Lincoln/Lancaster Planning Commission Public Hearing
July 18, 2001

My name is Bryan Rickertsen. I live at 8130 Dundee Drive in Lincoln. For 25 years, I lived on the Stevens Creek Stock Farm with my wife Marleen.

I am speaking this afternoon in support of the Planning Department recommendation to deny the inclusion of the East Far Beltway in the comprehensive plan.

I am an engineer and a businessman. In our response to the DEIS, Marleen and I included a summary of economic issues related to the EF-1 beltway route. I would like to address some of the main points of that summary that relate to the comprehensive plan amendments that are before you.

The DEIS presents two cost-benefit analyses for the beltway. Both of these analyses show that the EF-1 route is by far the worst choice of the alternative routes. One analysis shows that EF-1 has a 46% lower benefit to cost ratio than the most cost effective beltway alternative. The other analysis shows that EF-1 will take 52% longer to reach a break-even point than the most cost effective alternative. Since we are dealing with a project that may ultimately cost a half billion dollars by the time it is built, cost benefit differences in the range of 50% are very significant. These financial differences between beltway alternatives are points the Planning Department makes in their recommendation not to include EF-1 in the comprehensive plan.

There are a couple other financial numbers that stand out in the DEIS. One is the .55 benefit to cost ratio for EF-1. As you know, that number means that if you take all the benefits that would ever arise from EF-1 for all time, those benefits only pay back about half of EF-1's cost. This number was a key consideration in the formal recommendation to drop EF-1 from further study back in 1997.

Another set of numbers that stands out is the number of months in the payback periods for the beltway alternatives. The numbers are presented in summary Table 4.1 in the DEIS. According to Table 4.1, the middle route would be paid off with 23 months use, the close route with 25 months use and the far route with 35 months of use.

As the DEIS indicates in section 2.4.5, these numbers were developed as an illustration. Hopefully, nobody takes them literally. If they were literally true, they would represent an annual return on investment of 27 to almost 45 percent. That would be a very unusual return for a government highway project. Nevertheless, even though they are not literally true, these numbers clearly illustrate the significant financial difference between EF-1 and the other alternatives.

Exhibit 26
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One final number that is significant economically is the distance between the closest route and the far route, which is 2 ½ miles. As you know, to make the beltway effective, we will need good roads connecting the beltway with the city. While many of the main roads are improved east of the city, very few are paved all the way out to EF-1. The costs of improving connector roads are not included anywhere in the DEIS cost analyses, and connector road improvements will not be eligible for federal funding. This means that the percentage of total beltway costs born by the local communities is the greatest for the EF-1 alternative.

Thank you for your time today. I think the Planning Department has made good use of the financial information that is available, and I would reiterate my support of their recommendation against EF-1. Thank you.

Bryan Rickertsen
8130 Dundee Drive
Lincoln, Nebraska 68510