

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: March 18, 2016, 10:00 a.m., Mayor's Conference Room, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE

MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Roma Amundson, Leirion Gaylor Baird, Mayor Chris Beutler, Trent Fellers, Brandie Neemann and Todd Wiltgen. David Cary, Paul Barnes, Mike Brienza, Kellee Van Bruggen and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Dept.; Rick Haden and Jenny Young of Felsburg Holt & Uelvig; Lorraine Legg, Karis Ruse, Mike Owen and Andrew Mansfield of Nebraska Dept. of Roads; Pam Dingman of County Engineer's office; and Randy Hoskins of Public Works & Utilities.

Chair Trent Fellers called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Fellers then requested a motion approving the minutes of the meeting held November 18, 2015. Motion for approval made by Amundson, seconded by Gaylor Baird and carried 4-0: Amundson, Gaylor Baird, Mayor Beutler and Fellers voting 'yes'; Neemann and Wiltgen abstaining.

BRIEFING ON THE UPDATING OF THE LINCOLN MPO 2040 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP):

Jenny Young presented a chart of the major tasks for the LRTP. The first task is agency coordination. The next task is developing the travel demand model. This is essentially complete. Third is the needs assessment. This is an inventory of the existing transportation system. Task four is the goal objectives and performance measures. The next steps are the transportation system analysis, identify and prioritize projects and ultimately, the implementation plan.

Rick Haden stated the first part of the transportation needs is the needs assessment. He provided maps of household and employment growth. When we look at the forecast for the future, we look at a number of things. Trips in Lancaster County have an outflow towards Omaha, but also an inflow. There are really twice as many coming in, as are leaving the county. The majority live in Lancaster County. The average commuter time is 18.4 minutes, which is great for a city of our size.

Fellers inquired about the sources of data that were used. Haden replied these are based on household surveys. Young added this is information from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

Haden continued that we see the work at home population increasing. With ALLO Communications fiber coming to Lincoln, we see this as more people being able to work from

home. That is something we are seeing across the country. Traffic growth over time is projected. We will take this information and overlay it with the existing capacity for the roads. We are projecting pretty substantial growth by 2040. On the east side of town, we are seeing quite an increase on 84th Street within the planning period. We will be looking at this road closely. The Lincoln bicycle network has a good history of providing trails. One of the priorities we heard from stakeholders was maintenance of the existing systems, including sidewalks. Another priority was completing the missing links on the trails network. Another major effort is to address some of the difficult arterial crossings. Lincoln has 1,700 miles of sidewalks. There has been an aggressive program to repair and maintain them, as well as make them Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. We foresee that need continuing. With regard to the transit system, the Transit Development Plan (TDP) was just adopted. There is a major effort and a lot of discussion about increasing service frequency and improving the downtown connection. Rail is a new effort within the plan to focus on the railroad crossings. The Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) has a committed amount of funds and projects that need to be addressed. There are 12 at-grade crossings with an exposure rating above 50,000. NDOR uses 50,000 as a cutoff to qualify for funds for grade separation. Lancaster County has 8 crossings with an exposure rating above 100,000. 33rd St. and Adams is being addressed now. There are quite a few others that are candidates.

Mayor Beutler questioned if the transit system information is up to date. Young replied that the new information will be incorporated. Haden added that the new routes will be shown.

Mayor Beutler wondered about commuter information with regard to walking and bicycling. He believes these modes are dependent on more than public transportation. Is that a fair comparison, considering weather considerations and a variety of other factors that could be involved? Haden replied that it goes back to how the survey questions were formed. Young added that the way the questions were formed, you could only choose one answer. It is not perfect. Michael Brienzo noted this is data that is collected on an annual basis. Mayor Beutler asked if the question are asked the same way, each time. Young replied yes.

Young stated that community outreach began in January, 2016 with focus group meetings. Eight different focus groups met for one hour. We went through questions and exercises with each group. One exercise asked them to jot down three things they love about transportation in Lincoln. Some topics that came up a lot were they loved the trail system. Lincoln is easy to get around, with good access to I-80. We also asked them what three things they would love to change. We heard longer service hours for buses, signal timing improvements, lack of funding, a desire to build a beltway and a general desire for more bicycle and pedestrian facilities. We asked what they thought was the biggest change in the last five years, what trends they saw and what are the greatest opportunities. We heard a variety of responses. Themes were technology, growth and changing demographics. Everyone was talking about autonomous vehicles and how this will affect the future. There was a lot of discussion about infill growth. More people are moving into the downtown area. We also heard about shorter commutes, being able to bike or walk, and growth that is occurring on the fringe. We heard a lot about how the younger generation wants to allow for a lower ownership level of car ownership. We also heard about the aging population and how the older generation wants to be able to age in place and have access to transportation and walk.

Mayor Beutler inquired why developers aren't picking up on this trend. They aren't building facilities for older people in the downtown area, as they are for younger people. Haden heard that the people who are aging are finding it more difficult to get to health care facilities because those facilities are moving to the fringe. Grocery stores are moving to the fringe as well.

Young stated that the first of three public meetings were held. We had a series of stations set up around Culler Middle School. We sent out over 1,800 email notifications, placed a notice in the newspaper and asked all participants in the focus groups to spread the word. We had 33 people sign in at the Open House. They were very engaged. Many people spent a fair amount of time looking at all the information and providing comments. The primary purpose was to show how important it is to engage in the LRTP process. We presented current and future conditions. We provided opportunities for people to submit their input. We asked how they would you rate the ease of traveling around Lincoln. The results were interesting. Bike and car was rated highest, by foot a little lower and by bus received a lower score. The most significant transportation challenges in the next 25 years will be the aging and deteriorating infrastructure and service hours of the transportation service. One thing we did with the focus groups and the public was to ask them what they felt was most important. The focus groups had a pretty balanced mix of responses. When you put all the input together you can see a pretty strong balance. We heard from the focus groups that they are all pretty inter-related. At the public meeting, there was a little more emphasis on livability and travel choice. In addition to community outreach efforts, we have met with Planning Commission on a monthly basis, as well as the LRTP Project Oversight Committee. This will be a performance based plan. This is new this time. We have been working on system level performance measures. This is a federal requirement. Fortunately, Lincoln has great data. There are 32 system wide performance measures. The measures were selected based on availability of data and the ability to track them over time. The maintenance measures are all about condition. Mobility is aimed at congestion and reliability. Livability is all about providing travel options. Safety and security are aimed at understanding the safety of all travel modes. For economic vitality, we are measuring transportation contributions. For environmental sustainability, we are looking at ways to minimize impacts to the natural built environment. Funding and cost effectiveness is aimed at cost effectiveness. Brienzo added that all of this information will be posted online as it is completed.

Gaylor Baird would like elaboration on tracking over time. Young replied that in some cases, we have specific targets, others are being tracked. Brienzo stated this will be a big effort this year.

Gaylor Baird inquired what is used to determine those targets and trends. Young replied they were already established with Public Works.

Mayor Beutler would like to know what the examination says about how many people or families in the poverty category of the 12-15% of the population have cars. The public transportation percentage is so low, even if you add walking or biking, it seems to indicate most poor families have cars. Young replied there are 7,600 households in Lincoln without access to a car. This is 6.5% of all households. David Cary stated that would imply there are a number of households that have access to a vehicle. It also tells us that there are a number of households that try to gain access and don't have any.

Mayor Beutler wondered what this tells us about a lot of people who need to get to work. It seems there is a small number relying on public transportation. Brienzo noted there are shared rides. The Center for People in Need has a program. There are also small programs out there that help. Mayor Beutler sees that 1.2% of all commute trips to work are on public transportation. Cary stated that has been a steady number for a few years now. Haden believes it goes back to short commute times that make it possible for numerous people to ride together or share a vehicle.

Gaylor Baird inquired about the Downtown Master Plan. She recalls the bike lanes on 11th St. and 14th St. were going to change significantly from the current configuration. Cary stated that there is no plan to change them. We know by tracking the usage that a lot of people use them and don't feel that safety is a problem. They were designed to be in the middle of the street to keep the turning movements limited. The updated Downtown Master Plan shows 14th Street will eventually be a protected bikeway. The north-south connection will run eventually from UNL to the State Capitol. This is the plan over time, with proper funds. Fellers questioned if that would be one-way or two-way. Cary replied that would have to be studied. Gaylor Baird wondered about 11th Street. Cary stated the concept is for both 11th St. and 14th St. There is the idea of phasing both of those over time. That is something to consider. Fellers questioned if 14th Street is used more than 11th St. Cary replied yes.

Young stated that the next public meeting will be tentatively May 3, 2016. It will be about understanding the priorities. We have begun working on a methodology for prioritizing projects. We have worked through developing a system of evaluation criteria based on the seven goals. We will also look at the funding outlook and resources allocation. We expect to be back to Officials Committee in June, 2016. Cary added that for this next stage, the project prioritization will be a big effort. He anticipates there will be much more interest in this program as we have prioritizations.

BRIEFING BY THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS ON RECENT LINCOLN SOUTH BELTWAY PROJECT DISCUSSIONS AND MAJOR DESIGN ELEMENTS:

Mike Owen passed out a mosaic that was developed of the proposed South Beltway. He also provided a detailed factsheet from the website that talks about the history of the project. They had a plan in hand in November, 2015 which is a milestone for the process. A lot of stakeholders attended a meeting. On the environmental side, the most significant progress has been working with the Corp. of Engineers. We recently got their concurrence on the alignment. The biggest challenge is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We are working on addressing any EPA concerns. We are also looking at what potential impacts development could have on the resources. Resources agencies will be invited to a meeting. We are working with the Planning Dept., City Council, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce and economic development groups get their input and overlay that information and evaluate the impact. We are closer to getting this done. We are working on an environmental assessment. We will have a draft ready around June, 2016. The alignment is still being tweaked, but the graphics he has today are close. They will buy the right-of-way in 2017-2018. There will be a series of projects in 2017-2018 and 2019. The City contribution of 20 percent and federal aid costs around 200 million dollars. The City share is 40 million dollars. The project will come forward in several packages. This will be built over a series of five to seven years.

Mayor Beutler asked if the whole thing is positioned at this point. Is a payment schedule possible to execute at this point? Owen doesn't know at this point. Brienzo stated that the city has contributed some money already. Owen believes that 16.5 million dollars has been contributed by the city to this point. We are incurring engineering costs at this point. He assumes we are billing the city, but he doesn't know for sure. Mayor Beutler wondered if it is possible to plan the amount of the payments, and the timing of future contributions and put together a plan. Randy Hoskins stated that is spelled out in the plan that the city signed. There is a one-time payment up front and then subsequent payments. Owen believes the payments generally start when construction starts. We would bill the city as construction payments are made. Mayor Beutler questioned if there are ongoing conversations with city departments. Owen replied yes. Conversations are being held with the RTSD and how those funds could be used.

Owen addressed the mosaic and pointed out specific changes that would need to be made to different points along the road. This is the design from November, 2015. There have been a few changes since then due to public input. It is their plan to place this on their website.

Andrew Mansfield stated that the first major change would be to Saltillo Rd. They changed the design speed. They re-leveled the intersection and some bridge designs have been changed. The roundabout was redesigned. Another major change is the 27th St. to 38th St. intersections. They were changed and realigned. The next change was to 70th St. and 84th St. interchanges. They previously showed 4 legged intersections. There were a lot of discussions about two way stops. Those were upgraded to roundabouts as well. The 82nd St. interchange was previously a tight diamond pattern. There were environmental impacts on the east side, so this was changed. He pointed out the connectivity of the South Beltway to a future East Beltway. Duplicate connections that weren't needed until the East Beltway is built, were all pulled out of the design. Accommodations for the East Beltway are still provided for.

Owen stated that the state is still working with the county and would like to get an agreement before we go to the public. City and county staff have been coming to our monthly coordination meetings. We would like concurrence so we have the questions answered.

REVIEW AND ACTION ON AN AMENDMENT TO THE FY 2016-2019 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) TO INCLUDE THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS VANPOOL PROJECT THAT WILL PROVIDE STATEWIDE CONTRACTED/VENDOR VANPOOL SERVICE FOR A) LINCOLN & OMAHA METRO REGIONS AND B) RURAL NEBRASKA TO BE FUNDED WITH FEDERAL CMAQ AND FTA SECTION 5311 FUNDS:

Kari Ruse explained that a vanpool is a carpool with a larger capacity. About one year ago, a working group was assembled. Some representatives from the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA) and herself started the discussion about the feasibility of vanpools, and to see what other states were doing. Initially, the discussion was regarding moving between the two metropolitan areas of Lincoln and Omaha. A vanpool can also be important in rural areas as well. There are several funding streams available. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) funds are available to support the metro to metro vanpools. We can't make that case for rural, but we were awarded funding for the metro. Rural vanpools will use

funding already allocated for rural transportation across the state. The next step is to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a vanpool operation. This will be a turnkey vanpool operator. They will provide the vehicles, do the marketing, maintenance and collect the data. Nebraska Dept. of Roads (NDOR) will administer the program. The goal is to have a vanpool operator by the start of the new fiscal year. The subsidy would be a partial subsidy. The commuters would make up the difference with their fees.

Mayor Beutler finds this an interesting play between something old and something new. In Turkey they have a dolmus, which is a point to point system that has happened for ages. Now on the other end, we have people who can access a phone app and show up point to point. He wondered about the interplay between the vanpool idea and for example, allowing high tech private people to carpool. Ruse has never considered that option, but it could very well be a future option. Cary noted that in the City of Lincoln Smart Cities application, it was embedded in the thinking that there will be an ongoing discussion concept of the merging of technology where you have almost a confluence of Uber, subscribers and vehicles out on the street. That is technology that is already here today. Brienzo added that this program would be more for the five day a work week individual.

Mayor Beutler questioned if any other private corporations are doing this. He knows that Gallup runs buses from Lincoln to Omaha for their workers. Brienzo is aware of that. It is a private project.

Gaylor Baird inquired about the proposed timeline. Ruse hopes to have an operator in place by July 1, 2016. The CMAQ portion is eligible for 100 percent funding. The rural funding is available at 80 percent. The 20 percent local match will be provided by the local operator. Brienzo added that this is reflected in the TIP amendment.

ACTION:

Amundson moved approval of the amendment to the 2016-2019 TIP to include the Nebraska Dept. of Roads Vanpool Project that will provide statewide contracted/vendor vanpool service for A) Lincoln & Omaha metro regions and B) Rural Nebraska to be funded with Federal CMAQ and FTA Section 5311 funds, seconded by Gaylor Baird and carried 5-0: Amundson, Gaylor Baird, Mayor Beutler, Fellers and Neemann voting 'yes'; Wiltgen absent.

BRIEFING ON THE UPDATE OF THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS STATEWIDE MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROJECT:

Ruse stated that mobility management is transportation coordination. The state has hired a consultant. We will partner with the University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL). The goal is to identify coordination opportunities across the state. There are 57 rural public transportation operators across the state, inner city bus operators, 2 large urban buses and no coordination between them. We are going to look for opportunities and develop a strategy and model. Transportation regionalization is something we are looking at. We hope to improve efficiencies. We just met with some of our rural providers. McCook, Nebraska has some people who need to get to specialists in Omaha. There are no viable options for them. One

project that has been discussed is studying the viability and need to scheduled bus service between Lincoln and Omaha.

Amundson inquired about the average cost for transport from McCook to Lincoln. Ruse does not know. That is one barrier to coordinating. The fares vary so much. Working that out is one issue we will address. Amundson thinks that this is a great idea. There are many people in rural areas who could benefit from this. Ruse agreed. We woefully lack inner city bus service in Nebraska.

Mayor Beutler wondered if Medicaid would reimburse for transportation to necessary medical appointments. Ruse stated that is a different funding stream. We will be looking into that.

Amundson believes there are people who need to come to the Veteran's Administration (VA) in Lincoln. This can be difficult for those living in rural areas. She doesn't know if they have previously rode on a VA caravan or not. Fellers wonders if this is a mode of transportation we can tap into. Ruse stated that as part of this project, we have developed some regional coordination. Representatives from the VA are involved in discussions.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.