

FACTSHEET

TITLE: A resolution approving and adopting a proposed amendment to the ***Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan***, requested by the Director of the Urban Development Department, to expand the boundary and to identify the "Airport Entryway Corridor" project.

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

SPONSOR: Planning Department

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Planning Commission
Public Hearing: 03/05/14
Administrative Action: 03/05/14

RECOMMENDATION: A finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan (7-0: Scheer, Beecham, Corr, Hove, Cornelius, Sunderman and Lust voting 'yes'; Harris and Weber absent).

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. This amendment to the ***Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan*** proposes to expand the boundary and to identify the "Airport Entryway Corridor" as a new streetscape project, including landscaping, district markers and banners along Cornhusker Highway from near the Lincoln Airport to the I-180 interchange and south along I-180 to S Street. The project description is found on p.9-14.
2. The staff recommendation to find the proposed amendment to the Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan to be in conformance with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is based upon the "Analysis" as set forth on p.3-4. The staff presentation is found on p.5-6.
3. There was no testimony in opposition.
4. On March 5, 2014, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendation and voted 7-0 to find the proposed amendment to the ***Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan*** to be in conformance with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan (**Comprehensive Plan Conformance No. 14003**).

FACTSHEET PREPARED BY: Jean L. Preister

DATE: March 17, 2014

REVIEWED BY: Marvin Krout, Director of Planning

DATE: March 17, 2014

REFERENCE NUMBER: FS\CC\2014\CPC14003 Redev Plan

LINCOLN/LANCASTER COUNTY PLANNING STAFF REPORT

for MARCH 5, 2014 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

- PROJECT #:** Comprehensive Plan Conformance No.14003
- PROPOSAL:** To review as to conformance with the 2040 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan, to add the Airport Entryway Corridor project to the Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan.
- LOCATION:** Generally located from near the Lincoln airport on West Adams St., east on Cornhusker Hwy. to the I-180 interchange and south along I-180 to “S” St.
- LAND AREA:** 326 acres, more or less
- CONCLUSION:** The redevelopment project is in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan

<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u>	In conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
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GENERAL INFORMATION:

EXISTING ZONING: P Public, R-2 Residential, R-4 Residential, B-4 Lincoln Center Business, H-3 Highway Commercial, and I-1 Industrial

EXISTING LAND USE: Public right-of-way, commercial and industrial.

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING: A variety of zoning districts border this area including residential, commercial and industrial zoning districts.

HISTORY:

- July 2003 The Antelope Valley Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study was approved by the City Council.
- October 2006 The Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Area Blight and Substandard Determination Study was approved by the City Council.
- August, 2013 Comprehensive Plan Conformance #13005 to add the West Adams/Cornhusker Highway and I-180 Entry Corridor enhancement project to the Parks & Recreation Department 2012/2013-2017/2018 Capital Improvement Program was approved by the City Council.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SPECIFICATIONS:

Key entryways provide indelible “first impressions” of a community. (p.4.3)

Major entryways to Lincoln including Interstate 80 and its exits (especially I-180), Highways 77 and 34 from the north, Cornhusker Highway from the east and from the Airport on the west, O Street from the east and west, Homestead Expressway/Highway 77/Rosa Parks Way from the southwest and west, and Highway 2 from the southeast, should be studied, protected, and enhanced to create and express community pride. (p. 4.6)

Strategies: Entry Corridors and Public Art (p.4.7 & 4.8)

- Study key entryways to Lincoln and adopt zoning tools and incentives to protect and enhance “first impressions” of the community, including a thoughtful, distinctive, and attractive system of “wayfinding” signs to key community attractions.
- Preserve and enhance the character of key entry points and corridors into the City of Lincoln through enhanced landscaping and public art in rights-of-way, and respectful development of adjacent properties.
- The corridors along I-180 from Interstate 80 to the entry into Downtown, and from Lincoln Municipal Airport along Cornhusker Highway to the interchange with I-180 should be a special focus for public/private partnerships to identify special themes and appropriate sites for public art.

Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan

Areas that require redevelopment, including areas with obsolete land uses or unresolvable land use conflicts, should be developed in ways that strengthen existing commercial, industrial, and residential investments. Stable areas or marginal areas with viable future uses should be targets for rehabilitation reinvestment. (p.21)

Improve street landscaping, where possible, along parking lots or in conjunction with new developments. (p.21)

Preserve and enhance entryway corridors into Lincoln. (p.21)

Infrastructure issues that include streets, sidewalks, and utilities impeded new development throughout the Redevelopment Area and contribute to the blighting conditions. (p.23)

Design and construct a streetscape plan for West Cornhusker Highway. Elements should include, but not be limited to, lighting, thematic entrances and nodes, landscaping, removal of billboards and general streetscape improvements. (p.25)

ANALYSIS:

1. This is a request to review a proposed amendment to the Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan for a determination of conformity with the Comprehensive Plan. The boundaries of the amendment are identified in the attached map.
2. There are 2 purposes to the proposed project; 1) to expand the boundary of the redevelopment area to include the area along I-180 to “S” St. and 2) to add the Airport Entryway Corridor project.
3. The project includes streetscape improvements which may include landscaping, district markers, banners and public art along Cornhusker Highway and I-180.

4. Other actions within the project area are to continue the Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan's objective of strengthening the area through the removal of blighted conditions and redevelopment of the area by acquisition of substandard properties.
5. The Airport Entryway Corridor is a component of a larger overall strategy increase the areas economic development potential, enhance Lincoln's image to visitors and employers, and improve the area's infrastructure.
6. The cost of the project is estimated at \$9.3 million which includes 4 miles of roadway improvements, streetscape enhancements and an endowment to maintain the streetscape.
7. Roadway improvements from NW 1st St. to West Adams St. on Cornhusker Hwy,, estimated at \$4.9 million, will include concrete pavement repair with mill and overlay, curb replacement, and ADA curb ramps. The improvements are funded through the City's Street construction program.
8. Streetscape improvements are estimated to cost \$2.5 million. The primary funding source is City Certificate of Participation (COP) bonds. Tax Increment Financing (TIF), as well as, private funds and general fund revenues will be used for paying the debt service on the COP bonds.
9. In August 2013 CPC #13005 was approved to add a project to the Parks & Recreation Department Capital Improvement Program for enhancement of the area along Cornhusker Highway and the I-180 corridor with landscaping, district markers, and public art. This current CPC proposal will allow another funding source to be used through TIF for the streetscape enhancements.

Prepared by:

Tom Cajka, Planner

DATE: February 19, 2014

APPLICANT: David Landis, Director
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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONFORMANCE NO. 14003

PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE PLANNING COMMISSION:

March 5, 2014

Members present: Hove, Corr, Beecham, Cornelius, Scheer, Sunderman and Lust; Harris and Weber absent.

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

There were no ex parte communications disclosed.

Staff presentation: **David Landis, Director of the Urban Development Department**, explained that this is a request to find the declaration of surplus property to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. There are three aspects: 1) that the projected entryway corridor plan be specifically identified in the Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan as part of the authorized tasks and functions in that plan; 2) to make a slight boundary adjustment in that corridor to include some city-owned right-of-way between this area and Downtown Lincoln; and 3) to specifically recite that the City is authorized as part of this redevelopment area to purchase the blighted structures that might be there to prepare them for redevelopment. The most critical element is the delineation of this entryway corridor project as being specifically authorized by the redevelopment plan.

Landis went on to state that the redevelopment plan already provides language that is quite consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, but not as detailed as the language now being offered. Today we are being more specific by targeting and identifying the project.

As far as consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, Landis referred to page 4.3, reciting "Major entryways to Lincoln including Interstate 80 and its exits (especially I-180), Highways 77 and 34 from the north, Cornhusker Highway from the east and from the Airport on the west." The Comprehensive Plan goals include maintaining a welcoming atmosphere in these locations.

Michael Cornelius arrived.

Landis then showed renderings of the concept plan for the entryway corridor project. There are plans to execute, including an endowment to allow for its continued maintenance. There is a street construction portion and then the landscaping portion totaling about 9 million dollars. Actual construction is 7.4 million with 5 million being street construction.

Landis also stated that the area being added to the district includes city right-of-way around the highway between Haymarket Park and Antelope Valley.

Hove inquired why the redevelopment area widens out so far from Cornhusker Highway to the south. Landis explained that the area is in a TIF district and found to be blighted. When the district was created in 2006, that was part of the study area. If you are looking for resources, you want to have housetops and you want to have businesses in it because it generates the resources to allow you to do that. The most critical reason is that it is a blighted area.

Beecham inquired whether there are any historic buildings in this blighted area. Landis does not believe so. He is not aware of any and this application has been reviewed by several departments and it has not come up.

Beecham inquired about the plans for plantings on the medians, given the drought we have experienced. **Nicole Fleck-Tooze of the Parks and Recreation Department** stated that the plantings will be primarily native, stylized prairie plantings in an intentional design. There is an irrigation system built into the project for sustainability over time.

There was no testimony in opposition.

ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

March 5, 2014

Scheer moved to approve a finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Beecham.

Lust believes this looks like a good project for the city. It is nice to have our entryway corridors welcoming to the city showing off what we do have, and it looks to be a great improvement in the area.

Motion for a finding of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan carried 7-0: Hove, Corr, Beecham, Cornelius, Scheer, Sunderman and Lust voting 'yes'; Harris and Weber absent. This is a recommendation to the City Council.



Streetscape Beautification

Design and construct a streetscape plan for West Cornhusker Highway. Elements should include, but not be limited to, lighting, thematic entrances and nodes, landscaping, removal of billboards, and general streetscape improvements.

- 1. Airport Entryway Corridor Project:** The corridor is generally located from near the Lincoln airport on West Adams St., east on Cornhusker Highway to the I-180 interchange, and south along I-180 to S Street. The corridor provides the first impression of Lincoln for visitors arriving at the airport but it is currently unwelcoming, uninspiring, poorly landscaped and blighted. Streetscape improvements will be coordinated with construction of roadway improvements to avoid conflict and make improvements in an efficient and effective way. The Project Area is illustrated in *Exhibit 3a* which also expands the boundary of the Northwest Corridors Redevelopment Plan to the south along the I-180 corridor right-of-way. The expanded boundary, shown in *Exhibit 3b*, incorporates areas previously declared blighted and substandard through the Lincoln Center and Antelope Valley Redevelopment processes. The project area is approximately 298.6 acres, of which approximately 27.4 acres comprise the additional area.

Exhibit 3a: Airport Entryway Corridor Project

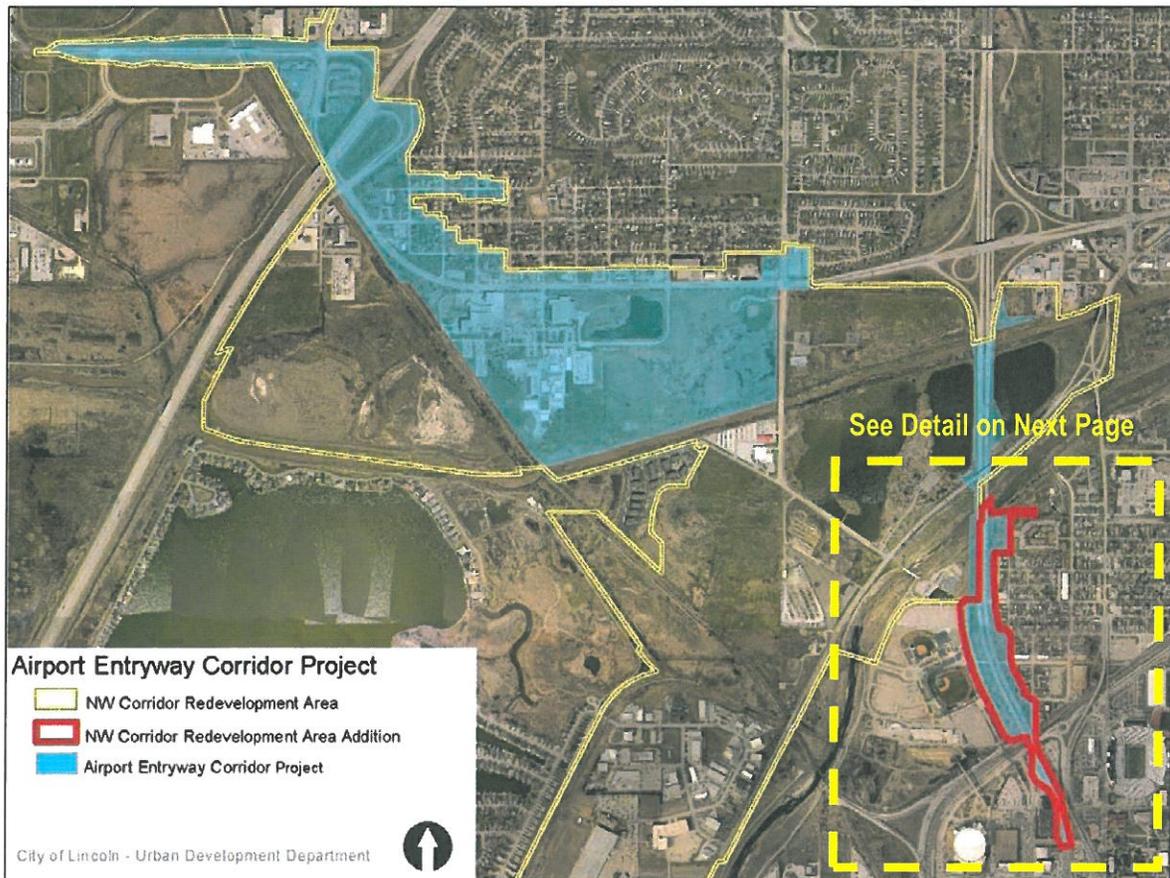
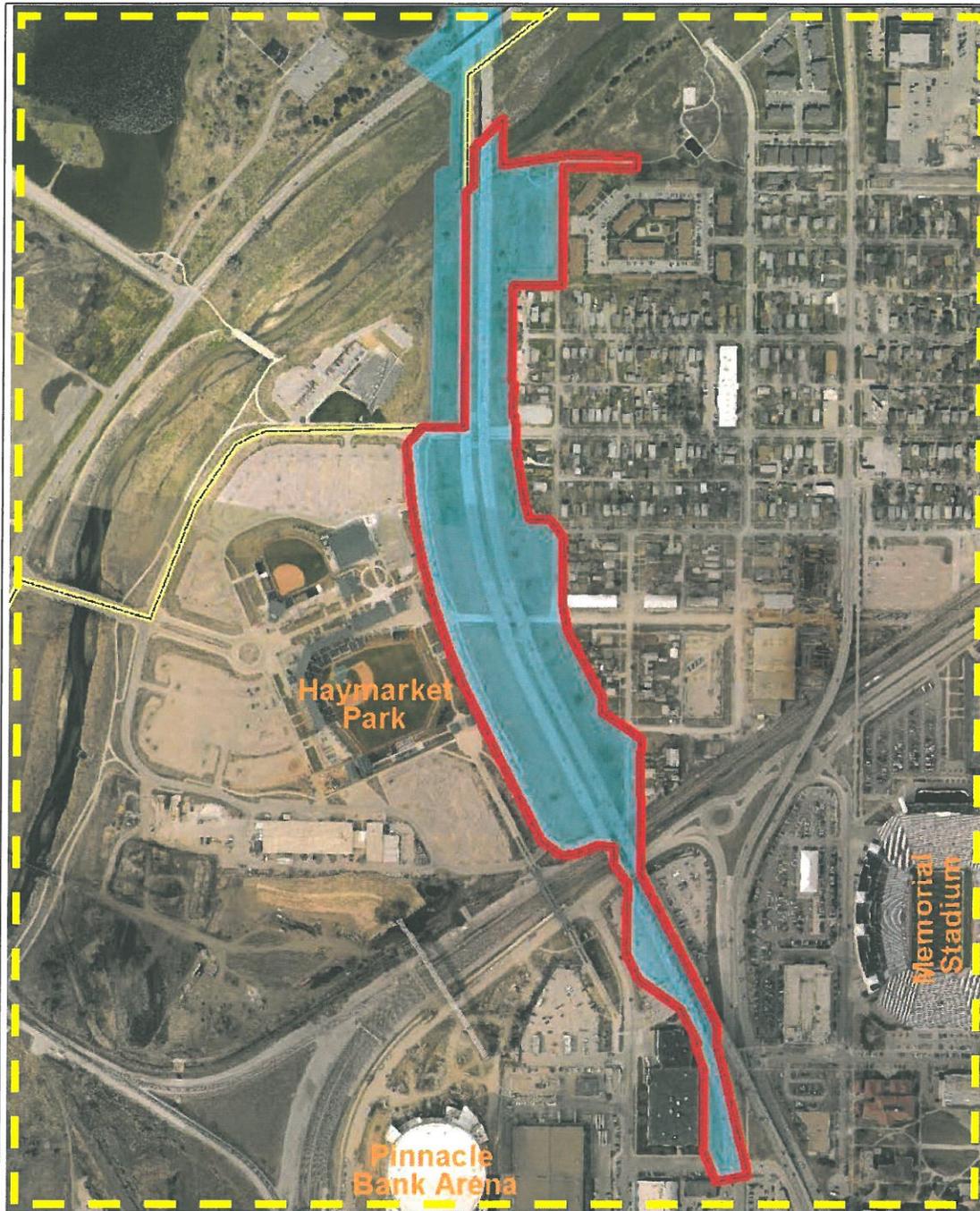


Exhibit 3b: NW Corridor Redevelopment Area Addition



Airport Entryway Corridor Project

-  NW Corridor Redevelopment Area
-  Airport Entryway Corridor Project
-  NW Corridor Redevelopment Area Addition

City of Lincoln - Urban Development Department



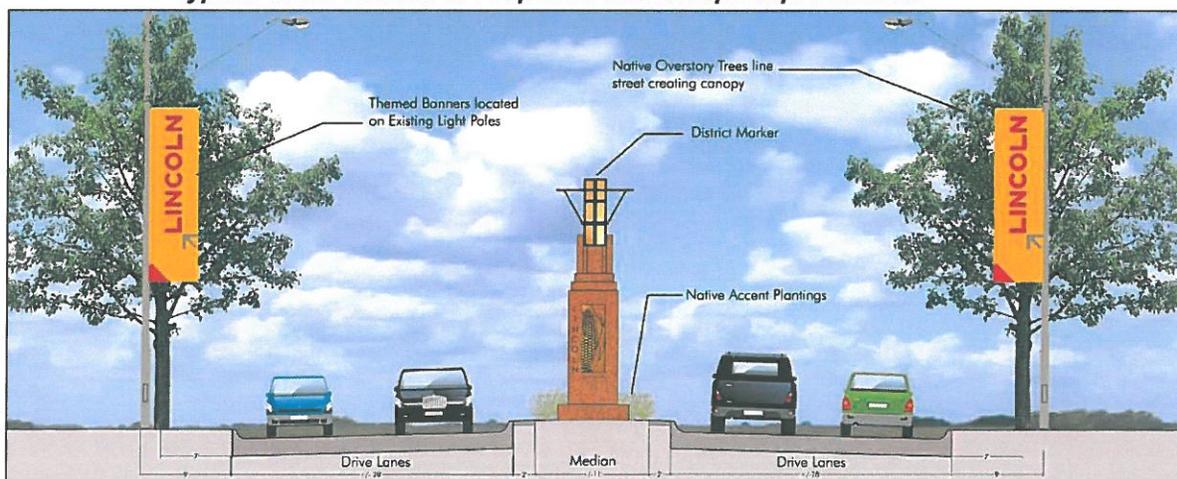
Streetscape improvements may include:

- Landscaping, including irrigated street trees, evergreen trees, flowering shrubs, and stylized prairie plantings to direct views, provide shade and contribute to the overall visual appeal of the corridor.
- A unique, illuminated district marker that repeats along the medians of West Adams and Cornhusker Highway. The marker will be constructed of corten steel with custom fabricated lights and a cultural iconic image that is illuminated at night.
- A series of banners that introduce rhythm, interest, and a distinctive identity to let people know they have arrived in the City of Lincoln. Banners will reflect the branding campaign and may also include iconic images of Lincoln the Man.
- Stylized prairie plantings and grouping of trees to frame views along I-180, with street trees and banners along the corridor as I-180 enters Lincoln at 9th Street.
- Prominent opportunities for public art.

In addition to the streetscape improvements, other actions within the Project Area will:

- Continue the Plan's objective of strengthening existing commercial, industrial and residential investments through redevelopment or rehabilitation of blighted, conflicting or obsolete land uses (See *Guiding Principles*, page 21).
- Continue implementation of **Project 6 – Acquisition of Substandard Commercial/Industrial Structures** (see page 30). Properties contributing to the substandard and blighting influences in the Redevelopment Area -- substandard commercial/industrial structures and uses inconsistent or incompatible with existing land uses -- will be acquired and made available for redevelopment. In some cases, parcels may be assembled for disposition. Properties to be acquired are included in Appendix B.

Typical Cross Section of Proposed Streetscape Improvements



Statutory Elements

The first priority is the construction of the streetscape improvements. The streetscape improvements will be constructed within the existing public right-of-way; therefore, no public acquisition of private property, relocation of families or businesses, or the sale of property is necessary to accomplish this Project. Since this is a Public Improvement project within existing public right-of-way, there are no changes in population density, land coverage, traffic flow, street layouts or street grades, parking, zoning, building codes or ordinances.

- o Financing and Cost Benefit Analysis: The entire cost of the project is \$9.3 million which includes nearly four miles of roadway improvements, streetscape enhancements, and an endowment to maintain the streetscape. The \$4.9 million roadway improvements are fully funded through the City’s Street Construction program. The streetscape project extends beyond the boundaries of the NW Corridors Redevelopment Area to Antelope Valley Parkway. The entire cost of the streetscape project is estimated at \$2.5 million, with an anticipated maintenance endowment ranging from \$1.4 to \$1.9 million. The primary funding source for construction of the streetscape is City Certificate of Participation (COP) bonds. Resources for paying the debt service on these COP bonds are Tax Increment Financing (TIF), private funds, and General Fund revenues.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is expected to be generated from planned private business expansion in the project area along with property value appreciation within the area over time. Based on past appreciation history and known business expansions, TIF is estimated at \$1.5 million. Additional private funds may reimburse the General Fund for COP bond debt service. Regardless of the amounts of the final revenue sources for this project and other currently planned COP financed projects, the amount of debt service will decrease over the next few years.

Uses and sources are summarized below:

Uses		Sources	
Roadway Improvements*	\$4,900,000	Street Construction	\$4,900,000
Streetscape	\$2,500,000	TIF	\$1,500,000
		COP	\$1,000,000**
Endowment	\$1,400,000 to \$1,900,000	Private fundraising	\$1,400,000 to \$1,900,000
Total:	\$8,800,000 to \$9,300,000		\$8,800,000 to \$9,300,000

* Includes concrete pavement repair with mill and overlay, curb replacement, and ADA curb ramps from NW 1st Street to West Adams Street on Cornhusker Highway.

** To be paid with private donations, as available, and other General Fund revenue sources. Item includes funding for additional streetscape improvements beyond the Redevelopment Area to Antelope Valley Parkway.



BEFORE

Above and Below: Looking SE from roughly the intersection of West Saunders Street and Cornhusker Highway



AFTER

- *Public Infrastructure and Public Service Needs Impact:* The project will improve existing public infrastructure through the roadway improvements and streetscape in the public right-of-way. Improvements to existing infrastructure are more cost effective than construction of new public facilities. There will be no adverse impacts to City public services.
- *Employment within the Project Area:* The project will not have an adverse impact on employers or employees within the project area. Construction of the project may increase construction jobs.
- *Employment in the City outside the Project Area:* Approximately 145,811 persons living in the City of Lincoln were employed in 2012 according to the Nebraska Department of Labor. The median household income for the City was \$49,504 according to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey. Any increased employment in the

project area will have a negligible impact on the overall employment in the City.

- *Other Impacts:* The Airport Entryway Corridor is a component of a larger overall strategy to increase the area's economic development potential, enhance Lincoln's image to visitors and employers, and improve the area's infrastructure. Enhanced aesthetics along this major entrance to the city will project a welcoming community. The corridor plan will integrate Lincoln's branding campaign and will enhance Lincoln's identity for visitors. It will also complement the effort being made to develop the airport's economic potential.

Streetscape improvements also send a message to the private sector that the City is willing to reinvest in the area. The improvements not only improve the corridor for people driving through, but also for the benefit of existing businesses and will create an environment that encourages the private sector to want to reinvest and make private improvements.