

City Council Introduction: **Monday, January 4, 2010**
Public Hearing: **Monday, January 11, 2010, at 3:00 p.m.**

Bill No. 10R-13

FACTSHEET

TITLE: A Resolution approving and adopting a proposed amendment to the **LINCOLN CENTER REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**, requested by the Director of the Urban Development Department, to add the "Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project".

SPONSOR: Planning Department

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Planning Commission
Public Hearing: 12/16/09
Administrative Action: 12/16/09

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: A finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

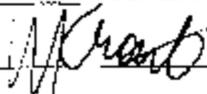
RECOMMENDATION: A finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan (9-0: Partington, Taylor, Gaylor Baird, Cornelius, Lust, Francis, Esseks, Larson and Sunderman voting 'yes').

FINDINGS:

1. The purpose of this proposed amendment to the **Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan** is to add the "Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project" to develop a new public plaza and supporting streetscape enhancements with the construction of a mixed-use public parking facility with retail on the ground floor and residential units above the garage. The Project Area is bounded by 13th, 14th, P and Q Streets. The Project incorporates all of Lots 1 through 12, Block 38, Lincoln Original.
2. The staff recommendation to find the proposed amendment to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan is based upon the "Analysis" as set forth on 9-10, concluding that the proposed amendment states that the site will include a public plaza, retail, dwellings and structured parking. The land uses described in the proposal are in general conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and the general goals of the Downtown Master Plan. The staff presentation is found on p.11-12.
3. There was no testimony in opposition.
4. On December 16, 2009, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendation and voted 9-0 to find the proposed amendment to the **Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan** to be in conformance with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan Conformance No. 09013).

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Jean L. Preister

DATE: December 28, 2009

REVIEWED BY: 

DATE: December 28, 2009

REFERENCE NUMBER: FS\CC\2010\CPC.09013 Redev Plan

LINCOLN/LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT

for DECEMBER 16, 2009 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

- PROJECT #:** Comprehensive Plan Conformance No. 09013
- PROPOSAL:** Add a redevelopment project to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan (see attached proposed amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan for the Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project).
- LOCATION:** Block 38 (N. 13th Street to N. 14th Street and P Street to Q Street)
- LAND AREA:** 1.3 acres, more or less
- CONCLUSION:** A generic concept plan was submitted with the proposed land uses (see "Exhibit -IV-163"). The proposed amendment states that the site will include a public plaza, retail, dwellings, and structured parking. The land uses described in the proposal are in general conformance with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the general goals of the Downtown Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:	In conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
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GENERAL INFORMATION:

- LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** Lots 1-12, Block 38, Lincoln Original, Lancaster County, Nebraska.
- EXISTING ZONING:** B-4 Lincoln Center Business District
- EXISTING LAND USE:** Parking, retail, offices, and restaurants.

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING:

- North: B-4 Lincoln Center Business District: bookstore, office, and restaurant
- South: B-4 Lincoln Center Business District: retail, office, dwellings, bank, and parking
- East: B-4 Lincoln Center Business District: vacant restaurant and restaurant
- West: B-4 Lincoln Center Business District: office, parking, and restaurant

HISTORY:

- May 1, 2006: City Council passed Resolution #A-83839 to approve Comprehensive Plan Conformance #06003. The project included the area of the current application and three other blocks. The project included Right of Way improvements, a public plaza, commercial, residential, parking, and mixed use buildings.

The Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan was first adopted in 1975 and has had more than 20 revisions for specific projects since its major update in 1985. Major benchmarks have been the 1993 revisions to approve parking structures, the Burnham Yates Conference Center, a childcare center, and the O Street Skywalk, utilizing proceeds from a bond issue of 1985.

These smaller, incremental projects followed concepts summarized in the “Downtown Master Plan” of 1989. That plan revised the large retail mall proposed in the major update of 1985. In 2005 the current Downtown Master Plan was adopted and identifies this area as a Civic Square and one of the major destinations on the “P” Street Primary Retail Corridor.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SPECIFICATIONS:

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use map shows this area as Commercial. (P. 19)

Commercial: Areas of retail, office and service uses. Commercial uses may vary widely in their intensity of use and impact, varying from low intensity offices, to warehouses, to more intensive uses such as gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores or automobile repair. Each area designated as commercial in the land use plan may not be appropriate for every commercial zoning district. The appropriateness of a commercial district for a particular piece of property will depend on a review of all the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. (P. 16)

Downtown Lincoln is the heart of our community, a unique common ground for all Lincoln and Lancaster County residents. At the same time, 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 has strong economic implications, and for that reason, as well as the desire to maintain downtown as the “heart” 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. (P. 7)

Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance. Neighborhoods should include homes, stores, workplaces, schools and places to recreate. Interconnected networks of streets, trails and sidewalks should be designed to encourage walking and bicycling, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, conserve energy and for the convenience of the residents. (P. 10-11)

Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks should maximize access and mobility to provide alternatives and reduce dependence upon the automobile. (P. 11)

Streets and public spaces should be safe, comfortable, and interesting to the pedestrian. Properly configured, they encourage walking and enable neighbors to know each other and protect their communities. The street network should facilitate calm traffic conditions, provide multiple connections within and between neighborhoods, using neighborhood development aspects such as four way intersections of residential streets, multiple connections to arterial streets, and reduced block lengths. (P. 11)

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. (P. 37)

This area is identified as a “Regional Center” for commerce. (P. 41)

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 County-City Building — as well as private endeavors— including financing, insurance, and other business services. Downtown Lincoln has historically served as the community’s dominant center of entertainment. (P. 42)

Streets and public spaces should be designed within each center to enhance pedestrian activity and support multiple modes of transportation. Commerce Centers should have convenient access to the major roadway system and be supported by roads with adequate capacity. (P. 47-48)

Encourage mixed-use commercial centers, including residential uses on upper floors and at the rear of commercial buildings. (P. 49)

Pedestrian Districts - These areas are typically located in settings where people go to walk around, shop, eat, or conduct business. 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. Future large scale, mixed-use activity districts should be considered members of this category of pedestrian activity centers. (P. 91)

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN SPECIFICATIONS:

A Mix of Uses

The framework encourages mixed use development wherever feasible. Mixed-use buildings with housing on upper floors support the retail uses on their ground floors, and benefit from nearby transit services. (P. 20)

This area is identified as "Retail", "Parking", and "Civic Square" for the main first floor use in the Downtown Master Plan Land Use Framework. (P. 20)

Retail Fundamentals

Each of the three retail types makes up a separate retail framework or district, distinct from and yet complementary to the others. While they differ, each type must meet the same fundamental physical configurations and requirements to attract investors, developers and tenants. Each must be:

- Compact and walkable – approximate distance of a five minute walk.
- Street-oriented and active – retail uses should be located so that they activate ground floors of buildings on both sides of the streets.
- Served by adequate parking – especially by adjacent on-street parking.
- Highly visible – exposed to sufficiently high volumes of pedestrian and auto traffic. (P. 21)

Retail Core

This area is identified as part of the "Primary and Secondary Retail Core". (P. 22)

The retail core consists of two basic categories, primary and secondary retail. These are mutually dependent and supportive, with similar yet somewhat different characteristics and requirements. Each is summarized below and described in more detail on the pages that follow.

Primary Retail

The primary retail core must support a high level of pedestrian activity throughout the day and night, and therefore requires continuous edge-to-edge retail land uses. Retail fundamentals – the Essential Retail Development Standards – must be adhered to rigorously on these properties, and are discussed in further detail later in this section.

Secondary Retail

Street-level retail activity is desirable but not necessary to generate adequate vitality on secondary retail streets. Thus these secondary retail blocks allow commercial uses to be mixed in with retail uses at the ground floor; for instance, a bank or hair salon could be next to a restaurant or clothing shop. (P. 22)

Primary Retail

While the P Street corridor is planned as the primary retail area in downtown, this has not historically been the case. In fact, O Street was downtown Lincoln's retail core for decades. However, its strength has eroded over the years, and P Street has replaced it in prominence for a number of reasons:

- Traffic volume – P Street has a high but not excessive volume of auto traffic, whereas O Street traffic renders it less conducive to pedestrians and street-oriented primary retail.
- Edge-to-edge retail – is more extensive on P Street than on O, where significant non-retail uses have, over time, been developed and thus eroded the potential for required ground floor edge-to-edge retail.
- Recent retail investment – P Street has seen significant retail investment over the last ten years and is now widely viewed as the primary retail street. Most recently the Douglas Grand Theater opened on P Street with a potential of up to one million patrons per year. This use serves as a significant attraction and catalyst for adjacent retail development.

- Linkage – P Street provides a direct connection to the historic Haymarket District. (P. 23)

Retail Development Standards

The intent of the Essential Retail Development Standards is to establish a template that prescribes only those requirements that are necessary to create a competitive, whole and integrated retail development:

- Required Ground Floor Retail
- Build-to Lines
- Active Edges

These requirements must be adhered to rigorously in the primary retail core, and at least moderately adhered to in the secondary retail area. Descriptions of each requirement follows. (P. 28)

Required Ground Floor Retail

Successful retail streets are not interrupted by inappropriate uses. To maintain a vibrant retail atmosphere, continuous edge-to-edge storefronts are required. Inappropriate uses that disrupt the retail corridor should be discouraged. (P. 28)

This area along P Street is identified as "Ground Floor Retail" for Essential Retail Development Standards (P. 28)

Build-to Lines

Consistent minimum setbacks along the street will create a "street wall" and provide a comfortable sense of enclosure for the pedestrian.

- Construct buildings up to the right-of-way line.
- Prohibit forecourts, gardens or other setbacks. (P. 29)

This whole block (and around the civic plaza) is identified as an area that should have "Build-to Lines". (P. 29)

Active Edges

Focus building activity at street level to animate the public realm and provide a sense of security for pedestrians both day and night. To create active edges:

- Front doors – should face the street or public spaces.
- Retail ground floor openings (windows and doors) – should comprise a minimum of 75% of the building's front facade.
- Ground floor retail windows and doors – should open to views in and out of the building without obstructions (tinted or obscured glass).
- Curb cuts (into parking lots or structures) – should generally be minimized and located at mid-block. (P. 30)

P Street, 13th Street, 14th Street, and around the civic plaza are identified as areas that should have "Active Edges". (P. 30)

UNL-oriented Housing

Areas adjacent to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's downtown campus provide prime opportunity sites for housing that is oriented to students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The university, alumni association and development interests should capitalize upon national trends that indicate similar housing being built in "town and gown" zones in university cities such as Knoxville, Tennessee and State College, Pennsylvania.

The university-oriented housing should:

- Have an urban character – front doors facing the street; parking internalized or below-grade.
- Respect the existing downtown street grid – new blocks fitting the prevailing pattern of streets; no "super blocks."
- Ground floor active uses – in buildings developed along P Street.
- Parking – integrated into each building or housing unit; separate or shared parking structures should be discouraged. (P. 33)

This block is identified as "Housing Over Parking Structure" under UNL-oriented Housing. (P. 33)

Parking Framework

The downtown parking facility is a city's "front door," leaving a lasting impression on visitors and residents alike. It is simply good business sense to provide parking that welcomes the shopper and supports the retail framework. (P. 42)

Shopper-friendly Parking

It is a common phenomenon that a downtown provides more than ample parking to meet demand, but that the perception remains that "there's nowhere to park." Parking must be easy to locate and easy to use, locking into the retail core, for it to facilitate downtown activity.

Parking structures should provide:

- Convenient access to the primary retail street.
- Active uses at the ground floor including corner entries to shops.
- Facades compatible with adjacent uses.
- High-quality durable materials and design details.
- Safe, well-lighted, well-maintained facilities.
- "Parker-friendly" auto circulation - a floorplate with minimum 240' width providing four parking bays allowing easy one-way auto travel. (P. 42)

The majority of the north half of this block is identified as "New Retail-supportive Parking" under the Parking Framework. (P. 42)

Transit Services Framework

The transit services framework sets forth a bold yet achievable vision. It is intended to provide easy and convenient access to destinations within downtown, as well as connections to and from outlying areas with fast and easy transfers.

- The framework components are:
- Downtown Bus Shuttle System –short- and long-term services.
- Multi-modal center – siting and development of a new downtown center.
- Streetcar – concepts for a rail circulator in the long-term. (P. 61)

This block is adjacent to Downtown Bus Routes A and B, the Streetcar Route, and the Multi-Modal Center. (P. 62, 63, and 66)

Route A

- Connections from the UNL campus via 16th and 17th Streets to the Q Street transit center and on to the Haymarket District and primary retail on P Street.

Route B

- Connections between the Capitol, the core business district, the Haymarket, P Street primary retail, and the Q Street multi-modal center. (P. 62)

Multi-Modal Center

The multi-modal transit center would be located on Q Street generally in the area between 12th and 14th Streets. It would include an exclusive bus lane and shelters on the north side of these blocks of Q Street, as well as transit facilities (described on the next page) housed in a new building at 14th and Q.

The center would be designed to enhance and encourage transit use, bicycle use, and pedestrian activity into and within downtown. It would provide:

- StarTran transfer improvements –safer and more convenient opportunities for passengers changing routes downtown.
- Close connection to the UNL shuttle system - located one block north on R Street.
- Convenient access to downtown area destinations - especially the primary retail district and UNL campus.
- Amenities – improved facilities and services for StarTran patrons.
- Pedestrian connectivity – to nearby streets, including Centennial Mall.

- Bike access and storage – safe and convenient connections and facilities for bicyclists.
- Public information – central location for explanatory maps and services related to StarTran and other alternative transportation options. (P. 63)

Q Street Multi-Modal Center

The drawings on this page illustrate the multi-modal center concept proposed for Q Street. The center's uses would occupy the north side of Q Street between 12th and 14th Streets, each of which would offer two-way travel.

As part of a proposed new building on the northwest corner of Q and 14th, the transit center could include:

- Passenger waiting room.
- Ticket and information counter.
- Driver break room.
- Bike lockers.
- Passenger and driver restrooms.
- Approximately 7,000 SF for transit supportive uses, including ground floor retail.

The transit center would require the widening of sidewalks along the two north block faces of Q between 12th and 14th Streets to accommodate new shelters. (P. 64)

Streetcar System

Unlike bus transit services, which are typically used solely for commuter trips or "lifeline" transportation for people who do not own a car or cannot drive, streetcars provide transit for a broader user market. In fact, streetcar lines have been used in recent years in various cities across the nation as a catalytic tool for mixed-use district development.

While the streetcar mode may be a long-term project, all efforts to expedite its implementation will, in turn, foster earlier and increased private sector development along its route. (P. 65)

Public Realm Framework

Public Square:

Centrally located to serve as the primary gathering and activity center in the heart of downtown at P and 13th. (P. 68)

The civic square and the N. 13th Street right-of-way adjacent to this block are identified as "Civic Square" in the Public Realm Framework. (P. 70)

Public squares are an essential part of a successful downtown. Designed correctly, they can create a setting for reinvestment and improve the quality of life for office workers, neighbors, visitors and tourists.

The City's Living Room

The heart of Lincoln's public realm is its "living room" – Civic Square at 13th and P Streets. The square should:

- Serve as the primary civic assembly space in downtown.
- Provide a focus for contiguous ground floor retail activity in adjacent buildings surrounding the square.
- Accommodate a variety of public gatherings and seasonal events yearround.
- Be safe and inviting for all people at all hours.
- Be durable and low maintenance.
- Provide a dignified setting for a possible future monument or public art.
- Require minimal maintenance.
- Incorporate universal design. (P. 70)

Design Elements

Design of the square would include the following:

- Special brick or concrete pavers throughout.
- Curbless design to expand the usable space and perceived visual dimensions of the assembly area.

- Possible expansion of the primary assembly area for special events by temporary closure to auto traffic on the adjacent half-block of 13th Street.
- Secondary square areas to north and south along 13th Street, providing passive seating areas.
- Visual and pedestrian linkages north-south from the busy O Street auto corridor to the P Street retail core and beyond to the UNL Campus.
- Possible office parking to be provided below-grade at the square. (P. 72)

The square, providing public open space for gatherings, special events and quiet seating and recreation, is intended to be the focus of downtown retail and office development.

Its central location between the O Street auto corridor and the UNL campus allows it to provide direct visual and pedestrian connections between these important areas. (P. 73)

Retail Streetscape

The creation of a successful retail streetscape is a critical aspect of providing a successful public realm and revitalizing downtown Lincoln. P Street, from 9th Street to Centennial Mall, was selected as the primary retail streetscape for several reasons:

- Concentration of existing retail.
- Greatest potential for future retail expansion.
- Primary geographic link between the historic Haymarket District and the locally-recognized heart of downtown, 13th Street. (P. 74-80; 86-87)

Q Street on the north side of this project is identified as a "Pedestrian Emphasis Streetscapes" area. (P. 109)

Pedestrian Emphasis Streetscapes

Several downtown Lincoln streetscapes will receive a "pedestrian emphasis." These streetscapes are intended to complete a network of pedestrian connections, tying retail streetscapes, promenades, districts and open spaces together.

The pedestrian emphasis streetscapes:

- May include distinctive elements depending on district location and use.
- Should be consistent with themes established in the Historic Haymarket District.
- Should be consistent with themes proposed for primary retail streets. (P. 109)

Catalyst Projects

This area is identified as Catalyst Projects A-Civic Square and B-Parking/Mixed-Use. (P. 113-116)

A-Civic Square

Design of the square would include the following:

- Special brick or concrete pavers throughout.
- Curbless design to expand the usable space and perceived visual dimensions of the assembly area.
- Possible expansion of the primary assembly area for special events by temporary closure to auto traffic on the adjacent half-block of 13th Street.
- Visual and pedestrian linkages north-south from O Street to the P Street retail core and beyond to the UNL Campus.
- Possible office parking to be provided below-grade at the square. (P. 115)

Parking/Mixed Use

This parking/mixed use project could include:

- Public parking structure for 400 cars
- 15,000 SF of new retail
- 80 residential units or hotel
- 100 residential parking spaces underground (P. 116)

LINCOLN DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS SPECIFICATIONS:

4.1 Site Development

- a. Downtown Lincoln buildings west of 19th Street and on North 21st Street from O to Q Streets shall be "built-to" their front property lines (and on corner lots, shall be built-to both front property lines).
- b. Pedestrian plazas and forecourts at street level shall be permitted except on P Street from 9th to 19th Street and on North 21st Street from O to Q Streets. (P. 3.76-3)

4.2 Building Features

- b. Parking structures and lots:
 1. Parking structures shall be designed with usable floor area on the ground floor between parking areas and public sidewalks if built between (and including) N and Q Streets, and between 9th and 19th Streets, and along North 21st Street between O and Q Streets .
 2. Any ground-floor parking in structures must be screened from public sidewalks.
 3. Entrances and exits shall be located and grouped to minimize curb cuts and other interruptions of pedestrian movement on sidewalks. (P. 3.76-3-4)
- d. Entrances and first floor windows:
 1. Buildings shall have at least one principal entrance that faces the street. Buildings on corners or with multiple street frontages may have a single principal entrance, which must face a street.
 2. The ground floor of buildings with frontages between (and including) N and Q Streets, and between 9th and 19th Streets and on North 21st Street from O to Q Streets shall have transparent glazing in at least 70% of the area between four feet and nine feet above the sidewalk, except in the case of residential buildings.
Building in other areas shall have transparent glazing in at least 50% of the area between four and nine feet above the sidewalk, except in the case of buildings with first-floor residential uses. (P. 3.76-4-5)

4.3 Additional Pedestrian Considerations

- a. To minimize interruptions of and conflicts with the pedestrian routes across adjacent sidewalks, garage doors and service bays shall not open directly onto sidewalks, but instead shall be oriented toward alleys or toward the interior of the lot. One service bay shall be permitted facing a sidewalk if a building has no alley access.
- b. Sidewalk cafes and other high-quality amenities including street furniture are encouraged in Downtown Lincoln and shall be designed and located to minimize interruption of clear, direct pedestrian routes.
- c. Dumpsters, service docks, transformers, and other necessary fixtures shall be located and screened so as not to be visible from adjacent sidewalks. (P. 3.76-5)

ANALYSIS:

1. This is a request to review a proposed amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan for a determination of conformity with the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposal encompasses approximately a one block area. According to Exhibit IV-163, this project proposes to demolish the one story retail/restaurant building at the southeast corner of N. 13th Street and Q Street. It appears that the remaining buildings on the P Street side of the block will remain intact, but they are shown within the project boundary and labeled as "commercial". The previously approved project incorporated the existing building. The Downtown Master Plan shows this building to be part of the "Primary Retail Framework" (P. 21) and does not show this building as part of the "UNL-oriented Housing" (P. 33) or the "Parking Framework" (P. 42). The Downtown Master Plan does not specifically state that the existing building should remain in place. The land use framework is a plan for first floor activity; this building is shown as "retail", so a new building which meets that description on the first floor in that location would be in full conformance.

3. The project proposes new retail, housing, parking, and a civic plaza. These are all concepts encouraged by the Downtown Master Plan in this vicinity.
4. This is a block in the core of Downtown and is integral to future redevelopment, so there are numerous overlapping concepts in the Downtown Master Plan. See "Downtown Master Plan Specifications" above.
5. The project boundary includes the rights-of-way for N. 13th, N. 14th, P, and Q Streets. These areas will be eligible to utilize tax increment financing for streetscape improvements and other amenities. Half of the Q Street Multi-Modal Center (P. 64 of Downtown Master Plan) is located within the right-of-way of this portion of Q Street. According to the concepts in the Downtown Master Plan, much of the Multi-Modal Center's activity is on the north side of the street, so any buildings on this block should have minimal impact on that design. See image below.
6. The Downtown Master Plan mentions transforming N. 13th Street into a narrower street adjacent to this project in order to make a larger Civic Square. See image on next page. While this proposal does not specifically mention such a change, it does not appear to preclude the narrower street/wider square in the future.
7. A detailed site plan was not included as a part of the proposed amendment. The land uses proposed are generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Master Plan, and the B-4 Lincoln Center Business District.

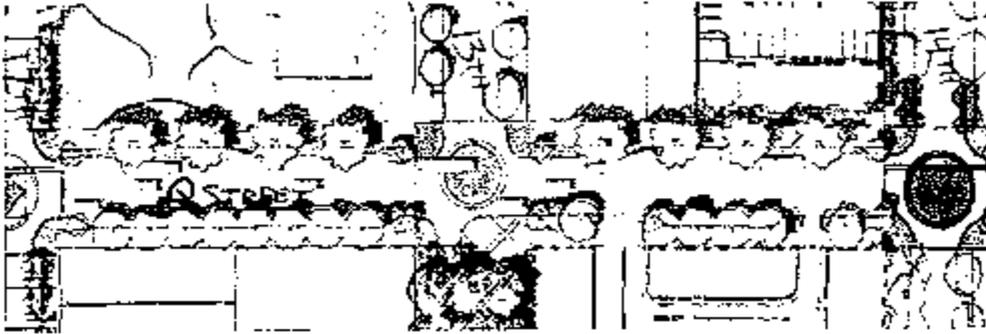
Prepared by:

Brandon M. Garrett, AICP
Planner

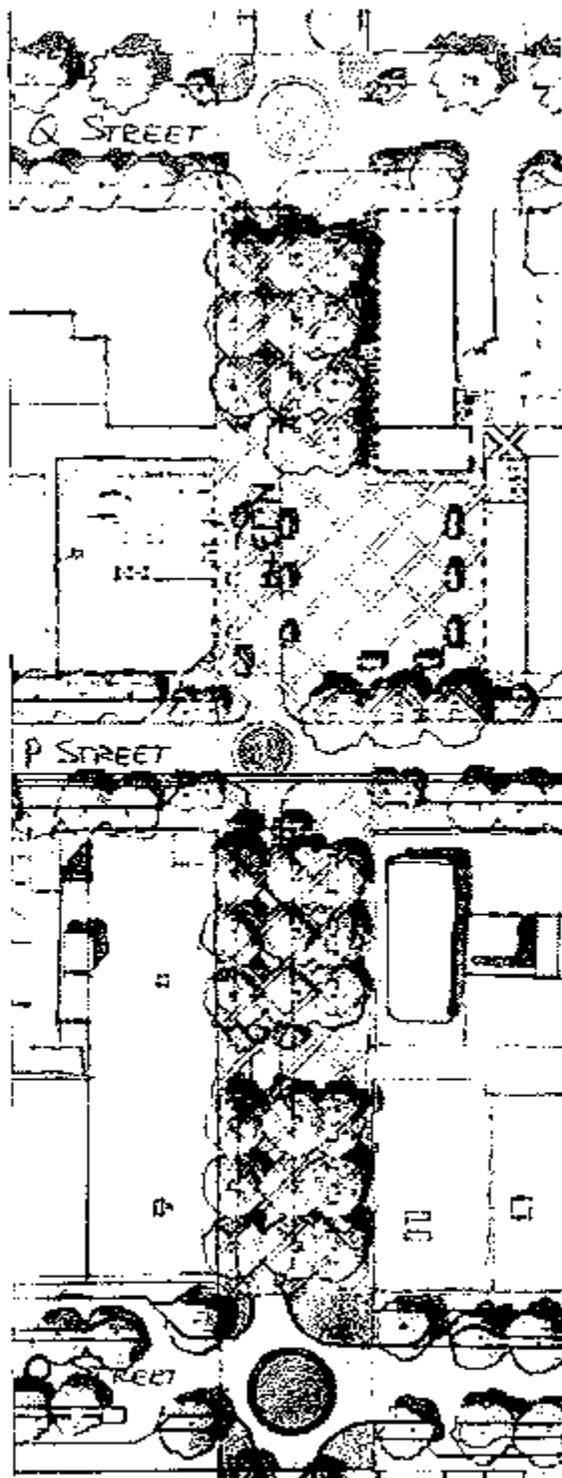
DATE: November 12, 2009

APPLICANT: David Landis, Director
City of Lincoln Urban Development Department

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Q Street Multi-Modal Center (P. 64, Downtown Master Plan)



Proposed Civic Square (P. 72, Downtown Master Plan)

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 09013

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

December 16, 2009

Members present: Gaylor Baird, Cornelius, Esseks, Francis, Larson, Lust, Partington, Sunderman and Taylor.

Ex Parte Communications: None.

Staff recommendation: A finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff presentation: **Brandon Garrett of Planning staff** explained that the north half of the block is shown in the Redevelopment Plan to be mixed use and public parking. According to the proposed Redevelopment Project, there would be retail on the ground floor, some levels of parking with housing on top of the parking. The second major element to this project is the Civic Plaza located at 13th & P Streets. The Planning Department recommends that this be found in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. It also appears that this application is consistent with the Downtown Master Plan.

Larson expressed concern about restricting traffic on 13th Street. Garrett explained that to be part of the approved Downtown Master Plan concept. It appears there would be at least one lane going each way on 13th Street. Larson does not see the space for that between Wells Fargo Building and University Towers. Sunderman clarified that the project before the Commission today does not affect 13th Street at this time. Garrett further clarified that this project does not propose at this time to shift the paving or the through-way of 13th Street, but this project also does not keep that from happening as envisioned in the approved Downtown Master Plan.

Esseks inquired as to the practical implications of approval this proposal – are we inviting developers to come forward with plans? Garrett explained that the amendment to the redevelopment plan would allow development to proceed as outlined in the project proposal.

2. Dallas McGee of Urban Development provided additional background on the project. This is a project that was identified in the Downtown Master Plan as one of several catalyst projects that could occur right away. After the Downtown Master Plan was adopted, the city assembled the site and sought proposals from developers. A developer was selected in April of 2007 (the Synergy Group). The city negotiated with the Synergy Group and was not able to come to a redevelopment agreement because of the inability to finance the project. The city then used this site as a temporary surface parking lot. In the summer of this year, Mayor Beutler directed Urban Development to see if there was additional interest in development of this site. An invitation for redevelopment proposals was prepared and proposals were received. The Urban 38 Group was selected as the developer. Their proposal is very similar to what was identified in concept in the Downtown Master Plan. They proposed an active street level with retail uses; the city had already proposed a garage structure on this site, and the project would include that garage structure of 400-600 parking spaces, with residential units above the garage structure.

The process includes this amendment to the redevelopment plan, which would allow for TIF to be collected and used to help finance the public improvements. Once the plan amendment is approved by the City Council, Urban Development will then begin negotiating a redevelopment agreement, which will answer a lot of the detailed questions about the number of parking spaces, the relationship to the Civic Plaza at 13th & P (another catalyst project), etc.

In terms of 13th Street, McGee advised that the Downtown Master Plan did identify a larger Civic Plaza of about 20,000 square feet. In order to achieve that, some of the right-of-way on the east side of 13th Street was actually made part of the plaza. They will be looking at that as well and building a plaza that is consistent with this development but also consistent with the project budget and the plans for the future.

Larson inquired how the parking garage will be financed -- will it be out of the city parking budget? McGee responded, stating that the city identified the need for a parking garage on this site years ago. Parking enterprise funds have been identified that will be used to build the parking. Most of the parking will be made available for retail uses. The Downtown Master Plan suggests a retail corridor along P and Q Streets and parking would be made available for retail uses as they develop. The developer would like about 100 stalls for the residential development, and 400-600 stalls are envisioned in the garage. There will be five or six floors of parking. The residential will probably be another three floors on top of the parking. This is much smaller than the original proposal that came forward with two taller buildings.

Sunderman inquired whether the Civic Plaza will carry into 13th Street. McGee stated that when the proposal was developed, the consultants suggested that for a plaza to be successful, there are several things that must be done and one of those was to have sufficient size in order to be attractive as a plaza. That size was identified from 18,000 to 20,000 square feet. Our intent is to accomplish the plaza within the space that we have available. The plan from Urban 38 addresses the north half of the block, but we want to make sure that that is designed in conjunction with the Civic Plaza.

Gaylor Baird inquired as to the space now available in the temporary parking lot. McGee stated that it is 14,200 square feet, i.e. two city lots -- it is on the small side. The north half of the block is approximately 142' in depth. A parking garage of two bays would need to be about 125', so there is a little bit of space available on the north half of the lot. We will be looking at that and what impact this will have on the alley as well as the two lots that were originally identified.

Larson stated that he is still concerned about the parking. Will the city own the parking area? McGee responded that it will be a public parking garage, financed the same way as the other city-owned garages. Urban Development will be visiting with some adjacent owners and structure an agreement with the developer that the adjacent owners would have the right of first refusal for a negotiated number of stalls. Most of the garage would be available for other users.

There was no testimony in opposition.

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

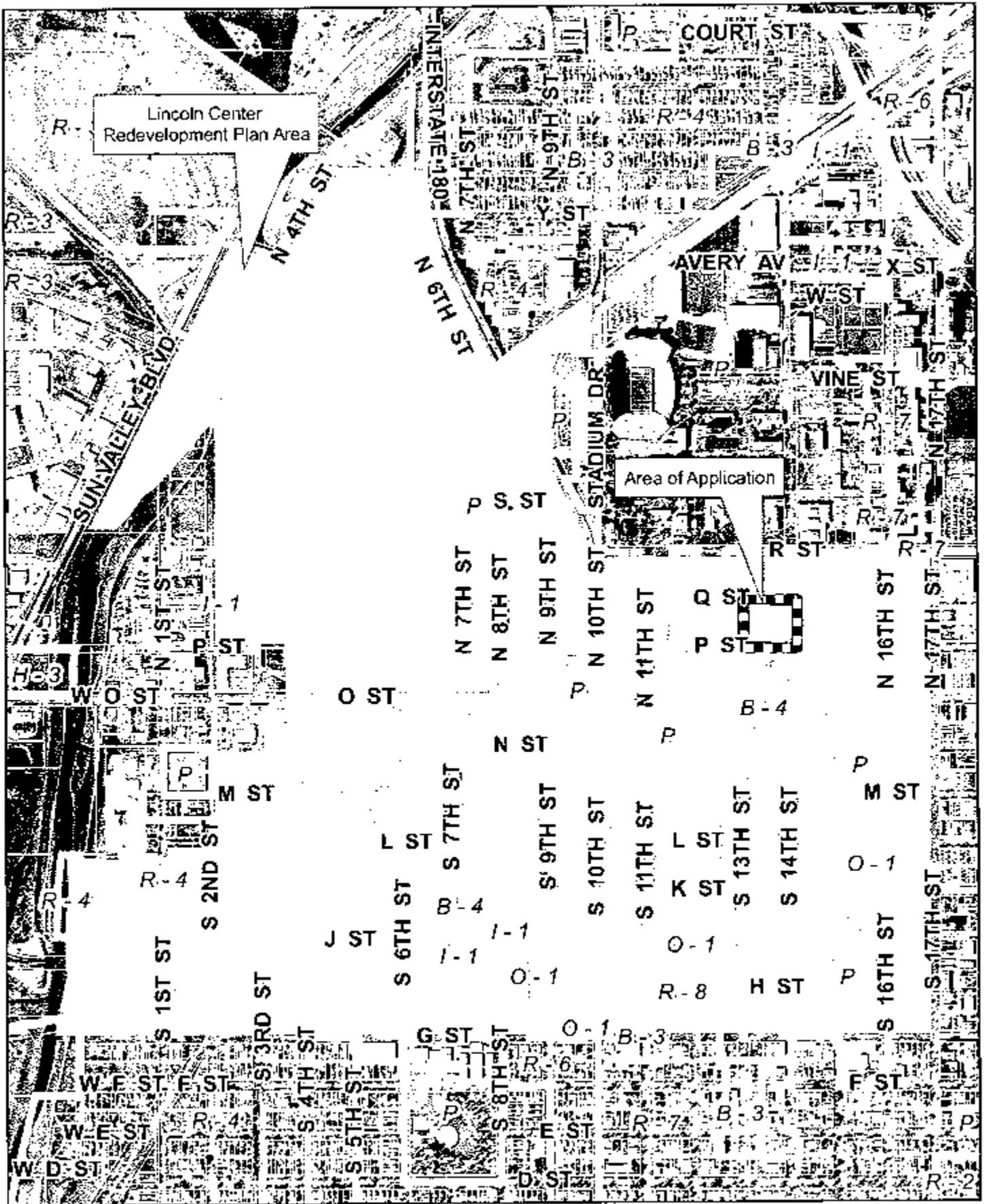
December 16, 2009

Larson moved to find the proposed amendment to be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Lust.

Gaylor Baird stated that she grew up in Portland where the consultants came from, and there is a civic plaza in downtown Portland. It became a thriving public square where people congregated, with book stores and cafes for people of all ages to congregate. It adds to the vibrancy of a downtown. This is an exciting project.

Taylor likes the way the area is being used. It speaks well for the direction we are going.

Motion for a finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan carried 9-0: Gaylor Baird, Cornelius, Esseks, Francis, Larson, Lust, Partington, Sunderman and Taylor voting 'yes'. This is a recommendation to the City Council.



Lincoln Center
Redevelopment Plan Area

Area of Application

**Comp Plan Conformance #09013
Catalyst One & Civic Plaza
Redevelopment Project**



2007 aerial

Zoning Jurisdiction Lines
City Limit Jurisdiction

**Proposed Amendments to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan for the
Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project**

Section III:

Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project

The Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project area is bounded by 13th, 14th, P and Q Streets and incorporates all of Block 38, Lincoln Original, Lots 1 through 12, in Downtown Lincoln. The goals of this project are to strengthen Downtown Lincoln by developing a new public plaza and supporting streetscape enhancements with the construction of a mixed-use public parking facility with retail on the ground floor and residential units above the garage. These projects will remove blighted and substandard conditions and will contribute to the continued revitalization of Downtown Lincoln by encouraging additional private reinvestment in this area. City support may include property acquisition; demolition, site preparation, and remediation; utility improvements and/or relocation; the construction of the civic plaza and related street and streetscape amenities; alley improvements; other public right-of-way and streetscape improvements; energy efficiency improvements; façade improvements; parking and related amenities; and, other related public improvements.

Section IV:

V. CATALYST ONE/CIVIC PLAZA REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Revitalization Project Description

The Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project area is bounded by 13th, 14th, P and Q Streets and incorporates all of Block 38, Lincoln Original, Lots 1 through 12, in Downtown Lincoln. Exhibit IV-161 identifies this area.

The existing land use in the Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Project area consists of commercial office and retail/restaurant, one residential unit, and public parking. Exhibit IV-162 identifies existing land use within the project area.

The goals of this project are to strengthen downtown Lincoln by developing a new public plaza and supporting streetscape enhancements with the construction of a mixed-use public parking facility with retail on the ground floor and residential units above the garage. These projects will remove blighted and substandard conditions by developing underutilized lots and will contribute to the continued revitalization of Downtown Lincoln by encouraging additional private reinvestment in this area. City support may include property acquisition; demolition, site preparation, and remediation; utility improvements and/or relocation; the construction of the civic plaza and related street and streetscape amenities; alley improvements; other public right-of-way and streetscape

improvements; energy efficiency improvements; façade improvements; parking and related amenities; and, other related public improvements.

The project is consistent with the goals of the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan and Downtown Master Plan, and is intended to support private sector residential and commercial development and amenities in and adjacent to this redevelopment area. Project improvements correspond to several of the Downtown Redevelopment Goals identified in the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan. The redevelopment project addresses these goals by accomplishing the following:

- Encouraging private redevelopment in and enhances the architectural character of downtown Lincoln
- Utilizing an underdeveloped lot/removes blight
- Supporting the vision of a revitalized downtown by adding a mixed use parking/retail/commercial buildings at a key intersection
- Integrating streetscape and landscape improvements in the project area with existing amenities
- Providing an additional festival/celebration site
- Supporting downtown business recruitment efforts
- Enhancing the security of downtown by providing a more pedestrian friendly, lighted environment
- Enhancing the area's pedestrian friendly, street-level orientation

The Downtown Master Plan identifies the block as part of the Civic Square and Parking/Mixed-Use Catalyst Projects. The Plan proposes the strategic location of a new parking structure, which will serve retail and office employees on underutilized parcels. The proposed project meets this goal, as well as other components identified as part of the Downtown Master Plan: new ground floor retail, the redevelopment of the parking lot at 13th and P into event space, and residential units. The project will also support the revitalization of Downtown through supporting the development of the P Street retail corridor.

Other Statutory Elements

Accomplishing the Catalyst One/Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project could involve the assembly of additional property on Block 38 and reconfiguration of the rights of way on 13th Street from O to Q Streets. These projects may involve acquisition, sales, or reconveyances as provided by law and as consistent with the plan. The City may acquire property for public infrastructure and other needs. Exhibit IV-163 identifies changes in the proposed uses in the project area.

There is one residential unit on the block today. The project would include the construction of additional residential units on floors above the garage. The number of units will be negotiated with the redevelopment agreement. Population density will increase as a result of this project.

Land coverage and building density will be altered with the implementation of this project. Several buildings on Block 38 were removed in preparation for these public improvements, including two theater buildings and two restaurant buildings. Two temporary public parking lots were constructed over these sites. Another building, SAM Properties on the corner of 13th and Q, with several retail bays may be acquired and demolished or constructed over. The multi-use public parking facility will be constructed on the north half of the property. The civic plaza will be constructed on the corner of 13th and P Street.

The existing street system within the project area may change as a result of this project. At one time, the Downtown Plaza project envisioned narrowing 13th Street from Q to O from three lanes with angled parking to two lanes with on street parallel parking. This could allow for utilization of the resulting additional sidewalk space for larger scale civic events planned for the plaza area. The mixed-use parking garage may have an entrance and exit on Q and/or 14th Streets.

The east west alley on Block 38 may also be altered by the development of the parking facility and/or civic plaza amenities. The construction of structures in the alley would likely require the relocation of utilities out of the alley. If utilities are to be relocated, the Public Works Department will review any relocation plans.

Pedestrian amenities may be constructed in the rights of way adjacent to both the proposed Block 38 public parking garage and along 13th Street in support of the civic plaza.

Parking in the project area consists of two temporary public lots, one with 99 spaces and one with 43 spaces. The redevelopment project would include the redevelopment of the 99-space lot into a garage with the capacity for approximately 400 to 600 additional stalls. Various on-street parking configurations surround the block. The configuration will be altered as part of the project.

The area is located within the downtown B-4 business zone that allows for a wide range of uses including the mixed-use development that is being proposed. Zoning will remain unchanged as a result of this project, with the possible exception of a change in zone from B-4 to P for the area included in the civic plaza.

The International Building Code and any related City regulations will be followed in the demolition of any property to properly protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people. At this time, there are no contemplated changes in the City zoning laws or building codes to implement this project.

New infrastructure improvements are anticipated to be needed as a result of this project. These improvements may include various utility improvements; alley improvements; plaza improvements; new right of way amenities, including curbs, sidewalks, lighting, plant material, street furniture, and other streetscape improvements.

Proposed Costs and Financing

The estimated total cost to implement the project is approximately \$30 million, with approximately \$16 million in private expenses. The sources of funds for public improvements are expected to include Community Improvement Financing (commonly referred to as Tax Increment Financing or TIF), estimated to be \$1.5 million, generated from the private developments within the project area, private donations, and Parking Revenue Bonds.

Funding sources and uses will be negotiated as part of the redevelopment agreement, subject to approval by the Mayor and City Council.

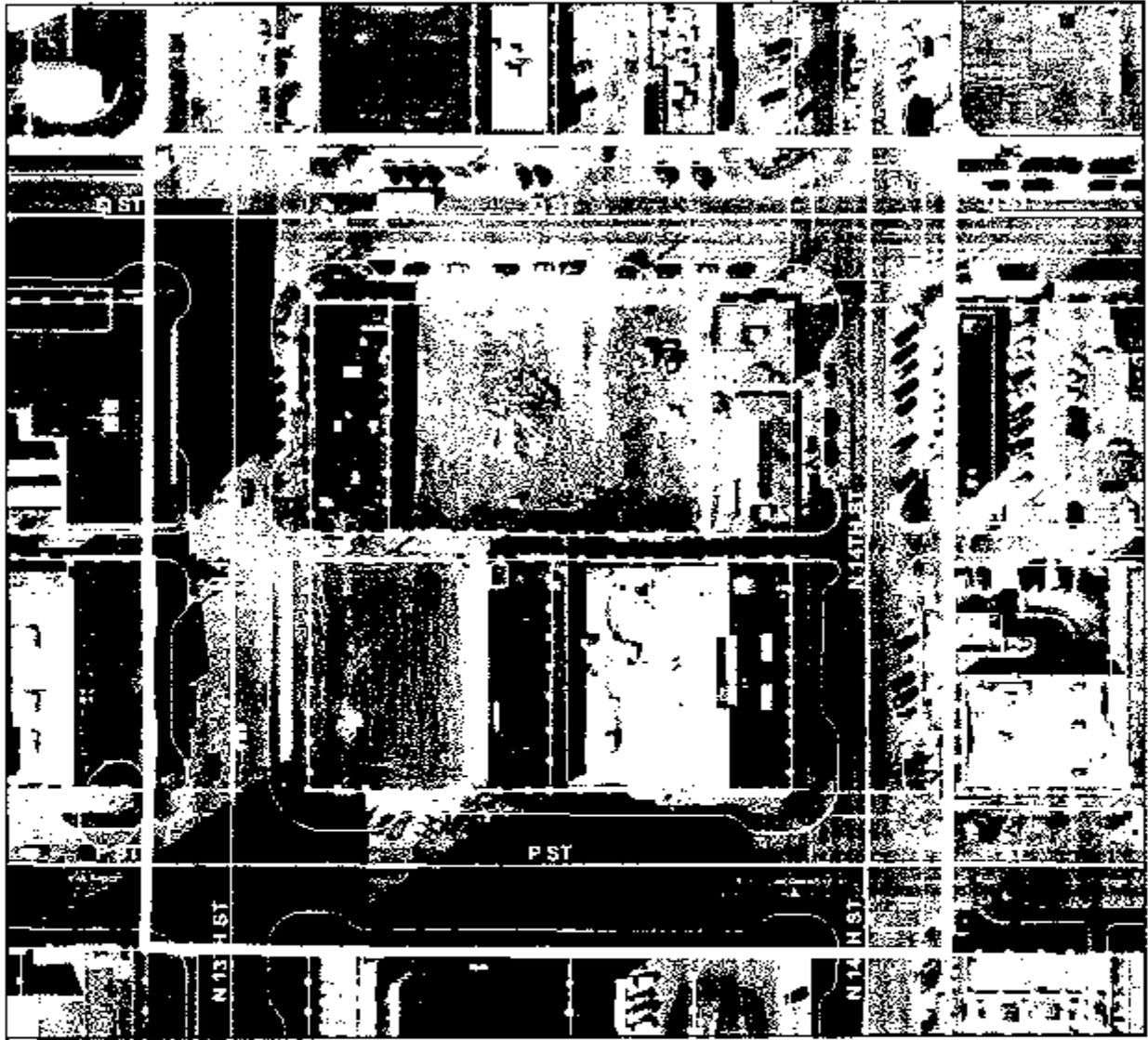


Exhibit IV - 161

Project Area with Existing Parcel Layout

- 1 Project Area
- Parcel Outline

Catalyst One & Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project

Lincoln Center Redevelopment Area

Client: Catalyst One
 The City of Lincoln, NE
 Catalyst One 201 11th St



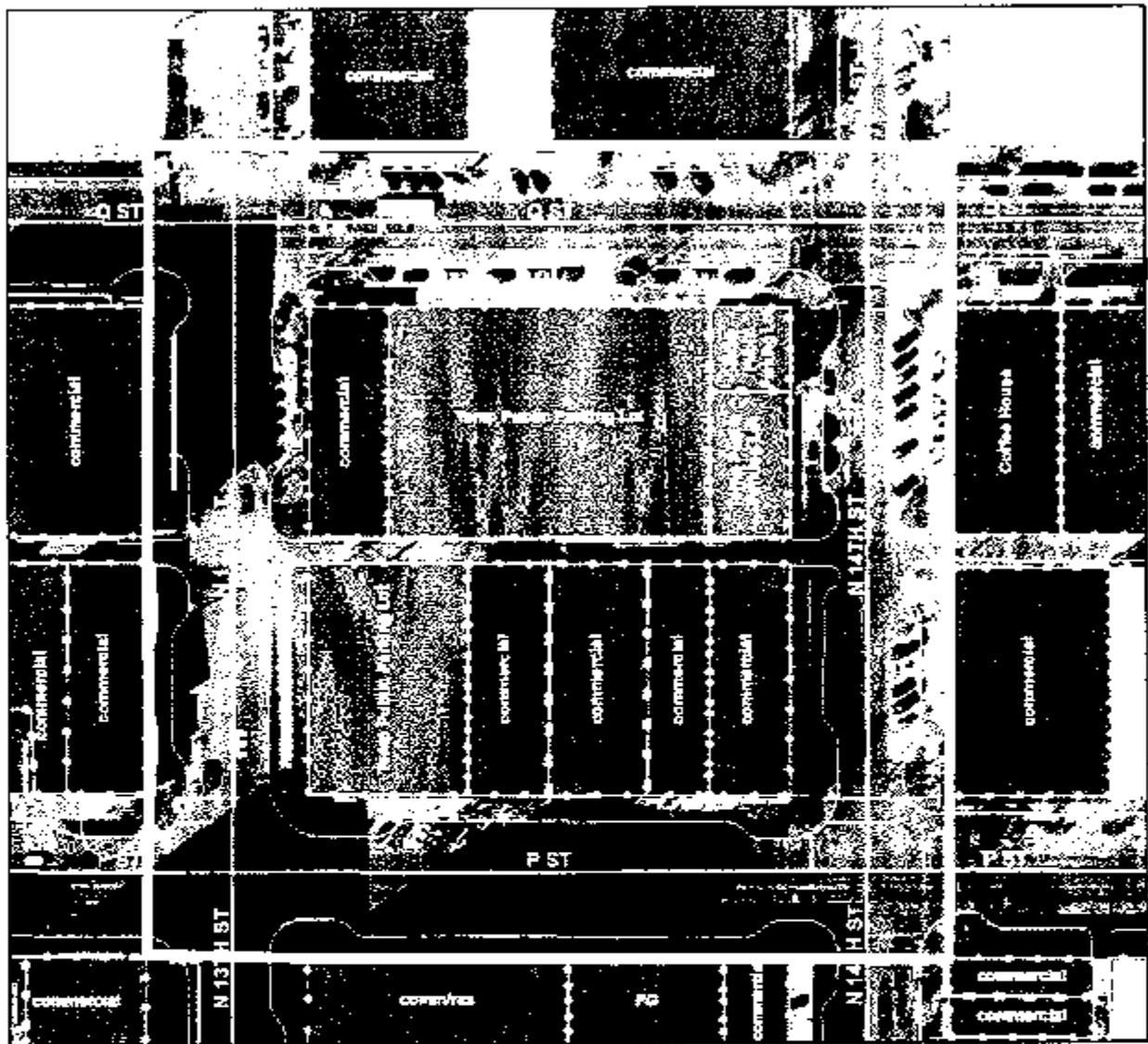


Exhibit IV - 162
Project Area with Current Land Use

Project Area	Residential	Public / Semi-Public	Right-Of-Way	Vacant / Undeveloped Land
Parcels	Commercial	Parks / Open Space	Agriculture	Park Plaza
Industrial	Environmental / Natural Areas	Lakes / Streams	Mining / Extraction	Mixed Use & Public Parking
		Pasture / Grassland		

Catalyst One & Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project
Lincoln Center Redevelopment Area

City of Lincoln
The Center for
Creative and Cultural
Development



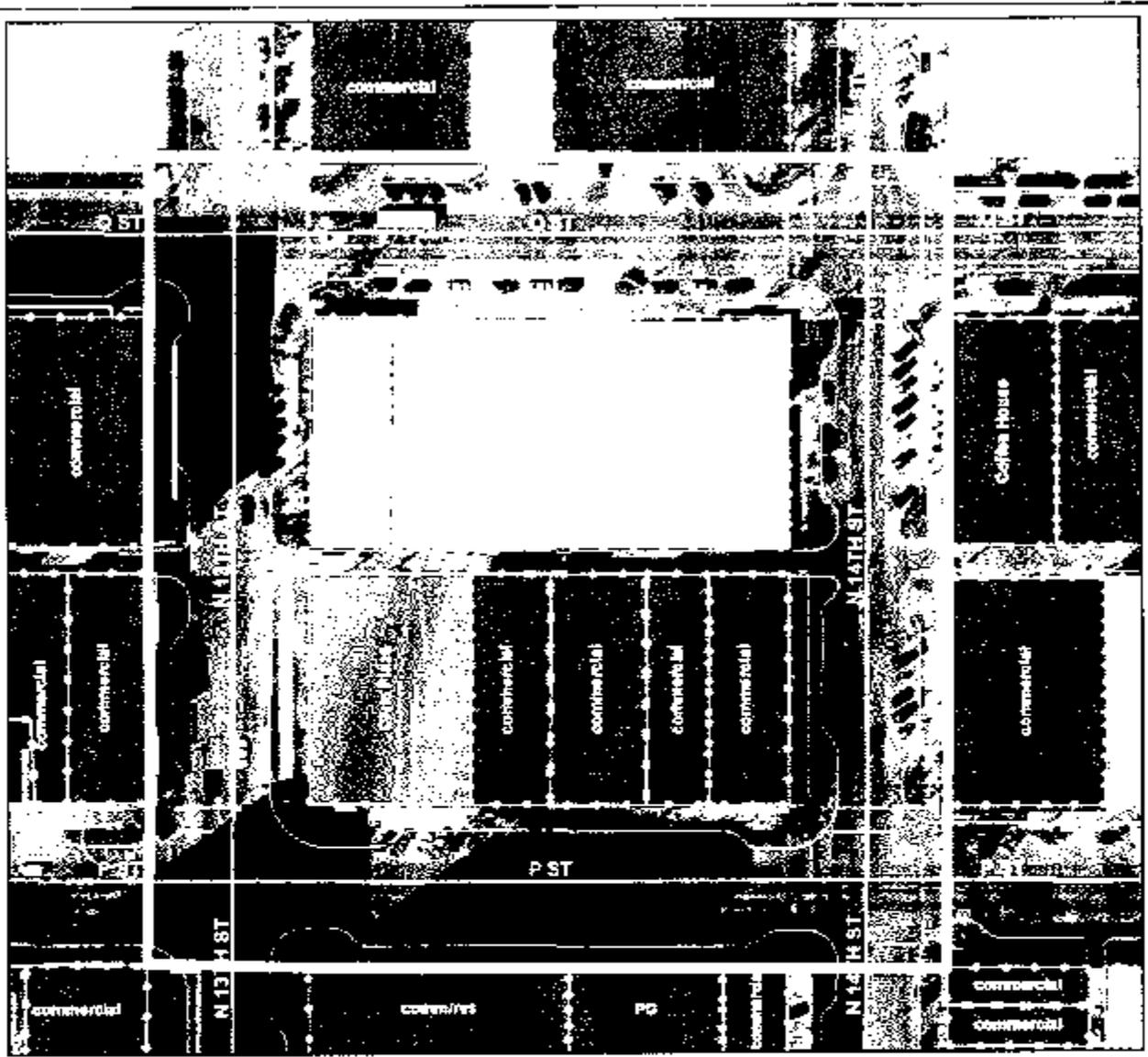


Exhibit IV - 163
Project Area with Future Land Use

Project Area	Land Use	Public / Semi-Public	Right-Of-Way	Vacant / Unimproved Land
Parcel	Residential	Parks / Open Space	Agricultural	Civic Plaza
	Commercial	Lakes, Streams	Mining / Extraction	Mixed Use & Public Parking
	Industrial	Environmental / Natural Areas	Pasture / Grassland	

Catalyst One & Civic Plaza Redevelopment Project

Lincoln Center Redevelopment Area

City of Lincoln
The City of Lincoln
Geographic Information System





Application Information	
Application #	17-0000
Associated Requests	Title: CATALYST ONE & CIVIC PLAZA

Planning Department Use Only	
Submission Date	11/27/2017
Project Planner	Brandon Garrett
Review Due	12/07/2017

Review Comments					
	<input type="radio"/> Corrections Needed for Review	<input type="radio"/> Insufficient Information for Review	<input type="radio"/> Recommend Denial	<input type="radio"/> Recommend Approval with Conditions	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Recommend Approval
Planning	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required	<input type="radio"/> No Review Required			
County Health (Chris Schroeder)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required				
Development Review Manager (Steve Hennrichsen)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required				
LCS (Mike Peterson)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required				
Public Works (Bruce Briney)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required				
Public Works (Buff Baker)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required 12/01/09 See Dennis' comments				
Public Works (Dennis Bartels)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required There are no specific details to review in the application and therefore I have no specific comments.				
Windstream (Ken Adams)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required				
Historic Districts/Capitol Projects (Ed Ziemer)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required				
Law Department (Rick Pro)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No Review Required Looks fine.				