

City Council Introduction: Monday, October 10, 2011

Special Joint Public Hearing of the Lincoln City Council and Lancaster County Board of Commissioners:

Tuesday, October 18, 2011, 5:00 p.m.

Bill No. 11R-250

FACTSHEET

TITLE: 2040 LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (LPlan 2040), requested by the Director of Planning and as recommended by the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission dated September 7, 2011.

SPONSOR: Planning Department

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Planning Commission
Public Hearing: 08/17/11, 08/24/11, 09/07/11
Administrative Action: 09/07/11

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the Planning Commission recommendation dated September 7, 2011

RECOMMENDATION: Approval, as revised and amended (8-0: Partington, Francis, Larson, Gaylor Baird, Sunderman, Esseks, Lust and Cornelius voting 'yes'; Taylor absent).

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan (LPlan 2040) and the draft 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) were heard at the same time before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission action on the Comprehensive Plan is a recommendation to the Lincoln City Council and Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. The Planning Commission action on the Long Range Transportation Plan is a recommendation to the MPO Officials Committee; however, the LRTP is basically Chapter 10 of the Comprehensive Plan, entitled "Transportation".
2. The draft 2040 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan (LPlan 2040) submitted to the Planning Commission on July 8, 2011, was the result of a broad-based community input process and over one year of intensive public outreach and involvement, including the work of the LPlan Advisory Committee (LPAC), a 20-person citizen group appointed by the Mayor, which included all nine members of the Planning Commission. The committee met 26 times from June 23, 2010 to June 15, 2011. The committee meeting materials and minutes may be found at <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/committee/index.htm>.
3. The Planning Commission held five workshops from July 13, 2011 to September 7, 2011, the notes of which may be found at <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/hearings.htm> under "Planning Commission Briefings and Workshops".
4. The staff report issued on August 3, 2011, is attached hereto (p.2-4), which concludes that LPlan 2040 provides new direction for Lincoln and Lancaster County, while continuing many key policies of the past that have served the community well. The Planning Commission recommendation represents a careful balance between many values and goals for the community relating to future growth and development, quality of life in urban and rural areas, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship and sustainability. LPlan 2040 includes some important strategies for implementation and a process for regular updates.
5. The Planning Commission held three public hearings on August 17, August 24 and September 7, 2011, the minutes of which are attached hereto (p.5-28). The meeting materials and change documents referred to in the staff report and the minutes may be found at <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/hearings.htm>.
6. All public comments submitted as of the date of this Factsheet are found on pp.29-64.
7. On September 7, 2011, the Planning Commission voted 8-0 to recommend approval of the staff recommendation as revised on September 2 and September 7, 2011, as amended by Motion to Amend #2 (See Minutes, p.24-26) and Motion to Amend #3 (See Minutes, p.26-27). Motion to Amend #1 to increase the sidewalk rehabilitation program funding to \$1.5 million annually, beginning in 2012-2013, failed 4-5 (See Minutes, p.18-24). (Note: Taylor was present during the vote on the amendments but was absent during the vote on the main motion.)
8. All of the staff recommended amendments as approved by the Planning Commission and the amendments made by the Planning Commission have been incorporated into the LPlan 2040 document submitted to the City Council and County Board dated September 7, 2011.
9. The draft Comp Plan document has previously been submitted to the City Council and County Board under separate cover and may be found on-line at www.lincoln.ne.gov (Keyword: LPlan2040).
10. On October 3, 2011, the City Council and County Board were briefed at the City-County Common meeting. Several proposed amendments were discussed and will be provided as motions to amend to both the City Council and County Board prior to the joint public hearing scheduled for October 18, 2011.

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Jean L. Preister

REVIEWED BY: _____

REFERENCE NUMBER: FS\CC\2011\2040 Comp Plan

DATE: October 4, 2011

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LINCOLN/ LANCASTER COUNTY STAFF REPORT
Lincoln-Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan –
Draft of July 8, 2011

DATE: August 3, 2011

PROPOSAL: Adoption of the July 8, 2011 draft of “LPlan 2040,” the new Lincoln City-Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan, with amendments.

RELATED ITEMS: Draft Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

APPLICANT: Marvin Krout, Director of Planning

CONTACT: Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department
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The July 8, 2011 draft of LPlan 2040 was developed through a broad-based community input process and is the result of over one year of intensive public outreach and involvement. This included the work of the LPlan Advisory Committee (LPAC), a 20-person citizen group (which included the nine members of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission) appointed by the Mayor representing a broad range of interests in the City and County, who met bi-weekly to provide guidance on the development of the Plan. The draft LPlan 2040 is submitted by the Director of Planning and is recommended for adoption to replace the 2030 Comprehensive Plan for Lincoln and Lancaster County. LPlan 2040 is proposed to be adopted with amendments noted in the “*Changes to July 8, 2011 Draft LPlan 2040*” document, which is a log of revisions dated August 3, 2011 that were discussed with the Planning Commission at their workshop in July. It is anticipated that this change document may be updated with additional revisions based upon the public hearings held by the Planning Commission.

LPlan 2040 Major Assumptions

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan served as the starting point for LPlan 2040, which retains many of the same visions, goals and strategies based on the foundation that Lincoln and Lancaster County comprise one community. Some fundamental assumptions of LPlan 2040 include:

- By 2040, the population of Lancaster County will increase by 126,000 to over 412,000.
- 90% of the population is projected to be within the City of Lincoln, 6% in the rural areas of the county and 4% in small towns.
- The Tier I growth area for Lincoln includes 34 square miles in multiple directions, but with an emphasis on growth to the east and south; the city is expected to grow from about 91 square miles to about 125 square miles by the year 2040.
- 47,500 additional residential units are projected within the Lincoln area by 2040, with an additional 4,500 in the balance of the county.
- The City of Lincoln will continue to implement policies of growth based upon drainage basins with gravity-flow sewer and new development that is contiguous to the existing City limits.

New or Enhanced Concepts in Lplan 2040

- **Mixed Use Redevelopment.** LPlan 2040 identifies the potential for 8,000 new dwelling units to be located within the existing built-out portion of the City by 2040. Infill and redevelopment is encouraged in a new chapter called “Mixed Use Redevelopment,” which focuses on redevelopment of underutilized commercial and industrial areas in “nodes and corridors.” These “nodes” are commercial centers that are encouraged to be redeveloped into walkable residential mixed use centers, and “corridors,” which represent areas to encourage mixed use redevelopment of commercial strips, connections between nodes, and priorities for future public transportation enhancements.
- **Transportation.** The transportation chapter of LPlan 2040 is also reflected in a separate document known as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which is a related item noted at the top of this staff report. The LRTP is required for the City and County to receive federal transportation funds, and it must be adopted by the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a separate agency with representation from the City, County and State.

LPlan 2040 and the LRTP look at all modes of transportation: walking, bicycling, driving and transit. Considerable additional detail was required with this update to consider expected funding and develop a “Financially Constrained” transportation plan. The plan also include “Illustrative” or unfunded projects that represent transportation needs for future consideration.

- **Placemaking.** A new chapter called “Placemaking” combines urban design and historic preservation as tools to preserve and enhance the community’s unique character - its sense of place. The chapter carries forward historic and cultural resource considerations from the 2030 Plan, identifies key entryways for protection, and includes strategies for improving urban design standards.
- **Energy Element.** A new section in LPlan 2040 in the Energy & Utilities chapter addresses energy as an important consideration in planning the future of Lincoln and Lancaster County. A new state statute mandates all comprehensive plans now include an energy element. This new section includes an assessment of energy use, evaluates the utilization of renewable energy sources, and describes efforts to conserve energy in the community.
- **Other Elements.** LPlan 2040 carries forward, clarifies and enhances the many sustainability elements found in the 2030 Plan, including encouraging compact growth, infill and redevelopment, and local food production. Additional strategies encourage the implementation of the Salt Valley Greenway with new emphasis on the prairie corridor extending from Pioneers Park to Audubon Spring Creek Prairie.

Public Outreach and Involvement

As noted above, an extensive and inclusive public process was carried out throughout the development of the draft LPlan 2040. This process is described in detail beginning on page 10.21 of the Transportation chapter. Over the past year, thousands of comments that were gathered and shared with the LPlan Advisory Committee (LPAC) helped to shape the development of the Plan. The links below include written comments from individuals on three online comment boards available during various periods over the past year, and four staff reports provided to LPAC that summarize written comments from the public received on specific sets of issues discussed during the process:

Draft LPlan 2040 & LRTP Comment Board

http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/comment_draft.htm

General Comment Board

http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/comment_gen.htm

Growth Scenario Comment Board

http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/comment_gs.htm

Transportation Preferences Survey Report

<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/survey/transrpt.pdf>

Transportation Goals Survey Report

<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/committee/110223/survey.pdf>

Growth Scenario Public Input Report

http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/committee/101117/pi_rpt.pdf

Bright Ideas Report

<http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/plan/lplan2040/committee/101103/BrightIdeas.pdf>

Three public hearings have been scheduled and advertised before the Planning Commission to encourage the public to continue to offer input and suggested changes to the Plan. The public hearings will be held in the Council Chambers in the County City Building, at 555 S. 10th St.:

- Wednesday, August 17th from 5 – 7 pm
- Wednesday, August 24th during the regular meeting, which begins at 1 pm
- Wednesday, September 7th during the regular meeting, which begins at 1 pm

As of the date of preparation of this staff report, the July 8, 2011 draft LPlan 2040 is recommended for approval with the revisions identified on the attached change document. However, it is noted that the purpose of these hearings is to seek additional public input, and that further changes may be recommended based upon this input.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed LPlan 2040 provides new direction for Lincoln and Lancaster County, while continuing many key policies of the past that have served the community well. The proposed Comprehensive Plan represents a careful balance between many values and goals for the community relating to future growth and development, quality of life in urban and rural areas, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship and sustainability. LPlan 2040 includes some important strategies for implementation and a process for regular updates. The Plan is recommended for adoption with changes as noted below.

RECOMMENDATION: **Approval**, with the revisions noted on the attached change document called “*Changes to July 8, 2011 Draft LPlan 2040,*” dated August 3, 2011. (Additional revisions may be recommended as a result of the public hearings before the Planning Commission).

Submitted by:

Marvin Krout
Director of Planning

**2040 LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
(LPlan 2040)
and
2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

August 17, 2011

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

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

Staff presentation: **Nicole Fleck-Tooze of Planning staff** explained that the Comprehensive Plan and the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) represent a vision for Lincoln and Lancaster County and the community in the year 2040. This is a major update, which is done every 10 years, to look at where people will live, work, shop and travel around the community and to provide the infrastructure and services needed for the next 30 years. We anticipate 125,000 additional people by 2040.

Fleck-Tooze advised that these two plans are the result of more than a year-long public process which started with the formation of the LPlan Advisory Committee (LPAC) in June of 2010, which is a 20-person citizen committee of which the Planning Commission was a part. Throughout the summer, the Planning Department hosted a series of workshops on important topics and received over 95 “Bright Ideas” that were submitted in five different topic areas. At one of the workshops, the members and citizens were invited to examine options for direction and type of growth. That workshop, plus the input from LPAC was used to develop the three scenarios for future growth. Based on the input received from the broad public outreach, the staff and LPAC developed a preferred draft growth map and future land use plan, which was the basis for the detailed transportation planning that began in the first part of this year.

Fleck-Tooze also pointed out that during the course of the development of the draft plan, there were about 12 public meetings and workshops; and the staff met with many neighborhood groups, interest groups and organizations. The Department received input from hundreds of people through on-line surveys, e-mails, virtual town hall and social media, with 11,000 individual Web visits representing about 3,000 individuals.

Fleck-Tooze advised that there will be two more public hearings on the Comprehensive Plan and LRTP at the end of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Planning Commission on Wednesday, August 24th, and Wednesday, September 7th.

Fleck-Tooze also advised that a set of recommended changes were provided to the Planning Commission on Friday, August 12th. Those changes fell into four categories: 1) feedback from the individual LPAC members representing multiple changes throughout the document; 2) some changes to reflect recommendations from the Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission and the Urban Design Committee to restate and add some emphasis on areas of importance to those

groups relating to design standards, public buildings, the Downtown Master Plan and the work of the Urban Design Committee; 3) some changes to reflect feedback from the Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable and the Mayor's Aide for Stronger Safe Neighborhoods, to emphasize the importance of protecting existing neighborhoods and directing infill development; and 4) some changes based upon feedback from agencies relating to transportation, including the Federal Highway Administration, Nebraska Department of Roads and MPO. Further changes are anticipated based on local funding that is occurring at this time, and those additional changes will be prepared and submitted on August 24th.

Fleck-Tooze announced that as a result of today's workshop prior to this public hearing, there is a recommended change to the Parks & Recreation chapter relating to the renovation of neighborhood pools, i.e. a strategy to:

Renovate the five neighborhood pools (Air Park, Ballard, Belmont, Eden and Irvingdale) to bring the pool basins and bathhouses into compliance with accessibility guidelines, contingent upon adequate funding for annual operations and for repair/renovation costs.

Public Testimony

1. Mike Carlin, 2800 W. Paddock Road, President of the Hitching Post Hills Neighborhood Association and Board member of the Friends of Wilderness Park, stated that he is testifying on his own behalf. He believes this is a pretty impressive draft plan. It is obvious that a lot of work and dedication went into it. However, he was surprised to find that there is a rather radical reduction to the amount of land designated for regional and community parks in new growth areas. The current Comprehensive Plan requires a level of service (LOS) of 2.5 acres for regional parks and 2.9 acres for community parks per 1,000 residents. The draft plan proposes to reduce the LOS to no set goal for regional parks and 1.3 acres for community parks. The combined effect cuts the guaranteed LOS from 5.4 acres to 2.4 acres, a 75% reduction that will be concentrated in new developing areas. Carlin believes that this is in direct conflict with the guiding principles cited at the beginning of the chapter:

Parks and open space enhance the quality of life of the community's residents and are central to the community's economic development strategy—the community's ability to attract and retain viable businesses, industries and employees is directly linked to quality of life issues, including indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.

The proposed plan will reduce the city-wide LOS for community parks from 2.9 to 2.4 acres, not a huge change as an average, but pretty significant when you consider that the decreases will be concentrated in the new growth areas. With a higher percentage of new development areas paved and roofed, the amount of stormwater runoff will increase at the same time that the percentage of permeable park land decreases. With more stormwater, the costs will be higher and ultimately it could cost the city more in stormwater management costs. There is no guarantee that those extra developed acres will generate any tax revenues, as they could become the home of a mega church with a mega parking lot with mega runoff, with no tax revenue to pay for it, for example.

The proposed changes submitted last Friday add some verbiage on this subject attributing the change largely to financial reasons. Carlin pointed out that if we are looking to the short range in the next few years, the financial reasons are probably accurate, but this is a 30-year plan. If the LOS is lowered, we won't be able to raise it again in the future.

Carlin recommends that the LOS remain as it is today. Parks and trails were listed as a major factor for Lincoln being the #1 city to live in for college graduates.

Esseks stated that he shares Carlin's concern, and suggested to Carlin that the Planning Commission needs as much information as possible in the terms of studies either for Lincoln or for peer communities that can demonstrate the relationship between really good parks and trails and the attraction of people that invest and work in the community.

2. Dr. Earl Lampshire, 7208 Van Dorn, Apt. 224, testified about the widening of O Street. In 1955, he purchased 11 acres out by Hillcrest Country Club, facing O Street. It was all flat and for 25 years, he operated a Christmas tree farm on the property. At that time, he planted Christmas trees over the entire 11 acres. As the years went by, houses were built to the south of his property and they began to put the driveways in and the water began to come down through his property. Then they located Southeast Community College and some other things to the west. The rains came and the water came and dug the creek deeper and deeper, and now it's almost a river. The city had told him there was nothing they could do. Dr. Lampshire quit the Christmas tree business and sold the property.

Dr. Lampshire pointed out that the water cannot get under O Street because of the small overpass. About 11 years ago, Dr. Lampshire contacted the State and he was told that there are plans to widen O Street and the creek. He was also told that when O Street is widened, the state will take some of this property and fill it in. Nothing has happened to O Street. He would hope the Planning Commission would realize that Lincoln has an opportunity to go east and O Street was supposed to be widened about five or more years ago. Nothing has been done. Is there anything in this plan that will tell me what is going to happen to O Street and whether something is going to be done to save the property from the water in that creek? Lampshire wants the city to be able to move further east.

3. Dale Arp, 426 Steele Avenue, testified on behalf of the Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) to show support and appreciation for the process. The GPTN has followed the entire update process with a committee of members attending the meetings and activities, and they contributed a number of ideas. The GPTN has a membership of over 800 citizens who advocate a network of trails. The GPTN supports the acquisition, development and wide availability of trails by securing funds from private sources, working cooperatively with government agencies, by providing opportunity for persons to learn more about trails through education and organizing trail related events. The GPTN has accomplished raising over two million dollars for trails. Arp expressed appreciation to the staff and task force for this high quality work. This has been a wonderful learning experience, and the GPTN is quite satisfied.

4. Jim Cook, 3339 South 40th Street, also testified on behalf of the GPTN and agreed with Arp's testimony. They did attend a number of the meetings and were very impressed with the work done by the staff and the task force. The GPTN is in support of adoption of the plan. There are a lot of strategies supportive of the goals of the GPTN and they endorse the balance of the plan that

appears to address all forms of transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle transportation. The GPTN will be urging the decision makers in the future not to just write and talk about it, but to actually implement many of the things that are in the plan to make pedestrian and bicycle transportation more convenient. There is an energy problem in this country. Whatever we can do to reduce vehicular traffic will be to the benefit of the street system and to the benefit of all of us individually. We have to have facilities that will make it convenient.

Cook further advised that the GPTN would like to see all of the bicycle and pedestrian related facilities that are in the needs based plan implemented, but they also recognize choices had to be made for a financially constrained plan, and the GPTN concurs with the choices that have been made. They will be encouraging more of the needs based facilities in the future.

In addition, the GPTN recommends adoption of the Complete Streets concept referenced in the plan, the use of which was submitted by GPTN in the “Bright Ideas” exercise, and recommends that the city implement that Complete Streets policy before the next update of the plan.

5. Lisa Lee, 9145 Wishing Well Drive, moved to Lincoln from Kansas City about a year ago. She stated that she has slowly gotten more involved and has only attended a couple of the Comprehensive Plan meetings. She is here to suggest that there should be language in the strategies in the residential section in developing communities that is already in the plan in other sections. For example, relating to residential energy use, it would be good to encourage a passive solar type of design to reduce residential energy costs. It would be helpful to have that in the residential section for new residential development. It is a no cost way to produce energy. She does not see anything in the residential strategies that goes toward reducing energy costs. The community section includes a lot of very good language about energy costs and our relationship to the rest of the world and how there is pressure to reduce energy costs. She suggested that energy costs could also be addressed in commercial buildings. She suggested that this should become part of the building codes and zoning laws. She believes this is a fantastic community, but until the building codes reflect what you want to see, you may or may not see it. She knows there is a sensitivity for the market to drive development, but she is not sure the attitudes understand the options that are out there. Some builders are doing it because it is a nice niche, but most do not want to spend the extra money. This would level the playing field for the builders. If everyone has to spend the same amount of money, it makes it easier. It would be beneficial to the builders to increase those standards.

Esseks asked for an explanation of a “passive solar facility”. Lee explained, e.g., lots should be north/south as opposed to east/west. Most of Lincoln’s lots are laid out facing east and west. It is very common knowledge that east and west exposure increases your energy costs. The streets could be laid out such that the majority of the lots would be wider to the south and north so that the big windows would have the south exposure.

6. Rick Krueger, 8200 Cody Drive, appeared on own behalf. He supports the idea of local food production and suggested the simple statement that, “anybody who wants to garden in any zoning district and wants to sell that produce can do it”.

Relating to sustainability, Krueger stated that he has an alternative view and believes we are sustainable. We generally call it “production” out in the industry, i.e. more productive in doing more with less. He challenges the thought that the earth is running out of energy. He submitted an article

entitled, "Potential Gas Committee", from the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado, indicating that we have more recoverable gas today than at any other time in our history. That's just one example. In terms of LES, we can already see the new generation of light bulbs coming on. In addition, we know that heating and air conditioning equipment efficiencies are increasing. Krueger submitted that the verbage in the plan relative to running out of fuel and foreclosing options for our future should be removed from the plan.

Krueger also submitted an article published in the Seattle Times which states that, "Seattle green jobs program falls short of goals." After one year, just 14 jobs have emerged from the program, almost all of which are administrative. They are not getting things done. Krueger thus suggested that the market is taking care of itself in all of these areas. The reason is because we need density, but he does not believe the densification will be acceptable by the public in Lincoln.

Krueger also shared a report he had from Steve Henrichsen of the Planning Department dated in 2009 which shows that we have more park space in Lincoln than we have industrial ground.

Krueger would like to see some language in the business portions about the liberal interpretation of business zoning. The policy of planning appears to be that when you interpret a land use, you do it in the most conservative manner. He thinks it needs to be in the most liberal manner, so the developer can allow capital to form to get the job done.

Krueger is opposed to design standards on any of the business zoning areas. They are a hindrance to people creating the capital and getting things done.

Krueger encouraged the need to simplify zoning. For example, early on in this process the staff was promoting the old Richman Gordman site as an area for mixed use development. The zoning was changed because a new buyer wanted some office use, some retail use and some manufacturing. The key is to go for more wide range business zoning. "Simplify" and give more rights to the people who want to do things like that, especially in redeveloping areas.

The same goes for mixed use redeveloping -- simplify, simplify, simplify. They talk about pedestrian connection, but what we really want to do is integrate those mixed use developments into the neighborhoods. It is better to have a commercial street system with the residential. He does not think we should have design standards. He is also critical of the idea of assigning this task of mixed use to Urban Development or some advisory committee. He wants to look at the underlying zoning and get the job done without going through a process. "We do not need any more cooks in the kitchen."

Krueger is also opposed to stormwater utility. That would be very negative.

Taylor asked Krueger to explain his statement about pedestrian connections. Krueger stated that the plan has a predisposition to try to have more pedestrian movements, and that's fine; but, in the commercial realm, it doesn't matter. It is more important to have the proper street connections. 90% of the people do their trips in cars. That's the market that has to be served.

7. Travis Davis, 1621 G Street, Apt. 4, appeared on his own behalf. It may be true that 90% of the people make trips in cars, but he thinks you encourage trips in cars by the type of planning that is done. If you are encouraging easier pedestrian connection throughout the city, that encourages

that type of transportation, as opposed to catering to the historical use of the vehicle.

He is encouraged to see talk about raising public awareness of the impacts of global issues on the local environment and economy in the plan. If the public feels like they are instigating the change, it gains momentum. Raising public awareness creates the political demand for well informed change. When people feel like it is their idea and not the government telling them what to do, it starts to gain a lot more momentum.

8. Adam Hintz, 1611 Van Dorn Street, appeared on behalf of the Friends of Wilderness Park, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preservation of Wilderness Park and all natural areas in Lincoln and Lancaster County. The Friends of Wilderness Park advocate natural area preservation. They would like to see the city-wide level of service remain the minimum of 2.9 acres of community park per 1,000 residents.

Hintz then stated that he is testifying on his own behalf with regard to sustainability. He is pleased to see that the proposed plan includes a large amount of sustainability. There are things in the plan that could be better, but it is such a wonderful huge step towards a place that he feels comfortable leaving to his children. He expressed appreciation for all of the work that has been put into this issue in the plan. He has a vision of what he sees for his children growing up – local foods, riding bikes, walking, less and less trash, and more nature. This plan reflects that vision in a large way. **(**As amended on 8/23/11**)**

Break

Meeting was reconvened at 6:50 p.m.

There was no other public testimony.

The Clerk submitted a letter received from the Near South Neighborhood Association.

Cornelius expressed appreciation to the members of the public who testified and gave some direction, and he is hopeful to see more in the future.

The Clerk then announced that these items will have continued public hearing on Wednesday, August 24th, and Wednesday, September 7th, at the end of the regular meeting of the Planning Commission, which begins at 1:00 p.m. Any written comments may be made by e-mail to plan@lincoln.ne.gov; on-line at LPlan2040.lincoln.ne.gov; or mailed to the Planning Department, 555 S. 10th Street, Room 213, 68508, all of which will be put in the public record and considered by the Planning Commission.

CONT'D PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

August 24, 2011

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

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

Staff presentation: **Nicole Fleck-Tooze** of Planning staff briefly described what was discussed in the workshop preceding this meeting:

- several comments from the Near South Neighborhood Association relating to redevelopment; the number of dwelling units anticipated city-wide for infill in areas of existing residential zoned land; and concerns about neighborhood pools;
- suggestion for an appendix listing the various task forces and committees that have contributed over the years to the development of the Comprehensive Plan and other plans recognized in the Plan;
- comments received related to importance of strong library system;
- comments from the Mayor's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee supporting the vision and goals set forth in the LRTP, noting that the intent to focus on place making, mixed use redevelopment and sustainability supports walking and biking; this group is also in support of Complete Streets and the items in the needs based plan;
- changes to the Neighborhoods & Housing chapter relating to rural areas regarding the strategy for transfer of development rights referring to respecting property rights by compensating owners who agree to the transfers;
- changes relating to the guiding principles as discussed at the August 17th meeting;
- additional changes proposed to reflect some of those suggestions encouraging public investment in neighborhood infrastructure and services; continuing policies that maintain a mix of single-family and multi-family housing and support home ownership and sustainability;
- changes to Parks, Recreation & Open Space relating to neighborhood pools, i.e. renovation of five neighborhood pools to bring in compliance with accessibility guidelines;
- new strategy to consider incentives to encourage higher densities;
- some minor changes for clarification that were proposed for the water elements by Public Works.

David Cary of Planning staff then explained the proposed amendments to the Transportation chapter and the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), all of which have been posted on the Web site, including a summary page which attempts to break down the funding changes that

have occurred during the process, with a related list of projects for roadways and a corresponding map.

The newly proposed changes to the draft LRTP and the Transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan are a result of the City's budget process that was just completed and adopted on August 22nd. There is an additional influx of 7.1 million dollars for transportation purposes. We are required to have a financially constrained transportation plan. We can only have enough projects and programs funded in the transportation plan related to the revenues coming in.

There is additional funding equating to approximately 2.5 million more per year to put towards existing spending on the capital program for roadways to be newly constructed and paved or to be widened. That will bring up the amount of available funding in 2040 to a higher amount overall, with 15 more capital roadway projects. This additional funding will also contribute to the costs of the South Beltway.

Another major change is that 4.6 of the 7.1 million dollars is specifically going toward street rehabilitation. This gets very close to the 12 million dollar number that was identified in the draft plan released in July. The new funding allows that shift to occur almost immediately as the revenue comes in over the next three years.

We have talked about the sidewalk rehabilitation program as being an important need that is being underfunded. At this time, we are able to get \$500,000 per year, which is what is being spent currently. This is a result of some of the commitments made in the budget process to allocate the new funding toward other items.

Fleck-Tooze also noted a change to the priority growth tiers map to show some additional areas within the existing city limits in northeast Lincoln, in the area of North 84th and Adams and further south as Tier I, Priority A.

Esseks inquired whether the increased funding for road rehabilitation and new construction will result in some improvement in sidewalks. Cary believes that it will because there is going to be increased funding for rehabilitation of existing streets, and there are often times improvements to the sidewalks at the time of that rehabilitation of the street, including curb ramps for ADA and crossings of existing streets. There is an opportunity to do more of the sidewalk improvement in the future with this additional roadway rehabilitation planning.

Cornelius commented that through the process of the LPAC, a needs based projection for what the LRTP would require was developed, i.e. what would be required to meet the transportation needs of Lincoln and Lancaster County as we move forward into the future toward 2040. We identified or determined that the important priority for Lincoln would be maintenance of our existing infrastructure. He is happy we got this windfall, but he is disappointed that we have taken a hit in the already severely underfunded bicycle and pedestrian rehabilitation line item. While small compared to the others, it is underfunded by a greater percentage than any of the others. He is happy that we do have the needs based plan that points out that we are failing to maintain this infrastructure. Where can we look for that funding, and what can we do moving forward to achieve the goals that we identified through the LPAC process? Cary suggested that it is an ongoing process. The Plan is updated on a regular basis. There is also the annual review process that allows opportunity to try to affect that discussion. In the implementation section of the

transportation plan, we have added new strategies to say we need to continue the discussion so that we don't forget about it.

Gaylor Baird agreed with Cornelius. She hears a little disconnect – we have to find funding and to have this kind of huge windfall and not have a piece go to something we have identified as important shows that it is not very high on the priorities. She feels very much less confident that there will be money for sidewalks anytime in the future if not a cent of it goes to the bike and pedestrian rehabilitation.

Lust expressed concern about voting on the entire Comprehensive Plan based on the premise that we want denser growth in the city whereby we need to encourage people to walk and get exercise, encourage neighborhoods that are walkable, etc. She is concerned about the fact that we are not providing funding for the very thing that makes that possible. She is worried how that will affect the rest of the plan. This wasn't just about, "should we fund sidewalks". This is an overall Comprehensive Plan. We started with the premise that people want denser growth and new urbanism. She suggested that under-funding the rehabilitation of the pedestrian system that we have by a factor of five is going to have a significant detrimental effect on the overall plan that the Commission will be asked to vote upon in a week.

Public Testimony

1. **Jon Carlson** offered congratulations to the new chair and vice-chair, and expressed appreciation to Lynn Sunderman for his services as Chair.

Carlson stated that he is here to speak based on the feedback, calls and comments he has received from different neighborhood associations through his various roles with the city. He is excited about the plan and the components of the plan keeping the center of the city vital and the center of downtown strong.

Carlson believes that most of the comments raised by the Near South neighborhood individuals have been addressed by the changes that have already been recommended by the staff, but there are three left:

- 1) the notion of "obstacles to redevelopment";
- 2) reducing size of the planned unit development (PUD); and
- 3) the 1,000 infill units called for in the plan in existing neighborhoods.

Obstacles to Redevelopment. Carlson understands there was a long process to identify issues. But the feedback he gets from neighborhoods is that they are seeing a draft plan that contains bullets that indicate to them that neighborhoods represent an obstacle or obstruction or that neighborhood associations are somehow not valuable. He knows that is not what the plan is trying to communicate, but the majority of the neighborhood associations are not satisfied. He acknowledged that staff has made some changes to this section but perhaps there needs to be an additional section based on neighborhood brainstorming exercises. Carlson suggested that at some point, it seems like we can work too hard to try to fix what is not really a problem. Carlson suggested that the section labeled "obstacles to redevelopment" should be removed from the plan.

The strategies can continue to exist. There is no other section that has the comments of a few constituents. The strategies are in there and can live independent of the individual comments that the neighborhoods find offensive.

Esseks agrees that the current language needs to be changed, but it may be healthy to have a section on obstacles so that we are frank with ourselves and our community that there are obstacles that have to be dealt with. Esseks proposed rewording in such a way that no group has been slighted but that we do realize there are economic and political obstacles.

Carlson stated that he did try to rewrite the section but it doesn't make it any better. The strategies are the important part.

Larson stated that in looking back on all of the discussion and actions we have had in the last two to three years about density, including the move to downzone so many of the neighborhoods, he believes that he was mistakenly thinking that neighborhoods were opposed to additional density when actually what they were opposed to was additional density with poor design. He wishes there was some way to strengthen the design standards and make that part of the Comprehensive Plan. It is not the number of people, but the design standards of the new infill development. Carlson agreed. The strategies that follow cover that.

But, Sunderman does not know what it means if the strategies remain in place and the obstacles of redevelopment are removed. Carlson suggested changing it to "Strategies for Encouraging Redevelopment." Sunderman thinks the obstacles are real and need to be addressed. There are reasons developers work on the fringe, and that is because it is easier and more predictable. The concerns of the developers (the people who will be working on increasing our density) need to be addressed. Carlson agreed, but he suggests that the way they are addressed are by the 20+ strategies that follow. Sunderman disagrees. He thinks the obstacles need to be put on the table. He is talking about unpredictability.

Gaylor Baird suggested achieving both goals by adding a short summary instead of bullets, i.e. that we have heard that the cost of land assembling, lending practices, zoning issues and consensus-building are challenges. In other words, discuss strategies without making it look like a list of complaints as opposed to a quick study on the issues.

Larson also suggested that the plan recommend consideration of the impact fee structure based upon the actual cost to the city for whatever infrastructure costs come about from this. He can see that a developer probably doesn't put too much more time into a 20-unit development on the edge than he does to one vacant lot development in the inner city, and the cost to the city is hardly anything for the infill but considerable for the development on the edge. This could be another incentive for developers. Cornelius pointed out that this issue is bulleted in section 6. Larson thinks there is an injustice there that needs to be looked at.

Cornelius asked Carlson to respond to the rewording that staff has proposed. Carlson stated that he appreciates that and it encouraged him to sit down and try to do more rewording and he eventually got to the point where he was working it to death. Cornelius wondered how Carlson felt about removing the main heading about obstacles and suggested "strategies for encouraging infill or redevelopment" with a short paragraph about the obstacles. Carlson would like consensus-building there as opposed to obstacles.

Taylor stated that he has problems with the idea of projecting the problem without solutions. That should be part of the process. Cornelius pointed out that the strategies include the solutions. Taylor thinks the process should be reversed.

Reducing the size of Planned Unit Development. Carlson pointed out that prior to 2004, the PUD was basically never used. It existed but it was very highly regulated. In 2004-05, the regulations were liberalized and essentially we created a “write your own zoning overlay” to facilitate some creativity. He recalls the discussion was to try to make sure there was a minimum size to provide enough space to make the creative solution work, but also to try to direct and make sure we weren’t creating an end-run around zoning. The language “consider reducing” makes sense. The plan itself is meant to give guidance for future action and this notion about reducing the size of the PUD is going to take some discussion to include more neighborhood individuals and more developers. Carlson believes that “reduce” the size of the PUD creates a mandate. “Consider” reducing the size of the PUD says this is a tool we want to look at.

Lust wondered about removing the word “consider” throughout that page because it seems when we are talking about strategies, that’s what we are doing (considering). None of these things are going to be done for sure. There are a lot of things in here that are out of our control, such as building and zoning fees. Given that this is a strategy section, Lust believes it would make more sense to eliminate any kind of fuzzy language.

1,000 infill units. Carlson stated that he applauds the Planning Department because early on they understood immediately that neighborhoods would be very interested on “where it is and how will it look”. There has been a lot of attempt to be very specific, i.e. we don’t mean tearing down houses. The development is intended to be on vacant lots and accessory dwelling units. The neighborhoods understand that, for the most part, but Carlson relayed the comment he has heard and suggested that the only way it can work is if this Planning Commission and future Planning Commissions really do honor the plan to the extent that that notion of these 1,000 infill units is closely tied to the idea of design standards. He wants to create a plan that gives guidance that will say, “here is what the plan meant and here’s where it meant.” We have done a lot of work to create design standards that will build the product and make it appropriate. We need to be able to tie the dwelling units to tough, tight design standards. The infill needs to enhance the neighborhood.

Lust noted that the staff has revised some of the language about existing neighborhoods and infill and wondered whether Carlson thought it was strong enough. Or does it need to be even more tied to well designed and appropriately placed dwelling units? Carlson stated that the Comprehensive Plan has that interesting tension between “the plan is viable” and “the plan is a guide.” It should not include the exact standard and the exact design specification. Alluding to “well designed” and “appropriately placed” is the key. He does not know how much is enough.

Gaylor Baird asked the Planning staff to take one more look at tightening the linkage between redevelopment and infill in existing neighborhoods and the importance of design standards. She agrees that it is important to older and established neighborhoods. She would like to see language that links them more closely without changing the 1,000 units.

There was no other public testimony.

The Chair reminded the public that there is additional hearing taking place at the end of the Planning Commission's regular meeting on Wednesday, September 7th, which begins at 1:00 p.m., followed by action on the draft Plan and the draft LRTP also on September 7th.

CONT'D PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

September 7, 2011

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

Ex Parte Communications: Cornelius reported that each Commissioner was individually contacted by Rick Hoppe of the Mayor's office, presenting the same information to each individual Commissioner which was also presented in an open meeting held use before this session.

Gaylor Baird disclosed that she contacted Rick Hoppe as a courtesy when she developed a proposed amendment to let him think about it and give feedback. She also contacted several of the other Commissioners for the same purpose.

Staff recommendation: Approval, as revised in the change documents dated September 2 and September 7, 2011.

Staff presentation: **Nicole Fleck-Tooze of Planning staff** briefly summarized the additional information provided to the Commission since the last meeting held on August 24, 2011, referring to the change document dated September 2, 2011, as follows:

- additional public comments, as well as a response to those comments from Esseks relating to Parks;
- comment received today regarding the importance of light rail;
- additional revised staff recommended changes to the plan, the majority of which are fairly minor grammatical changes or clarifying language, relating to redevelopment, transportation, commercial centers, level of service for parks and other minor revisions;
- revision to County Land Use Plan in the Waverly jurisdiction to reflect the updated version of the Waverly Comprehensive Plan;
- motions to amend prepared at the request of Gaylor Baird relating to challenges of redevelopment, strategies for PUD, and to increase the sidewalk rehabilitation funding to 1.5 million annually (with a parallel amendment prepared for LRTP) and an exhibit describing how that would change the roadway capital projects.

Fleck-Tooze also submitted an additional change to the staff recommendation as a result of this morning's briefing session to amend the strategy related to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, specifically sidewalk rehabilitation as follows:

The Mayor and City Council should examine funding options prior to the 2012-13 city budget year that more closely match funding with identified needs in the sidewalk rehabilitation program. (Chapter 10, Transportation: Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities: Strategies).

Public Testimony

1. **Barb Fraser**, 3210 Laredo Drive, Chair of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC), testified to reinforce the position on funding for sidewalk maintenance and repair. When the PBAC originally provided a letter of support, the Plan invested one million dollars in sidewalk maintenance and repair, which is a better approach to fixing the current sidewalk problem. The PBAC would prefer to see the “needs based” plan funded, which includes 2.5 million. The PBAC stated that the current funding of \$500,000 is insufficient. The PBAC supports the Complete Streets approach as we move forward with transportation projects.

2. **Rosina Paolini**, 1850 Dakota Street, pointed out that there is a lot of language in the Plan regarding fiscal constraint and the ability to tax as we look toward the year 2040. In her mind, those are things/issues that whoever is in office is going to have to deal with – they are budgeting issues, which is separate from the issue of what this city needs for growth. When we limit the amount of park space that we will have in the future or limit the potential number of pools that we may revise, refurbish, etc., Paolini suggests that to be a budgetary issue separate from a “what does our community need” issue. We know that crime rates for adolescents go down when we have neighborhood pools, recreation centers and parks. Yes, they cost money to build and maintain, but if we can engage children in their future early by spending the money ahead, we will save so much in the future. When we put limitations from 6 to 1.1 pools or 2.4 to 1.3 acres, are we limiting the possibilities for our future? The other side of that, especially with park land, is that we know it increases the value of your home if the home is near a park, and we know that the permeable soil is going to benefit ecologically down the line. We also know that park land is going to be cheaper now than if we decide in 2030 we are going to be able to increase the acres of park land but the price went up. These are things that go through her mind when she looks at the changes. Neighborhoods need to remain strong if we are going to keep the crime rate down and keep people working together, and that includes a walkable grocery store, restaurant, park, swimming pool, recreation center and library. That’s a lot of what pulls a neighborhood together.

Paolini stated that she has learned so much through this process and expressed appreciation to the Planning Commission members for taking time to volunteer so many hours.

Esseks stated that the Commission has been very impressed by Paolini’s frequent attendance at the meetings. “You have been there learning, but also speaking out and informing us. Thank you.”

2040 LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

September 7, 2011

Lust moved approval of the staff recommendation, as revised on September 2 and September 7, 2011, seconded by Esseks.

Motion to Amend #1: Gaylor Baird moved to amend the staff recommendation on various pages of Chapter 10: Transportation, by increasing the sidewalk rehabilitation program funding to \$1.5 million annually, beginning in 2012-2013, seconded by Lust, as follows (this motion deletes the staff's September 7th revision regarding sidewalk rehabilitation set forth above):

“Amend the staff recommendation **by increasing the sidewalk rehabilitation program funding to \$1.5 million annually beginning in Year 2 of the Plan** (FY 12-13) on various pages of Chapter 10: Transportation as follows:

Page #	Amendment
10.41	[Update City of Lincoln Needs Based Capital Roadway Projects and Programs table to account for \$1.5 million annual sidewalk rehabilitation program]
10.47	[Update Table 10.1 Forecasted Current and Year of Expenditure Total Revenues (\$1 M) to show impact of \$1.5 million in sidewalk rehab program]
10.51	[Revise 2 nd paragraph in Bicycle and Pedestrian Program] This Financially Constrained Plan <u>funds</u> recommends the sidewalk rehabilitation program <u>at</u> be funded to a level of \$500,000 <u>\$1 million</u> \$1.5 million per year...
10.52	[Update Table 10.5 Bicycle and Pedestrian: Current and Year of Expenditure Revenues and Costs (\$M) to indicate \$1.5 million annual sidewalk rehabilitation program]
10.56	[Revise 2 nd paragraph in Financially Constrained Roadway Plan] As can be seen, the total financially constrained funding for roadways is approximately \$41.66 million \$37,375,000 for 2012. Total roadway funds by year of expenditure through 2040 are approximately \$1.88 \$1.92 <u>\$1.68</u> billion.
10.57	[Update Table 10.8 with new funding amounts to account for \$1.5 million annual sidewalk rehabilitation program]
10.60	[Update Green Text Box] In total, there <u>are</u> were 54 60 local 45 projects (note: this includes some projects with multiple segments) identified that could be constructed within the remaining roadway capital budget.
10.60	[Revise 4 th paragraph in Roadway Capital Project Details] In total, there <u>are</u> were 54 60 local 45 projects (note: this includes some projects with multiple segments) identified that could be constructed within the remaining roadway capital budget.
10.61	[Use updated Financially Constrained Roadway Plan map to account for \$1.5 million annual sidewalk rehabilitation program]
10.62/ 10.63	[Use updated Table 10.9: Roadway Capital Projects: Current and Year of Expenditure Revenues and Costs (\$M) to account for \$1.5 million annual sidewalk rehabilitation program]

Discussion: Gaylor Baird stated that by the year 2040, Lincoln and Lancaster County is projected to see a significant increase in population – likely to grow to 410,000 – which is a 65% increase over our population today. Simply put, there are going to be a lot more people moving around in our community, both on streets and sidewalks. Typically, with greater density, we have more people. This will result in a significant increase in population density in part of our community, which will result in the desire to have more options about moving about our community – more people who want to walk and bike. We need to plan for this by improving our pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The current budget number for sidewalks falls far short of estimates to even maintain them. Sidewalks are currently underfunded by a factor of 5. Sidewalks help preserve connectivity, insure walkable and livable neighborhoods, reduce traffic congestion, help with air quality and help to make sure that people have a safe pathway moving about our community.

Gaylor Baird went on to state that the City Council has some tough decisions to make about funding as a community given the constraints and resources. There are tradeoffs they are going to have to make. That is not our job – the job of the Planning Commission is to tell the City Council what we think is going to happen in our city and how the city should plan and prepare for it. The City Council gets to make those tough decisions about funding year to year, but she wants to be very clear that no one thinks the money allocated for sidewalks is enough. The “needs based” plan calls for \$2.5 million. The amendment which she is proposing is based on a year-long public process and would increase sidewalk funding from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million, with funds being available by shifting capital roadway projects past the 2040 time horizon.

Gaylor Baird commented that in the briefing held before this meeting, the Commissioners and staff had a great debate about the role of the Planning Commission and it seems that that role might be up for some revision. And everyone seems to agree that needs to happen quickly. The Planning Commissioners need to understand their role and how their role might be changing if it is becoming more intertwined with the dollar amounts that go with their recommendations.

Until Gaylor Baird knows more specifically about that new role as a Planning Commission member, ~~and until she is more comfortable about providing advice about what is best for our community based on the experts, data, and input of many, many people who have written and testified, she is offering this amendment.~~ She recognizes that it is awkward offering it this amendment in the context of the briefing just held, but until she understands her new job description as a Planning Commission member, she feels more comfortable politely agreeing to disagree with those whom she respects and admires very, very much, while respecting her environment very, very much. In her opinion, this is a very valid amendment to make a quality plan. (**As amended on 9/21/11**)

Larson, having missed the briefing, asked for clarification of the amendment. Gaylor Baird stated that it is a recommendation that the amount in the bicycle and pedestrian rehabilitation program for sidewalk maintenance be \$1.5 million instead of the current allocation of \$500,000. The “needs based” plan calls for \$2.5 million. This would require some shifting of some roadway projects with minimal impact in the near term, with six projects shifted into a future time horizon beyond 2040. We are happy about the new funding and amount of work that will go on in our community. She just wants to make sure the people who walk the sidewalks can celebrate too.

Larson stated that he appreciates the need for better maintained sidewalks, but does not think we should be so specific as to take it out of the roads budget. As he understands, this would come out of additional state funds being received by the City because of the Fisher amendment. **David Cary**

of Planning staff explained that the shift in funding is not specific to LB 84, but it is specific to the capital roadway program. Larson stated that he will vote against the amendment. While he would be in favor of increasing the sidewalk budget, he is not comfortable reducing the roads budget.

Lust stated that she will support the amendment. She fully understands the Mayor's urging that we not get this specific about what is in the budget; however, she believes that the Planning Commission has spent a lot of time on coming up with a Comprehensive Plan that is dependent upon the idea that growth in the future is going to be more dense; that we are going to live in a more urban environment; and she believes that under-funding sidewalks puts the entire Comprehensive Plan at risk. She believes it has to be a priority of the community to have a funded sidewalk system in the Comprehensive Plan; otherwise, the Comprehensive Plan that we are adopting is simply not going to work, and frankly, we will not see the fruition of what we think we can be in the future if we underfund this element. What has her most convinced that this amendment deserves support is the numbers that were run by staff on the exhibit. Without the additional funding, there were 18 projects that were not going to be completed during the 2040 program period. Now, with the additional funding, even with this amendment, only six of those projects will not get funded. When we originally adopted a draft Comprehensive Plan, we never thought we'd get as far as we did. The fiscally constrained plan got so much less done than we now can get done, even if we fund sidewalks fully. Lust stated that she is especially encouraged by the fact that none of these projects go away – they just get delayed. For example, if we fund sidewalks at \$1.5 million, phase three of S. 33rd through S. 56th on Old Cheney Road gets done 7 years from now instead of 6 years from now. Another year delay in a project like that is not going to make as big of a difference in the long term as underfunding sidewalks when we have a Comprehensive Plan that is trying to encourage density and people to walk. We have an obesity challenge in this county; we have an environmental challenge in this county. To underfund something that gets people out of their cars is just not the right decision for the city.

Esseks stated that he agrees with Baird and Lust, i.e. there is a real need to improve our inventory of sidewalks and have sufficient money to build good sidewalks in the near future; however, we learned that there are federal regulations regarding certain types of expenditures, including roads and sidewalks, and we are in partnership with the City administration and the City Council in setting monetary goals for expenditures. We have been asked explicitly by the City administration to give them a month or so to develop plans for fully meeting or certainly approaching the goals that have been articulated. They have asked us for this reprieve; they have also agreed that we can "hold their feet to the fire" in the sense that if they do not come up with funding levels that we think necessary, we can then amend the Comprehensive Plan during the annual review process to include the \$1.5 million. Right now, they would like us to approve the amendment that is now part of the staff recommendation as follows:

The Mayor and City Council should examine funding options prior to the 2012-13 city budget year that more closely match funding with identified needs in the sidewalk rehabilitation program.

Since the Planning Commission members are partners (closer than Esseks thought) with the City administration and City Council in these budgetary matters, Esseks believes it is prudent to give them the time they need to develop these new funding sources. Therefore, Esseks stated that he will regretfully oppose the amendment in which he believes out of respect for working together with the City administration and the City Council.

Being on the Planning Commission for 12 years now, Taylor is concerned that we are disingenuing ourselves from the issues that are vital to the life of the community, i.e. more density, more connectivity, and the health of our community. He supports the motion to amend. It just makes really good sense in terms of the dollar matching that is being done federally, but we must think in terms of the life of our community in doing some really substantial change that will improve the quality of life in our community.

Francis expressed appreciation to Gaylor Baird for bringing this forward so that it can be discussed. Sidewalks are important to us and we have had a history in the Comprehensive Plan where we have not had enough funding for them. She appreciates the fact that we could put \$1.5 million into the future Comprehensive Plan for this, but it is not the role of the Planning Commission to say where that funding comes from. She appreciates the Mayor's Chief of Staff attending and offering this amendment. We do need to be partners. It is a great topic. It has been brought to the forefront and we are having an open discussion on it. She wishes she could say "yes" to take money from the roads, but she does not believe that is her decision to make as a Planning Commissioner.

Larson wants to give the City administration the opportunity to find places where funding for sidewalks might come from.

Gaylor Baird again pointed out that in the fiscally constrained plan that was initially proposed, there were dollars listed and projects were prioritized. We had the good fortune as a community to have \$7 million more dollars identified for transit and transportation. This is not something that is likely to happen again anytime in the future. But, with this infusion, not one penny of that \$7 million went to sidewalks. In fact, money was taken away from sidewalks as allocated in the fiscally constrained plan (from \$1 million to \$500,000) to help fund roads. She does not see this as money being taken away from roads but replenishing money for sidewalk maintenance and spreading the bounty which largely goes to roads. **(**As amended on 9/21/11**)**

Lust conveyed a staff question regarding the concept that if we fund sidewalks, we are taking money away from roads. As she understood it, sidewalks, trails, etc., were part of the LRTP that we had to do as part of the Comprehensive Plan, so we had to have a line item for sidewalks. It is not like we have decided that sidewalk funding can now come from roads. David Cary advised that it has been a longstanding policy of the Comprehensive Plan to have a balanced transportation system – and that in order to be balanced, we need to provide some level of funding for sidewalk rehabilitation in order to have a transit program and a trails program. It is a longstanding community goal. With that in mind, we therefore have an obligation to fund, to some level, all of the different aspects of the transportation system. It is part of the plan to have those programs funded. As to the amount, that is what is truly up for consideration and debate. Lust then confirmed that as part of the process and Chapter 10, sidewalks are part of that transportation plan. Cary answered, "yes".

Larson inquired as to how much of the total transportation funding comes from the state. Cary advised that approximately 25% comes from state funding. The remainder is local and federal funds. Local is approximately 50%. Larson inquired whether we are restricted at all by the state as to how we use those funds. Cary explained that there are different sources of state funding, but he does not believe there is any restriction on use of sidewalk funds. LB 84, the Build Nebraska Act, has more specific ties to it as far as the use of the money. In that case, the money is to be used for the state system, i.e. expressway system. There is a portion which comes to local funds

and we have incorporated that additional funding in our local program. Once that money comes to local agencies, it is up to the local agency to spend it within reasonability, and sidewalks is not off the list.

Larson believes we have the classic situation where we have more needs than we have funding. Everyone wants better sidewalks and everyone wants better roads. He agrees that sidewalks do improve the quality of life and will foster economic development, but roads do the same “in spades”. He still believes that the Commission should give the city administration the opportunity to make adjustments that will be able to take care of sidewalks as well as the roads, which is part of the staff recommendation.

Sunderman agreed with what everyone says about sidewalks being underfunded and not maintained. The amendment moved with the original motion says nothing about a dollar figure – it just provides the administration the opportunity to sit back and work on the budget next year – they don’t want to be constrained with a dollar amount. Sunderman struggles with being an appointed official and now being thrust into a stronger role as far as the budget goes and dictating how tax dollars are spent. He is not comfortable diving into that too quickly. The Planning Commission has the ability to come back and address this in the spring, and make a more forceful movement at that time if we are not satisfied with what the Mayor and City Council come up with. All we are doing with the main motion is giving the Mayor and City Council the opportunity to work through this.

Partington agreed with Sunderman. He also opposes the amendment because when we started this process we had a 20-member committee that came up with the Plan. He is not comfortable increasing the Committee’s recommendation by a factor of three without talking with the rest of the committee.

Gaylor Baird pointed out that the fiscally constrained plan put together by the committee did provide \$1 million for sidewalks, not \$500,000. She is moving to increase that to \$1.5 million to make the point that the \$1 million was a part of the fiscally constrained plan and did not account for the \$7 million infusion. That additional \$7 million should include at least a few pennies for sidewalk maintenance.

Lust stated that part of her hesitancy with the staff recommendation giving the Mayor and City Council more time to analyze this issue is that now is the time that we are debating this Comprehensive Plan and the vision for the future. Although she has not been on the Planning Commission all that long, every year when the proposal for sidewalk funding has come forward, we have looked at the proposal and commented with chagrin about the underfunding of the sidewalks and made public our displeasure. I think that now is the time to be bringing this issue forward, especially when it is part of a larger plan and we can point to its importance. She is hesitant to wait when now is the right time to give this issue the attention it deserves.

Esseks believes that this has been the most controversial issue as we approach the vote to approve the plan. We are making a very clear point to the administration, City Council and the community that we are concerned about this. He agrees that something has got to change. It puts a burden on the city authorities to come up with additional funding. They say they will look for it and he would like to know how much more. Yes, we discussed sidewalks being underfunded but we do not have the reports on the inventory of sidewalk issues, how to overcome those problems, how to prioritize

them, etc. If we are going to take part in this budgetary decision regarding sidewalks, then let's do a thorough job and work with the administration and the City Council. He predicts that the Commission will get progress from the administration.

As far as waiting until spring, Sunderman stated that he has full faith that this subject will not die away. And as far as working with the City Council and the Mayor on the budget, what really happened is that they worked through their budget and the Planning Commission was working on the Comprehensive Plan and LRTP in parallel. We were not working together. That was the main problem. This really is a wake-up call. We may be talking about sidewalks, but there are other issues that are there and working separately needs to stop. We need to begin to work together. The Planning Commission needs to be brought into the process a little more to understand the issues on the budget. Sunderman is firmly convinced that the original amendment on the main motion is what should be approved.

Taylor suggested that the reason the Commissioners are appointed is to respond to the constituencies and fellow citizens and we can make recommendations that are not necessarily popular with the elected officials. We are performing our function very well. At this point, it is very important that we go forward and approve this motion. He agrees that \$1.5 million is arbitrary, but \$500,000 is not acceptable. What we do in between would be at least a showing that there is attention properly applied and that the voices of the community will be heard.

Cornelius stated that he came prepared to make an impassioned speech on this amendment. He feels strongly about the way sidewalks have been repeatedly underfunded in the past. He commended Commissioner Gaylor Baird on all the work she did on this amendment; he does not think \$1.5 million is necessarily an arbitrary number but a number that reflects the will of the LPlan Advisory Committee, the members of which came up with a \$1 million figure. It reflects a windfall that the city received recently that was applied to transportation, and that is an important distinction. Roads are part of the transportation system, trails are part of the transportation system, mass transit and sidewalks are part of the transportation system. It boggles his mind how we found \$7 million and lost \$500,000 in the process. We had a chart that had dollar figures on it that we were recommending to the elected officials and the dollar figure for sidewalk rehabilitation was \$1 million. The job of the LPlan Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission is to study these issues and make a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council. Cornelius stated that he will echo Gaylor Baird and say that he is not comfortable allocating that responsibility to give the best possible advice to those bodies because they need it to make a good decision. The LRTP requires us to put forth a fiscally constrained plan. That means we have to create a document and we decide what we think. That document has line items with dollar signs. Cornelius will support the amendment.

Motion to Amend #1 failed 4-5: Taylor, Gaylor Baird, Lust and Cornelius voting 'yes'; Partington, Francis, Larson, Esseks and Sunderman voting 'no'.

Motion to Amend #2: Gaylor Baird moved to amend the staff recommendation regarding challenges to redevelopment, seconded by Taylor, as follows:

Amend the staff recommendation **regarding Challenges to Redevelopment by changing the amended text on page 6.10** as follows:

CHALLENGES TO REDEVELOPMENT

Although there have been a few successful developers pursuing redevelopment projects in Lincoln, most developers choose to do projects on the city's fringe. A few developers, when asked why they do not do infill or redevelopment projects, responded that:

- Land is too expensive in the existing city
- Land assembly is too expensive and unpredictable
- Local banks are uncomfortable lending money for that type of development
- The public process for development and financial incentives (such as Tax Increment Financing) is too long and unpredictable
- Zoning issues, including parking and setbacks, can be problematic

Another challenge for infill and redevelopment projects is the time and uncertainty when zoning approvals or financing assistance is required, especially when neighbors express opposition to the project, a reaction that is understandable when proposals have not been anticipated in neighborhood plans or when the proposed development has not been designed to be sensitive to the context of the surrounding neighborhood.

Strategies for Facilitating Redevelopment

Facilitating infill and redevelopment in the existing city requires both a nuanced understanding of the challenges associated with redevelopment projects and a well-thought out set of strategies to overcome them. Commonly cited challenges to infill and redevelopment include land cost and assembly, access to financing, zoning requirements, and consensus building among project stakeholders. The Comprehensive Plan seeks to address these concerns and encourage successful infill and redevelopment through the following strategies:

- Raise public awareness of and support for infill and redevelopment.

Discussion: Esseks proposed a friendly amendment to add "including neighbors" after "project stakeholders". Both the maker of the motion and the seconder agreed.

Gaylor Baird Lust suggested that this is excellent clarification language because it reaches a consensus between wanting to point out that there are barriers to redevelopment but doesn't "bullet point" them out and make them as upsetting to some neighborhood associations as the way it was written before. (**As amended on 9/21/11**)

Sunderman stated that he struggles with this amendment. It is well written and a nice way of putting across some of the issues, but he does not think it as clearly defines the obstacles and challenges that go with infill and redevelopment. As we change the way the city develops and we move more toward a denser environment, it changes how we have grown in the past. Without clearly stating the obstacles that we will be dealing with, he believes we are kind of missing the boat. The staff recommended language doesn't blame neighborhoods or anyone at all. It even states that the obstacles are "understandable when proposals have not been anticipated in neighborhood plans or when the proposed development has not been designed to be sensitive to the context of the surrounding neighborhood." Sunderman does not believe the language proposed by Gaylor Baird

is as effective as that proposed by staff. However, Sunderman stated that he will support the amendment as proposed to produce a less inflammatory document in the end.

Cornelius stated that he will support the amendment. He believes the staff did a good job of rewording, but Gaylor Baird's amendment is "a little bit pithier".

Francis also stated that she will support the motion to amend. The illustrations provided by the staff were helpful to her.

Motion to Amend #2 carried 9-0: Taylor, Partington, Francis, Larson, Gaylor Baird, Sunderman, Esseks, Lust and Cornelius voting 'yes'.

Motion to Amend #3: Gaylor Baird moved to amend the strategy for PUDS, seconded by Francis, as follows:

Amend the staff recommendation **regarding the strategy for PUDs by changing the bullet on page 6.11** as follows:

- Where compatible mixes of uses, appropriate site layout, and quality design standards still can be upheld, Reduce the minimum size for Planned Unit Developments to promote mixed use redevelopment on smaller parcels in identified Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors.

Discussion: Gaylor Baird suggested that the Commission received a lot of comment on this issue as well. The public's issue with the reduction in The minimum size of for PUDs has to do with trying to ensure that no more low-quality, incompatibly designed infill (think, of those windowless multiplexes we saw pictures of during the LPAC discussions) gets squeezed into development slipped in next to residential. Investors and established neighborhoods with minimal buffers for the existing investors in those neighborhoods, are very concerned about this happening as density increases. As Planning staff rightly has pointed out, high quality infill does exist and is most certainly the intention here. She pointed out that, during the past year, each time our LPLAN Advisory Committee discussed infill redevelopment, this was discussed with the LPlan Advisory Committee, we also discussed the necessity of establishing clear design standards for these types of projects so such that residential investors and developers alike would judge the redevelopment process to be the process if fair, predictable and successful. To address the concerns that the public still clearly has about reducing the minimum size of a PUD, it makes sense to be absolutely explicit about our these good intentions, and staff is not opposed to this change. (**As amended on 9/21/11**)

Francis believes that this is a great option that allows for redevelopment in older neighborhoods and shopping centers, while giving the developer the notion that we are agreeable to look at PUDs that are smaller than the current 3-acre sites.

Cornelius pointed out that all of this Comprehensive Plan seems to be very interconnected, more so than in the past, and as Lincoln moves toward greater density of population, things like design standards are going to be critical and being explicit about that is good in the 2040 Plan.

Motion to Amend #3 carried 9-0: Taylor, Partington, Francis, Larson, Gaylor Baird, Sunderman, Esseks, Lust and Cornelius voting 'yes'.

Discussion on main motion, as amended:

Lust stated that she is not proposing an amendment, but she wanted to point out something that is of concern to her in the Comprehensive Plan. She encourages the County officials to take another look at re-adopting some areas as being appropriate for a grid of development sites that were shown as acreage development sites in the 2030 plan. The LPlan Advisory Committee did accept the recommendation of the County Board. However, in accepting that, Lust wants the public to be aware that they need to not necessarily be relying on the map – there is a lot of language in the plan and elsewhere that indicates that there are things that may not be appropriate about acreage development for those sites and would encourage the County Commissioners to take another look at this issue because she is not sure we are doing a public service by showing certain land as being appropriate for acreages when it truly is not. That could lead to some confusion on the part of the public and she would prefer not to do that. She understands the County Board's desire to protect the investment and she is not proposing an amendment, but she wants to raise public awareness of that issue.

Sunderman commented that a lot of work went into this plan including 12 other people that served on the committee that are not here now. In addition, the staff put a horrendous amount of effort into this plan and did a wonderful job. The biggest thing he took out of the process was steering the growth of the city by focusing more on the inside. The ground work is in these documents to increase that process. The challenges are great. Changing public opinion on mixed use development and things that happen in a neighborhood will be a huge challenge. The future is bright. We are making a good step. He is confident that while 40 years may not be exactly what was accomplished, he thinks progress was made.

Cornelius commented that we can't know what Lincoln will look like in 2040, but he thinks we are pushing it in the right direction. He expressed appreciation to the staff, the LPlan Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission for their work on this.

Main motion approving the staff recommendation as revised on September 2 and September 7, 2011, as amended by Motion to Amend #2 and Motion to Amend #3 above carried 8-0: Partington, Francis, Larson, Gaylor Baird, Sunderman, Esseks, Lust and Cornelius voting 'yes'; Taylor absent at time of vote. This is a recommendation to the Lincoln City Council and Lancaster County Board of Commissioners.

2040 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN
ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

September 7, 2011

Sunderman moved to approve the staff recommendation, as revised on September 2 and September 7, 2011, seconded by Francis.

Cornelius pointed out that everything everyone wanted to discuss in the LRTP was closely related to the Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and was covered during that discussion. We discussed some important items and it is worthy of further review. We are going to be “holding people’s feet to the fire” during the next Capital Improvements Program and Comprehensive Plan annual review.

Motion approving the staff recommendation, as revised on September 2 and September 7, 2011, carried 8-0: Partington, Francis, Larson, Gaylor Baird, Sunderman, Esseks, Lust and Cornelius voting ‘yes’; Taylor absent at time of vote. This is a recommendation to the Lincoln MPO Officials Committee.

Public Comments on Draft LPlan 2040 & LRTP

Received September 28 via comment board from Adam Brown

After looking over the plan I was very glad to see the inclusion of the smaller towns around Lincoln when planning decisions are made in their jurisdiction. I think that is an important piece of the success of this plan.

Received September 28 via comment board from Allyson

I appreciate and like the general Plan. In comparison to some other plans, though, this one lacks in extraordinary environmental concern. There are more wildlife and plants to be considered besides just threatened and endangered species. The plan does, however, surpass expectations for other issues such as transportation. Overall well written.

Received September 28 via comment board from Carly Manijak

My suggestion is to clarify your monitoring of the guiding principles as well as goals and objectives to ensure readers these goals and objectives will be implemented and monitored for future development.

Received September 28 via comment board from Phil Luebbert

I would like to see in the plan, what organizations or agencies will be responsible for monitoring and implementing the policies in the plan.

Received September 28 via comment board from Dan Feuerbach

I am a Master's Student at UNL for planning. I have to say the plan looks good in it's goals but it's objectives aren't as tangible as I would like to see. I recently reviewed a county in California with a similar plan and they called for an agency dedicated to enforcing the plan. I think this would be a viable option for Lancaster County since it would allow for accountability with the plan's implementation, specifically in regards to conservation policy.

Public Comments on Draft LPlan 2040 & LRTP

Received September 28 via comment board from Leisha Osterberg:

I feel that the Salt Valley Greenway concept would be an excellent way to further connect Lincoln to surrounding communities.

Received September 8 via email from Willis Scofield

Re: Green space at 84th & Vandorn: I realize I missed the initial deadline for comments on this issue but I'm sure this will be an ongoing debate. I believe we should keep this area as green space. With plenty of dirt work/retaining walls etc it could be developed but there is plenty of strip malls, apartments etc on the west side of 84th. I do understand the need to prevent urban sprawl but I think having green space, trails etc for families to enjoy is more important.

The most recognizable part of New York City is Central Park. I'm sure there are folks that wanted to build there over the years but it could be the most important place in the city. I'm a Financial Planner as an occupation so I understand and encourage business development but things like parks/green space etc are what makes an enjoyable community to live in. Thanks for your time.

Received September 7 via mail from Richard Schmeling

See attached.

Received September 6 from comment box at People's City Mission (name not given)

You are doing a great job! Just wished you people would move faster with improving transportation in City.

Received August 30 via email from Dick Esseks in response to Mike Carlin's email

Thank you so much for your highly productive hunt for research studies that support the thesis about parks producing significant economic benefits to the community.

1) I am very impressed that you were able to identify as many as 9 separate studies on this question. Your findings surely support the second paragraph in the draft LPlan40, "**Guiding Principles** – Parks and open space enhance the quality of life of the community's residents and are central to the community's economic development strategy—the community's ability to attract and retain viable businesses, industries and employees is directly linked to quality of life issues, including indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities."

2) Like you, I am concerned by the decrease found in the draft in the "level of service (LOS)" goals for parks, compared to current policy. Let's review the city administration's responses so far that are relevant to your critique of the draft plan's LOS goals:

A) **LOS for Regional Parks & Tournament Sport Facilities**

1. Your recommendation: Maintain the current standard at 2.5 acres per 1,000 Lincoln residents “with minor variances.”

2. No written response, as far as I can see. The current draft language does indicate the likelihood of “One new Regional Park . . . for the Stevens Creek area during the plan period; [and] one new Tournament Sports Facility . . . as an upgrade to the existing Oak Lake Park.”

*****With this memo, I am asking the Parks & Recreation Department for evidence that, during the plan period, Lincoln residents in the planned growth areas who seek the recreational opportunities typically available at Regional Parks and Tournament Sports Facilities will likely be able to find those opportunities either at the planned new construction/upgraded facilities or at existing Regional Parks that are not already fully utilized and are not too far away from the planned growth areas.**

If not, I’ll move at the next Planning Commission meeting that LPlan40 state at the end of the “Level of Service” paragraph on p. 9.3: ***“When the financial resources available to the City permit, the citywide LOS goal will be re-instated at 2.5 acres per 1,000 Lincoln residents.”***

B) LOS for Community Parks:

1. Your recommendation: Maintain the current standard at 2.9 acres per 1,000 residents

2. Amendment from the Planning Department (see the underlined passages):

[Revise text in **Level of Service**] The level of service (LOS) goal for Community Parks is based on both the financial resources anticipated to be available for park development and on programmatic standards. It is anticipated that development of future community parks will be financed primarily through voter-approved general obligation bonds. There are currently 18 Community Parks encompassing roughly 746 acres, with an average size of 41 acres. The current citywide LOS is 2.9 acres of Community Park land per 1,000 Lincoln residents. LPlan 2040 establishes an LOS goal of 1.3 acres per 1,000 new Lincoln residents in new growth areas and a service area radius of approximately 2 miles in the urban area. The resulting citywide Community Parks LOS goal for LPlan 2040 will be 2.4 acres per 1,000 Lincoln residents. While this goal is lower than the current LOS, it recognizes the financial resources projected to be available and plans for the development of three 50-acre sites during the planning period of a size that will meet the programmatic standards for community parks.

*****Although the expected average number of acres per community park, 2.4, is just a half-acre below the current goal of 2.9 acres, I am troubled by the goal set for new parks—1.3 acres per 1,000 new residents in new growth areas. In this memo, I am asking the Parks & Recreation Department to describe the likely traits of actual park that will be built. In a two-mile radius of new growth areas, there may tend to be enough thousands of residents that the resulting parks are likely to be both large enough in open space and sufficiently well-equipped (e.g., with playgrounds, sports fields, picnic facilities) that the 1.3-acre LOS is acceptable.**

If not, I’ll move for inclusion at the end of the “Level of Service” paragraph on p. 9.4, ***“When the financial resources available to the City permit, the citywide LOS goal will be re-instated at 2.9 acres per 1,000 Lincoln residents.”***

In other words, if the planned reductions in standards are not likely to be cost-effective in the sense of providing sufficient recreational opportunities despite those decreases, let's explicitly label the plan's stated reductions in LOS goals as temporary. That way, developers are warned of the real possibility of returning to the higher standards, and they can plan accordingly.

Received August 28 via email from Mike Carlin

On August 17, 2011 I testified before the Planning Commission during the first public hearing on the update of the Comprehensive Plan. I asked that the Planning Commission retain the current level of service (LOS) for regional and community parks. The current Comprehensive Plan calls for a LOS of 2.5 acres for Regional Parks and 2.9 acres for Community Parks per 1,000 Lincoln residents. The draft plan proposes to reduce the LOS for Regional Parks to "no set LOS goal" and to reduce the LOS for Community Parks to 1.3 acres. The combined effect of the proposed changes for Regional and Community Parks would cut the guaranteed LOS from 5.4 to 1.4 acres which would be a 75% reduction in Regional and Community Parks LOS in new development areas.

During my presentation I noted that Lincoln's parks and trails were listed as a major factor in Livability.com's ranking Lincoln as the #1 city to live in for college graduates. At the end of my presentation Commissioner Esseks asked me if I would provide the Commission with examples of studies that that can demonstrate the relationship between really good parks and trails and the attraction of people that invest and work in the community. I appreciate the opportunity to share that information with you.

Example #1. Gallup and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. "Why People Love Where They Live And Why It Matters – A National Perspective." 2010.

This study was conducted over three years in 26 cities across the United States where Knight Foundation is active. It was designed to find out what emotionally attaches people to a community - what makes them want to put down roots and build a life there.

In today's challenging economic climate, community leaders are seeking new ways to attract and retain people, develop prosperous economies, add intellectual capital, and create jobs. This report provides a fresh perspective about the current driving factors of passion and loyalty in a community. Most importantly, it represents the voice of the residents themselves. Gallup gathered insights from nearly 43,000 individuals and the resulting picture will help community leaders to answer important questions such as: What makes residents love where they live? What draws people to a place and keeps them there?

The study provides empirical evidence that the drivers that create emotional bonds between people and their community are consistent in virtually every city and can be reduced to just a few categories. Interestingly, the usual suspects — jobs, the economy, and safety — are not among the top drivers. Rather, people consistently give higher ratings for elements that relate directly to their daily quality of life: an area's physical beauty, opportunities for socializing, and a community's openness to all people.

Remarkably, the study also showed that the communities with the highest levels of attachment had the highest rates of gross domestic product (GDP) growth. Discoveries like these open

numerous possibilities for leaders from all sectors to inform their decisions and policies with concrete data about what generates community and economic benefits.

The link between local GDP and residents' emotional bonds to a place has remained steady despite declines in the economy over the three years of the study. Communities with residents who are more attached to a place show stronger growth even in tough economic times.

People's perception of their community's performance in social offerings, openness and beauty has a greater impact on their emotional bonds to a place than their demographic characteristics.

Perception of the local economy is not a leading reason residents create an emotional bond to a place.

Example #2. National Park Service. "Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails and Greenway Corridors." 1995.

Greenway corridors provide a variety of amenities, such as attractive views, open space preservation, and convenient recreation opportunities. People value these amenities. This can be reflected in increased real property values and increased marketability for property located near open space. Developers also recognize these values and incorporate open space into planning, design, and marketing new and redeveloped properties.

Natural open space and trails are prime attractions for potential home buyers in 1995. According to research conducted by American Lives, Inc. for the real estate industry, 77.7 per cent of all home buyers and shoppers in the study rated natural open space as either "essential" or "very important" in planned communities. Walking and bicycling paths ranked third. A community design which offers quiet and low traffic was the top ranked feature. A research spokesperson commented that consumers are increasingly putting a higher premium on interaction with the environment through inclusion of natural, open space and nature paths. The findings of this most recent study differ greatly from the 1980's preferences, which included tennis courts, swimming pools, and golf courses. (San Francisco Chronicle, January 8, 1995)

Increased Property Values - Quantified

The effect on property values of a location near a park or open space has been the subject of several studies. Statistical analyses have been a common method of attempting to measure this effect. These analyses attempt to isolate the effect of open space from other variables which can affect property values, such as age, square footage, and condition of homes. Isolating the effect of open space can be difficult and results have been varied. Nevertheless, many studies have revealed increases in property values in instances where the property is located near or adjacent to open spaces. Most studies have addressed traditional parks or greenbelts (large open space areas), though a few studies are available for greenways.

Increased Property Tax Revenues

An increase in property values generally results in increased property tax revenues for local governments. Many arguments made for park and open space investment claim these acquisitions pay for themselves in a short period of time, due in part to increased property tax revenues from higher values of nearby property.

Example #3. New Yorkers for Parks and Ernst & Young. "Analysis of Secondary Economic Impacts, New York City Parks, Capital Expenditures." 2003.

Can park investment be a wise economic strategy as well as a way of building our neighborhoods? In the summer of 2002, our two organizations – the advocacy group New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P) and the real estate services practice of the accounting firm Ernst & Young, LLP (E&Y) – tried to answer the question by studying the economic impact of investment in parks on real estate values. NY4P selected 6 parks from all 5 boroughs as case studies and 30 neighborhood parks for a citywide survey. NY4P conducted site surveys of the parks, researched the history of capital investment in each one, and examined other community factors. E&Y assessed each park's relationship to local real estate value by analyzing tax assessments, sale prices and turnover rates of the commercial and residential properties in the immediate area in comparison to the broader marketplace. The 6 case studies provided detailed perspectives of how public and private forces shaped the investment strategy to redevelop these parks. The citywide survey of 30 parks offered a look at the effect of the City's current approach to investment. The result of this effort is a 300+ page analysis of park investment and its impact on local community.

The final report documents cases of commercial real estate value increasing by up to 225%, residential real estate value by up to 150%, turnover rates dropping to less than 1%, and instances where increased use and concessions have generated returns that have paid for the park improvements. These effects were not isolated to a single borough or scenario – residential and commercial areas of different income levels and demographics across the City have been wise financial investments for City planners and private developers.

Statement specific to Prospect Park: The results have been clear not only to the park, but to the neighborhood. Over the past 5 years, multi-family units in the immediate proximity to the park have outperformed the broader local market by approximately 40% on average on a cost per square foot basis. According to PPA President Tupper Thomas, real estate near the park has tripled in value through the 1990s.

Example #4. More, Thomas A., Thomas Stevens and P. Geoffrey Allen. August 1982. "The Economics of Urban Parks." Parks and Recreation.

An analysis of property surrounding four parks in Worcester, Massachusetts, showed a house located 20 feet from a park sold for \$2,675 (1982 dollars) more than a similar house located 2,000 feet away.

Example #5. Kimmel, Margaret M. 1985. "Parks and Property Values: an Empirical Study in Dayton and Columbus, Ohio." Thesis. Oxford, OH: Miami University, Institute of Environmental Sciences.

In the neighborhood of Cox Arboretum, in Dayton, Ohio, the proximity of the park and arboretum accounted for an estimated 5 percent of the average residential selling price. In the Whetstone Park area of Columbus, Ohio, the nearby park and river were estimated to account for 7.35 percent of selling prices.

Example #6. Hammer, Thomas R., Robert E. Coughlin and Edward T. Horn IV. July 1974. "Research Report: The Effect of a Large Park on Real Estate Value." Journal of the American Institute of Planners.

In the vicinity of Philadelphia's 1,300 acre Pennypack Park, property values correlate significantly with proximity to the park. In 1974, the park accounted for 33 percent of the value of a plot of land (when the land was located 40 feet away from the park), nine percent when located 1,000 feet away, and 4.2 percent at a distance of 2,500 feet.

Example #7. Correll, Lillydahl and Singell. May 1978. "The Effects of Greenbelts on Residential Property Values: Some Findings on the Political Economy of Open Space," Land Economics.

A study of property values near greenbelts in Boulder, Colorado, noted that housing prices declined an average of \$4.20 for each foot of distance from a greenbelt up to 3,200 feet. In one neighborhood, this figure was \$10.20 for each foot of distance. The same study determined that, other variables being equal, the average value of property adjacent to the greenbelt would be 32 percent higher than those 3,200 feet away.

A study of the impacts of greenbelts on neighborhood property values in Boulder, Colorado, revealed the aggregate property value for one neighborhood was approximately \$5.4 million greater than if there had been no greenbelt. This results in approximately \$500,000 additional potential property tax revenue annually. The purchase price of the greenbelt was approximately \$1.5 million. Thus, the potential increase in property tax alone could recover the initial cost in only three years.

Example #8. Nelson, Arthur C. April 1985. "A Unifying View of Greenbelt Influences on Regional Land Values and Implications for Regional Planning Policy." Growth and Change.

The amenity influence of greenbelt land on property values also applies to privately held greenbelt land, according to a study of the Salem metropolitan area in Oregon. In this case, the greenbelt was comprised of rural farmland. Greenbelt zoning had been applied to this prime farmland beginning in 1974 in an effort to contain urban sprawl and preserve farmland. The study found that urban land adjacent to the greenbelt was worth approximately \$1,200 more per acre than urban land 1,000 feet away from the greenbelt boundary, all other things being equal. However, rural land values within the restrictive zoning actually decreased in value by \$1,700 per acre.

Example #9. Lacy, Jeff. August, 1990. "An Examination of Market Appreciation for Clustered Housing with Permanently Protected Open Space." Center for Rural Massachusetts Monograph Series. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts.

A recent study of market appreciation for clustered housing with permanently-protected open space in Amherst and Concord, Massachusetts, found that clustered housing with open space appreciated at a higher rate than conventionally-designed subdivisions. Appreciation was measured as the percent increase in open market sales price. The study compared one clustered development and one conventional subdivision in each community. The clustered homes studied in Amherst appreciated at an average annual rate of 22%, as compared to an increase of 19.5% for the more conventional subdivision. This translated into a difference in average selling price of \$17,100 in 1989 between the two developments. In both Amherst and

Concord, the homes in the clustered developments yielded owners a higher rate of return, even though the conventional subdivisions had considerably larger lot sizes.

In Summary

One has to look no further than the draft Comprehensive Plan itself to find justification for maintaining the current level of parks LOS:

Page 3.2.

The community should capitalize upon both the environmental and economic benefits that the natural resource features provide.

Well managed environmental resources generate and reinforce business opportunities.

Page 3.3

Prevent the Creation of a “Wall-to-Wall City” through the Use of Green Space Partitions. As cities and villages expand, establishing corridors and districts of green should be part of the growth process. This often requires the advance delineation of these areas and the means for securing their ongoing protection and maintenance.

Page 9.1.

Guiding Principles for Parks, Recreation and Open Space.

Parks and open space enhance the quality of life of the community’s residents and are central to the community’s economic development strategy—the community’s ability to attract and retain viable businesses, industries, and employees is directly linked to quality of life issues, including indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities.

Page 9.2

It is important that the community continue to acquire parkland and conserve open space areas commensurate with expanding development and population growth, with the responsibilities for acquisition and development of parkland and conservation of open space shared among many cooperating partner agencies and organizations.

I urge you to hold on to the standards that have helped to make Lincoln the great city that it is.

Thank You.

Received August 24 via email from Mary Reeves

I would like you to support the South neighborhood changes in the plan. They are important to the quality of life of all neighborhoods, especially the older neighborhoods.

Received August 24 via email from Bob Reeves

I just want to be sure that the Comprehensive Plan still includes neighborhood swimming pools, preferably within walking distance of children, throughout the city. I think we could get by with fewer library branches, but we need to keep our neighborhood pools. They perform a vital function for young people and families throughout Lincoln.

Received August 24 via email from Karen Gagner

The Near South Neighborhood Association has proposed some recommendations to the Comprehensive Plan that you are drafting. I support these proposed changes exactly the way the Association has sent to you.

Received August 24 via email from Christina Bavougian

Thank you for your work toward making Lincoln a stronger, healthier and more sustainable community.

Please consider the Near South Neighborhood Association's proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan, ESPECIALLY:

1. The neighborhood pools being evaluated for replacement with spraygrounds. Spraygrounds are wonderful and I would love for our city to have more of them--but they can't provide the same community programs and safety training that pools do. The neighborhood pools are so important to quality of life and are part of what makes Lincoln such a great place to live.
2. I feel it would be more appropriate to call for an additional 4,000 dwelling units in the Greater Downtown area instead of 3,000 in greater downtown and 1,000 in existing residential neighborhoods.
3. The section listing developers' opinions on "Obstacles to Redevelopment" in older neighborhoods should be removed.

Again, thank you for your consideration and for all that you do to help our community.

Received August 24 via email from Wil & Sarah Hass

Just want you to know my wife and I (1801 Sewell St.) support the changes to the Plan that have been proposed by the Near South group. There is no need to list developers' objections to neighborhood associations unless you also list neighborhood associations' objections to some actions of developers---neither is relevant in a plan for our city's development, which should reflect positive goals. We have noticed the positive role of our Irvingdale swimming pool in our neighborhood, and do not believe it could ever be replaced by a spraying area. The issue of residential density should not be handled by fiat, but should reflect the history and character of each neighborhood---one of our neighbors, who lives in a row of duplexes down our block stopped by the other day to say how much they enjoyed having our old (1888) home near them, "setting the style" for the area. Let's plan for what makes sense in a given case, not make statements and rules that destroy the Lincoln that residents love.

Received August 24 via email from Jeff Johnson

I support the proposed changes to the Near South neighborhood plan as detailed below:

- #1) The draft plan currently contains a section listing the opinions of developers on "Obstacles to Redevelopment" in older neighborhoods. They represent a single-sided negative opinion about the value and legitimacy of neighbors and neighborhood associations and have no place in a comprehensive plan designed to represent the vision of the entire community. This section must be removed.

#2) The plan calls for an increase in density in existing neighborhoods of 1,000 dwelling units. While some additional units may be created in older neighborhoods, calling for 1,000 creates an unnecessary pressure.

The proposed change moves those 1,000 units to the Greater Downtown area.

#3) The plan currently says that five neighborhood pools (Air Park, Ballard, Belmont, Eden, and Irvingdale) should be evaluated for replacement with spraygrounds. Neighborhood pools are a significant asset to neighborhood quality of life and should be maintained and enhanced. Pools offer programming that a sprayground alone cannot: swim safety training, recreation for older kids and adults, and team practice. The proposed change removes the language calling for replacement with spraygrounds.

Received August 24 via email from Jim Cook

I was disappointed to see the recommended reduction in the sidewalk rehab fund from \$1M to \$.5M and encourage the Planning Commission to reject that change. As the previous draft of the plan noted, sidewalk rehab has been “well” underfunded to date. Contrary to the suggested change, I believe the word “well” should be retained in the plan and the funding level should be maintained at least at \$1M.

Received August 24 via email from Julia Larson

I support the Near South Neighborhood Assn changes to the plan.

Received August 24 via email from Karl Reinhard

I am writing to support the proposed changes listed below by the Near South Neighborhood Association to the Comprehensive Plan.

#1) The draft plan currently contains a section listing the opinions of developers on “Obstacles to Redevelopment” in older neighborhoods. They represent a single-sided negative opinion about the value and legitimacy of neighbors and neighborhood associations and have no place in a comprehensive plan designed to represent the vision of the entire community. This section must be removed.

Specifically, I live in the Irvingdale Neighborhood. Our neighborhood association has facilitated development in our community. This section is prejudicial, not to mention insulting.

#2) The plan calls for an increase in density in existing neighborhoods of 1,000 dwelling units. While some additional units may be created in older neighborhoods, calling for 1,000 creates an unnecessary pressure. The proposed change moves those 1,000 units to the Greater Downtown area.

#3) The plan currently says that five neighborhood pools (Air Park, Ballard, Belmont, Eden, and Irvingdale) should be evaluated for replacement with spraygrounds. Neighborhood pools are a significant asset to neighborhood quality of life and should be maintained and enhanced. Pools offer programming that a sprayground alone cannot: swim safety training, recreation for older kids and adults, and team practice. The proposed change removes the language calling for replacement with spraygrounds.

The spraygrounds are simply a bad idea. The Neighborhood Associations that use the Irvingdale pool; Irvingdale, Everett and Near South are on record in support of keeping Irvingdale pool open.

We stated the following to the City Council and Mayor's office with regard to Lincoln's pools in general and Irvingdale pool in specific:

"The 80% reduction of pool hours in 2011 over 2010 has been debilitating for many families. It is frustrating to see the Irvingdale Pool closed on sweltering evenings as the heat index extends above 100 degrees. Climate change increases our evening temperatures and increases the duration of heat waves. In this new climate reality, public pools are a necessity for public health. It is ironic that in 2010 the evening pool family hours were reduced by 80% just when the impact of higher temperatures and heat waves were felt.

Beyond a health necessity, the pools are also a social necessity. Socializing between neighborhoods strengthens the community as a whole. This is especially true of Irvingdale, Near South, and Everett. These neighborhoods increasingly represent distinct socioeconomic classes. As such, there is the threat that the neighborhood boundaries are becoming more than just lines on a map. The threat is that the lines represent socioeconomic barriers to cooperation between neighborhoods. This has been recognized by our three neighborhood associations. Our associations commenced joint meetings and activities in 2011 to overcome the socioeconomic barriers that are arising. We have discussed efforts between Irvingdale and Near South to support Prescott School development and street safety. Everett and Irvingdale have worked on joint neighborhood clean up and also on improvements to Rudge Park and Stransky Park. Irvingdale Park serves as the main attraction to our neighborhoods by virtue of its pool. The Lincoln Parks and Recreation staff have perennially maintained Irvingdale park and pool in wonderful condition. The aforementioned neighborhoods have come to rely on the Irvingdale Park and pool as the key recreation area in our immediate area. If our pool is closed, it will be a negative development for the surrounding neighborhoods and put an increasing burden on our neighborhood associations to find activities for our children in summer."

Received August 24 via email from Richard Bagby

I support the Comp Plan changes outlined and supported by the Near South Neighborhood Association.

Received August 24 via email from Don Pinkley

Please support the Near South Neighborhood proposed changes to the comprehensive plan. These are very sensible strategies for a strong community and suppressing increased crime.

Received August 24 via email from Pat Bracken

Please note that I support and encourage the Planning Commission to approve the recommendations proposed by the Near South Neighborhood Association. I live in the Irvingdale area and share the concerns for the longterm preservation and vitalization of older Lincoln neighborhoods.

Received August 24 via email from Alison Stewart

I urge you to support the Near South Neighborhood Association's proposed changes to the comprehensive plan, for the removal of "Obstacles to Redevelopment", increasing density, and changing Irvingdale pool to a sprayground.

Received August 24 via email from Teri Hlava

Please accept this as input for the Sept 7, 2011 public hearing.

I am concerned about some proposed plans and feel that while these might be of interest to some, they are misguided. My experience and knowledge says, "Listen to your neighborhoods. Definitely do NOT intentionally try to increase the density as this will only mimic the scientific observations consistently apparent when (rats) become crowded and more "massive" . . . crime and stress increasing, space perceived as lacking, etc. Finally, spray grounds could be beneficial for children, but not to replace city pools that provide more physical exercise and develop life skills of knowing how to swim and learn life-saving, providing safe movement for body joints, and social interaction."

Received August 24 via email from Ryan Reinke

In my opinion, neighborhood pools are a draining cost which could be better utilized in other areas of the budget such as streets, lighting, police, fire and rescue, etc.

If kids need swim lessons, take them to the Y. Or increase the pool entrance fees to cover the full maintenance cost.

This is a ridiculous expense which benefits very few people. Why should I pay an increase in taxes for properties in the Near South for the benefit of the Air Park or Belmont swimming pool!!!

Received August 23 via email from Sharon Johnson

I am in support of the following Near South Neighborhood Association proposed changes. As a resident of the Everett Neighborhood and active community volunteer, I share the need for careful planning and consideration of strategies to preserve Lincoln's core neighborhoods.

Received August 23 via email from Susan Melcher

I support the NSNA's proposed changes to the comprehensive plan. The plan, as currently written, does not benefit our neighborhood.

Received August 23 via email from Patte Newman

As a fellow member of the LPLAN committee, I would like to express my support for the attached comments of the Near South Comp Plan Committee to incorporate in the new plan.

As discussed at several meetings of the LPLAN committee I would also like to see an appendix listing of various task forces and/or committees that have met over the past 15 or 20 years to study, discuss and recommend sustainable planning in Lincoln/Lancaster County. This community stresses citizen involvement and grassroots participation and many of these groups

made valuable recommendations that should not be shelved. Names of the committees, years involved and a link to an executive summary should be included. Some of these (with many, many more) include:

- Congestion Management Task Force: 1995 - 1997
- Floodplain Task Force: 2001-2003
- Deadman's Run Watershed Study Committee
- Multi-Modal Task Force
- Stevens Creek Watershed Advisory Committee
- Transit Development Task Force

Thank you!

Received August 23 via email from Cathy Beecham

I am writing to ask you to please support the Comprehensive Plan changes proposed by the Near South Neighborhood Association. I believe the Comp Plan can be a great tool for helping Lincoln's neighborhoods (both old and new) thrive in the future. These changes will enhance the Plan's ability to do that.

Received August 22 from comment box at library (name not given):

Planners need to remember how vital a strong city library system is to the community at large, as well as to the individual neighborhoods each branch serves. Please support all our library branches, large and small. They are used on a daily basis, and are an important investment in our future.

Received August 17 via email from Barb Fraser, Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee Chair

(See Attached)

Reference Articles Submitted to Planning Commission on August 17, 2011 from Rick Krueger

(See Attached)

Received August 17 via email from William Carver, Near South Neighborhood Association President

Near South Neighborhood Association Comments and Requested Changes to LPlan 2040

The draft LPlan 2040 Comprehensive Plan contains many goals and strategies that will benefit not only the Near South and other existing neighborhoods, but the entire community. We are very supportive of the LPlan 2040 goals including: Strong Neighborhoods, Quality Community Services, a Strong Downtown, a Healthy Community, Economic Opportunity, Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability, Historic Preservation, and Urban Design that encourages Walking & Biking.

We respect and appreciate the work that has occurred to prepare the draft plan for public review and comment. For almost 40 years, the Near South Neighborhood Association has been involved in helping

guide city plans and policies to help promote, preserve, and grow the Lincoln community. We have been proud to participate in the development of the last four major (10 year) updates to the Lincoln Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan along with the intervening periods of amendment.

The NSNA Board has reviewed both the draft plan and the 8-12-11 recommended changes. NSNA asks that the following changes and additions be forwarded to the Planning Department and Planning Commission for amendment into the LPlan 2040. We feel that these changes will help promote the stated plan goals and help create a stronger, more vibrant community into the future.

NSNA recommended changes/additions to LPlan 2040

(NOTE: The first four change requests are part of the Planning Department recommended changes dated 8-12-11 and are listed here to indicate NSNA support)

- 1) **CHANGE:** Insert the phrase “well-designed and appropriately placed” where the plan refers to increasing residential density through infill development. **REASON:** Good design and appropriate placement are the keys to successful infill according to the plan vision. This cannot be overstated and should be reminded in all sections dealing with infill. *(INCLUDED IN PLANNING DEPT RECOMMENDED CHANGES 8-12-11)*
- 2) **CHANGE:** On page 6.10 rename the section heading “Strategies for removing Obstacles for Redevelopment” to “Strategies for encouraging well-designed, appropriately placed redevelopment”. **REASON:** Plan strategies are better understood as goals when stated in the positive. *(INCLUDED IN PLANNING DEPT RECOMMENDED CHANGES 8-12-11)*
- 3) **CHANGE:** On page 6.11 change the bullet that reads “Revise the Zoning Ordinance to provide more flexibility, particularly in older *neighborhoods*” to “Revise the Zoning Ordinance to provide more flexibility, particularly in older *commercial districts*”. **REASON:** We believe this was meant to reference commercial district redevelopment and not residential zoning protections. *(INCLUDED IN PLANNING DEPT RECOMMENDED CHANGES 8-12-11)*
- 4) **CHANGE:** Chapter 7 Neighborhoods & Housing: This chapter needs to include more language that describes community services and policies that protect and support existing neighborhoods. **REASON:** It should be recognized that the vast majority of neighborhood investment and activity will be in maintaining and improving existing houses and properties. *(INCLUDED IN PLANNING DEPT RECOMMENDED CHANGES 8-12-11)*
- 5) **CHANGE:** On page 6.11 change the bullet that reads “*Reduce* the minimum size for Planned unit Developments...” to “*Consider reducing* the minimum size for Planned Unit Developments...”. **REASON:** PUD’s can be a very useful tool for redevelopment, but reducing the size needs very careful consideration to avoid issues like spot-zoning, inadequate buffers, and incompatible uses.
- 6) **CHANGE:** Remove the section on page 6.10 (included as reference below) that refers to “Obstacles to Redevelopment”. **REASON:** This section containing solely the comments of “a few developers” is not an appropriate thing to include in a comprehensive plan designed to represent the vision of the entire community. The 8-12-11 version removes the word “few”, but the lack of counterpoint comments on why neighborhood associations and good zoning are important to the community remains a problem. In addition, while the first four statements about land prices, financing, and incentives speak to general community conditions, the last three statements about zoning and dealing with neighbors and neighborhood associations represent a single-sided negative opinion about the value and legitimacy of neighbors and neighborhood associations. At a minimum, we ask that those bullets be removed. The Planning change dated 8-12-11 attempts to soften the criticism of neighborhoods, but remains unsatisfactory. Overall, it seems like that entire “Obstacles” section could just be removed. The

rationale for redevelopment strategies already flows from the plan vision and goals laid out in the preceding chapter(s). **REFERENCE TEXT ON PAGE 6.10: Obstacles to Redevelopment** Although there have been a few successful developers pursuing redevelopment projects in Lincoln, most developers choose to do projects on the city's fringe. A few developers, when asked why they do not do infill or redevelopment projects, responded that:

"Land is too expensive in the existing city."

"Land assembly is too expensive and unpredictable."

"Local banks are uncomfortable lending money for that type of development."

"The public process for development and financial incentives (such as Tax Increment Financing) is too long and unpredictable."

"Zoning issues, including parking and setbacks, can be problematic."

"Dealing with existing neighbors and neighborhood associations is unpredictable and time consuming."

"Another challenge for infill and redevelopment projects is the potential for neighborhood opposition. Change can be difficult for older neighborhoods, and without clear design standards, the developer, neighbors, and city officials may have very different visions which can require time-consuming negotiations and public meetings."

- 7) **CHANGE:** Replace "1,000 dwelling units" with "Additional dwelling units" where infill units are called for in existing residential neighborhoods. **CHANGE:** Replace the number of new infill dwelling units identified for "Greater Downtown" from 3,000 to 4,000. **REASON:** Calling for 1,000 dwelling units creates an unnecessary pressure on existing neighborhoods. Those units can be better-planned for within the Greater Downtown, while still allowing for infill opportunities within existing neighborhoods. This change accounts for the number of units projected as infill within the planning period, but says market interest will determine the exact number of units placed within existing neighborhoods through ADU's and other well-designed and appropriately-placed projects. **NOTE:** NSNA supports the Planning department changes dated 8-12-11 to page 7.9 that create more details specific to the additional living units projected as infill to existing neighborhoods, but requests that the text "1,000" be changed to "Additional" for this and other sections.
- 8) **CHANGE:** On page 7.2 under (Neighborhood) Guiding Principles, add three additional bullets:
 - i. Encourage public investment in neighborhood infrastructure and services like parks, pools, libraries, and neighborhood business districts.
 - ii. Policies should continue that support the preservation and enhancement of single family homes and historic properties like landmark districts and down-zonings that have occurred in existing neighborhoods.
 - iii. Promote sustainability and resource preservation by preserving and improving housing in existing neighborhoods.**REASON:** Preserving and improving our existing housing stock and neighborhood services is one of the best ways to continue to provide housing in our community. In terms of environmental sustainability and resource preservation, the Plan should also recognize that the "greenest" building is very often the one that is already built.
- 9) **CHANGE:** On page 9.8 remove the language that recommends replacing five neighborhood pools with spraygrounds. Change "Evaluate five Neighborhood Pools (air Park, Ballard, Belmont, Eden, and Irvingdale) for major renovation or replacement with a sprayground" to "Evaluate five Neighborhood Pools (air Park, Ballard, Belmont, Eden, and Irvingdale) for major renovation". Remove "Air Park, Ballard, and Belmont may be considered for replacement with sprayground facilities due to cost recovery." **REASON:** Neighborhood pools are a significant asset to neighborhood quality of life and should be maintained and enhanced. Pools offer programming that a sprayground alone cannot: swim safety training, recreation for older kids and adults, and team practice.

NSNA sincerely appreciates the opportunity to continue to participate in the creation of our community vision for the next thirty years. We ask for your consideration and adoption of our recommended changes. With these few amendments, we believe the LPlan 2040 draft plan contains a wealth of exciting goals and strategies that will carry our community forward into the future as a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Received August 17 from comment box at library (name not given):

If you're discussing transportation, I have something to say. I appreciate those who work for the city, but our public transportation in Lincoln is a joke. The bus systems are difficult to navigate, and they barely cover a skeleton of the city. Also, most citizens who ride it are low income, but the schedule is terrible. What about those who work 2nd or 3rd shifts? It's pretty much impossible to get around. Generally, those who are low income and need to ride the bus don't work 9 to 5 jobs. How are they supposed to get to and from work if they can't afford a car? I'd love to not own a vehicle, but because of my work schedule, there is no possible way for me to get to my job. It's all the way across town from where I live. With jobs as scarce as they are, people are willing to take one where they can. If our public transportation were better, they could actually get to where they need to go.

Received August 17 from comment box at library (name illegible):

I would like to see u fix my alleyway at 1010 D St because it good way to get a flat tire. (2) We need not to have fire work at all on July 4th. It keep me wake until 2 AM. (3) And u need to switch StarTran bus back to it normal number so where I do not get confused. Thanks.

Received August 17 from comment box at library (name not given):

The biggest complaint about Lincoln is the driving. The bypass is a must before the city gets any bigger. We have to get rid of the "small town" attitude and help the city grow.

Received August 17 from comment box at library (name not given):

I think that we need to increase the number of bus routes and change the system from one centered downtown to a grid system where you can get on a bus in the southwest corner of town and go to the northwest part of town or across town without having to make a downtown connection. In other words, have 70th or 84th, up to Superior and across to 10th and down. It could have a downtown stop. Another idea would be for routes that go around a quadrant of the city and connect to a route that goes around the center of Lincoln. I would use the bus to get more places if it didn't require so many connection waits.

I enjoy having the parks and libraries we have here in Lincoln. These are an important part of what makes it a good place to live. I think we ought to spend more on the items that everyone benefits from and less on things fewer people will be able to afford to use, like the arena. I don't think that most people in Lincoln will be able to afford events at the new arena after it is built. It adds to the cost of restaurants and delis and will add to the congestion downtown. My opinion is that the arena shouldn't be built and the money allotted for it should be used for libraries, parks and roads.

Received August 17 from comment box at library (name not given):

I believe Lincoln should grow west. That would support downtown and clean up the west side of Lincoln.

Received August 16 via mail from Ruth Jensen:

1. I don't know his name, but when StarTran used to hold their town hall meetings, a man claiming to be an attorney said Lincoln should have a "grid system". From what I recall, I think it was supposed to be like a trolley that would travel on a perimeter around Lincoln. This would possibly be a good idea for areas not covered by buses.
2. Some of the bike trails are treacherous to ride on at night because of trees and no lighting.
3. The "arena" should be built in another part of Lincoln, not downtown. We already have enough entertainment places downtown.

There seems to be a lot of vacant land north of 84 and Holdrege. About the Antelope Valley study. When you get to Lewis Ballpark, and past there, it used to be you could walk up to about 23 and N but now you can't because the trail is closed off or not well marked.

Received August 16, 2011 via comment board from Lyle Schmidt:

Green Transportation Infrastructure for Lincoln and Nebraska's Future...

I want to thank you for the opportunity to present my vision of how to meet the future energy and transportation needs of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Lincoln is a great and growing city and has a population of 200,000 plus strong.. The Census Bureau records show that when a city hits this landmark, the population doubles in ten years. But a great city needs a great infrastructure. How do we handle this challenge? Let's journey into a future with a green, multi-tasking high speed monorail I call the Linc Rail.

My starting points for the green Linc Rail are 27th and Interstate 80 and 27th and Saltillo Road. This measuring stick is a good indicator of how far our City has grown and where we are going. Now that I have a diameter of approximately 15, I can draw a circular route. This circular route is where I propose to put the Linc Rail. Such a location will meet many of our current needs as well as laying the foundation for the future.

Like a subway, there would be an inbound and an outbound or in this case, a clockwise and a counter-clockwise track. Each stop would have two Personal Transport Cars (PTCs), holding up to nine persons. One six-to-nine passenger PTC would be on each track at each station. A person enters the car, chooses their destination, makes payment with a renewable fare card (similar to a debit card), and an automated system would choose the shortest route and issue a ticket with the destination stop printed on it. The PTC would go directly to the destinations of the persons in the car and there would be no further stops and pickups until all of these persons have been delivered to their destination.

I count 48 major bus routes radiating from the downtown city bus hub. Using this number, I envision a Linc Rail stop between every two bus routes. This gives us a total of 24 stops. New bus routes could start at a Linc Rail stop. Some may argue that I'm merely recreating the wheel.

Rather, I submit through this proposal the hub, spokes and rim. I'm not recreating the wheel, I'm finishing it.

When utility companies string new trunk lines, they include bundles of fiber optic cables. All of the towers that would be part of the Linc Rail would be designed to receive and transmit wireless signals and thus become wireless platforms. I cannot foresee the future of the wireless revolution, but I can guarantee that such a unified wireless system would make Lincoln a founding father of that revolution.

Another frontier that could be incorporated is an array of photo-voltaic cells and wind turbines. I have recently seen some designs that would work well within the Linc Rail infrastructure. For the Linc Rail, all towers would have an array of photo-voltaic cells and wind turbines. All Linc Rail transport cars would use passive air conditioning and braking that would transfer motion into electricity to be channeled back into the track.

According to the latest Census information, Lancaster County added 3,347 new people. However, we hear often reports about crumbling roads, outdated and unsafe bridges, dangerous potholes and that there is no money available to maintain the current transportation infrastructure. Many cities, such as Denver, Colorado, place parking garages at the outskirts near to their mass transit systems. Lincoln would benefit tremendously from including such a plan in its future urban planning.

Using 27th and Interstate 80 as Station One, we set the stage for future development. The population chart shows growth in several neighboring cities. Assuming the challenge would be greater going east, I suggest that the Linc Rail be expanded west to Grand Island because more funding is being spent and budgeted for economic growth and the unemployment rate is lower as well. Having the Linc Rail connected to Grand Island, it would be a short stretch of track to bring easy access to this vital city.

A second expansion could be to Kearney. Kearney has numerous tourist attractions for instate residents as well as visitors to our state. In addition, there is a University of Nebraska campus.

Finishing the Linc Rail to the last city, Hastings, of the tri-city area makes a richer variety of college opportunities available for future generations of Nebraskans and others because of easy access to the campuses. The natural beauty of the Platte, historical sites and the new location of the Nebraska State Fair make this tri-city route a lucrative and attractive one.

It is evident that Omaha must also be a future destination of the Linc Rail. University students and scientists alike would have easy access to the University of Nebraska's Innovation Campus. Research would move forward on many fronts, greater flexibility and choice of classes for University students would be available with easy access to transportation to all three major campuses in Lincoln, Omaha and Kearney. All three campuses of the University of Nebraska would have stronger ties than ever before not to mention the possibility of connecting the Nebraska community college system as well to the Linc Rail.

Currently there is a national high-speed train being planned to follow the old Chicago-Northwestern Railroad route. This includes the city of South Sioux City. From Chicago, this national route is planned for service to be extended to Kansas City and St Louis. Positioning our

Linc Rail to connect to South Sioux City would enable travelers to connect to major national high-speed train hubs.

In conclusion, I have two more points to make. Former Senator Bob Kerry once sent an open letter to the Washington Post. In this letter, he made it very plain that a nation that did not have control of its energy needs, would never have sustainable economic growth or development. This sounds like the current situation in our nation, our state and yes our city. For now, just think about the fact that our nation imports 700 billion dollars of fossil fuels from nations that really don't like us.

The other point involves a Department of Energy study that was done about the same time Bob Kerry's letter was published. There were two criteria for this study. Alternative fuel sources are not very cost effective if they have to rely on a backup plan. So the Department of Energy wanted to find states that had at least 80% of their days either sunny or windy. This was vital because it ensured that startup costs would be paid off in ten years. Everyone thought that sunny California and the windy city of Chicago would make the list. The results were disappointing. Not one state in the nation met the 80% target.

When they overlaid both energy sources, they came up with three or four states that just barely passed the 80%. But one state met and exceeded the criteria at an unbelievable 95%. Nebraska. There lies room for economic growth. There lies sustainability for the future. There, ladies and gentlemen is true Husker Power.

In efforts to keep this project local and still moving forward, I would like to name some possible community partners. Several reasons have already been state as to why the University of Nebraska would benefit. I would like to add another reason. They have a premier engineering college and I would like to challenge the students of this college to become a major part of this project.

Kawasaki is currently building rail cards for Amtrak and it has also recently unveiled a testing center for rail cars.

Nebraska Tourism would also be a partner in this endeavor. Through the use of the Linc Rail, many Nebraska points of interest and historical sites would be accessible and easy to visit. Also if we build a multi-tasking, green, tailorable to size of town, monorail; scientists and engineers from all over the world will come to see it in operation.

Through the expansion of the Linc Rail, the State of Nebraska will be better and more easily connected to Nebraska cities and towns which will allow for greater job opportunities, greater communication, and increased revenues for all residents.

Lastly, the U. S. Department of Energy will continue to see the nation experiencing an energy crisis and will certainly be very interested in the progress of our positive efforts to providing mass transit with alternative energy sources.

Received August 12, 2011 via comment board from Mike Carlin:

Please consider the following recommended changes to LPlan2040:

Recommendation #1a:

Chapter 9: Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, page 9.3

Regional Parks and Tournament Sports Facilities, Level of Service

Change to read as indicated in **bold**: "The current citywide Level of Service (LOS) is 2.5 acres of Regional Park land per 1,000 Lincoln residents. **This LOS will be maintained in LPlan 2040 with the understanding that there may be minor variances** ~~No set LOS goal is stated in LPlan 2040 since the size may vary depending on the feature or facility. In addition, Regional Parks may attract visitors from outside the immediate area and thus do not have a defined service area."~~

Recommendation #1b:

Chapter 9: Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, page 9.4

Community Parks and Tournament Sports Facilities, Level of Service

"The current citywide LOS is 2.9 acres of Community Park land per 1,000 Lincoln residents. **This LOS will be maintained in LPlan 2040.** ~~LPlan 2040 establishes an LOS goal of 1.3 acres per 1,000 new Lincoln residents in new growth areas and a service area radius of approximately 2 miles in the urban area. The resulting citywide Community Parks LOS goal for LPlan 2040 will be 2.4 acres per 1,000 Lincoln residents."~~

Reason for recommendations:

1a. To change the LOS from 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents to "no set goal" is inviting disaster. Each individual developer will be able to say "it's not my responsibility" if planners try to include land for parks because there is "no set goal." Maintain the current LOS for Regional Parks at 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

1b. To reduce the LOS from 2.9 acres to 1.3 acres per 1,000 residents will result in a ring of new development around the city that has fewer and smaller Community Parks than the inner part of the city. The mathematical average doesn't look that bad on paper but the residents of the lower LOS won't be on paper, they will be in an area with a lower LOS. In addition, with a higher percentage of new development areas paved and roofed, the amount of storm water runoff will increase at the same time that the percentage of permeable park land decreases. This will drive the cost of storm water management up as the quality of life goes down. Ultimately it will cost the city more in storm water management costs than it might make if the land that should have been park land becomes taxable (not all developed land is taxable you know).

The combined effect of the proposed changes for Regional and Community Parks would cut the guaranteed LOS from 5.4 to 1.4 acres. That is a 75% reduction in Regional and Community Parks LOS in new development areas. This is in direct conflict with the guiding principle cited at the beginning of the very chapter that proposes this drastic cut: *"Parks and open space enhance the quality of life of the community's residents and are central to the community's economic development strategy—the community's ability to attract and retain viable businesses,*

industries, and employees is directly linked to quality of life issues, including indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities."

Keep the LOS that has helped to make Lincoln the great city that it is. To decrease the LOS for regional and community parks in future development would decrease the opportunities that our citizens will have to connect with and learn from our ecological community. Maintaining the current level of service for regional and community parks will help to maintain a uniform beauty citywide and a healthier, secure community throughout.

Recommendation #2:

Chapter 3: Environmental Resources, page 3.16

Greenways and Open Spaces, Strategies: Salt Creek South/Wilderness Park Link

Change to read as indicated in **bold**: "Pursue the acquisition of additional greenway **and the extension of Wilderness Park** south from Saltillo Road along Salt Creek. This future greenway should generally follow the 100-year floodplain along Salt Creek, and incorporate the right-of-way of the abandoned Union Pacific rail line. This area could eventually connect a network of trails that would extend into northern Kansas. This extension may be accomplished through a combination of land purchases, conservation easements, donations, and other options."

Reason for recommendation:

Designating the extension of Wilderness Park south as park land carries with it a greater level of protection than designating it as greenway. The current confines of Wilderness Park are being surrounded by our expanding city and losing the "illusion of wilderness" that the park is intended to provide. Recognized as an environmental legacy (Comprehensive Plan 2030 page A-23), it is essential that we extend and protect Wilderness Park for the growing population to enjoy for generations to come.

Received August 9, 2011 via comment board from Eric Bigham:

I think the 2040 plan is very short sighted in it's proposed perpetual growth model (a.k.a. let's look like Omaha). Denser development is more sustainable in the type of future we face (lack of natural resources/global warming, aging population, lack of funding for infrastructure, etc.). I strongly urge reconsideration on what type of city we want to look like in the future. Also, not too hot on the conservative position taken on capital improvements to streets in the city - wouldn't more of a mix make more sense (like 65% maintain/35% capital)? Right now, just looking at the improvements proposed, is seems like 80%/20%... not very impressed. Anyways, thank you for your time and consideration!

Received August 2, 2011 via comment board from Ron Hill:

I do not feel that the converting of the two properties to commercial are necessary. There are plenty of areas that are commercial already that are vacant, abandoned or unused. It would be better that the investors use those properties first for their ventures in beautifying the city. I see no reason whatsoever to give real investment companies a "hand up" unless they can improve areas that need to be improved first. We enjoy the 70th and Pine Lake Road properties as they are now. Please do not convert these properties.

Received July 20, 2011 via comment board from Stuart Long:

LPlan40 is a beautiful local version of Infinite Planet Theory. One pictures the Titanic, a gash in its side, steaming into the night. But Peak Oil means the 140-year petroleum growth party is over. Some time in the very near future an oil order will be placed and the market will not be able to deliver. Pandemonium and sudden media obsession. Price spikes, panic buying, hoarding, shortages, lines, rationing, etc. The truth of the human predicament will be hotly denied, scapegoats identified, crazy solutions proposed, governments replaced. But nothing will alter the fact that from then on more people will share a shrinking pie: less production, less wealth, less credit, less gasoline, less food. The city will not grow as forecast. Number of dwellers per residence will rise, however. "Lots For Sale" signs will bleach in the hot sun.

Received July 9, 2011 via comment board from Lillie Larsen:

It seems reasonable and appropriate to improve and widen Pioneers from 84th Street to 98th street since 98th street is currently in process of being widened to four lanes. A decade ago there was a fatal accident at 98th and Pioneers because of poor road conditions. Now would be the best time to make this necessary to avoid future accidents. Thank you for your consideration of my suggestion.

Received July 9, 2011 via comment board from Mike McClure:

Lincoln is the only city I know of its size that doesn't have a bypass highway circling the city. Why can other cities afford to have modern road systems while Lincoln remains a transportation system backwater?

RECEIVED

SEP 7 - 2011

4612 Van Dorn Street
Lincoln, NE 68506
September 3, 2011

Lincoln/Lancaster Co.
Planning Department

Planning Department
City and County
555 So. 10th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508

Re: 2040 Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan

Dear Sirs:

Here are my comments about the latest comprehensive plan and transportation plan for 2040:

1. The consultant from LSA Associates of Ft. Collins, Colorado, as reported in the March 10, 2011, issue of the Journal-Star, concluded that Lincoln is not yet big enough for Light Rail. Perhaps he should have his pay docked for such a ridiculous conclusion. With Lincoln's population at about 60,000 it had a flourishing streetcar system - the predecessor to Light Rail.

2. The problem is not the size of the city but, rather, the fact that all planning to date has been sprawl-oriented rather than Transportation Based. Lincoln will never have a modern, viable transportation system, either bus or rail, as long as sprawl development continues.

3. The concept of Transportation Based Zoning has been a huge success in Portland, Oregon where Light Rail lines provide fast, convenient service. I have ridden the system and talked with people who say that transit time on Light Rail is far better than they can achieve driving their own cars. The Light Rail option eliminates the cost of parking and the cost of gasoline and wear and tear on the family auto.

4. Portland has devised a system where the bus lines serve their true best function -- as feeders to Light Rail terminals. Bus-train service is so coordinated that as a bus pulls into the station the train is arriving and a cross-platform transfer is easy.

5. Good transportation corridors require population density. Population density can be achieved by Transportation Based Zoning whereby more dense zoning categories are placed along the corridors and then the density tapers off away from the corridor.

6. LSA Associates did a grave disservice to Lincoln when they failed to recommend that Light Rail transportation corridors for Lincoln be identified today and all future planning be oriented to making these corridors viable. My thoughts are that the possible corridors today are:

- a. O Street from 90th to SW 40th.
- b. Lincoln Airport to Downtown
- c. Crosstown from the south end of Lincoln to Interstate 80 on 71st St to 48th
- d. Down the median of Normal Boulevard from southeast Lincoln to downtown with extension to UN-L campus

There may be others that should be considered. The important

051

overriding consideration is interconnectivity. The east-west line should intersect the north south line at 27th & O Streets where there would be a sheltered transfer station. There would be connectivity along all the corridors to bus routes to feed the Light Rail.

7. The fatal flaw in the current city bus system is slow transit time. The buses have to mix with automobiles which slows transit time down tremendously. Citizens are not willing to pay the time penalty to take public transportation. Light Rail lines should be built down the middle or at the side of streets, have their own dedicated right of way to free movement from vehicle conflict. Trains should have a pre-empt system similar to the fire trucks where as they approach a major intersection they can "demand" the traffic signal and coast into the intersection with the signal turning so that they can proceed without stopping. This works well on the Portland Light Rail line to Gresham which I rode from end to end.

8. Good public transit accomodates both long trips and short trips. In Portland I watched a woman board a Light Rail train with two bags of groceries from the grocery store. She rode the train two stops and got off and walked a block or two home. We here in Lincoln just have no concept about how good public transportation can be because we haven't had it since the streetcar system converted to a bus system.

9. We have done and continue to do everything possible to discourage public transportation by our planning decisions. Don Linscott, a noted Lincoln developer bemoaned the fact that downtown development was almost impossible because he could not accumulate enough land to provide parking. Why should we need parking? Good public transit would allow us to close all those wasteful parking garages we seem so intent on building. We won't need them any more because people won't be taking their cars down town or to the shopping centers.

10. If we never look ahead, we will never have good public transportation in Lincoln. In spite of LSA we need to plan ahead, identify the transit corridors today and then overhaul the whole zoning code so that we have Transportation Based Zoning in place for future development. Our "car and truck only" mentality needs to change. Why build and maintain an elaborate street system when we could haul the same number of riders on a double-track Light Rail line that would use less right of way than the current street system? The savings in governmental cost would be tremendous.

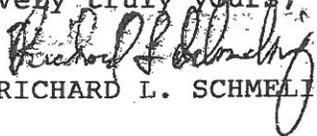
11. Finally, we move toward the desireable goal of reducing dependence on foreign oil by getting serious about public transit. We also reduce emissions since Light Rail is electric and environmentally friendly.

Am I the only one who sees this? As Lincolnites travel to other cities and to Europe and Asia and experience good public transit, perhaps the whole approach will change. I hope so.

Planning Department
September 3, 2011
Page 3

If you can't see the waste of our current auto-centric society, just drive the Lincoln streets during non-rush hour peaks. The streets are virtually empty. We have built huge overcapacity so that for an hour and a half in the morning and an hour and a half in the evening people can go a little faster -- and even that isn't working! Time to try a new approach.

Very truly yours,


RICHARD L. SCHMELING

P. S. Regarding Moe's observation about the cost of Light Rail, how about just doing no more street and road improvements and using the money for a Light Rail system and beefing up the bus system for feeder service instead? I'll bet there would be a lot of funds available if we just stopped widening streets and building parking garages. Relying on an improved bus system alone does not address the basic problem of bus runs stuck in traffic. Of course, Mr. Moe, I'm sure you realize that the only way to cure ~~the~~ problem is to build dedicated bus lanes at a cost comparable to Light Rail.

MAYOR'S PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2740 "A" STREET
LINCOLN, NE 68502

August 17, 2011

Mayor Chris Beutler
555 So. 10th
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Mayor,

The Mayor's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC) supports the vision and goals set forth in the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and updated Comprehensive Plan (LPlan 2040). The intent to focus on place making, mixed use redevelopment and sustainability all support walking and biking within the community. The PBAC supports the creation of a healthy community where active living and a balanced transportation system allow for more choices to bike and walk to destinations. The PBAC believes that a focus on walkability and preserving neighborhoods contributes to a more livable community. A continued focus on making connections for various modes of transportation will move these goals forward. The PBAC applauds the Complete Streets approach with its focus on all users of roadway projects and looks forward to its implementation. The continued provision of parks and open spaces, in addition to trails, helps provide greater opportunities for walking and biking within the community.

The PBAC would prefer to see the "Needs Based Plan" receive the funding to allow for greater emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Realizing that the current plan focuses on a fiscally restrained approach, the PBAC supports the many improvements suggested, including on street facilities for bicycles, the rehabilitation of sidewalks and trails, and continued coordination amongst city departments to plan for such amenities.

The PBAC thinks the current amount of funding (\$500,000 annually) for the sidewalk rehabilitation program is not sufficient to meet the needs of the community and much more is needed. There are no dedicated funds today for bicycle and pedestrian capital projects such as on-street bike facilities so the proposal to fund such a program in the new LPlan 2040 is the right direction to take.

The PBAC appreciates the opportunity to provide input into the planning process and supports the many efforts within LPLAN 2040 and the LRTP to create more opportunities for walking and bicycling in the community.

Sincerely,



Barb Fraser, Chair
Mayor's Pedestrian/Bicycle Advisory Committee

Cc: Planning Commission, City Council

SUBMITTED BY RICK KRUEGER AT
SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING: 8/17/11
BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION



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Wednesday, August 17, 2011



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Seattle green jobs program falls short of goals

VANESSA HO seattlepi.com
Updated 09:19 a.m. Tuesday, August 16, 2011

Comments (0) **0** tweets **85**

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SEATTLE (AP) -- Last year, Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn announced the city had won a coveted \$20 million federal grant to invest in weatherization. The unglamorous work of insulating crawl spaces and attics had emerged as a silver bullet in a bleak economy - able to create jobs and shrink carbon footprint - and the announcement came with great fanfare.

McGinn had joined Vice President Joe Biden in the White House to make it. It came on the eve of Earth Day. It had heady goals: creating 2,000 living-wage jobs in Seattle and retrofitting 2,000 homes in poorer neighborhoods.

But more than a year later, Seattle's numbers are lackluster. As of last week, only three homes had been retrofitted and just 14 new jobs have emerged from the program. Many of the jobs are administrative, and not the entry-level pathways once dreamed of for low-income workers. Some people wonder if the original goals are now achievable.

"The jobs haven't surfaced yet," said Michael Woo, director of Got Green, a Seattle community organizing group focused on the environment and social justice.

"It's been a very slow and tedious process. It's almost painful, the number of meetings people have gone to. Those are the people who got jobs. There's been no real investment for the broader public."

The buildings that have gotten financing so far include the Washington Athletic Club and a handful of hospitals, a trend that concerns community advocates who worry the program isn't helping lower-income homeowners.

"Who's benefitting from this program right now - it doesn't square with what the aspiration was," said Howard Greenwich, the policy director of Puget Sound Sage, an economic-justice group. He urged the city to revisit its social-equity goals.

"I think what it boils down to is who's got the money."

Organizers and policy experts blame the economy, bureaucracy and bad timing for the program's mediocre results. Called Community Power Works, the program funds low-interest loans and incentives for buildings to do energy-efficient upgrades. They include hospitals, municipal buildings, big commercial structures and homes.

Half the funds are reserved for financing and engaging homeowners in Central and Southeast Seattle, a historically underserved area. Most of the jobs are expected to come from this sector.

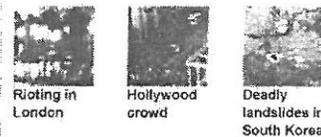
But the timing of the award has led to hurdles in enticing homeowners to bite on retrofits. The city had applied for the grant at a time of eco-giddiness, when former Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels was out-greening all other politicians except for Al Gore. Retrofits glowed with promise to boost the economy, reduce consumer bills and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

"A triple win," is how Biden characterized it.

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By the time Seattle won the award, homeowners were battered by unemployment and foreclosures. The long-term benefits of energy upgrades lacked the tangible punch of a new countertop. And the high number of unemployed construction workers edged out new weatherization installers for the paltry number of jobs.

"Really, we couldn't have rolled out this program at a worse time," said Greenwich, who had helped write the city's grant proposal.

"The outcomes are very disappointing. I think the city has worked really hard, but no one anticipated just how bad this recession was going to be, and the effect it was going to have on this program."

City feels 'cautiously optimistic'

As of last week, 337 homeowners had applied for the program. Fourteen had gotten a loan, or were in the process of getting one.

"Yes, we're not seeing as many completed retrofits as we wanted to," said Joshua Curtis, the city's manager for Community Power Works. "While everyone would like to see more upgrades, I think we're feeling cautiously optimistic."

He said the residential portion of program didn't launch until April. He said there was a normal summertime lull in work and that he expected things to pick up in the fall. He was confident that the city's marketing campaign and loan partner held promise.

Curtis said there were factors outside the city's control, such as the economy. And he attributed frustration among job-seekers to a "mismatch" in the timing of two federal grants.

Before the city got the \$20 million, some local agencies, including Got Green, had received funds in a government push to train workers in weatherization. But the anticipation of landing career-path jobs evaporated as months went by with no work.

"People are frustrated and rightly so," Curtis said. "There's been sort of a lag time when people graduated from those programs."

They include Long Duong, 32, who got a certificate in sealing air leaks and insulating walls after he was laid off from a job handling bags at the airport. But he soon found that other men had more qualifications than him, and he took part-time gigs - installing light bulbs and canvassing doors - while waiting for work.

A year later, he's still looking.

"I haven't given up yet," said Duong, of South Seattle. "Weatherization is another opportunity for me."

Curtis said the money that financed the Washington Athletic Club and hospitals doesn't draw from funds reserved for single-family homeowners. He said the program's standards will ensure that people targeted by the program - low-income workers - will get good jobs. And he said the WAC project will create some new work in September.

"We're not where we want to be, but we have a path forward," he said.

But will the city hit its goals? Curtis was hopeful Seattle would make it by 2013, when the funding ends. Greenwich, of Puget Sound Sage, said the city needs to retrofit 100 to 200 homes a month to create 2,000 jobs. Woo, of Got Green, thinks the city needs to throw more money on incentives.

Greenwich said the energy retrofit market has turned out to be extremely complicated, with required hammering out of job standards, hiring practices, wages and how best to measure energy benefits.

"The city is really going to have to step up its game to get the 2,000 retrofits," Greenwich said.

"But if this would have been easy, it would have been done already."

Information from: Seattle Post-Intelligencer, <http://www.seattlepi.com/>

SUBMITTED BY RICK KRUEGER AT
SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION: 8/17/11



Potential Gas Committee

For Release April 27, 2011, 1100 EDT

Contact: Dr. John B. Curtis, Potential Gas Agency, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO 80401-1887. Telephone 303-273-3886; fax 303-273-3574; ldepagni@mines.edu.

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POTENTIAL GAS COMMITTEE REPORTS SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN MAGNITUDE OF U.S. NATURAL GAS RESOURCE BASE

GOLDEN, COLORADO — The Potential Gas Committee (PGC) today released the results of its latest biennial assessment of the nation's natural gas resources, which indicates that the United States possesses a total resource base of 1,898 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) as of year-end 2010. This is the highest resource evaluation in the Committee's 46-year history, exceeding the previous record-high assessment by 61 Tcf. Most of the increase arose from reevaluation of shale-gas plays in the Gulf Coast, Mid-Continent and Rocky Mountain areas.

These changes have been assessed in addition to the 44 Tcf of domestic marketed-gas production recorded during the two-year period since the Committee's previous report.

"The PGC's year-end 2010 assessment reaffirms the Committee's conviction that abundant, recoverable natural gas resources exist within our borders, both onshore and offshore, and in all types of reservoirs—from conventional, 'tight' and shales, to coals," said Dr. John B. Curtis, Professor of Geology and Geological Engineering at the Colorado School of Mines and Director of the Potential Gas Agency there, which provides guidance and technical assistance to the Potential Gas Committee.

Dr. Curtis cautioned, however, that the current assessment assumes neither a time schedule nor a specific market price for the discovery and production of future gas supply. "Assessments of the Potential Gas Committee are 'base-line estimates' in that they attempt to provide a reasonable appraisal of what we consider to be the 'technically recoverable' gas resource potential of the United States," he explained.

(more)



The Committee's year-end 2010 assessment of 1,898 Tcf (statistically aggregated mean value, rounded) includes 1,739 Tcf of gas attributable to "traditional" reservoirs (conventional, tight sands and carbonates, and shales) and 159 Tcf in coalbed reservoirs. Compared to year-end 2008, traditional resources increased by nearly 67 Tcf (4%), while coalbed gas resources declined by 4 Tcf (2.7%), resulting in a net increase in total potential resources of 61.4 Tcf (3.3%). (See accompanying Table 1.)

When the PGC's results are combined with the U.S. Department of Energy's latest available determination of proved dry-gas reserves, 273 Tcf as of year-end 2009, the United States has a total available *future supply* of 2,170 Tcf, an increase of 89 Tcf over the previous evaluation.

As Dr. Curtis observed, "Our knowledge of the geological endowment of technically recoverable gas continues to improve with each assessment. Furthermore, new and advanced exploration, well drilling, completion and stimulation technologies are allowing us increasingly better access to domestic gas resources—especially 'unconventional' gas—which, not all that long ago, were considered impractical or uneconomical to pursue."

"Consequently, our present assessment, strengthened by robust domestic production levels and a growing base of proved reserves, demonstrates an exceptionally strong and optimistic gas supply picture for the nation."

Overall, the Gulf Coast, including the Gulf of Mexico outer continental shelf, slope and deepwater, remains the country's richest resource area (29 percent of total traditional resources), followed by the Atlantic, Rocky Mountain and Mid-Continent areas, which altogether account for 85% of the assessed total traditional resource. (See accompanying Table 2.) Changes in the assessments from 2008 to 2010 arose primarily from analyses of new geological, drilling, well-test and production data from these same four regions. The largest volumetric and/or percentage increases in individual resource categories (Probable, Possible and Speculative) resulted mainly from reassessments of active and newly developing shale-gas plays in the Gulf Coast Area (La.-Miss.-Ala. Salt Basins, East Texas and Texas Gulf Coast Basins), as well as the Anadarko Basin (Mid-Continent Area), Piceance Basin (Rocky Mountain Area), Appalachian Basin (Atlantic Area) and Michigan Basin (North Central Area).

The growing importance of shale gas is substantiated by the fact that, of the 1,898 Tcf of total potential resources, shale gas accounts for 687 Tcf (“most likely” value), or approximately 36%. PGC has again prepared a separate tabulation of shale-gas resources but has not computed an aggregated mean value inasmuch as shale gas is considered part of PGC’s traditional resources.

Again this year, PGC is releasing an *Advance Summary* of its assessment results. This concise document will provide those who preorder the Committee’s full-content printed report with all of the national, area- and province-level assessment tabulations and accompanying graphics for immediate analysis and critique.

PGC’s complete printed report will include detailed area- and province-level resource assessments, summaries of recent E&P activities, and updated editions of its popular value-added features:

- *PGC and the Ultimately Recoverable Resource*—explains in simplified terms, with annotated graphics, the time-dynamic nature of gas resource assessment, the relationship between proved reserves and the PGC’s categories of resources, and how these quantities lead to determination of the ultimately recoverable gas resource.
- *Historical Trends I*—Analyses of annual trends in U.S. crude oil, natural gas and gas liquids production for 1980-2010, together with the basics of ‘vintaged’ production graphs, production profiles, well and rig statistics, prices, revenues and other useful parameters, as well as forecasts of production trends to 2035. Accompanying detailed text describes each plotted trend, which is keyed to a graphical folio for the U.S. containing more than 90 charts that are rarely, if at all, seen in print elsewhere.
- *Historical Trends II*—Monthly gas production and well-count histories for all Lower 48 States’ onshore and offshore provinces, allowing the reader to compare and contrast basins with rising, falling or stable production trends.
- *Historical Trends III*—Gas-well permitting and spudding histories for all producing provinces, a measure of overall health of the industry from basin to basin.
- *Historical Trends IV*—“Top-ten” rankings of gas producers and well production trends and performance, arranged by PGC province.
- *North American Perspectives I-II*—Overviews of natural gas resources, production and recent E&P activities in Canada and Mexico.
- *Frontier Gas Resources I-III*—Latest domestic and international developments in natural gas hydrates and liquefied natural gas (LNG); and U.S. shale gas resources and play characteristics.
- *From Reservoir to Burner Tip*—PGC’s natural gas “primer,” a less technical discussion of how and where natural gas occurs and how it is produced, stored, transported, delivered to and beneficially used by consumers.

In addition to the *Advance Summary* and complete printed report, the PGC will release the fifth edition of its information-packed DVD product, *PGC Trove 2011*. This disc will include digital

versions of the report, both in its entirety and as amply bookmarked individual chapters. The trove will again feature the comprehensive *Folio of Historical Production Trends and Forecast for the United States*, consisting of more than 3,400 historical-trend plots covering separately the entire U.S. and Lower 48 States, as well as each petroleum-producing region and each onshore and offshore producing province.

With these offerings, the Potential Gas Committee presents a more complete picture of present gas supply and productive capacity of the North American natural gas industry than it has compiled previously.

(more)

Details of the Potential Gas Committee's Natural Gas Resource Assessment
(as of December 31, 2010)

The Potential Gas Committee (PGC) reports its gas resource assessments biennially in three categories of decreasing geological certainty—*Probable*, *Possible* and *Speculative*. For each, a *minimum*, *most likely* and *maximum* volume is assessed in each of 90 provinces in the Lower 48 States and Alaska. The *mean* values shown in Table 1 below were calculated by statistical aggregation of the minimum, most likely and maximum value ranges for each category. Mean values for total traditional resources and total coalbed gas resources are aggregated separately. This procedure imparts greater statistical validity to the results and allows for more direct comparison of PGC's assessments with those made by other organizations.

The PGC's assessments are not static. Each year, based on new exploration results, drilling and production information and various other data that become available, PGC members may reclassify resources at the province level from one category to another and to proved reserves.

Table 1.

Resource Category	Mean Values, Tcf		Change
	2010	2008	Tcf (%)
Traditional Gas Resources:			
Probable resources (current fields).....	536.6	441.4	
Possible resources (new fields).....	687.7	736.9	
Speculative resources (frontiers).....	518.3	500.7	
Total Traditional Gas Resources*	1,739.2	1,673.4	+66.7 (3.9%)
Coalbed Gas Resources:			
Probable resources.....	13.4	14.2	
Possible resources.....	48.1	49.8	
Speculative resources.....	96.2	98.9	
Total Coalbed Gas Resources*	158.6	163.0	-4.4 (-2.7%)
Grand Total Potential Resources**	1,897.8	1,836.4	+61.4 (3.3%)
Proved dry-gas reserves (DOE/EIA).....	<u>272.5</u> †	<u>244.7</u>	
U.S. Future Gas Supply	2,170.3	2,081.1	+89.2 (4.3%)

* Mean values for Probable, Possible and Speculative resources are *not* arithmetically additive in deriving Total Traditional Gas Resources or Total Coalbed Gas Resources.

** Mean values for Total Traditional Resources and Total Coalbed Gas Resources are arithmetically additive in deriving Grand Total Potential Resources.

† Latest available figure is for year-end 2009.

Note: Totals are subject to rounding and differences due to statistical aggregation of distributions.

(more)

PGC's 90 geological provinces are grouped into seven geographic assessment areas. In similar fashion as above, the minimum, most likely and maximum value ranges for each category of traditional resources in each province within an area are aggregated at the area level to yield mean values for area Probable, Possible and Speculative traditional resources and a separately aggregated area total. Coalbed gas resources are aggregated only at the national level. Table 2 below compares the total mean values for these areas for year-end 2010 and year-end 2008.

Table 2.

Assessment Area	Total Mean Values, Tcf		Change Tcf (%)
	2010	2008	
Traditional Gas Resources:			
Gulf Coast (including Gulf of Mexico).....	506.0	455.2	+50.8 (11.2%)
Atlantic.....	353.6	353.5	+0.1 (0%)
Rocky Mountain.....	344.0	374.4	-30.4 (-8.1%)
Mid-Continent.....	272.2	274.9	-2.6 (-1.0%)
Alaska.....	193.8	193.8	0 (0%)
Pacific.....	54.0	51.3	+2.7 (5.3%)
North Central.....	21.6	24.0	-2.4 (-10%)
Total U.S. Traditional Gas Resources*	1,739.2	1,673.4	+65.7 (3.9%)
Coalbed Gas Resources (all areas).....	158.6	163.0	-4.4 (-2.7%)
Grand Total Potential Resources**	1,897.8	1,836.4	+61.4 (3.3%)
Proved dry-gas reserves (DOE/EIA).....	<u>272.5</u> †	<u>244.7</u>	
U.S. Future Gas Supply	2,170.3	2,081.1	+89.2 (4.3%)

* Mean values of Traditional Resources for the seven areas are *not* arithmetically additive in deriving Total U.S. Traditional Resources.

** Mean values for Total U.S. Traditional Gas Resources and Coalbed Gas Resources are arithmetically additive in deriving Grand Total Potential Resources.

† Latest available figure is for year-end 2009.

Note: Totals are subject to rounding and differences due to statistical aggregation of distributions.

(more)

How to Obtain the Potential Gas Committee 2010 Advance Summary and Report

Prepublication orders for the full-content printed PGC report, *Potential Supply of Natural Gas in the United States (December 31, 2010)* may now be placed with the Potential Gas Agency, Colorado School of Mines, Golden, CO 80401-1887. The cost of the printed report is US\$495 (US\$515 for foreign shipment), if payment accompanies the order. The printed report with the companion DVD will be available for US\$950 (US\$970 for foreign shipment). All purchasers will receive the *Advance Summary* immediately and will automatically be sent the full report (or report plus DVD) when the book is published later in 2011.

For additional information about ordering these and previous reports and DVDs, please contact Linda D'Epagnier, Program Assistant, at the Potential Gas Agency, telephone 303-273-3886, fax 303-273-3574, or e-mail: ldepagni@mines.edu.

About the Potential Gas Committee

The Potential Gas Committee, an incorporated, nonprofit organization, consists of knowledgeable and highly experienced volunteer members who work in the natural gas exploration, production and transportation industries and in the field and technical services and consulting sectors. The Committee also benefits from the input of respected technical advisors and various observers from federal and state government agencies, academia, and industry and research organizations in both the United States and Canada. Although the PGC functions independently, the Potential Gas Agency at the Colorado School of Mines provides the Committee with guidance, technical assistance, training and administrative support, and assists in member recruitment and outreach. The Potential Gas Agency receives financial support from prominent E&P and gas pipeline companies and distributors.

- END -

Note to Editors:

Selected illustrations from the press conference slide presentation are available for print use. Contact the Potential Gas Agency and specify desired figure number(s) and preferred file format (e.g., tiff, jpg, eps). Alternatively, one may request all the illustrations in the slide presentation as a Microsoft® PowerPoint® file (ppt).

Slide 5. Potential Gas Committee's assessment of traditional gas resources of the United States, as of December 31, 2010 (mean values, Tcf). Data from Potential Gas Committee (2011).

Slide 6. Potential Gas Committee's assessment of coalbed gas resources of the United States, as of December 31, 2010 (mean values, Tcf). Data from Potential Gas Committee (2011).

Slide 7. Potential Gas Committee's assessment of potential gas resources of the United States, traditional and coalbed, 1990-2010 (mean values, Tcf). Data from Potential Gas Committee (2011).

Slide 9. Map of Potential Gas Committee's assessment areas, annotated with total traditional and coalbed gas resource values for year-end 2010 (mean values, Tcf). Data from Potential Gas Committee (2011).

Slide 10. Comparison of Potential Gas Committee's potential traditional gas resources for the United States, by area, onshore and offshore, including coalbed gas, year-end 2010 ("most likely" values, Bcf). Data from Potential Gas Committee (2011).