

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** November 16, 2018, 8:00 a.m., Mayor's Conference Room, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Mayor Chris Beutler, Jennifer Brinkman, Ryan Huff and Cyndi Lamm; (Bennie Shobe and Todd Wiltgen absent). Mike Brienzo, Teresa McKinstry, David Cary, Paul Barnes and Kellee Van Bruggen of the Planning Dept.; Lonnie Burklund from Public Works & Utilities; Mike Davis and Brian Praeuner from StarTran; Kris Humphrey from the Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD); Rick Haden and Jenny Young from Felsburg Holt & Ullevig (FHU); and Pam Dingman, County Engineer.

The posting of the Open Meetings Act was acknowledged in the room.

### **REVIEW OF THE TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT (TAM) PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

Brian Praeuner stated that this project has been a year long process. It requires transit agencies to do a thorough review of all their assets. The FTA (Federal Transit Administration) has identified billions of dollars of equipment that need to be updated. The purpose is a business model that uses the condition of assets to guide the prioritization of funding transit properties in order to keep transit networks in a State of Good Repair. We are confident it will be approved next year. A state of good repair is where an asset is able to operate at a full level of performance. There are a number of performance measures we are required to develop as well. The four main elements are rolling stock, facilities, infrastructure and equipment. Elements we are required to look at are inventory of capital assets, condition assessment, decision support tools and investment prioritization.

### **BRIEFING ON THE NORTH 33<sup>RD</sup> GRADE SEPARATION AND CORNHUSKER HIGHWAY SUBAREA PLANNING PROJECT:**

Kris Humphrey stated that in 2015, a Planning Environmental Linkages (PEL) study was done. There are about 65 trains a day that travel through this area along with 20,000 vehicles per day. The NDOT (Nebraska Department of Transportation) looks at an exposure of 50,000. This has 1.3 million. There were two preferred alternatives identified. There was one question left unanswered, would this intersection support the future land use needs. The need for a subarea plan was determined. We just received a study from Olsson Associates this week. We had a lot of public involvement, an advisory committee and many open houses. There was a strong

connection between the north/south movement. The PEL study focused more on the east/west connection. We have taken what we heard from the public and gone back to the PEL study and looked at the numbers more closely. We came up with consensus items. We want to make sure it conforms to the subarea plan, the 33<sup>rd</sup> St. extension, the Salt Creek Roadway extension to Cornhusker Hwy. and speaks to the closure of the railroad crossing 44<sup>th</sup> St.

Brinkman questioned why 44<sup>th</sup> St. would close. There are many people who live in the area. That access is not always open at 48<sup>th</sup> St. Humphrey stated the main focus is along the railroad corridor. The goal is to improve safety and pedestrian conflicts. By closing this, we will be constructing a new roadway between 45<sup>th</sup> St. and 48<sup>th</sup> St. There are a lot of trains on these tracks. It is a safety issue.

Humphrey continued that we don't have all the answers yet. We will look at any impacts to individual properties and driveways for businesses in the area. There are a lot of constraints. The draft subarea plan was just submitted. There are four different alternatives to the transportation network. In all four plans, the 33<sup>rd</sup> St. alignment will swing to the west and there will be an extension up to 33<sup>rd</sup> St. and Superior.

One alternative has a fish hook connection. Adams St. will come over the tracks and move into a connection with Cornhusker Hwy. An open house is scheduled for January 17, 2019. This will then move on to Planning Commission and then City Council in February 2019.

The preliminary preferred alternative includes a dedicated bridge over the railroad tracks. Another option would be to not connect Adams St. Another option would be to have a bridge over Cornhusker Hwy. and connect to the north. Another option would have Adams St. run parallel to the railroad tracks on the south side.

We are working with NDOT and FHWA (Federal Highway Administration). It will probably take another two to three years before we have a final document. That would be followed by right-of-way acquisition, utility construction and final construction.

Lamm noted there is an advisory committee meeting next week. Humphrey will present the four different alternatives and the subarea plan will be reviewed.

Brinkman inquired where State Fair Rd. is in the timeline. Humphrey stated that the extension of Salt Creek Roadway and 33<sup>rd</sup> St. would become part of the LRTP (Long Range Transportation Plan). David Cary added that those concepts will be in the plan, they will end up being illustrative projects only in the LRTP. The plan will be amended to show those concepts are being considered. The funding isn't there for the near term.

Humphrey stated we have met with a handful of businesses in the area and let them know what is happening with the project. She believes they were okay with what was being proposed. Mike Brienzo noted that the LRTP is required to be fiscally restrained. The RTSD has

committed to this project. He believes you can realistically say that the RTSD is determined to see this through.

### **BRIEFING ON THE LINCOLN MPO ON-STREET BIKE FACILITIES STUDY:**

Kellee Van Bruggen handed out some executive summaries. Staff has been working on this for most of the year. The draft is available for public input.

Jenny Young stated that the draft plan and executive summary are now available for public review. The foundational element for the bike plan is that it is very much data driven. Community input has been essential. We appeared before the Technical Advisory Committee in February 2018. They met monthly. There was also a Bicycle Facility Advisory Committee. That group met four times during the process. There has been some research done to categorize different people and the way they perceive bicycling. Only a small population are highly comfortable riding a bike and mixing with traffic. The vast majority of people are considered interested, but concerned. This group is our target audience. This is the greatest opportunity to get people biking. If you can design a bike network to this group, then you can capture the greatest group of people.

We crafted a vision that states Lincoln will be a bicycling community. There are also supporting goals. We are trying to take a holistic look. Safety, comfort, culture, equity, connected ridership, education, funding, travel options and bicycle friendly are all areas being looked at.

We used a multitude of different strategies to reach out to a number of people. We used the City email list which is over 1,200 people. We did social media blasts. We used posters and postcards and several newspaper articles. We have a project website: [www.lincolnbikeplan.com](http://www.lincolnbikeplan.com). We did two different surveys and a public commenting map. There were over 650 different locations and comments identified from the map. Two public meetings were held. They were well attended. We held booths at various events such as Earth Day and farmers markets around town. This helped us reach a broader audience. We found that we were lacking diversity. We did some targeting supplemental outreach through the Lincoln Bike Kitchen, StarTran, City libraries and Matt Talbot kitchen.

We were fortunate to have a lot of readily accessible data from the City GIS (Geographic Information Systems) database. We tried to identify the likely places that people would want to be biking. We looked at the population density, employment density, bus stops, BikeLNK stations, parks, schools and libraries. We created a map that showed areas likely to create the highest demand for bike traffic. We performed an analysis of all the streets in Lincoln to find traffic stress. She thinks we can see there are barriers in the arterials, but there are also a lot of opportunities. There are 95 miles in the existing bike network and 144 miles proposed. This network builds off the already excellent trail system that is in place. Projects will be built over time. The network includes some lower cost solutions. Many projects can be paired with future rehabilitation and reconstruction projects.

There are two basic initiatives. They are to implement a safety campaign targeting specific unsafe behaviors and to foster a culture of mutual respect and empathy. One key message in the plan is to communicate that investing in bikes is good for everyone. There is a lot of good research to show that investing in bicycling is good for the environment. There are economic benefits and health benefits as well. The public review is through the end of the month. So far, 41 comments have been received. Overall, they have been very positive. There were five generally negative comments. The majority of comments were specific considerations. We will consider all comments before finalizing the plan. This should be finalized around January or February 2019. The LRTP will need to be updated.

Lamm questioned the timeframe if this is implemented. Young responded there is no specific timeframe. It all depends on funding availability. Lamm noted a study was mentioned. Young answered that it was a study that was National based. It is not Lincoln specific, but representative of the nation.

Brinkman wondered how this connects with the Downtown Master Plan. Van Bruggen replied that the two plans have been on a parallel track.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS:**

Brinkman nominated Lamm as Chair Pro Tem for today's meeting, seconded by Mayor Beutler and carried 4-0: Mayor Beutler, Brinkman, Huff and Lamm voting 'yes'; Shobe and Wiltgen absent.

#### **REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE NEBRASKA DOT/MPO HIGHWAY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND REVISIONS TO THE LINCOLN MPO 2040 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) AND FY 2019-2022 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) TO INCORPORATE PLANNING SUPPORT:**

Brienzo noted there is a Federal requirement that these are put together. In February 2018, safety measures were adopted and those were amended to the LRTP. Since then, we have been working on measures for State of Good Repair and System Performance. A memo was in the agenda outlining the targets that the State has agreed to. These were submitted to FHWA and they were accepted. The MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) has gone through the process of working with the State. We are comfortable with the State measures and recommend supporting those. If at any time we feel we want to establish different targets, we can do that. We would have to go through a whole process and gather data. Coordination seemed to be the best strategy. The data and targets are submitted to FHWA for review on a regular basis. A report included in the agenda outlined the targets. We are supporting the StarTran Transit Asset Management Plan and are incorporating it into our process. The action amends the LRTP and the TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) to include the State target measures.

**ACTION:**

Brinkman moved approval for the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan – 2016 Update and the FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program to reflect MPO support for the newly adopted Performance Management Measures, seconded by Lamm.

Mayor Beutler would like clarified if adoption of the standards we are already doing, will not cost any additional resources. Brienzo stated if a project comes forward, it doesn't mean it is our responsibility to fund it. It is very likely that if the project was on the National Highway System, the State would fund it. Huff added this adopts targets. There are penalties if we don't hit our targets. For the MPO, there is no penalty. This just makes sure that projects are coordinated. Cary noted that this is why it makes sense. It is a mechanism for us to improve our coordination.

Motion carried 4-0: Mayor Beutler, Brinkman, Huff and Lamm voting 'yes'; Shobe and Wiltgen absent.

Mayor Beutler wondered if the measures could be changed. Brienzo noted this could be sent back for more review at any time. Pam Dingman stated the targets could be changed at any time as well. Mayor Beutler questioned if new targets require new expenditures. Brienzo replied not according to current regulations. This is mainly information. Right now, it is a reporting mechanism, so Congress can have information from all the States. Mayor Beutler inquired if a new target is set on a particular project. Huff responded it is just feedback. It takes data and sees how decisions affect outcome, how roads are performing. It uses data to inform decision making.

Mayor Beutler questioned if our safety record is getting better. Brienzo replied yes it is. We have a very good engineering and traffic system.

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Lamm called for acceptance of the minutes of May 4, 2018. Mayor Beutler, Brinkman, Huff and Lamm voting 'yes'; Shobe and Wiltgen absent.

**BRIEFING ON THE LANCASTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY REPORT:****S. 68<sup>th</sup> St. Study and 148<sup>th</sup> St. Study**

Dingman noted that the City had a coalition and Lancaster County was planning on a study. This was funded by County Commissioners to primarily focus on infrastructure needs. She believes there were some who may have thought the needs of the County were exaggerated.

This was not the case. There were people involved from the City and County. We looked at overall what are the goals and expectations. The main goals are maintenance, mobility, safety and reliability issues. It was the Committee's overall thought that we focus on replacing the closed bad bridges first, and hold off on pavement. The second focus was on maintaining what we already have. We also did a peer review to see what others are doing. 85 to 95 percent of the population in Lancaster County is in Lincoln. The rest is pretty rural. Many peer counties are spending a lot more money than what we are. We are \$18,000.00 dollars a mile compared with a National average of \$28,000.00 to \$32,000.00 a mile. The funding gap in Lancaster County is \$15 million dollars a year. As the City continues to grow, we are gifting our bad infrastructure to the City. The Transportation Committee is now looking at what additional funding mechanisms there are. Perhaps we could look at sales wheel or property tax. We have sent a letter to the County Attorney to help research this. 14 bridges are closed, 42 bridges are obsolete. We keep having more bridges added. We are making progress, but not enough to get us out of danger.

Brinkman believes based on our work, the County 1 and 6 Program reflects that we are focused on maintaining safety and reliability, when we would prefer to be partners in growth. We are hoping the County Attorney can help us identify new revenue sources to identify some safety needs. Hopefully we can get into a better growth mode.

Huff stated that there are people out there who question a need. You have to tell a story. He questioned if there is any time spent looking at trends relating to storm frequency, climate change perhaps in Lancaster County that might affect bridges. It could be another data point. Dingman finds it interesting. She loves details. Engineers understand data, the public doesn't always have a handle on it. She is aware of other entities that are studying storm frequencies. 100 year storm frequencies are happening more often these days. These are things we continually look at. We have been stretching this budget for almost 100 years. It was in the 1930's when our budget was cut and it continues to this day.

Dingman continued that there have tragic deaths and a cry for a safety study on S. 68<sup>th</sup> St. She asked for N. 148<sup>th</sup> St to be studied as well. We contracted with FHU to do both of these studies.

### 148<sup>th</sup> Street

148<sup>th</sup> St. has had a lot of growth. We looked at speed in the corridor. We looked at safety improvement, operational improvement and system improvements. She believes we need to focus on operational improvements as well as system. The consultant surprised her with data that shows the traffic warrants 148<sup>th</sup> St. to be four lane divided by 2025. We have a really bad cultural issue on our roads in Lancaster County with speeds. She thinks we need to look at roundabouts. In Lancaster County, we are at a pivotal point where we don't have any infrastructure set up to target managing traffic signals, especially considering the current level of funding. There are some safety improvements suggested now for 148<sup>th</sup> St. We are going to

start getting a lot louder with our request to get the East Beltway in process. Right now, 148<sup>th</sup> St. acts as the East Beltway.

### 68<sup>th</sup> Street

Dingman stated that 85 percent of the speeds are at 70 mph on this street. We looked at safety, operation and systemic improvements. Safety wise, we know we need some additional turn lanes. We are talking about a lot more roundabouts for this area. The State is incorporating a roundabout at 70<sup>th</sup> St. and Saltillo Rd. Hickman is looking at a roundabout on 68<sup>th</sup> St. It makes sense to look at additional roundabouts. We are trying to hold off on investing in traffic signal technology. We currently have no infrastructure set up for that. People in this corridor want paved shoulders. She knows we have future needs, but we have maintenance needs that aren't getting met.

Lamm wondered if there are any numbers on estimated revenue from wheel tax. Brinkman stated that it depends on what wheel tax is set at. If we are trying to match the City of Lincoln, \$2.2 million dollars. We are thinking of partnering with other growing communities in the County. It depends on the different levels that are set. We know we will have a lot of input from different agricultural producers on any tax. We don't plan to move forward without a public engagement effort.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.