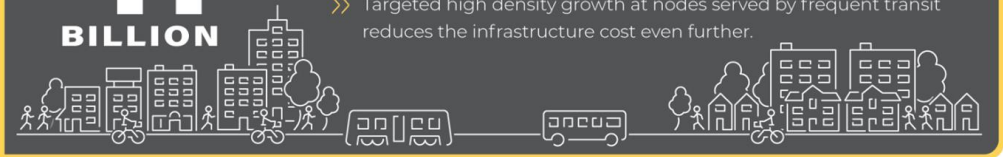
$12 BILLION

» The Heartland 2050 vision prioritizes compact growth and more re-development which results in a lower infrastructure cost.

TOD

$11 BILLION

» Targeted high density growth at nodes served by frequent transit reduces the infrastructure cost even further.



It's **not** an "all or nothing" decision for communities

H2050

1/5

of new development

in redevelopment areas.

TARGETED TOD

1/3

of new development

in redevelopment areas.