

MEETING MINUTES

Technical Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 26, 2013

1:30 p.m.

Room 113, County/City Building

Members Present: Miki Esposito, Roger Figard, Randy Hoskins, Public Works/Utilities/RTSD; Marvin Krout, David Cary, David Pesnichak, Planning; Don Thomas, Doug Pillard, County Engineering; Wynn Hjermsstad, Urban Development; Gary Bergstrom, Health; Lynn Johnson, Parks and Recreation; Michael Davis, StarTran; Brad Zumwalt, Randy Eldorado, Nebraska Department of Roads.

Others Present: Tom Brennan, Nelson Nygaard; Barb Fraser, PBAC; Mike Heyl, Health; Kaine McClelland, David Schoenmaker, NDOR; Brian Praeuner, StarTran; Sheree Goertzen, NeighborWorks; Mike Brienzo, Michele Abendroth, Planning.

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. The Nebraska Open Meetings Act was acknowledged.

1. Review and action on the draft minutes of the August 15, 2013 Technical Committee meeting.

Krout moved approval of the August 15, 2013 Technical Committee meeting, seconded by Cary. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Review of the *Lincoln Travel Options Strategy* for the MPO planning area.

Brienzo introduced Tom Brennan of Nelson/Nygaard, who is the lead consultant for the travel options project. A team of City, County, State and UNL staff has been working with our consultants on the travel options strategies, or Travel Demand Management, since December of last year (2013). A draft report has been prepared and posted on the MPO webpage called Lincoln Travel Options Strategy.

Brennan began with a presentation on the travel options strategy for Lincoln. He provided a definition of travel options, which include: strategies that deliver, expand and reduce barriers; programs that outreach, encourage, incent and educate; and investments that support options. He reviewed the events that have taken place since the initiation of the project in December which include reports on a landscape scan, best practice review, a community survey, stakeholder outreach, proposed organizational alternatives, the draft work plan, a business case, and a revised work plan.

Brennan stated that stakeholder interviews were conducted and reviewed the key themes found during this time including:

- Many traditional drivers of TDM are not in place such as congestion, travel time, etc.
- Transit headways, service hours and user perceptions are a challenge to attracting users.
- Public health and reducing “brain drain” cited as key drivers for increasing travel options.
- Economic development cited as driver, but in practice parking is seen as primary access mode.
- Opportunity to focus on education and acceptance (reduce negative perceptions of cyclists and transit riders by non-riders).
- Opportunity to build on success in biking realm, seeking to attract more commuters.

Next, Brennan provided a review of strategies used in our peer cities. The peer cities all have a higher percentage of commuters using alternative modes of transportation.

Brennan reviewed the reasons why a travel options program is needed, which include to maintain short

commuter times, support a healthy economy, maintain good air quality, manage parking access, support community health, enhance value of transit, and expand the life of roads. Brennan displayed a graph showing how the use of alternative forms of transportation has seen a decline in Lincoln over the past 20 years.

Brennan then paused the presentation to ask if there are any questions.

Esposito asked how Lincoln compares to the peer cities in terms of congestion and air quality. Brennan stated that in places like Ann Arbor, they do have more significant congestion problems, but Missoula has a similar amount.

Johnson asked how Lincoln compares to the peer cities in terms of investment in public transportation. Brennan stated that in comparing service hours per capita, it is approximately half of what the peer cities are investing. He recognizes that there is a difference in that some of the peer cities have taxing authority.

Davis asked about the guaranteed ride home program for the peer cities. Brennan stated that the service is generally provided by a city transit agency. Esposito asked if there is a cost to the rider. Brennan stated that it is generally free to the rider.

Bergstrom asked how the peer cities were chosen. Brennan stated that they tried to find cities that had large universities and had good travel programs in place already.

Brennan continued with the presentation, specifically the travel options program. The goals of the travel options program are to establish a travel options program structure via new partnerships; improve awareness of travel options to encourage more people to use sustainable modes of travel for more trips, provide safe and accessible travel options for people of all abilities and for types of trips; reduce community-wide costs associated with transportation.

The timeline for the strategies is as follows: year 1 would include program development, partnership building and branding; year 2 would include rideshare matching and bike map; and years 3-5 would be universal pass program, carshare and bikeshare.

The interim strategies are to secure funding, build organizational knowledge and support, and initiate a coordinating committee. Funding options include federal (CMAQ), state, local partnerships, and foundations/trust grants.

They looked at organizational options, and they recommend a City/MPO-led program due to the supportive city/regional policy, the existing political support, infrastructure/ program coordination, overhead costs savings and centralized user information. Program priorities include branding, working on partnerships, and providing an incentives program.

For staffing, they are recommending a full time travel options program manager coordinating with the StarTran marketing coordinator, and a half time travel options program coordinator.

Estimated program costs for year 1 are \$183,920, year 2 \$275,678, year 3 \$238,909, year 4 \$345,854 and year 5 \$328,002.

They are also recommending the continuation of the oversight committee as a coordinating committee. The goals of the coordinating committee are to revise the work plan as needed, implement performance measurement, coordinate programs and leverage funding.

Hjermstad asked if the elected officials have seen this report. Brienzo stated that there is an MPO Officials Committee meeting tomorrow. The Mayor has seen pieces of the program. He noted that this is the draft report.

Davis asked how other options programs are funded. Brennan stated that there is not really a template for that to happen. CMAQ is a major funding source.

Esposito thanked Brennan for his work on the project and the presentation today.

3. Other topics for discussion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

*** Please note that these minutes will not be formally approved until the next meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Committee. ***

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