

# THE COMMUNITY PLANNER

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CITY OF LINCOLN  
NEBRASKA  
MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER

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The Planning  
Department  
wishes our  
customers, friends  
and colleagues  
a happy  
holiday season!

## New year New manager New challenges

Re-joining the Planning Department is Nicole Fleck-Tooze. Nicole began her career in City government with Planning, but moved to Public Works and Utilities after three years. She managed the newly established Watershed Management Division, and later managed the Business Office as well. After nine years in Public Works, Nicole has returned as Planning's Long-Range Planning Manager. She fills the position held by Kent Morgan, who retired in August.

Nicole's immediate challenge is leading a major update of the City-County Comprehensive Plan – the guide for land development and stewardship over the next 30 years.



This update will include the long-range transportation element. This transportation plan must be reviewed every five years for Lincoln to remain eligible for millions of dollars in federal grant funds we receive each year to improve local roads and bridges and support the local public transit system. The update will need to include consideration of the potential impacts of changing demographics, emerging technologies, continuing financial constraints and sustainability issues.



***Preservation Planner Ed Zimmer  
gives new meaning to the term  
"multi-modal transportation."***

## Projects completed in 2009

## A look ahead to 2010

The long list of accomplishments by the Planning Department include the following:

- Zoning changes clarify and simplify the City sign code.
- Mining operations in the City and County are now governed by new zoning standards for special permits.
- A new special permit process allows expanded home occupations in the County.
- A Planned Unit Development designation for the University Place commercial area allows more flexible parking provisions.
- Zoning code amendments clarify how administrative amendments can be appealed.
- The final plat documents required from the City Treasurer and Register of Deeds are now obtained by staff rather than applicants.
- A zoning amendment allows for some expansion of nonconforming residential structures without the need for Special Permit approval.
- A subdivision code amendment allows the administrative approval of requests to extend deadlines for installing subdivision improvements.
- A subdivision code amendment eliminates the 14-day waiting period between approval and recording of final plats.
- “E-plan” allows for paperless filing and review for all planning applications.
- The Preservation Planner published a “Driving and Walking Tour of Wyuka Cemetery.”
- The survey of commercial/industrial acres and floor area has been updated for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Transportation planning documents a Management Plan, Congestion Management Process and Public Participation Plan -- were updated to maintain Lincoln's eligibility for federal grant funds.

In addition, the Planning Department received a continuing achievement award from the Nebraska Planning and Zoning Association, and secured the designation of the Haymarket historic district as one of a select group of “Great Places” by the American Planning Association.

In addition to Planning's normal and ongoing activities, we'll be working on the following key projects:

- An amendment to the R-3 zoning district would allow for smaller and narrower lots if they meet certain design standards.
- A comprehensive package of amendments to the City's zoning code would simplify and shorten it by about 100 pages. Potential changes include a reduction in the number of separately listed land uses; the consolidation of lot standards; a reduction in the number of special permits; and the conversion of “use permit” approvals to an administrative process.
- The buyers of new lots would be notified of nearby pipelines carrying hazardous materials.
- A wayfinding signage plan would provide drivers and pedestrians with appealing visual guides to key destinations in the community.
- We will continue to assist the Census Bureau in efforts to obtain a “complete count.”
- We will coordinate the review of a new design for Centennial Mall.
- State legislation would enable the County Board to use Transfer of Development Rights as a zoning tool and to delegate approval of special permits to the Planning Commission.
- Planning will continue for shared bike lanes along “M” and “N” streets from Antelope Valley through downtown.

The major update of the Comprehensive Plan will include the following first-phase tasks:

- upgrading the transportation model;
- conducting a citizen survey on planning/development issues;
- reviewing population and land use trends;
- preparing new projections and scenarios;
- building understanding of relationship between land use, travel, and greenhouse gas emissions;
- reviewing strategies to encourage more local food production; and
- identifying opportunities for more “complete” streets that offer multiple travel modes.