BRIEFING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP:	PLANNING COMMISSION
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 11:30 a.m., Bill Luxford Studio, Room 113, County-City Building, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Cathy Beecham, Michael Cornelius, Chris Hove, Jeanelle Lust, and Lynn Sunderman; (Tracy Corr, Maja Harris, Dennis Scheer and Ken Weber absent).
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	David Cary, Brandon Garrett, Mike Brienzo, Kellee Van Bruggen Stacey Groshong-Hageman and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Jenny Young and Rick Haden of Felsburg Holt & Ullevig.
STATED PURPOSE:	Briefing **"LRTP Update"** by Planning staff

Chair Chris Hove called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the back of the room.

David Cary stated that today's briefing is about the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The public open house is tomorrow at Culler Middle School.

Jenny Young appeared. She would like to give an overview from the focus groups, preview the public meeting material being presented tomorrow and Rick Haden will go over performance measures. She passed out a printed meetings summary that included detailed discussion points.

There were eight focus groups. Each session was approximately one hour long. The agenda covered many items. The love/hate exercises were held. Bicycle, the pedestrian system and trails were points that a lot of people loved. When asked what they would change, transit came up the most often. We heard quite a bit about changing the bike system in terms of wanting more, amongst other items. Open ended discussions were held with each focus group. We asked them about the biggest changes they have seen in the last five years and what trends and opportunities they have seen. There were three themes we heard; technology, growth and changing demographics. Every group recognized that the younger generation has expressed a desire for different modes of transportation. Staff tried to distill and find what was unique to each focus group. She presented a table showing the unique perspectives of each group.

The Development Community Focus Group felt that there was a disconnect between transportation, infrastructure and development. They see continued growth on the fringe and

they generally expressed a need to plan ahead for corridor improvements and extending the trail system.

Then we met with a group that was a variety of interests, Bike/Ped, Health and Environmental. They expressed a desire for more walking and biking. They see infill density in the downtown to support a bike network. They were all excited about the N Street Cycle Track, but expressed a desire to find a lower cost option. There was also a discussion regarding a possible partnership with bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The Freight Interest Focus Group talked a lot about congestion on Highway 2. It is an important route for freight movement. The planned South Beltway is most critical for freight movement. We had some representatives from the Airport Authority. They expressed a need for transportation to the airport area. We also talked about the shift in how so many people have packages delivered to their home, rather than going out and shopping. This creates a need for more localized distribution centers.

The Transit and Under Served Community was very much focused on transit. Some were more focused on smaller vehicles and longer service hours. Then there were others that felt the need for more fixed routes and improved service. Technology was talked about to provide transit rider information, along with an increased need for human services for the aging population.

The Neighborhood Associations Focus Group talked a lot about how big box retailers are coming in and local smaller stores are closing. This creates a need for more transportation to reach those retailers. They talked about how to find ways to make it more walkable, along with downtown housing that will result in changing lifestyles. Smaller transit vehicles to pick up people in neighborhoods was discussed.

Business Community Focus Group talked about the lack of bus service for 2nd and 3rd shift workers. Mike Brienzo stated that Kawasaki expressed a desire for a possible partnership. They are having difficulties with getting workers to their workplace. Young continued that there was discussion that businesses are very supportive of healthy choices for employees, such as biking and walking and also the importance of beltways to businesses.

The Downtown Interest Group included a representative from the University of Nebraska and Lincoln Public Schools. They talked about congestion on I-180 entering the downtown area. LPS has grown by 4,000 students in the past five years.

The last group was the Multicultural Focus Group. They talked about medical facilities moving further out and that being an issue.

For Goals and Objectives, each group picked three priorities. Overall, maintenance was the goal that received the highest number of points. She believes the important takeaway is that there is

an important need for all of these items. There was a lot of discussion about how the goals are inter-related. There is a need for balance. This will be brought back to Planning Commission because ultimately we will be asking for Commissioner input in weighting the evaluation criteria. We will be doing a similar exercise with the public at the open house tomorrow night.

Beecham admits the question of public transit to the airport is something she hasn't thought about. She would be interested in transport to the airport, as opposed to driving there and leaving your car for a fee. Brienzo believes there is also interest in developing the industrial park to the west.

Hove talked about the need for neighborhood grocery stores. What we have seen so far is a lot of grocery stores grouped together. He questioned if something is holding them back from going into neighborhoods. Cary believes it is simply a matter of other stores wanting to be close to their competition.

Cornelius finds it an interesting element. In his opinion, grocery stores as an amenity you can walk to, haven't been planned in this way in many years. The zoning regulations are not very amenable to having a walkable neighborhood.

Sunderman noted that some of the grocery stores in neighborhoods are closing. He offered Russ's IGA on S. 70th as an example. Cornelius pointed out that many quick shops have grown into small grocery stores. Beecham pointed out that a lot of those don't offer fresh produce. It is interesting that now the idea of a walkable neighborhood is coming into its' forte. It is like going back to what we had many years ago. Doctor's offices seem to be located on the south and east parts of town. She wonders how much zoning plays into that. Cary responded that he believes it is an economy of scale and footprint influence. Cornelius suspects that there are chronic health problems that people need a regular Doctor, not a quick care facility. Young stated that the focus groups noted that point. People need transportation to their Doctor. Brandon Garrett stated that CVS Pharmacy and Walgreens are scattered across the city. He believes they are trying to fill a gap as well.

Cornelius questioned at what point does a neighborhood support this? Beecham stated that it can be tricky. The Hy-Vee up north closed because it did not generate enough revenue.

Beecham thought it was interesting to hear feedback on the idea of extending the trails before development occurs. Was there indication if this was desirable? Young replied yes, this was a desirable amenity.

Cary stated that looking across the last couple of plans, he thinks that the efforts have settled in that the maintenance of the existing system is a given priority. Young added that a lot of groups talked about cost effectiveness. She was surprised that safety was given a higher priority. She thinks both cost effectiveness and safety are considered by the public as given.

Cornelius sees safety and security as fundamental, along with cost effectiveness and funding. He believes when there is a high profile safety incident, it is cross modal.

Beecham stated that roundabouts seem like a direction we are going. They are an attractive way to keep traffic going, but the whole point of not stopping seems contrary to pedestrians. Funding should be important as well.

Lust doesn't necessarily want to confuse goals and priorities with funding and safety, which drive the plan. Everything we do depends on a funding source. It also seems like those things drive what the transportation plan is. She doesn't think they are a goal and priority of the public.

Cornelius believes with regard to funding and cost effectiveness, he thinks it is important to talk about funding. What we have seen over and over again is that we would like to have a world class transit system, but no funding. We have a wish list, but the answer seems to be funding. It may not be a priority but it is certainly a constraint.

Cary believes we are going to end up with a big list of needs and will be smacked in the face with the cost reality. There is an opportunity to look at these differently. Livability and maintenance are a goal, but cost effectiveness is a way we develop the plan.

Lust doesn't think that cost effectiveness came into play a lot when developing the LRTP. She believes it was more about available funding and prioritizing projects.

Young stated we will meet with the oversight teams starting tomorrow and discuss project prioritization.

Cornelius believes we have all heard about housing choices. He doesn't believe we have heard a lot about travel choices. Beecham noted that baby boomers and the aging population will have limited travel options.

Sunderman knows that the development on 56th & Pine Lake is designed to have housing and commercial together. Cornelius pointed out the new urbanism concept.

Cary stated that Garrett has numbers on the aging population increasing dramatically in the near future. We need to start dealing with it now.

Young encouraged everyone to read through the range of comments received. She reiterated that the open house is tomorrow night. There will be a welcome station and five stations set up around the room. The five stations will be: 1-Why transportation planning is important, 2-Vision and

goals, 3-Current and future needs, 4-Love/change exercise and 5-Issues and opportunities, with a survey at the end. We will bring back the information we receive from the open house.

Young stated that the next topic for discussion is Transportation Goals. There are over 30 performance measures. We have been working with the Oversight Committee. This will become a chapter.

Rick Haden stated that in talking with the focus groups, we heard numerous comments that if technology changed things in a big way, how this would affect the plan. He stated that performance measures is how that is adjusted. The first category is Maintenance. Some items we will be tracking are conditions of streets, and trails, square footage of sidewalks replaced, age of traffic signals, bridge ratings and age of transit vehicles.

Mobility and System Reliability measures the level of congestion, on-time performance and signal detection reliability.

Livability and Travel Choice will relate to how many miles of trails and sidewalks are added, allowing for personal choice, annual transit ridership, and the number of completed projects that accommodate all modes.

Safety and Security are items that are already tracked. Injury and fatal crashes are already used by Public Works. Bike crashes per 10K and pedestrian crashes per 10K will be measures. Transit crashes per 100k miles driven is something StarTran already tracks. There will upcoming campaigns related to safety.

Beecham questioned if we have anything that addresses the number of dangerous chemicals going through town. Haden stated that he doesn't remember if that was a specific item called out. Cary stated that the joint Health and Planning committee looked at some of that data such as pipelines and rail lines. It is tough to get around that with what is being hauled on vehicles through the community. He thinks you probably could find out what is coming through the community, but where and when is difficult. Beecham believes it would be a benefit of the South Beltway for truck traffic. Haden stated that funding has pretty much been identified for the South Beltway.

Environmental Sustainability is vehicle miles of travel, mobile source emissions, mode split, number of alternatively fueled vehicles in fleet and miles of minimal impact projects completed.

Funding and Cost Effectiveness speaks to cost per user of completed projects, proportion of completed project subjected to life cycle cost analysis and annual funding for transportation projects.

Regarding Economic Vitality, there is a housing and transportation affordability index that is reported each year. Travel time to work is another item. We heard that quite a bit in our focus

groups. Jobs accessible in a 30 minute transit ride, number of potential stops on primary truck routes and exposure rating of railroad at-grade crossings are measures. There has been quite a bit of discussion with the RTSB and Lancaster County. The state has a threshold and already there are locations around Lancaster County that are beyond the railroad crossing exposure rating.

Cary stated that performance measures are a new piece, due to Federal new requirements showing how you develop and implement the plan. That is why this is a big part of the update.

Young stated we are still waiting on a few pieces of data, but the vast majority are ready to go.

Lust questioned if there is any analysis when there is a crash, as to a possible cause. How is the data used? Haden replied that Public Works does an annual review. They look at patterns of crashes and rate them. On the major intersections, they will look at traffic volumes and type of control. They will look at the crash reports and try to see what is occurring and look for developing patterns.

Young stated that the amount of data that is already available for these measures is incredible. There are only about three performance measures that are not currently being collected.

Beecham inquired if complaints are taken into account. Young replied that may be factored into Public Work's process, but we decided not to include the number of complaints. The concern is that it builds on itself. She doesn't think it is a great measure of the actual system.

Young stated that the next steps will be to give this group a summary of the public input. We will start to talk about potential projects, the prioritization process and the funding outlook.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

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