MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY
July 11, 2016

Tracy Corr opened the meeting on Monday, July 11, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room, City/County/Building, in Lincoln, NE.

Attendance

Seventeen residents and three City staff attended:

Tracy Corr – 40th & A NA
Carl Tesch – Autumn Wood NA
Karen Dienstbier – Eastridge NA
Nick Hernandez – Havelock NA
Scott Richert – Indian Village NA
Larry Weixelman – Meadowland Area RA
Mike DeKalb – University Place CO
Lin Quenzer – Mayor's Office
Wynn Hjermstad – Urban Development Dept
Mike Renken – NW-L
Mayor Beutler
Michael Cooper – Arnold Heights NA
Paul Johnson – East Campus CO
Pat Anderson-Sifuentez – Everett NA
Eileen Durgrin-Clinchard - Hartley
Amy Karabel – Irvingdale NA
Scott Hofeling – Ridge South
Bill Vocasek – West A NA
Jon Carlson – Mayor's Office
Russell Miller – Lincoln Neigh Alliance
Leirion Gaylor Baird – City Council

Welcome & Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves. Tracy noted the new severe weather policy: the Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable meeting will be cancelled when severe weather warnings are issued including tornado, thunderstorm, and flash flood warnings. Karen Dienstbier volunteered to take notes.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Beutler began his remarks by mentioning the upheaval around the country with police being killed; the shooting in Orlando, FL. and more killings at the hands of the police across the country. He is planning to reach out to our neighborhoods and communities, hoping for deeper community dialogue with citizens to make sure that he is well informed of what is happening across the city. He remarked that community policing helps to keep stable relationships between communities and the police who serve them.

Recycling: He mentioned that he is ready to roll out the recycling program and asked for our help by contacting our neighbors and City Council representatives asking for their support in the recycling effort (Attachment 1). There is an online petition for residents to sign regarding the need for recycling. He mentioned that in states where recycling takes place the life of a landfill can be extended by years and perhaps for decades. And that it saves a lot of money in the long run.

Traffic Signal Timing: The City has hired five more people to keep an eye on city streets to make sure that traffic is moving as it should. The timing of lights should help to move more traffic safely.

Review of proposed biennial City Budget

Rick Hoppe, Chief of Staff for Mayor Beutler, briefed the Roundtable participants on the proposed Biennial Budget for 2016 -2018 (Attachment 2) beginning with the budget goals:

- Keeping Our Community Safe
- Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth
- Taking Care of What We Have

There is a $3.3 million shortfall but only $57 million of the $173 million tax-funded budget can be cut and there are a number things vying for the use of the $57 million.

Revenue is not keeping pace - Telecommunications fees have fallen thus taxes for telecommunications occupation tax and cable franchise fees have dropped.
Public Safety Challenges – keeping up with pension funds and salaries for those in public safety jobs is a challenge. Over 50% of the budget is used for public safety.
Emergency Medical Service - calls have increased steeply causing increased costs for the services. There have been 19,000 emergency medical calls this year. The good news is that police calls are fewer.
Derelict housing demolition - $32,000 has been allocated in the budget for removal of derelict housing in neighborhoods where the City is aware of safety issues.
Emerald Ash Borer - costs will begin to hit Lincoln this year. The borer has arrived in Greenwood and Lincoln residents will begin to see signs of it soon in the city. Over a period of 15 years we will need $29 million for taking down of public trees alone. Some work will begin on cutting this year.
Parks **–** Parks and Recreation estimates $1.7 million annual shortfall in maintenance funding. Increased Keno funds will help to offset some of the short fall.
Transportation

- South Beltway 2020 construction date – the City has already paid the state $18 million of the $40 million owed by the City of Lincoln. More funds need to be put aside to meet our obligations.
- Street Repairs monies allocated from LB 610 are applied to fixing Lincoln streets.

Increase in 2016 – 2018 Budget

- The mayor's budget asks for an increase in taxes of $22 per household. Lincoln has the 12th lowest tax rate per mil levy.
- It was mentioned that City employee hires have increased by 1.5% this year and that even with the increase that is 67 fewer employees than when Mayor Beutler first took office.

Discussion from neighborhood roundtable participants during the meeting:

1. Has there been any discussion among the Mayor's staff to increase impact fees in new neighborhoods by having contractors pay for them? $1,000 for new streets, $1,000 water pipe installation, $1,000 for waste water pipes. *The answer was not at this time*.
2. Will there be more diversity in the kind of trees planted in public areas once the ash trees are removed? *Discussion has not moved that far along yet.*
3. Will the City be hiring private contractors to remove some of the trees? *Some private contractors will be used along with City employees.*
4. Will neighborhoods on the north side of Lincoln gain anything from the tax increase? Most residents in the south of Lincoln in the downtown area seem to be reaping the benefits of increased funds. *Yes, residential street projects are underway and Uni Place will be getting an upgrade. And two new fire stations have been built or will be built in that area.*
5. Pat Anderson-Sifuentez distributed the 2016 Lincoln Policy Network Priority Budget Requests (Attachment 3).

Announcements

There were no announcements

Next Meeting/Agenda

The next meeting of the Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable will be August 8, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. The topic is Community Policing in Lincoln.

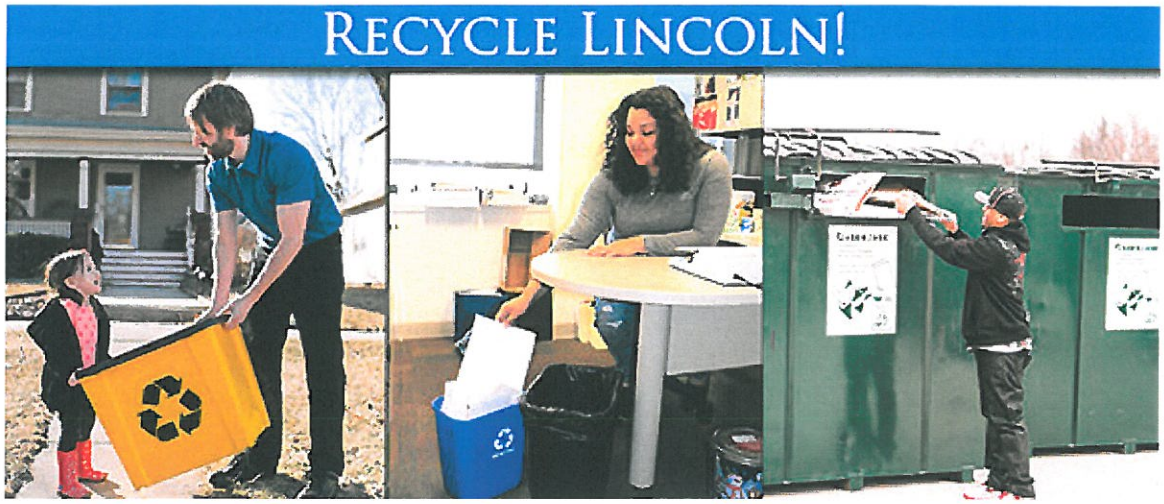
Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

Submitted by Karen Dienstbier

Attachment 1

Double Lincoln's Recycling Rate by 2020!



Lincoln is becoming known across the country as the 21st century place to live, work, learn, play and more. Our City has a reputation as a smart community that places a high value on environmental sustainability, fiscal responsibility and growing the future. Unfortunately, one place where Lincoln can do significantly better is in recycling.

What is *Recycle Lincoln!*?

Recycle Lincoln! is a proposal by Mayor Chris Beutler. The proposal is intended to increase recycling opportunities for citizens, expand the local economy, reduce the need for expensive landfill expansion, and grow a sustainable future for ourselves and our children.

How would the *Recycle Lincoln!* proposal work?

- To increase recycling rates, corrugated cardboard will be banned from the landfill in 2017. Newspaper will be banned in 2018 and mixed office paper in 2019.
- The City will launch a community based education program to promote how to recycle, where to recycle and what to recycle across the city.
- All waste haulers will offer curbside recycling service to residents, apartments, and businesses.
- The 28 current public recycling drop off sites will be expanded for those who don't want to subscribe to curb-side recycling services.

What can I do to get involved?

1. Send support emails and letters to: the Mayor at **Mayor@lincoln.ne.gov** and to the City Council at Council@lincoln.ne.gov
2. A public hearing on the proposed ordinance is tentatively scheduled for Monday 7/25 at 5:00pm .

Thank you for your support to build a more sustainable community!

Attachment 2

City of Lincoln

Mayor's Recommended
Biennial Budget 2016 - 2018

Keeping Lincoln Strong: Investing in Our Future

Budget Goals

- Keeping Our Community Safe
- Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth
- Taking Care of What We Have

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Budget Challenges to Our Goals

- Police Fire Pension
- Public Safety
- Parks Maintenance
- Emerald Ash Borer
- Transportation
- Revenue Shortfall

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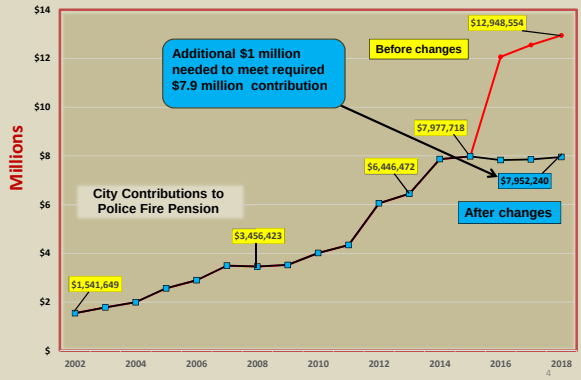
City Contributions to Police Fire Pension Soaring



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Public Safety Challenges
Since the 2006 – 2007 Budget

The City has grown 8.7 square miles or 10%.

The population of the City has increased 32,000 or 13%.

Lincoln Fire and Rescue calls are up almost 27%.

Since 2006, Lincoln Fire and Rescue has added 5 firefighters (up 1.8%) and LPD has added 7 police officers (up 2.2%).

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PARKS

Challenge

Parks and Recreation estimates $1.7 million annual shortfall in maintenance funding.

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Transportation

Challenge

- South Beltway construction scheduled for 2020.
- Improve traffic flow- smart traffic solutions.
- StarTran Transit Development Plan

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Revenue Is Not Keeping Pace

Challenge

- Residents are paying less in Telecommunications Occupation Tax and Cable Franchise Fees:
  1. More price competition
  2. Bundling of phone, Internet and cable TV services
  3. Streaming to smart TVs and other technological and generational changes
- 2015-16 revenue down $1.2 million and falling! Revenue estimate lowered $1.7 million.

-$1.7 million

$3.3 Million Shortfall- What can be cut?

Only $57 million of $173 million tax-funded budget can be cut.

Challenge

Employee Costs	
Social Security	$ 2.7 million
Police Fire Pension	$ 6.4 million
Employee benefits	$23.1 million
Borrowing Costs	
GO bond payments	$ 6.2 million
COPS debt service	$ 2.7 million
Other Costs	
Street lights	$ 5.7 million
Rent	$ 1.6 million

Can't Cut

Public Safety $66.4 million

#1 Citizen Priority

What's left?

- Aging Services
- Health Department
- Libraries
- Parks & Recreation
- Public Works & Utilities

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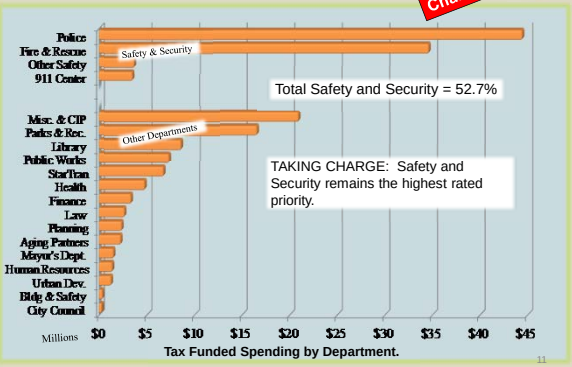
Over 50% of budget is public safety

Challenge



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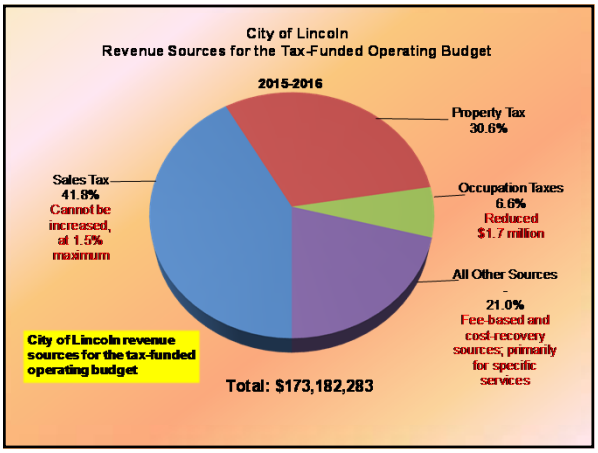

Lincoln is a great community

- #1 Place to Find a Job – Forbes, Fortune, NerdWallet, ZipRecruiter
- #1 Affordable Rental Market - EasyTenant Screening.com
- #2 Best Cities for Creative Professionals – SmartAsset
- #4 Best Cities for Professional Women – Movato.com
- #4 Best Cities to Start a Business - Wallethub
- #7 Best Places to Retire – Livability.com
- Top 10 Most Beautiful Cities in U.S. – Culture Trip

Wow! Lincoln

Lincoln's strong economy and role as a hub in the Silicon Prairie have received national media coverage.

- CBS This Morning – February 2016
- Wall Street Journal – December 2015
- Silicon Prairie News – October 2015
- Bloomberg Business – September 2015
- NPR – March 2015

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Keeping Lincoln Strong: Investing in Our Future

Solution

✓ **Keeping Our Community Safe:**
- Police and Firefighter Paramedics

✓ **Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth:**
- South Beltway
- Green Light Lincoln
- StarTran
- Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

✓ **Taking Care of What We Have:**
- Parks & Recreation
- Emerald Ash Borer
- Police Fire Pension

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Keeping Our Community Safe

Solution

- **Investing in 6 new Firefighter Paramedics and a new ambulance**
- **Adding 4 new Police Officers**
- **Keeping 2 Police Officers added last year**
- **Thanks, Lincoln voters for new fire stations, police station, emergency radios**

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Solution Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth:

- ❑South Beltway funded in Capital Improvement Program.
- ❑$15.5 million in arterial and $5.4 million in residential street improvements planned.
- ❑Green Light Lincoln to improve traffic flow.
- ❑Additional StarTran service:
  - ➢5 new bus drivers
  - ➢Increased evening service
  - ➢Increased frequency

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Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth:
Water & Wastewater Main Replacement

Annual water main replacement increases from 5.5 to 7.0 miles with 5% water rate increase and 3 new FTEs.

Wastewater expansion into Stevens Creek and new growth areas funded with 5% wastewater increase.

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Taking Care of What We Have

Solution

Protect Lincoln's AAA bond rating.

2016-18 Budget adds $981,354 annually to fully fund Police Fire Pension actuarial recommendation.

Taking Care of What We Have- EAB

As in Toledo, Ohio nearly all public and private ash trees in Lincoln will die during a 15-year period.

Taking Care of What We Have- Parks

Solution

New Revenues . . .

- $400,000 increased Keno estimate
- $400,000 in additional CIP funding

Reduces gap to $860,000 instead of $1.7 million

. . . Fund Repairs/Replacements:

- Playground renovations and safety improvements
- Roof and floor replacements for rec centers
- Trail repair and replacement
- Improvements to meet federal ADA requirements

Keeping Lincoln Strong: Investing in the Future

Challenge

- A growing community needs a budget that supports growth.
- Population and area steadily increasing.
- Programs and staffing have been cut dramatically.

Solution

Investing in the future keeps Lincoln strong.

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City government has 100 fewer employees than 10 years ago

Fiscal Year	Fire, Police, 911 Employees	Other City Employees	Total Full-Time Equivalents
2006-2007	740	1,487	2,227
2015-2016	748	1,379	2,127

Percent change since 2006-2007: +1.1% | -7.3% | -4.5%

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Lincoln is Growing

Fiscal Year	Lincoln's Population	Area
2006-2007	244,653	86.0 sq. miles
2015-2016	277,348	94.8 sq. miles
Percent change since 2006-2007	+13.3%	+10.1%

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Few Places Left to Cut

$3.3 million in cuts would mean the elimination or reduction of the following programs:

- Neighborhood pools
- Pioneers Park Nature Center
- Non injury traffic accident reporting
- Neighborhood snow removal
- Neighborhood/business watch program
- Keeping intoxicated people off the streets
- Parking and abandoned vehicle enforcement
- Sunday hours at Bennett Martin library; Friday hours at all branches

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Protecting Lincoln's Future: How do we fund it?

The 2016-18 budget proposes to increase the City's property levy by 1.17 cents or about $18 on a $150,000 home.

Police Fire Pension	$981,357
+ Emerald Ash Borer	$950,000
Total Administration proposed levy increase	1.17 cents

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Property Tax Summary

Tax rate for 2015-16 budget	31.96 cents
Add levy for Police Fire Pension	0.58 cents
Add levy for Emerald Ash Borer	0.59 cents
Tax rate for proposed budget	33.13 cents
Add voter-approved levy for stormwater bonds	0.24 cents
Total tax rate 2016-2018	**33.37 cents**

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Lincoln receives a small portion of total property tax levy.

2015 – 2016 Budget Year

All other taxing entities receive 84.3%.

City of Lincoln receives 15.7%.

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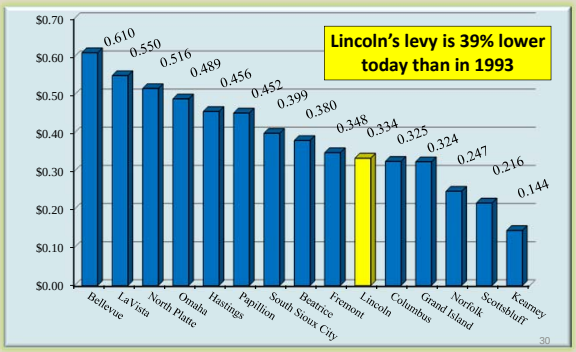
Lincoln's property tax levy is still low compared to others
(All cities have a base sales tax rate of 1.5%)



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Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth

New street funds have greatly advanced progress:

- South Beltway
- Yankee Hill Road, Pine Lake Road, Rokeby Road and the 14th Street, Warlick Blvd. and Old Cheney intersection will be improved.
- N. 48th, N 33rd and neighborhood street projects added.
- West A moved up.

Street dollars available for snow removal allow $1.85 million to return to General Fund.

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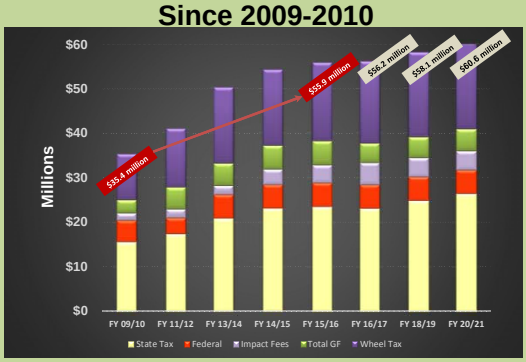
58% Increase in Street Funding Since 2009-2010



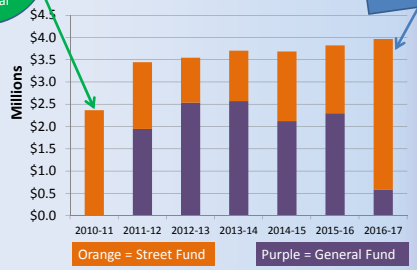
Street Funding Will Increase Despite Snow Shift

Returning Snow Removal to Street Fund

From 1992 to 2010, NO General Funds went to Snow Removal

$1.85 million shifts from General Fund to Street Fund

Snow Removal Annual Contributions: General & Street Funds



Orange = Street Fund

Purple = General Fund

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New Positions to Meet Budget Goals

Positions	Number	Funding Source
Improve emergency response (Police & Firefighter Paramedics)	10	General Fund, Ambulance Fund
Speed economic growth (Building & Safety Inspection & Permits)	2	Fees
Expand and maintain infrastructure (Public Works & Utilities)	3	Water Fund
Improve StarTran service	5	General Fund
Reduce overtime costs (StarTran)	3	General Fund
Provide greater accountability (Budget Officer, Golf Business)	2	General Fund, Fees
Meet service demands and other needs	8	Various
Total	**33**	

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Efficient Government
67 fewer employees

Budgeted full-time equivalents (FTEs)
2006-2007 through 2017-2018

Fiscal Year	Fire, Police, 911 Employees	Other City Employees	Total FTEs
2006-2007	740	1,487	2,227
2015-2016*	748	1,379	2,127
2016-2017	760	1,393	2,153
2017-2018	762	1,398	2,160
Percent change since 2006-2007	+3.0%	-6.0%	-3.0%

**Includes positions added after budget's adoption.*
Examples: community broadband, UNL bus service, and sidewalk repairs

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Protecting Programs in 2017-2018

$1,200,000 available in cash reserve

$ 600,000 used to preserve programs

$ 600,000 remains in cash reserve

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Budget Summary for 2016-2018 Biennium

Year One		Year Two	
Mayor's recommended budget 2016-2017	$180,475,263	Mayor's recommended budget 2017-2018	$182,855,521
Council-adopted 2015-2016 budget	$173,182,283	Mayor's recommended 2016-2017 budget	$180,475,263
Dollar difference	$7,292,970	Dollar difference	$2,380,258
Percentage change over prior year	4.21%*	Percentage change over prior year	1.32%

Two-year average change 2.79%

**Includes a 27th pay period for 2016-17*

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Keeping Lincoln Strong: Investing in Our Future

Keeping Our Community Safe

Building Transportation & Infrastructure to Support Growth

Taking Care of What We Have

Attachment 3

2016 Lincoln Policy Network Priority Budget Requests –

LPN members continued discussion from June's meeting addressing priorities that support the Neighborhood Plan for Action.

1) Allocate $50,000 for mini grants/projects for Lincoln's 45+ neighborhoods. Grants could be submitted for tree planting, park/public space improvements, sidewalk repair and exterior paint projects. Supports Neighborhood Promotion and Preservation

   The goal is to increase neighborhood investments made by residents, thus increasing property values. Residents provide a major portion of the property tax base. Neighborhood grants show support from city government and allow residents to make public improvements, while encouraging neighborhood leadership and pride.

2) Maintain current funding ($30,000) for the Problem Resolution Team so they can address problem properties. Supports Public Safety and Quality of Life

   Problem properties have a significant negative impact on neighborhood quality of life and property values. Such properties give surrounding owners reasons to move and discourages them from investing in their property. Problem properties must be addressed to stop negative impact on the stability of the surrounding neighborhood.

3) Establish a $30,000 fund to address properties on the Neglected Property Registry – recognizing that some buildings are approaching two years on the registry and may need to be demolished. Supports Public Safety and Quality of Life

   The Neglected Property Registry more than 20 properties on the list, some of which have been on the list since November 2014, but some have been red-tagged for 20+ years. These problems need to be resolved by demolishing or rehabbing the properties immediately to ensure safe environments.

4) Maintain (at minimum) current funding for Quality of Life assets in our community such as: accessibility and maintenance of parks and trails, libraries, sidewalks and infrastructure. Supports Neighborhood Promotion and Preservation

   Quality of life assets are often cut in tight budget years. Many years of cutbacks for Lincoln Parks have resulted in buildings and infrastructure deteriorating and needing replacement rather than simply maintained. Maintaining our assets not only increases residents' quality of life but also provides an economic advantage for the city—such as the Lincoln Marathon.

5) Establish a citizens/city task force to study how to keep Lincoln safe and look for more efficiencies in all departments. Supports Public Safety and Quality of Life

   This task force would review ordinances and laws that currently exist, looking at ways to reduce expenses, share costs, and be more efficient. For example, enforcing laws and ordinances may lead to more efficiencies in the workforce without needing to increase staff.

*Supports priority issues in Neighborhood Plan for Action

As of June 28, 2016

Abbreviated Version

Our County, Our City, Our Neighborhoods - A Neighborhood Plan for Action

(Action items are not listed in any priority order)

Neighborhood Promotion and Preservation: (maintaining quality of life)

- Citizens need access to the full range of community facilities, health services, open space, and playgrounds. Neighborhood parks, pools, libraries, senior centers, public transit, and trails must be a high budget priority.
- The City's Housing Code and Health Inspectors should adopt solution-oriented code enforcement, broadening their mission to identify and solve issues causing the property problem, i.e.pro-active contacts with owners, identification/elimination of repeat issues and coordinating departmental/community resources to solve the problem.
- Abstain from zoning designations that conflict with current or historical use patterns which create increased density detrimental to the character of neighborhoods, undermines home ownership, and is often beyond the infrastructure capacity (parking, water, sewer, etc.).
- Clearly defined and easily accessible rehab standards for older structures should be adopted or amended into current codes. Rehab incentives should be created to encourage maintenance of the housing stock.
- Neighborhood design standards should be enforced to ensure that new construction/rehab is compatible with the character of existing neighborhoods throughout the city.
- The City should support neighborhood businesses and better integrate commercial with residential and other zoning by looking at incentives, lighting, signage, set-backs, noise, traffic, permitted uses, maintenance, screening and permitted uses.
- Schools, Community Learning Centers (CLC's), and neighborhood associations should work together to improve both school and neighborhoods. New schools should be built and sited to facilitate safe, easy walking and biking, traffic flow, and joint use of facilities.
- Neighborhood marketing should be better integrated into Lincoln's community marketing strategies with the development of a marketing plan to promote all neighborhoods.
- The City should promote and encourage active neighborhood associations.
- Neighborhood associations should recommend individuals knowledgeable and concerned with neighborhood issues to serve on public policy bodies such as the Planning Commission, the LES Board, Parks and Recreation Board, and the Historic Preservation Commission. The City/County should notify neighborhood associations of vacancies and request nominees.
- Neighborhood associations should increase their efforts to organize public forums, testify in public hearings, write letters, etc. to ensure that public officials are aware of neighborhood concerns. Citizens need to be aware of the elected officials.

Infrastructure:

- The maintenance of existing infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, sidewalks, streets, alleys, public power, schools, fire, and police) should be the highest priority.
- New development should pay a significant share of the initial costs related to extending public infrastructure and services to that development.
- Impact fees remain a significant revenue source for infrastructure finance. All public entities involved in building and maintaining public infrastructure within Lancaster County should cooperate to achieve the maximum efficiency (e.g. Rural to Urban Transportation System (RUTS) and "Build-through").
- The City should maintain parks equitably and promote green practices in all neighborhoods.
- The City should maintain sufficient lighting for parks and trails to provide safety.
- The City/County should prioritize and support projects that improve safety of streets.
- Existing street lane widths should be preserved in areas where widening would negatively impact adjacent homes, street trees and other neighborhood facilities.
- LES and city officials should maintain a fiscally-sound, phased program to bury Lincoln's older residential neighborhood power lines and transmission lines.
- The City should promptly replace trees in established neighborhoods that die or are removed including those in the public right-of-way on arterial and residential streets.
- The City should budget to replace the trees lost over the last twenty years and to ensure regular trimming and maintenance.
- The City should enforce tree-planting standards in new developments.

Sustainability (includes public safety):

- The City/County should work aggressively across all departments and with neighborhoods, businesses, developers, natural resources districts and state/federal agencies to coordinate and mitigate adverse impacts of flooding and pollutants.
- The City/County should promote water conservation through storm water best management practices such as rain gardens, native and naturalized grasses for lawns, and other similar type practices, which all assist in reducing the impact of development.
- The City should support community-policing and solution-oriented practices including neighborhood police substations and neighborhood watch areas as a deterrent to business and residential crime.
- Neighborhood revitalization programs and services that remove blight and provide safe environments should be funded as important parts of our community crime-reduction strategy.
- The City should maintain and enforce the "no more than three unrelated persons per household" ordinance.
- The City should promote the health of its citizens by maximizing walkability and bikability.
- The City should promote health of its citizens through promotion of local food and gardening.
- The City/County should aggressively plan, invest and develop public policies that support alternative and public modes of transportation. Modes such as biking, public transit, trails and sidewalks improve the quality of life and reduce the burdens of traffic.
- The City should promote green practices and renewable energy when feasible.