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MAYOR CHRIS BEUTLER

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November 4, 2010

Kit Boesch
Lincoln/Lancaster County Human Services Administrator
1115 K Street, Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68508

RE: LPlan 2040 - Growth Scenarios

Dear Kit:

Thank you for your letter of October 29th expressing concern that we consider the impacts of our physical planning decisions on low income families and children in general. I just wish we had heard from you earlier – you were included in the distribution list of city and county departments and other governmental agencies to which we sent a letter or email two months ago asking for comments on the impacts of growth in general, and how they might vary in the three scenarios, and offering to sit down and discuss the issues in more detail. You may be interested in visiting the report on our LPlan website to read the summary report or the more detailed comments of the respondents, some of which deal with the issues you raise.

Some of the issues you raise are best addressed at the neighborhood and site scale – the “how” of planning, as opposed to the macro-scale we are currently looking at – the “where” of planning. But certainly where growth occurs can have an impact on your areas of interest. The Health Department pointed out the value of a more compact, walkable community in reducing obesity, which is a particular issue for lower income families, as well as improving the market for better public transportation services. The differences in infrastructure cost in different scenarios affect the taxes and utility bills that homeowners pay directly and renters pay indirectly. Our local housing authority director noted that new housing costs could be higher with redevelopment, but also that very little new housing for low income households has been constructed in the last decade, and that regardless of the direction of growth, housing needs for this segment of our population will increase.

Although we were not able to include your comments in the staff report, we would be glad to share your letter with our citizen advisory committee, or if you would prefer to submit comments to the committee in the future, or to meet with us and other interested parties copied in your letter to discuss these issues in more detail, we would welcome that.

Sincerely,

Marvin S. Krout
Director of Planning

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cc: Mayor Chris Beutler
Bernie Heier, Chair, Lancaster County Board of Commissioners
Pastor Tom Barber, People's City Mission
Nicole Fleck-Tooze, Planning
Homeless Coalition