

FACTSHEET

TITLE: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 05015, by the Director of Planning, adopting the proposed "***Downtown Master Plan***" as a recognized subarea plan in the 2025 Lincoln/Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan.

SPONSOR: Planning Department

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Planning Commission
Public Hearing: 08/31/05
Administrative Action: 08/31/05

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with three amendments (9-0: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand voting 'yes').

FINDINGS:

1. The Master Plan area generally extends from approximately 6th Street on the west to approximately 17th Street on the east, and from approximately H Street on the south to approximately R Street on the north, and includes the "Haymarket District". The Master Plan also provides land use and development guidance for a portion of the area immediately to the east of Downtown, known as "Antelope Valley". The "*Downtown Master Plan*" document is being provided under separate cover.
2. The Downtown Master Plan is intended to serve as a guide for continuing private and public sector endeavors and to provide a basis for reviewing future development proposals, both public and private.
3. The staff recommendation of approval is based upon the "*Analysis*" as set forth on p.5-9, concluding that the proposed Downtown Master Plan is in conformance with the principles of the 2025 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan and should be amended into the Comprehensive Plan as an approved subarea plan. (Also see "Conclusion" on p.9-10).
4. The minutes of the public hearing before the Planning Commission are found on p.12-19, including the presentation by staff (p.12-13); testimony in support by seven individuals (p.14-16); and testimony in opposition by one individual (p.16). The main concern of the opposition was cost of implementation. Testimony in support included, among others, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce.
5. The amendments proposed by Richard Krueger are found on p.22.
6. The Planning Commission discussion with staff is found on p.16-17.
7. On August 31, 2005, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendation and voted 9-0 to recommend approval of the proposed Downtown Master Plan, with three amendments as follows:

Amendment #1: Show the properties at the southwest corner of 18th & Q Streets and on the south side of P Street between 18th and 19th Streets as "Office" as opposed to housing/residential (p.31).

Amendment #2: (p.38) Convention, Arena and Conference Center Framework

~~West Haymarket~~ Several locations in the Downtown offers a significant opportunity to provide arena, convention, and headquarters hotel facilities. A Mayor's Task Force study will be completed to provide guidance on the exact location.

Amendment #3: Change the designation of the property at 14th & O/P (the current location of Novel Idea Bookstore) from "new retail" to "existing retail".

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Jean L. Walker

DATE: September 12, 2005

REVIEWED BY: _____

DATE: September 12, 2005

REFFRNFCE NI IMRFR: F:\C:\2005\CPA 05015

LINCOLN /LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT
for August 31, 2005 Planning Commission Meeting

P.A.S.: Comprehensive Plan Amendment #05015
Downtown Master Plan

PROPOSAL: The Director of Planning requests to amend the 2025 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan to adopt the proposed “Downtown Master Plan” as a recognized subarea plan of the City-Comprehensive Plan.

CONCLUSION: The proposed Downtown Master Plan is in conformance with the principles of the 2025 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan and should be amended into the Comprehensive Plan as an approved subarea plan.

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| RECOMMENDATION: | Approval |
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GENERAL INFORMATION:

LOCATION:

“Downtown Lincoln” – This area generally extends from approximately 6th Street on the west to approximately 17th Street on the east, and from approximately H Street on the south to approximately R Street on the north, and includes the “Haymarket District.” The Master Plan also provides land use and development guidance for a portion of the area immediately to the east of Downtown known as “Antelope Valley.”

EXISTING LAND USE:

Significant diversity of existing land uses. The predominate land uses tend to be commercial (i.e., office, retail, services) in character, but the area also contains substantial elements of residential, institutional, governmental, educational, entertainment, parking, open space, and arts/cultural uses.

ASSOCIATED APPLICATIONS: None

HISTORY:

The community’s previous “Master Plan” for the Downtown Lincoln area was adopted by the Lincoln City Council over 30 years ago. This previous Plan – entitled the “Lincoln Center Development Program” – contained a multi-faceted set of development recommendations ranging from broad policy objectives to site specific projects.

The Plan’s 14-point implementation strategy identified nearly 140 potential downtown improvements. Some of the more notable examples include the conversion of the “Old Town District” (a.k.a., “Haymarket”) from an industrial/warehouse area into an entertainment and retail district; the retention of State government offices in the Downtown, including the construction of a new State Office Building; the establishment of a one-way system of streets; the construction of a

new performing arts center; the formulation of a program for upgrading streetscape appearance through landscaping and pedestrian-oriented lighting; the creation of an integrated parking program, including the building of the first publicly owned and operated parking structures; the development of a skywalk system to provide elevated weatherproof connections between office and retail activities; the revamping of the City's public transit services in the Downtown, including an expanded loop route system and provision of a Downtown shuttle service; the development of additional retailing space to support existing retail operations; the reuse of the Old City Hall and Post Office complex; and the first use of "tax increment financing" (TIF) for public improvements. The Plan was instrumental in bringing about significant redevelopment efforts in the Downtown area over the past several decades. The Plan's success is attributable in part of the community's willingness and desire to embrace and actively pursue the vision established by the Plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SPECIFICATIONS:

In the 2025 City-County Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Lincoln area is recognized as playing a salient role in the long term growth and development of the community. This relationship of Downtown to the overall success of Lincoln receives special acknowledgment as one of only six elements in the Comprehensive Plan's overall "Vision" statement:

Downtown Lincoln - The Heart of the Community

Downtown Lincoln belongs to all residents of Nebraska because "downtown" is synonymous with the University of Nebraska, state government, and the State capitol Building. This state-wide ownership have strong economic implications, and for that reason, as well as the desire to maintain downtown as the "heartbeat" of the community, the Comprehensive Plan will ensure that downtown remains a special place. The plan will seek to preserve vistas and institutions of cultural importance, to reinforce the district as a center of entertainment, and to promote a rich diversity of activities and uses, including housing, education, government, offices and commerce.

In the "Future Conditions - Business & Commerce" section of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan the continuing role of Downtown is explicitly spelled out in the following text:

Principles for Downtown

The City should preserve and enhance Downtown's role as:

- the major office and service emolument center of the City*
- the focus of all levels of government*
- the City's principal cultural and entertainment center*
- the hotel and convention center for the City*
- the City's financial center*
- a hub of higher education*
- specialty retail geared toward employees, area residents, convention visitors and University population*

Lincoln's successful Theater Policy must be maintained and reinforced. New entertainment attractions should be encouraged to locate in the Downtown.

The City's government center must remain Downtown. All efforts should be made to locate local, state, and federal offices Downtown when expansions and relocations are considered.

Support development and implementation of the Antelope Valley project which is to provide neighborhood revitalization, transportation and transit opportunities and storm water improvements on the east side of Downtown, the UNL campus and surrounding neighborhoods. As the Antelope Valley project progresses, ensure that new development is compatible with the existing Downtown and is pedestrian oriented. Development in the existing and expanded Downtown will maintain the urban environment, including a mix of land uses and residential types. Higher density development with parking areas at the rear of buildings or on upper floors of multi-use parking structures is encouraged.

There are numerous other references in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan to the Downtown area and its continuing function as a key subarea within the community. A sampling of these references are presented below:

Among existing Regional Centers, Downtown Lincoln stands as a unique community resource. Downtown is the county's most intensive center of activity, offering a broad mix of retail, office, industrial, residential, and governmental uses. It is home to numerous public facilities – including the Nebraska State Capitol, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's main campus, and the County-City Building – as well as private endeavors – including financing, insurance, and other business services. Downtown has historically served as the community's dominate center of entertainment. A key element to this role have been the long standing and successful "theater policy." This policy has allowed Downtown to retain an appreciable share of the area's movie theaters. It is intended that this policy would continued as part of the present Plan.

Encourage a variety of housing types in the Downtown and Antelope Valley area.

These districts attract large numbers of pedestrians on a regular basis. They include the Downtown (along with the main campus of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln), University Place, College View, and Havelock. Pedestrian level of service standards in these areas should be high. These areas should have direct, continuous sidewalks with safe street crossings. Visual interest and amenities should serve to attract people to these districts.

Strategies – Bicycles in the Downtown:

- Develop and implement a Downtown Bicycles Facilities Plan. This Plan shall include north-south and east-west bicycle lanes. Identify and Develop at least one north-south and one east-west corridor to pilot dedicated bike lanes within one year of the Downtown Bicycle Facilities Plan approval.*
- Work with the Downtown Lincoln Association, the Lincoln Public Works and Utilities Department, the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department, and other agencies interested in the creation of a Downtown Bicycle Facilities Plan.*

Strategies – Balances Transit System

- *Consider transit service supporting the Comprehensive Plan's Vision of Downtown as a diverse center of activity. Such transit service should aid within the Downtown and further the Downtown's role as an entertainment center.*

Travel between Lincoln and regional destinations (such as the Omaha metropolitan area) will increase during the planning period. The travel will include routine commuter trips as well as discretionary travel. . . .Planning and improvements might be considered to help promote and support the possibility of commuter rail for Lincoln beyond 2025. These strategies might include a multi-modal center in the Downtown area with immediate access to the existing rail service.

Downtown is the heart of our community, and strong community facilities are essential to maintaining Downtown vitality. The main library should remain Downtown, where it is pedestrian and transit accessible, serving and linking Downtown's housing, education, government, offices and commerce communities. Keeping the main library Downtown is important not only for downtown but for the surrounding historic neighborhoods and the city as a whole. Any future renovation and/or relocation plans must involves sites that maintain pedestrian and mass transit accessibility and continue the main library's role as a core community facility in traditional geographic Downtown.

ANALYSIS:

1. The purpose of the "Downtown Master Plan" is to depict in text and images a blueprint for ensuring the sustained economic, physical, and cultural vitality of Downtown Lincoln. The Plan contains a series of recommendations for maintaining and enhancing residential, retail, office, service, entertainment, public/governmental, transportation, and other uses and activities in the Downtown. The Plan recognizes the strong architectural and cultural heritage of the Downtown area and of the need to preserve its integrity for future generations. At the same time, the Plan sets forth development and redevelopment opportunities to ensure the area remains current with the community's evolving growth and development demands.
2. The Master Plan is designed to address Downtown's development potential for a period of approximately 25 to 30 years. The Plan lays out both near term "catalyst projects" – that call for immediate action – and significantly longer term efforts that will take years to bring to fruition. The Plan presents an overall vision of Downtown's relationship to the broader Lincoln community in a fashion paralleling the image painted in the adopted 2025 Comprehensive Plan.
3. The Master Plan was developed over a period of approximately one year, with the study effort beginning in the summer of 2004. During this time, four community workshops were held in the Downtown – each involved several hundred citizens. These events were designed to elicit the community's thoughts and ideas on how to guide Downtown's future.

During the course of the study, staff also conducted dozens of presentations to local business, neighborhood, and community groups to solicit their vision regarding Downtown.

4. The Plan's preparation was overseen by the "Downtown Action Team" (DAT.) This group was appointed by Lincoln Mayor Seng specifically for this study. The DAT was composed of 22 local area citizens represented a diversity of private, public, and not-for-profit concerns in and around the Downtown area. Staff support for the study was provided by the City-County Planning Department, Lincoln Urban Development Department, and the Downtown Lincoln Association. Professional consultant services were also employed during the study to provide crucial land use and transportation planning, market analysis, urban design, and implementation guidance.
5. The Master Plan's broadly based vision for Downtown reflects the unique and diverse character of the area and its environs. The Plan is intended to serve as a guide for continuing private and public sector endeavors and to provide a basis for reviewing future development proposals – both private and public. The vision of the Downtown area as expressed in the Plan includes the following:

- ! **Strengthening Private/Public Relationships:** Successful development in downtown areas necessitate a close working relationship between the private and public sectors. This is especially the case in Lincoln because of the traditional balance between private and public sector uses – particularly with the strong presence of State, Federal and local government facilities in the Downtown. Strengthen the private/public relationship is a primary goal of the Master Plan to ensure the long term success of the Plan's proposed projects and policies.
- ! **Retaining and Expanding Retailing Opportunities:** The presence of sustainable, diverse, and quality retailing is vital to making Downtown appealing to workers, residents, and visitors. The objective expressed in the Master Plan is to pursue a course which protects the viability of existing retail operations while seeking to expand opportunities for new retail. The market research analysis completed for the Master Plan study indicated a potential for about 600,000 sq. ft. of additional retailing capacity over the next twenty years – this projection is in addition to existing retail operations in the Downtown. A linchpin of the Plan's retailing strategy is fostering the development of additional retail capacity along the P Street corridor. The recommended strategy will serve to create an attractive retail experience for Downtown shoppers as well as link the core Downtown with the Haymarket District, with its existing complement of shops, restaurants, and cultural attractions.
- ! **Expanding Residential Choices:** Growth in Downtown's housing market has been extremely positive over the last several years. Research conducted for the Master Plan study indicates a continuation of this affirmative housing market with a projected absorption of around 2,000 units over the next two decades. With this expanding Downtown residential market there is also the need to provide greater diversity in housing stock so that the needs of renters and owners can both be met.

- ! **Sustaining Architectural and Historic Character:** Lincoln's Downtown has a long and storied architectural legacy, accentuated by the world-renowned State Capitol Building designed by New York Architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. The Master Plan embraces the goal of affirming and furthering the historic character of Downtown buildings and structures by ensuring their long term economic and functional viability. The Master Plan calls for a sensitivity to the architectural history in the Downtown as the area evolves to meet current and future development requirements. This includes acknowledging the role of existing public commissions, adopted plans, and design standards governing the evolving architectural character of Downtown.

- ! **Expanding and Efficiently Managing Public Parking Services:** Parking plays a critical role in attracting and keeping Downtown development viable. The supply, location, pricing, and management of public parking – off- and on-street – are all central to the “parking experience” of Downtown workers, visitors, and residents. The Plan recognizes the importance of parking to all who use Downtown and offers recommendations on ensuring its place in the future of the area.

- ! **Contribute to Community’s Economic and Jobs Expansion:** Downtown is one of the community’s primary generators of economic vitality. The Downtown is home to thousands of employees each work day and is an attractive location for businesses seeking opportunities for personal and commercial interaction in an urban-style environment. The presence of State government, the University of Nebraska, Federal Courts and other governmental, institutional, and educational entities furthers this economic foundation. The Plan foresees expanding opportunities for job growth in the office and service sectors.

- ! **Create Active Civic/Public Spaces:** Downtown furnishes a variety of existing open space venues which are enjoyed by Downtown employees, residents, and patrons. With projected increases in employment, residential units, shopping, services, and entertainment in the Downtown, the virtue of additional civic and public space will be magnified. The Plan sees multiple opportunities for enhancing the Downtown’s public spaces through the creation of a Civic Square at 13th and P Streets, linear green ways manifested through “promenades” along public rights-of-way, and planned and newly proposed recreational spaces flanking the Downtown.

- ! **Affirm Education, Cultural and Entertainment Contribution:** Downtown is home to a diverse complement of educational, cultural, and entertainment venues. On Downtown’s northern doorstep resides the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s flagship campus, which offers a world-class higher education experience. UNL provides a deep stock of cultural opportunities, not only for their thousands of students, instructors and support staff but also for the broader community. Movie theaters, live performing arts events, art galleries, museums, and other cultural and entertainment activities are routinely held in Downtown Lincoln. The Master Plan presents strategies for encouraging the continuance and expansion of such events by maintaining key policies and identifying venues for holding these activities and by bolstering the visibility and attractiveness to all members of the Lincoln community. This includes siting areas for festival events, retaining high-quality library services in the Downtown, support the continuation and enhancement of existing museums (e.g.,

Children’s Museum and Nebraska State History Museum), and pursuing convention, conference, and sports venues that further the interests of the entire community.

- ! **Attract Visitors and Tourists:** Visitors to Lincoln contribute millions of dollars each year to the local economy. Tourism is an important economic force which needs to be aggressively pursued and actively supported. Downtown Lincoln offers the greatest single concentration and diversity of tourist attractions in the entire county. The existing concentration of hotel and convention space in the Downtown aid to this economic vitality. The Master Plan sets a vision that calls for support from across the Lincoln community to retain the existing investment in these tourist attractions and supporting facilities, as well as logically and systematically expanding the attractions in order to capture large portions of this travel regional market for the benefit of the city and county as a whole.

- ! **Respect Adjacent Districts:** Downtown Lincoln is not an island. While it has traditionally recognized edges, Downtown Lincoln’s land uses blend into the residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional zones which skirt its flanks. A healthy, positive symbiotic relationship between the Downtown and its neighbors is critical to the long term viability of all these areas. The Master Plan recognizes the importance of these relationships and offers development strategies for managing their long term success. Of particular note, the study process took care to address the development relationship between Downtown and the Antelope Valley project area to the east. Antelope Valley stands as one of Lincoln’s largest public infrastructure and redevelopment efforts of all time. It will significantly reduce the breadth of the Antelope Creek floodplain as it approaches Salt Creek and will open up new development opportunities along Antelope Creek. The project also involves the construction of a major network of arterial streets across the center of the community. The Downtown Master Plan represents the balancing of land uses and development densities between the two areas, most notable for the area east of 17th Street running to Antelope Creek.

- ! **Further Transportation Opportunities for the Downtown:** Well planned and operated transportation systems to, from, through, and within a downtown are an important part of what makes urban cores successful. The Master Plan process examined a number of non-traditional transportation and mobility concerns for Downtown Lincoln including pedestrian movement, public transportation, and bicycle facility needs. The final Plan contains recommendations regarding the near-term installation of on-street bicycle lanes, pedestrian enhancements, and a revamping of downtown transit shuttle services. These improvements are intended to balance the respective contributions of these various modes with the omnipresent automobile. These recommendations seek to advance pedestrian and bicyclist safety, create a more pedestrian/bicycle friendly environment, and actualize a mobility paradigm consistent with the character of an urban core.

- ! **Promote Desirable Urban Design:** While not a part of the Master Plan document, the Plan’s study process crafted a set of Downtown “Designed Guidelines” intended to aid the Plan’s implementation. These guidelines look at the more detailed physical manifestation of the Plan’s vision by addressing the character of the

Downtown (including its historical and architectural legacy), pedestrian orientation (including streetscape and outdoor spaces), architectural integrity, lighting objectives, and signage guideposts.

6. The Master Plan includes basic, long term guidance for making land use development decisions. The Plan's "Land Use Framework" casts a broad image of how the Downtown could develop over the next several decades to achieve the vision presented in the Plan. This Land Use Framework is intended to give overall guidance to the community on how Downtown should develop – it is not intended to be prescriptive but rather descriptive in nature. It is understood that events will occur over the life-span of the Master Plan which moderate, alter, or redirect certain development objectives and concepts embodied in the Plan. This built-in flexibility is highly desirable in that it allows for unanticipated events (i.e., be they matters of timing, location, development intensity, infrastructure improvements, etc.) to unfold and take hold within an overall planning framework and implementation process.
7. The Downtown Master Plan respects and recognizes the planning endeavors – past and present – which consider or govern development within subregions of the Downtown. Such standing groups – i.e., the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission, the Urban Design Committee, and Historic Preservation Commission – are key players in setting the future for Downtown. These groups and their work are considered integral to the implementation process and must be fully engaged by staff and the community as the Master Plan's implementation moves forward.
8. Simply put, the successful implementation of the Master Plan will require earnest leadership, the community's commitment and dedication to the Plan's vision, diligence on the part of stakeholders and staff, cooperation among the many participants, and, inevitably, money. The Master Plan charts the organizational responsibilities for seeking the Plan's implementation. This includes a listing of key players and their tasks for bringing the Plan into reality. An inventory of potential funding sources is also identified in the Plan. This inventory recognizes that innovative and creative thought will be required to assemble the correct balance of public and private sector funding needed to bring about the community's vision for Downtown.
9. A series of "Catalyst Projects" are detailed in the Plan's implementation section for early development. These seven projects embody the initial spirit required to effectively launch the implementation process. The projects include a diverse set of public and private sector initiatives that begin to lay the foundation for projects which could logically follow. The Catalyst Projects include potential public/civic space at 13th and P Streets, along with the development of a mixed used facility involving decked parking, retail, hotel, and/or residential uses. Some of the Catalyst Projects are modest in scale and will move quickly, while others are more formidable and will require some period of time to bring about.

CONCLUSION:

Downtown remains a key determinant in defining the quality of Lincoln's economic, social, educational, cultural, and development future expressed in the 2025 City-County Comprehensive Plan. Within this context, the Downtown Master Plan effectively articulates the goals and policy objectives contained in the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

The Master Plan provides applicable guidance for the continued planning and on-going development processes for the Downtown area and the community as a whole. Moreover, the Master Plan lends meaningful and sufficient direction for crafting implementation programs by city departments.

The Master Plan's programmatic and policy details need to be further integrated with the concepts, visions, and approaches contained in the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted planning and documents. This integration will take time and thoughtful design. Moreover, additional studies and program assessments will likely need to occur to refine and unfurl the concepts embedded in the Downtown Master Plan. These may include the analysis of selected issues dealing with transportation (i.e., new and/or improved streets, public transit services, parking supply and management, pedestrian enhancements, multi-modal facilities, etc.), evolving retail market segments, growth in housing demand, and other applicable Downtown land uses.

All in all, the community has an opportunity through the Master Plan to craft a distinctive and unique subarea that supports Lincoln's broader growth objectives. The Master Plan's vision for the Downtown includes a robust mix of residential, retail, office, service, entertainment, educational, public, open space, and other uses that is appropriately scaled for the subarea and for the regional marketplace.

RECOMMENDATION:

Amend the 2025 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan as follows:

1. Amend the "On-Going Comprehensive Plan Activities", section on page F 156 to add the following Plan to the list of approved subarea plans.
 - Downtown Master Plan, 2005

Prepared by:

Kent Morgan
Assistant Director of Planning

DATE: August 24, 2005

APPLICANT: Marvin S. Krout, Director of Planning
City-County Planning Department
555 S. 10th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 441-7491

CONTACT : Kent Morgan
City-County Planning Department
(402) 441-7491
kmorgan@lincoln.ne.gov

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 05015 “DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN”

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

August 31, 2005

Members present: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand.

Staff recommendation: Approval.

Ex Parte Communications: None.

Proponents

1. Kent Morgan, Assistant Director of Planning, presented the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment to incorporate “by reference” the proposed Downtown Master Plan document. Not included in this amendment are the draft “Design Guidelines” for Downtown. Those guidelines are being processed separately and are not part of this Master Plan adoption process.

Morgan went on to state that this Master Plan is the first true “Master Plan” for Downtown Lincoln in over 30 years. This Plan will help guide development and investment decisions for years to come. The Plan offers a long term vision respectful of Downtown’s historical and architectural legacy, while recognizing Downtown’s role in meeting our growth objectives for the 21st century.

This Master Plan is about balance, flexibility, cooperation, and the inevitability of change. The Plan crafts a broad vision using policies, projects, and processes to balance the diversity of Downtown interests. The Plan is flexible in its design. It acknowledges the long term character of the development process and the need to adapt to evolving situations. The Plan embraces a spirit of cooperation. Relationships in Downtown are perhaps more synergistic than in any other part of the city. The Plan urges existing and future commissions, organizations, institutions, businesses, and other interests to remain active in the Plan’s fulfillment. It seeks support for the “common good” founded on a sense of mutual respect. And lastly, the Plan accepts the inevitability of change. This may not be a popular notion but is a realistic one. Today’s Downtown is not the same Downtown as it was in 1974 when the last Master Plan was adopted; nor was that Downtown the same as it was in 1944. Downtowns are not stagnate areas. They must evolve to thrive or they will not long survive.

Morgan pointed out that the Plan is the product of many individuals and organizations.

Four community workshops were held, with 200 to 300 people attending each session.

A 22-member Downtown Action Team, appointed by the Mayor, oversaw work on the study. The Plan was discussed with dozens of groups – many two, three, or four times.

Part of the Plan’s foundation is a market analysis of the greater Lincoln area prepared by the research firm of ERA. ERA projects that over the next 20+ years, Downtown can support an additional two million square feet of office space; 600,000 square feet of retail space; 2,000 new dwelling units; and 1,000 new hotel rooms. While these figures may sound ambitious, they are

consistent with recent local trends. Over the last 15 years, Downtown's inventory of total occupied space has increased by nearly two million sq. ft., pushing Downtown's current occupied space to nearly 13 million square feet.

Other key themes in the Plan include:

--Strengthening Private-Public Relationships - The ultimate success of Downtown resides in strong, affirmative, and lasting relationships between the public and private sectors. The same characteristic giving Downtown its uniqueness – namely, its diversity of interests and land uses – is what can make the Plan successful. We must all work toward common goals that ultimately benefit everyone.

--Retaining and Expanding Retailing Opportunities – Downtown Lincoln has a hardy, thriving contingent of retail establishments. The Plan looks to add to this success by expanding the market for Downtown retailing. It's not about replacing success; it's about creating a strategic model that adds to the retail dollars spent in Downtown.

--Building onto the Existing Residential Base – Downtown living is alive and well, and is on the brink of a period of accelerated growth. The 2,000 new dwelling units projected over the next 20 years is realistic if we create an affordable and diverse housing stock, and if we provide the neighborhood amenities Downtown residents can reasonably expect.

--Sustaining Downtown's Past – This Plan embraces the historical and architectural legacy of Downtown Lincoln. It affirms the role Downtown has played and will continue to play as a focus for government, private economic development, education, culture, and entertainment. Respecting the past is paramount – and this lies at the foundation of the Plan.

--Contributing Jobs to Our City's Economy – Downtown is one of our community's largest economic generators. With the addition of nearly three million square feet of occupied office, service, and retail growth, the Plan will expand our City's wealth by adding a diverse range of jobs and business opportunities for all generations

--Respecting Adjacent Districts – The proposed Plan values the histories and the futures of the neighborhoods and institutions which flank Downtown. It supports their continued health by creating a vigorous urban core contributing to the long term viability of these neighborhoods and institutions.

Morgan noted that there are some minor map revisions that will need to be made before this amendment proceeds to the City Council.

Esseks noted the mention of the benefit of jobs downtown. For what other reasons do we think people living in the far northeast, southeast and southwest areas of the city will support the Downtown program. Morgan suggested that the Downtown does generate both economic wealth as well as agricultural and social wealth that helps all of us across the community. Everyone in the community benefits in the long term by the activities that do occur Downtown, just like the activities that occur in suburban areas.

2. Cecil Steward, 125 N. 11th Street, testified in support. He was Co-chairman of the Downtown Action Team (DAT) that had been appointed by the Mayor and charged to oversee the development of this Master Plan. This proposal represents a community-made perspective of the future of Lincoln. It is exciting, innovative and relevant to both the history of Lincoln and the context of our place and our future. It is challenging, but it is doable, and, it is eminently timely – and urgent – that we begin the hard work of implementation now.

The DAT was comprised of twenty outstanding citizens who represent a broad cross-section of downtown and community stakeholders (the list of the DAT membership was submitted). The DAT conducted four community workshops plus numerous stakeholder meetings and focus groups.

As a key component of the Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Master Plan will begin to have an impact on the entire plan and, in turn, all other aspects of the Comprehensive Plan will begin to influence the implementation strategies for the Downtown Plan. This is the plan for economic growth for Lincoln. This will make Lincoln a force for equity in the region. For those who already take pride in and want even more features of Lincoln's clean, distinctive, and workable urban characteristics, this is your plan. This is a plan of more choices for housing and urban village walkable lifestyles in contrast to the auto-dominated suburban development at the edge. This plan is a perspective for balanced growth, a sustainable strong core, tremendous development and economic opportunity, and a bright, distinctive future for the city of Lincoln.

3. The owner of **A Novel Idea Book Store**, 118 North 14th Street, testified, indicating that she has contacted the Planning Department and has been assured that the building in which her bookstore is located will be designated "existing retail" as opposed to "new retail". The retail component of this plan is very important to be implemented in order to provide for a cohesive retail environment. Other cities have a central retail district. Through this plan we have the opportunity to create such an environment in Downtown Lincoln.

4. Ed Swotek, 5340 W. McKelvie Road, Sr. Vice-President in charge of investor relations and corporate strategic planning with Tier One Bank and member of the DAT, testified in support. Part of his responsibility at Tier One is to help in the development of new offices in the growth of their company. Tier One has made quite a significant investment at 12th & N, and chose Downtown Lincoln as its headquarters almost a century ago. Tier One continues to choose Downtown Lincoln as its corporate headquarters because this is the heart of the community. When putting together the Tier One corporate strategic plan, they begin with a team in drafting a vision, then go to a concept, then a plan and then implementation. Downtown Lincoln is no different. The Master Plan is a vision for an even greater Downtown. Like a business, Downtown must position itself to be competitive, to stimulate investment and to encourage development. This visionary plan provides that private sector with confidence and insurance of a long term focus on Downtown. This signals to Lincoln and those throughout the country of the continued commitment to Downtown and support for its future vitality. Lincoln is changing, and we have to be adaptable to that change and visionary to continue to look forward for a strong Downtown. This plan is a vision – not a specific blueprint – with a lot of flexibility. It provides an essential framework, structure and focus on where we want to position ourselves as a progressive Downtown for the future. The Downtown is a heart of the community. It is a window to the soul of a city. It is also a city's front door. To continue to grow and be vibrant you have to have a healthy heart, and that is important for Downtown. The Planning

Commission's support of Downtown over the last several years has been outstanding and he urged the Commission to move this Downtown Master Plan forward. It is Lincoln's future.

5. Michelle Waite, Assistant to Chancellor Perlman of UNL, testified in strong support. She also served as a member of the DAT. She has worked in public policy for many, many years involving consensus building and negotiating, and this process has been one of the most inclusive she has ever been involved with. She advised that UNL is also undertaking a similar process in updating their master plan. Crandall-Arambula and various city staff have worked hard to integrate many of UNL's concepts and desires in this plan. It has been a true partnership. This plan and the UNL plan share a common vision which creates a safe, welcoming and attractive environment.

Specifically, UNL finds that the civic square and the many pedestrian elements are very attractive. The back-in parking concept is acceptable and UNL has offered to be used as a test for this concept. They are continuing to discuss certain areas of the plan as it relates to R Street. This Master Plan and UNL have common goals: pedestrian safety, bicycle traffic, parking, and maintenance of green space. She also noted that the plan provides the flexibility needed to fine-tune certain areas.

Bills-Strand inquired whether there are other communities utilizing the back-in parking. Waite observed that there were several cities used as examples. It is a much more safe type of parking situation. The Chancellor was very intrigued and the University has offered to be used as a test area.

Esseks inquired whether there has been any discussion about the University using the proposed convention facility. Waite indicated that there has been such discussion. They are monitoring the situation; however, the University has made no commitment. The Athletic Department prides themselves into being self-supporting, so any additional debt would have to be taken into consideration.

6. Jeff Gierhan, Commercial Property Manager for US Property, testified in support. US Property recently moved Downtown after 35 years at a previous location, being now at 1320 P Street. Since moving Downtown, the Company has doubled in size. He suggested that the Downtown Master Plan is going to have a huge impact on his company's future as well as the future of Downtown.

7. Rick Krueger, appeared on his own behalf and submitted proposed amendments to the Master Plan. He stated that he is in favor of the back-in parking concept. He suggested that P Street should be made a two-way street to support the retail along that corridor.

Amendment #1: On behalf of AV L.L.C., Krueger requested that its properties be removed from the "housing" framework portion of this Plan. These properties are at the southwest corner of 18th & Q Streets and on the south side of P Street between 18th and 19th Streets (p.31). Krueger would prefer that these properties not be shown as future urban housing on the maps in the plan.

Amendment #2: Krueger requested that the following affirmative statement be inserted on page 12 of the Implementation Program: "For purposes of site assembly, the City of Lincoln

will not use its powers of eminent domain to transfer property from one private owner to another”.

Amendment #3: Krueger requested that the items in the Master Plan that anticipate and call for additional design standards and plan review be deleted. These are primarily on page 13 of the Implementation Program and the whole of the Design Guidelines section. He understands that the design guidelines are not coming forward at this time.

8. Bruce Bohrer, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, advised that the Chamber of Commerce Steering Committee has passed a resolution in support. To the extent that the plan identifies the location for an events center, the Chamber believes such a designation should wait until the Mayor’s Task Force has completed their work.

Opposition

1. Richard Esquivel, 733 W. Cuming, testified in opposition. He attended one of the meetings and left with questions which have not yet been answered:

--How is Lincoln and the county going to finance this project?

--The plan proposes to remove Douglas Theaters at 13 and P and make that a green area. If it is a green area owned by the city, how much tax revenue will be lost?

--There is to be a hotel or parking garage where Starship 9 is now located. How are we going to finance it?

--As far as the potential for a Convention Center, he pointed out that just this past week, the newspaper reported that Omaha’s convention center has not drawn the conventions they were hoping for, so how will Lincoln benefit by having a convention center?

--The development downtown should be private. If tax incentives are granted, how much tax revenue will the city lose over a period of time? Will they grant tax incentives to other areas?

--How much is this going to cost the taxpayers?

Staff questions

Bills-Strand commented that she was surprised to see the primary site for the convention center being identified as the Haymarket. She also notes that it suggests modifying Pershing to a festival space area but does not address what we’re going to do with Pershing. She believes the Plan should be modified to allow the other study group to come forward. There is some question as to whether the Post Office can move. She asked whether staff would be comfortable leaving that out at this point and waiting for the study. Morgan stated that the staff is more comfortable going forward with what has been shown now for some time. This study was delayed until the CSL study was completed. This is conceptual. Our preference is to retain what is in the Plan with the recognition that as other events unfold we may make modifications. In terms of public dialogue, we

believe it is reasonable to move forward. With regard to Pershing, the Plan does talk about it as a possible re-use site for the Library, and the Library Board voted in favor of that. This is at least a good starting point. For right now, what is in the Plan is perfectly acceptable and can move ahead. Changes can be made in the future.

Bills-Strand asked whether Krueger's proposed Amendment #1 is acceptable. Morgan stated that they do need to work out the potential use and he would be comfortable making that change.

Bills-Strand inquired about changes to the CIP to implement this Plan, noting that currently, the CIP projects are mainly Antelope Valley and now we're going to have to fight for the funding we have. We are 200 million dollars behind in infrastructure for the rest of the community outside of Antelope Valley and Downtown. Downtown does not pay impact fees. What happens to all of the development that is trying to get things done to continue growth to help pay for all of this? Where are those impact fees going to be spent? Rick Peo of the City Law Department advised that impact fees have to be spent in the benefit district from which the impact fee is required. The city is set up in zones of benefit districts. It can be spent on projects in that district where the impact fee was paid. Impact fees are not spent in the Downtown. Obviously, the CIP is a matter of priority. Projects are going to come and go as to their priority but obviously, if there is lack of funding, it becomes difficult to do the prioritization for funding. Bills-Strand inquired whether approving this Plan makes a commitment to transfer dollars in the CIP away from other areas to the Downtown. Peo advised that this is only a subarea plan in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is not a binding document. The City Council is not bound by the Comprehensive Plan in making decisions on the CIP. The Comprehensive Plan is a guide. It does not mandate anything.

With regard to the Krueger amendment regarding eminent domain authority, Peo does not believe that belongs in the plan at all. Eminent domain is a state law. It might be a policy decision by the administration as to how to use the power but it should not be put in this plan as a binding statement.

Esseks inquired about the advantage of adopting this plan now if it does not bind the future decision makers. Morgan agreed that this proposed Plan, as well as the Comprehensive Plan, are not binding in the sense that "you have to do it". It is not forcing anyone to do anything. It basically sets forth things we would like to accomplish. It begins to identify issues. This simply gives us a framework within which to work. It behooves us to look to the future. There is nothing binding. It gives direction and guidance.

Carlson inquired about inserting a bullet point that mentions the ongoing work of the existing committee on the events center. Morgan stated that he is not that familiar with what that committee is doing and that would be a decision of the Commission; however, Morgan believes that the flexibility is built into the Plan.

Morgan agreed that the issue of eminent domain is a broad policy issue for the city to deal with which should not be in the Master Plan.

Morgan also pointed out that Page 19 refers to making every effort to grandfather any existing use. We want to be respectful of those who invest in Downtown. There will be an attempt to keep any business in place that wants to remain there and operational.

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

August 31, 2005

Larson moved approval, as proposed, seconded by Pearson.

Bills-Strand moved to amend:

--adopting Amendment #1 requested by Rick Krueger regarding the property at the southwest corner of 18th & Q Streets and on the south side of P Street between 18th and 19th Streets, designating the properties as office use; and

--to change the wording on page 38: ~~West Haymarket~~ Several locations in the Downtown offers a significant opportunity to provide arena, convention and headquarters hotel facilities. A Mayor's Task Force study will be completed to provide guidance on the exact location.

The motion to amend was seconded by Sunderman.

Bills-Strand pointed out that there is a task force that is working hard and she does not want to tell them we have made a decision on the location. She understands this may be a wonderful location but it may be the most expensive location because the post office could be one of the biggest hurdles. She wants the task force to do their work.

Pearson noted that staff indicated that there were specific areas that needed to be changed on the maps so she does not feel comfortable making a specific change for Mr. Krueger and not including the Novel Idea Book Store. She believes that staff will take any inaccuracies into consideration.

Pearson moved to split the question, seconded by Esseks and carried 9-0: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand voting 'yes'.

Motion to amend to incorporate Krueger Amendment #1: Bills-Strand stated that she was not intending to leave anyone out. The Novel Idea Book Store owner stated that she was told her issue was being taken care of and that is why she did not include that. Marvin Krout, Director of Planning, suggested that both amendments are acceptable and possibly the Novel Idea Book Store should be a separate amendment.

Motion to amend to incorporate Krueger Amendment #1, designating office use as opposed to housing, carried 9-0: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand voting 'yes'.

Motion to amend, changing the language concerning the Convention, Arena and Conference Center Framework as set forth above carried 9-0: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand voting 'yes'.

Pearson moved to amend the designation on the Novel Idea Book Store property from "new retail" to "existing retail", seconded by Carroll. Pearson stated that she is real hesitant to do this because she thought the whole purpose was that it was a flexible document and that it could be edited and be useful, and now we're talking about tiny parcels and very specific uses. She is hoping that other

businesses who are not here today who have similar problems will come forward and be addressed equitably as well. Motion to amend carried 9-0: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand voting 'yes'.

Discussion on the main motion for approval, as amended:

Bills-Strand reiterated her concern for funding and she hopes we find a way to step up funding for the CIP.

Carroll expressed gratitude to the DAT, staff and consultants. He believes it is a great plan and great vision. It helps property owners downtown know where the city wants to go and he believes we will see more private development because of it.

Larson commented that looking around the country, virtually every good city has a good downtown and every rotten city has a rotten downtown. Lincoln has a special responsibility because we are the Capital City and visitors from throughout the state love to come to Downtown Lincoln. We need to make sure they continue to have pride in their Capital City.

Sunderman commented that as the city grows, the importance of a healthy downtown grows with it. We need a solid center.

Main motion for approval, as amended, carried 9-0: Esseks, Carroll, Taylor, Larson, Sunderman, Pearson, Krieser, Carlson and Bills-Strand voting 'yes'. This is a recommendation to the City Council.

TESTIMONY before the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Commission
DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

W. Cecil Steward, Co-chairman, Downtown Action Team (DAT)

8-31-05

There is a commercial on TV that says, "Your view of the future very much depends upon your perspective." What we bring to you today is a community-made perspective on the future of Lincoln. It is exciting, it is innovative, it is relevant to both the history of Lincoln and the context of our place and our future. It is challenging, but it is doable, and, it is eminently timely -- and urgent -- that we begin the hard work of implementation NOW.

The task of assembly of the Downtown Master Plan, over the past eighteen months, has been guided by the Downtown Action Team, comprised of twenty outstanding citizens who represent a broad cross-section of downtown and community stakeholders (see handout membership list). Outstanding staff support has been provided by Polly McMullen (DLA), Dallas McGee (Urban Development), and Kent Morgan (L/LC Planning Dept). We have had the creative and highly competent services of Crandall Arambula PC, who are, arguably, the premier planning/urban design consultants in the U.S. Together, we have conducted four open community workshops on the various stages of the planning, plus numerous stakeholder meetings and focus groups. The very open and participatory process was established to give consideration to all ideas, and the on-going dynamics of a growing community. It does, I think, recognize and draw together the other planning and development activities surrounding the downtown, i.e., Antelope Valley, the University, Hay Market, Library planning, State Government, and on-going transportation and parking studies -- to name only a few.

This plan is to become a key component of the L/LC Comprehensive Plan. As such, with your and the City Council, and County Commissioners' approval for adoption, it will begin to have an impact on the entire plan, and, in turn, all other aspects of the Comp Plan will begin to influence the implementation strategies for the Downtown Plan. For instance, the next, and future Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budgets will need to be altered to reflect certain aspects of implementing this planned work.

For those persons in the community who want economic growth for Lincoln -- this is your plan. For those in the community who want Lincoln to be a force for equity in the region -- this is your plan. For those who already take pride in, and want even more features of Lincoln's clean, distinctive and workable urban characteristics -- this is your plan. And, for those in the community who want, as I do and the DAT does, there to be more choices for housing and "urban village" walkable lifestyles within this city (in contrast to the auto-dominated suburban developments at the edge) -- this is your plan.

It is a perspective for balanced growth, a sustainable strong core, tremendous development and economic opportunity, and a bright, distinctive future for the city of Lincoln. I urge your unanimous adoption for inclusion into the Lincoln/Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan.

Downtown Action Team (DAT)

Membership List

Downtown Lincoln Master Plan Study

DAT Co-Chairs

Jon Weinberg (DLA) - Ameritas Investment Advisors

Cecil Steward (DLA) - Downtown Resident & Dean Emeritus UNL

DAT Members

Kent Seacrest, Seacrest & Kalkowski Law Firm

Jessica Kennedy, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

Jon Camp, Lincoln City Council Member

Matt Harris, Arbor Day Foundation

Mike Sisk, General Services Administration

Lori McClurg, State of Nebraska

Jane Stricker, Footloose and Fancy Birkenstock

Becky Van de Bogart, Downtown Resident

Sachit Nadkarni, Marriott Cornhusker

Terry Werner, Lincoln City Council Member

Will Scott, Arlington Properties

Jim Fram, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce

Dan Massoth, Buzzard Billy's

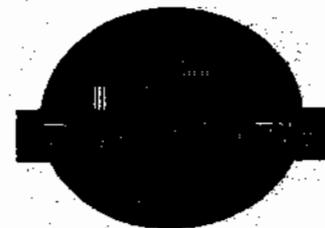
Ed Swotek, TierOne Bank

Nader Sepahpur, Osso Burrito

Lynnie Green, Embassy Suites

Michelle Waite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Annette McRoy, Lincoln City Council Member



Staff Contacts

Polly McMullen (DLA) 434-6900 / Dallas McGee (Urban Dev.) 441-7857 / Kent Morgan (Planning) 441-7491

AMENDMENT 1

ON BEHALF OF AV L.L.C. I AM REQUESTING THAT OUR PROPERTIES BE REMOVED FROM THE HOUSING FRAMEWORK PORTION OF THIS PLAN. THESE PROPERTIES ARE AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF 18TH & Q AND ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF P STREET BETWEEN 18TH & 19TH. PAGE 31

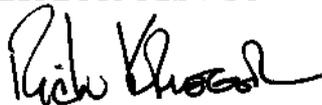
AMENDMENT 2

I AM REQUESTING THAT THE FOLLOWING AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENT BE INSERTED ON PAGE 12 OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM. **“FOR PURPOSES OF SITE ASSEMBLY, THE CITY OF LINCOLN WITH NOT USE ITS POWERS OF EMINENT DOMAIN TO TRANSFER PROPERTY FROM ONE PRIVATE OWNER TO ANOTHER”.**

AMENDMENT 3

I AM REQUESTING THAT THE ITEMS IN THE MASTER PLAN THAT ANTICIPATE AND CALL FOR ADDITIONAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND PLAN REVIEW BE DELETED. THESE ARE PRIMARILY ON PAGE 13 OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM AND THE WHOLE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES SECTION.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED



RICHARD C. KRUEGER