

Highway 77 Corridor: West Beltway Study

Applicant	Location	Proposal
Lincoln/Lancaster Metropolitan Planning Organization	US Highway 77 corridor from Interstate 80 south to the planned South Beltway interchange.	Upgrade existing US-77 to freeway standards from Interstate 80 south to the planned South Beltway interchange south of Saltillo Road. This is a state project that includes construction of interchanges at Warlick Blvd. and Pioneers Blvd., and the closing of at-grade access crossings at Rokeby Rd., Yankee Hill Rd., and Old Cheney Rd.
Recommendation: Approval		

Status/Background

The original US Highway 77 Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA 04020) proposal submitted by the Nebraska Department of Roads was approved unanimously (8-0) by the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Commission on August 18, 2004. It was then forwarded to the Lincoln City Council and Lancaster County Board. The amendment was introduced at the City Council on September 13, 2004, and at the County Board on September 14, 2004. The City Council amended the proposal by including the following statement:

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Comp. Plan Amendment shall in no way preclude future consideration of an overpass for Old Cheney Road over US-77 (West By-Pass), should future needs of the City of Lincoln and the County of Lancaster so justify. This Amendment shall also not absolve any government entity of its responsibility to participate in the funding of such Old Cheney overpass should one be constructed.” (See Exhibit A)

The City Council then approved the amended version of the State’s proposal 7-0 at its October 11, 2004, meeting.

The County Board kept the public hearing open on this amendment through December 7, 2004, and subsequently denied the State's proposal to amend the Comprehensive Plan with a vote of 3-1 against the amendment.

At the MPO Officials Committee meeting of January 21, 2005, the US Highway 77 Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA 04020) was reviewed and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan was amended by a unanimous vote (5-0). The current MPO Officials Committee voting members include Mayor Coleen Seng, City Council Chairman Terry Werner, County Board Chairman Larry Hudkins, County Board Vice Chair Deb Schorr, and Nebraska Department of Roads Deputy Director Monty Fredrickson. The approved Officials Committee's version included the US Highway 77 amendment as proposed by the Nebraska Department of Roads with the following statement to be added on Page F106 to language related to the State's US-77 study and on Page F111 to the list of Proposed Studies in the Mobility & Transportation section of the Plan:

As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road. The study is to be a joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environments review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection to 1st Street.

Requested Actions

This current submittal (CPA #05002) is a compromise request to amend the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County Comprehensive Plans to include the Nebraska Department of Roads proposal to upgrade the existing US Highway 77 corridor to freeway standards from Interstate 80 south to the planned South Beltway as amended by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Officials Committee at its meeting of January 21, 2005. (See Exhibit B) The purpose of this compromise is to ensure there is agreement between the City, County, and MPO transportation plans regarding the upgrading of Highway 77 to freeway status and the subsequent studies of potential overpasses of Highway 77 at Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road, and Rokeby Road. Approval of the the MPO's amended language will bring the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County Comprehensive Plans into agreement with the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan as amended by the MPO Officials Committee.

The **Planning Commission** is asked to recommend to the City Council that it approve the amended language adopted by the MPO and strike the Council's original amended language to its approved version of the original Highway 77 CPA. The Planning Commission is also being asked to propose to the County Board that it approve the entire CPA including the amended language from the MPO.

It is recommended that the **City Council** amend their previously approved version of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment by striking the Council's amended language and approving the MPO's amended language.

It is also recommended that the **County Board** approve the entire Highway 77 Comprehensive Plan Amendment including the amended language from the MPO.

Description (this is a repeat of information provided in the original review of this CPA)

The Nebraska Department of Roads submitted a proposal to amend the Mobility and Transportation Element/Long Range Transportation Plan of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan as CPA 04020 to show the segment of US-77 from Interstate 80 south to the planned South Beltway interchange south of Saltillo Road as a freeway design to complete the Lincoln West Beltway concept. This proposal was a result of a signed agreement with the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County and the Nebraska Department of Roads to construct the South Beltway and the East Beltway around the City of Lincoln to improve traffic flow and to enhance safety for the traveling public. A study specifically addressing the Highway 77 portion of the planned beltway system has been completed.

This request proposes to amend the Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan's Mobility and Transportation element, which also acts as the Long Range Transportation Plan for the region, as follows:

- ! Upgrade US-77/West Beltway from an expressway to a freeway beginning at the planned South Beltway interchange just south of Saltillo Road and ending at Interstate 80.
- ! Construct a new interchange at Pioneers Boulevard.
- ! Construct a new interchange at Warlick Boulevard.
- ! Close access to US-77 at Rokeby Road, Yankee Hill Road, and Old Cheney Road with a study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road prior to the upgrade of US-77 to freeway status.
- ! Change the future functional classifications of US-77 from I-80 to the South Beltway interchange, the South Beltway, and the East Beltway to freeway status.

The upgrading of the US-77/West Beltway to a freeway design is to be completed in conjunction with the South Beltway. The Nebraska Department of Roads recognizes that converting this segment of highway to a freeway may take five to ten years to complete, and during this time, changes may take place in the City-County Comprehensive Plan and actual development may occur that alters traffic along the local roadway system from that shown in the current traffic study. As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road will occur. The study is to be a joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environments review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection to 1st Street.

Construction of this project will be dependent upon availability of future funds. Based upon the current construction program for the Nebraska Department of Roads, construction is not expected for five to ten years in the future.

Comprehensive Plan Implications (this is a repeat of the original report)

On page F106 of the Comprehensive Plan, the Nebraska Department of Roads is identified as presently studying portions of Highway 77 as it passes through Lincoln to consider upgrading this roadway to freeway status. This study is now completed. The findings of this study are proposed in this amendment.

As part of the beltway system proposed in the Comprehensive Plan on pages F106 and 107, the upgrade of US-77 to freeway status on the west side of Lincoln will complete the planned freeway system that includes the East Beltway, South Beltway, and Interstate 80 on the north. It is acknowledged in the Comprehensive Plan, and by the Nebraska Department of Roads, that of the two new planned beltways, the South Beltway must be built first and is considered a committed project. The Nebraska Department of Roads also acknowledges that the upgrading of US-77 to freeway status is to be completed in conjunction with the South Beltway.

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan highlights many principles and objectives in regard to transportation on page F87. These principles and objectives relate to and should be considered as part of the review of this proposed amendment. They are as follow:

“A Connected City. In Lincoln and Lancaster County, the unifying qualities of transportation will be emphasized. The transportation network will sustain the One Community concept by linking neighborhoods together. Neighborhoods, activity and employment centers, rural communities, and open lands will be connected by a continuous network of public ways.

A Balanced Transportation System. Transportation planning in Lincoln will be guided by the principle of balancing needs and expectations. It will recognize that transportation is a means to the goal of a unified, liveable, and economically strong community, and not an end in itself. Thus, the system will effectively move people and goods around the community, while minimizing impacts on established neighborhoods and investments. The concept of balance also applies to methods of transportation. While the system must function well for motor vehicles, it should also establish public transportation, bicycling, and walking as realistic alternatives now and in the future.

Transportation as a Formative System. Transportation and land use are linked systems. The land use plan, which includes projections of future development, determines the character of the transportation plan. On the other hand, transportation has a major impact

on the form of the City. Lincoln and Lancaster County will use major road projects to reinforce desirable development patterns.

Planning as a Process. Transportation planning is a dynamic process, responding to such factors as community growth, development directions, and social and lifestyle changes. Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan should also establish an ongoing process that responds to these changes.

Developing a balanced transportation system that meets the mobility needs of the community and supports Lincoln and Lancaster County's land use projections and plan.

Using the existing transportation system to its best advantage.

Increasing the use of alternate means of transportation, including public transportation, bicycle transit, and pedestrian movement, by improving and expanding facilities and services and encouraging compact, walkable land use patterns and project designs.

Continuing Lincoln's street and trails network into newly developing areas.

Designing a street and road improvement program that is both physically attractive and sensitive to the environments of urban neighborhoods."

Conclusion

This amendment to show this segment of US-77 as a freeway with new interchanges at Pioneers Boulevard and Warlick Boulevard generally meets the principles and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition, subsequent planning activities that will take place at the project development stage prior to implementation should be included in the Comprehensive Plan. This recommendation identifies additional review and study at project development stage for the potential of adding an overpass at the intersections recommended for US-77 access closure. These intersections include Rokeby Road, Yankee Hill Road, and Old Cheney Road.

The State of Nebraska prohibits bicycles on Interstates and freeways but not expressways. Such a restriction will bar bicyclists from using this segment of US-77 as a result of upgrading it to a freeway. There were comments made by the public during the public hearing stage of this study that dealt with the impact on the bicycling community that uses US-77 as an on-street road route. Additional joint planning should take place between the City, County, and State at project development stage to address the bicycle restriction issue and to work together to provide a comparable alternative for cyclists.

Map changes to the **Future Functional Classification: City Streets** map on page F103 of the Comprehensive Plan and the **Future Functional Classification: County Roads** map on page F104 are needed as part of this amendment to change the classification of US-77, the South Beltway, and the East Beltway to freeway status from principal arterial status. These maps are also attached as part of this report as Exhibit C and D to indicate the necessary changes.

Map changes to the **Projects & Studies: Lincoln Area Street & Road Improvements 2025** map on page F105 in the Mobility and Transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan are required for this amendment. A map is attached to this report as Exhibit E to indicate these necessary map changes.

Also needed will be particular text changes to pages F106 and F111 to update the Comprehensive Plan so that it indicates all of the changes that are part of this amendment.

County Board: Amend the Comprehensive Plan as Follows:

1. Amend the **Lincoln Area Street and Road Improvements 2025** map on page F105 to indicate the proposed updates and additions to the Comprehensive Plan as follow:
 1. Replace the US-77 and Pioneers Boulevard “Overpass/Interchange Study” designation with an “Interchange” designation.
 2. Remove the “Overpass/Interchange Study” designation for the US-77 and Old Cheney Road intersection.
 3. Add a “Study” symbol at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road, and Rokeby Road reflecting the requirement to “Study” for a potential overpass no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade.
2. Amend the **Future Functional Classification: City Streets** map on page F103 and the **Future Functional Classification: County Roads** map on page F104 to indicate the proposed updates and additions to the Comprehensive Plan as follow:
 1. Change the classification of US-77 from I-80 to the planned South Beltway interchange, the South Beltway, and the East Beltway to freeway classification from their current principal arterial classification.
3. Amend the text of the Mobility and Transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan on pages F106 and F111 to update the status of the Nebraska Department of Roads’ US-77 study and to add proposed projects and studies that relate to the findings of the US-77 study:

Page F106

Amend the language related to the State’s US-77 study as follows:

! “The Nebraska Department of Roads ~~is presently studying~~ ~~has completed~~ study of portions of ~~State~~ US Highway 77 as it passes through Lincoln. This study ~~will give~~ gave consideration to upgrading the facility to freeway status from its present classification as an expressway. This upgrade ~~would~~ will require eliminating existing at-grade intersections. These intersections could be replaced with interchanges, overpasses ~~or underpasses~~, or the road connection could be eliminated all together ~~and~~ with no crossing provided. As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road will be conducted as a joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environments review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection to 1st Street.

As part of the implementation of this project to upgrade US-77 to freeway status the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists will be addressed. It was affirmed during the study process that the proposed pedestrian and bicycle crossing points at the planned Pioneers Boulevard interchange and at the abandoned railroad right-of-way south of the planned Warlick interchange would be provided. The existing US-77 bridge structures over the abandoned railroad right-of-way are intended to remain and be used to separate US-77 traffic from pedestrians and bicyclists, and the design of the new Pioneers interchange is to contain a multi-use trail facility. An extensive system of trail facilities is planned within this area extending along both the east and west side of the US-77 corridor. The US-77 trail connections will allow pedestrians and bicyclists between the new growth area to the west and the existing urban area and the Wilderness Park Trails system to the east of US-77. Also, the City, County, and State will work together to resolve bicycle access issues that will result from the upgrading of this segment of US-77 to freeway status. The City, County, and State will collectively work together to provide a comparable alternative for cyclists.”

Page F111

Add to the list of Proposed Projects the following:

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| ! | <u>US-77/West Beltway Upgrade to Freeway Status from I-80 to South Beltway</u> | <u>Upgrade to Freeway</u> |
| ▶ | <u>Construct new interchange at Pioneers Blvd.</u> | <u>Interchange</u> |
| ▶ | <u>Construct new interchange at Warlick Blvd.</u> | <u>Interchange</u> |
| ▶ | <u>Close access to US-77 at Rokeby Rd., Yankee Hill Rd., and Old Cheney Road</u> | <u>Access Closure</u> |

Add to the list of Proposed Studies the following:

- ! As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road. The study is to be a joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environments review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection to 1st Street.

Remove from the list of Proposed Studies the following:

- ! ~~Old Cheney Rd. And US-77: Overpass/Interchange Study~~
- ! ~~US-77 and Pioneers Blvd.: Overpass/Interchange Study~~

City Council: Amend the Comprehensive Plan as Follows:

Page F106

Amend the language related to the State's US-77 study as follows:

- ! ~~Additional review and study will be conducted, as needed, at project development stage for the potential of adding an overpass at the intersections recommended for US-77 access closure. These intersections include Rokeby Road, Yankee Hill Road, and Old Cheney Road. This Comp. Plan Amendment shall in no way preclude future consideration of an overpass for Old Cheney Road over US-77 (West By-Pass), should future needs of the City of Lincoln and the County of Lancaster so justify. This Amendment shall also not absolve any government entity of its responsibility to participate in the funding of such Old Cheney overpass should one be constructed~~ As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road will be conducted as a joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environments review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection to 1st Street.

Page F111

Add to the list of Proposed Studies the following:

- ! ~~As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at project development stage and prior to closure at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road, and Rokeby Road.~~ As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road. The study is to be a

joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environments review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection to 1st Street.

Prepared By:

David Cary, 441-6364

dcary@ci.lincoln.ne.us

March 15, 2005

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04R-228

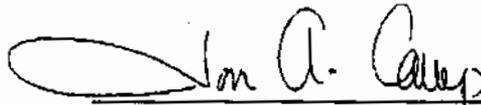
MOTION TO AMEND NO. 1

I hereby move to amend Bill No. 04R-228 in the following manner:

- 1. On page 3, after line 29, insert the following:

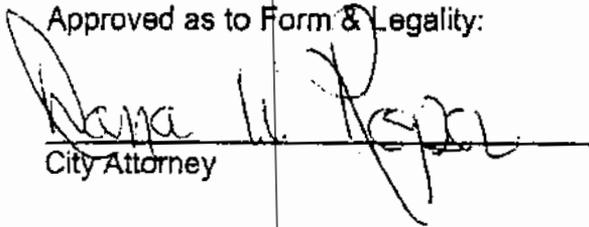
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Comp. Plan Amendment shall in no way preclude future consideration of an overpass for Old Cheney Road over US-77 (West By-Pass), should future needs of the City of Lincoln and the County of Lancaster so justify. This Amendment shall also not absolve any government entity of its responsibility to participate in the funding of such Old Cheney overpass should one be constructed.

Introduced by:



AYES: Camp, Cook, Friendt,
 McRoy, Newman, Svoboda;
 NAYS: Werner.

Approved as to Form & Legality:



City Attorney

Requested by: Jon Camp

Reason for Request: To clarify future consideration of an overpass for Old Cheney over Highway 77.

ADOPTED
 OCT 11 2004
 BY CITY COUNCIL

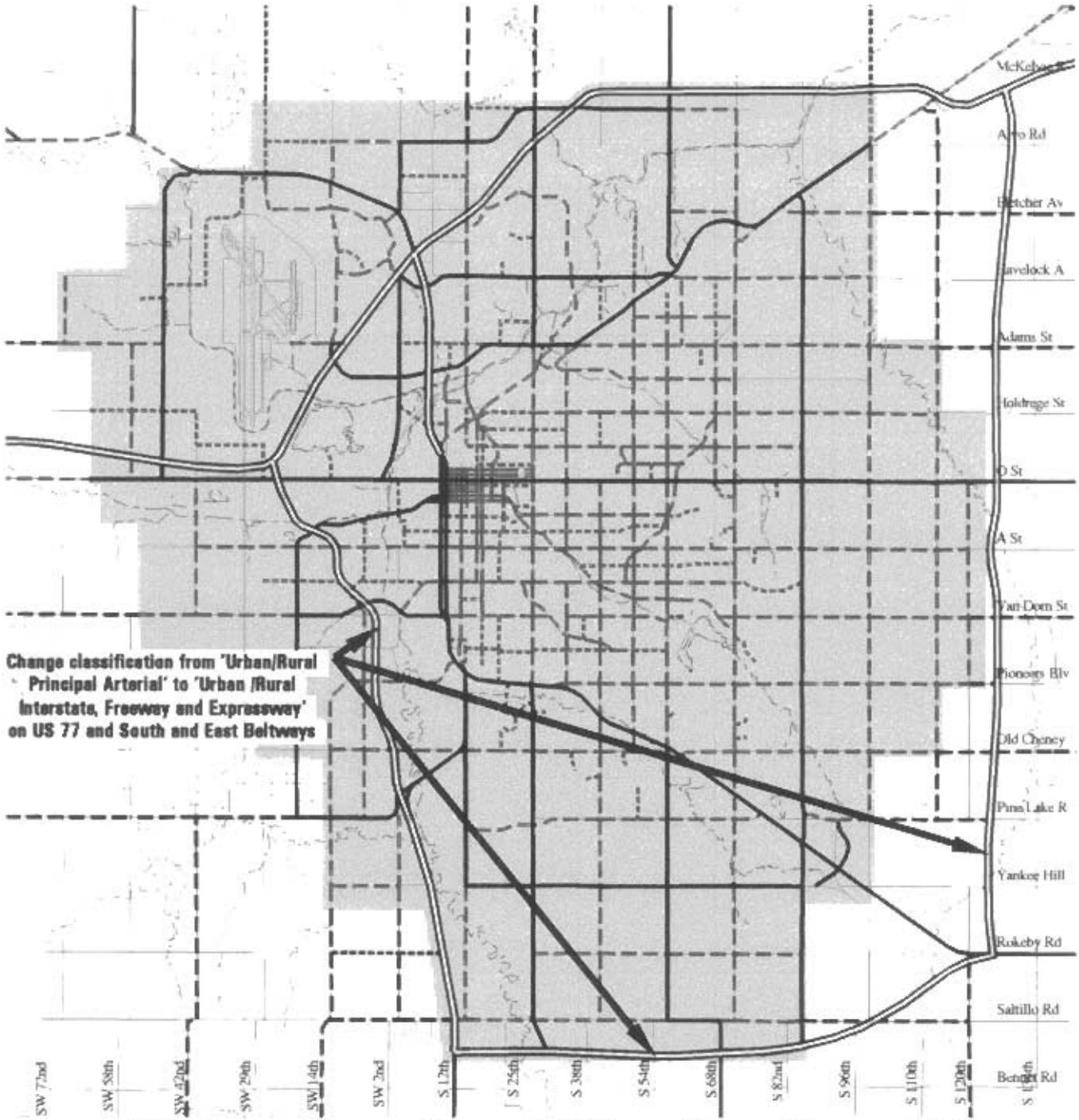
Exhibit B

MPO Officials Committee Amendment:

At the MPO Officials Committee meeting of January 21, 2005, the US-77 Highway amendment was reviewed and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan was amended by unanimous vote. The Officials Committee amendment included the US-77 Highway amendment as proposed by Nebraska Department of Roads with the following statement to be added on Page F111 and to the list of proposed Studies in the Transportation Plan:

As part of the US-77/West Beltway project, study for a potential overpass at US-77 and Old Cheney Road, Yankee Hill Road and Rokeby Road. The Study is to be a joint State/County/City feasibility study, including a traffic analysis, a citizen participation element, an appropriate environmental review, and will be started no later than one year prior to the contract letting of the West Bypass freeway upgrade. The study will comply with FHWA procedures for Federal Aid projects and will attempt to maintain an Old Cheney connection for 1st Street.

The current MPO Officials Committee voting members include Mayor Seng, Terry Werner, Larry Hudkins, Deb Schorr, and Monty Fredrickson (NDOR).



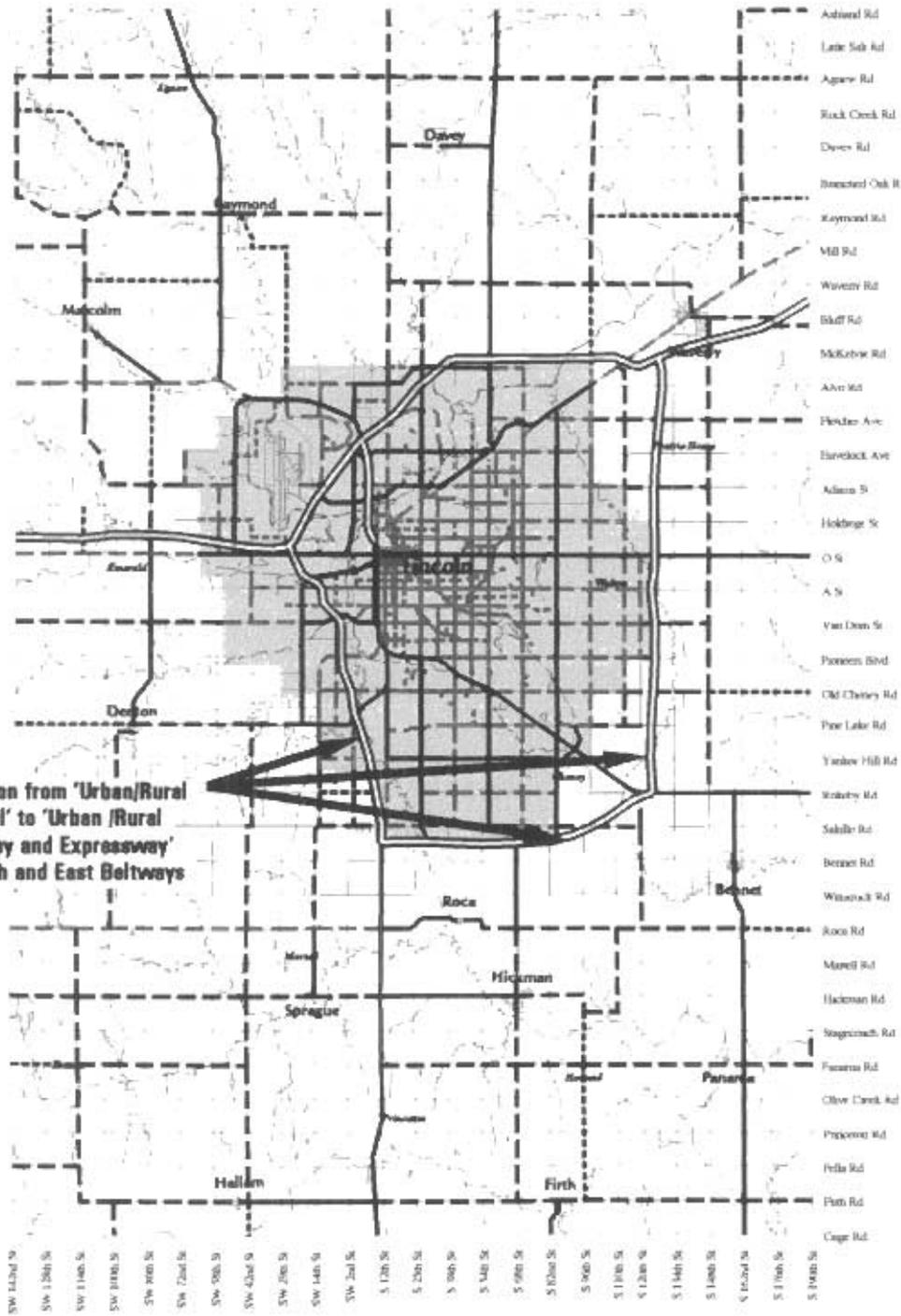
Change classification from 'Urban/Rural Principal Arterial' to 'Urban/Rural Interstate, Freeway and Expressway' on US 77 and South and East Beltways

Future Functional Classification - City Proposed Amendment 04020 - Exhibit C

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------|
| | Urban / Rural Interstate, Freeway and Expressway | | Urban Area Boundary |
| | Urban / Rural Principal Arterial | | |
| | Urban / Rural Minor Arterial | | |
| | Urban Collector | | |
| | Rural Major Collector (County) | | |
| | Rural Major Collector (State) | | |
| | Rural Minor Collector | | |



Change classification from 'Urban/Rural Principal Arterial' to 'Urban/Rural Interstate, Freeway and Expressway' on US 77 and South and East Beltways

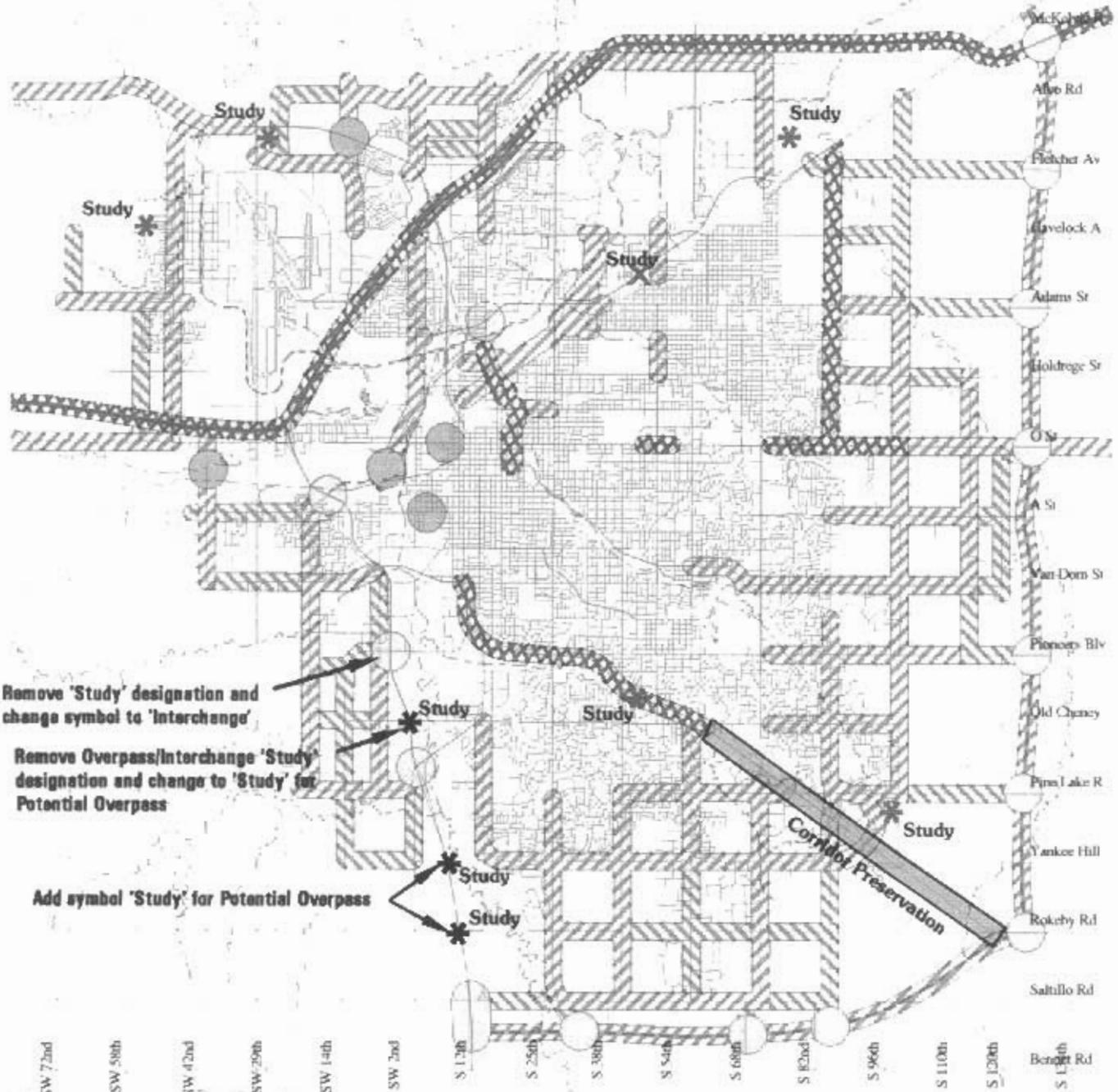


Future Functional Classification - County

Proposed Amendment 04020 - Exhibit D

- Urban / Rural Interstate, Freeway and Expressway
- Urban / Rural Principal Arterial
- Urban / Rural Minor Arterial
- Urban Collector
- Rural Major Collector (County)
- Rural Major Collector (State)
- Rural Minor Collector
- Urban Area Boundary





Street & Roadway Improvements

Proposed Amendment 04020 - Exhibit E

- Corridor Preservation
- 2 Lanes + CTL
- 4 Lanes + TL
- 6 Lanes + TL
- 6 Lane Interstate Highway
- Four Lane Freeway, 300 Ft. ROW
- Overpass
- Interchange

- Street Closure Study
- Study

Future Service Limit

