

SECTION 2 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATION

2.1. Introduction

The City and LPSNRD have emphasized the importance of public participation and education since the beginning of the Basin Plan effort. To achieve plan goals and fully understand issues throughout the watershed, citizens and stakeholders were informed and given multiple opportunities to provide feedback as part of the planning process. The Basin Plan is expected to be adopted as an approved component of, and will be integrated into, a unified watershed management master plan for the City and projected growth areas.

The public involvement strategy was established so that citizens can participate in public decisions that affect them, their property, and their interests. The public involvement strategy's diverse approach involved a Core Work Group, Advisory Council, two open house events, stakeholder meetings, four newsletters, press releases, news articles, and the City of Lincoln Watershed Department website. A description of each component of the strategy is outlined below.

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2.2. Core Work Group

Technical input from the Core Work Group was vital to establishing the Basin Plan. This group consisted of technical staff representing the City of Lincoln Public Works and Utilities Department, Planning Department, and Parks and Recreation Department, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ), LPSNRD, and members of the consultant team. The Core Work Group, listed below in Table 2-1, met 11 times throughout the planning period; most members also attended Open House events and various other progress meetings. The Core Work Group was responsible for reviewing and commenting on Basin Plan components, providing direction for public involvement and education, and adding technical insight to the Basin Plan.

Table 2-1. Basin Plan Core Working Group

Representing	Name	Title
City of Lincoln Public Works	Ed Kouma, PE	Project Manager
City of Lincoln Public Works	Ben Higgins, PE	Senior Engineer
City of Lincoln Public Works	Miki Esposito, JD	Director of Public Works
City of Lincoln Planning	Sara Hartzell	Planner
City of Lincoln Parks and Recreation	Terry Genrich	Natural Resources Manager
LPSNRD	Paul Zillig	Assistant Manager
LPSNRD	JB Dixon	Stormwater Specialist
NDEQ	Mary Schroer	Program Specialist
EA Engineering, Science, and Technology	*Dale Schlautman, PE	Senior Technical Review
EA Engineering, Science, and Technology	*Jon Trombino, PE	Project Manager
EA Engineering, Science, and Technology	*Jonathan Mohr, AICP	Environmental Scientist
JEO Consulting Group, Inc.	*Lalit Jha, PE, CFM, D.WRE	Engineer
Wright Water Engineers	*Jane Clary, LEED AP, CPESC	Senior Environmental Scientist
Wright Water Engineers	*Jonathan Jones, PE, D.WRE	Chief Executive Officer
Wright Water Engineers	*Dr. Robert Pitt, PE, PhD, BCEE, D.WRE	Cudworth Professor University of Alabama

*Consulting team members attended at appropriate times throughout the project

2.3. Advisory Council

An Advisory Council was established in order to gather input from a diverse set of stakeholders that live and work in the Basin Plan project area. The Advisory Council members were selected based upon recommendations from the Core Work Group, and appointed by Mayor Chris Beutler. Council members were invited to review elements of the process, ask questions, raise issues, and share information with one another, the public, and the project team. The 12-member Advisory Council included representatives from neighborhoods, business owners, and various agencies in the project area as shown in Table 2-2. The Advisory Council met three times during the planning period, including meetings in September 2010, February 2011, and November 2011; brief meeting summaries are provided below. Meeting minutes and sign-in sheets are provided in Appendix B.

“Advisory Council members were asked to review elements of the process, ask questions, raise issues, and share information with one another, the public, and the project team” – Advisory Council’s Role

Table 2-2. Basin Plan Advisory Council

Representing	Name
Non-profit	Mike Renken, NeighborWorks
Lincoln Public Schools	Scott Wieskamp, Facilities & Management
Business Group	Andrew Campbell, Campbell's Nursery
Business Group	Steve Hill, Assurity
University of Nebraska – Lincoln	Jennifer Dam, Campus Planning
Lincoln Golf Courses	Dale Hardy, Administrator
Lincoln Children's Zoo	John Chapo, President
Neighborhood Group	Tracy Corr, 40th and A Street
Neighborhood Group	Bob Kuzelka, Near South
University of Nebraska – Lincoln	Rachel Herpel, Water Center
LPSNRD	Karen Amen, Board Director
City of Lincoln	Adam Hornung, City Council

Basin Plan Advisory Council Meeting #1

LPSNRD Office, 3125 Portia Street, Tuesday September 14th, 2010 – 5:30 to 7:30 pm

Summary—The Advisory Council's first meeting consisted of introductions, an introduction to the project, a brief presentation about the scope of work, and discussion to gather feedback from the group on the Basin Plan effort.

Basin Plan Advisory Council Meeting #2

LPSNRD Office, 3125 Portia Street, Thursday February 10th, 2011 – 7:30 to 8:30 am

Summary—The group was briefed on the project team's progress, including a summary of the basin inventory, water quality sampling results, and work completed by the consultant team. The group also discussed the game plan for proceeding with stakeholder meetings, the next open house, and schedule for plan completion.

Basin Plan Advisory Council Meeting #3

LPSNRD Office, 3125 Portia Street, Thursday November 29th, 2011 – 7:30 to 8:30 am

Summary— The final meeting provided the Advisory Council with an update of the project through the presentation to be used at the second Open House. The Council also provided feedback on the project overall and helped make changes to the public presentation.

2.4. Open House Events

Citizens and other stakeholders had the opportunity to meet first hand with those working directly on the Basin Plan at two Open House events. The first Open House was held September 2010, at the beginning of the planning process; the second was held towards the end of the project in December 2011. Open house post-card invitations were sent to more than 11,000 property owners in the project area, special interest groups and resource agencies from across the City of Lincoln. Street sign advertising, a press release, the City's website, and announcements at City and LPSNRD meetings were also employed to advertise the Open Houses. Below is a brief summary of each Open House:

Basin Plan Open House #1

Charles Gere Library, 2400 S. 56th St, Thursday September 30, 2010, 5:00 to 7:30 pm

Summary—Nearly 90 citizens attended the first open house which featured a 15 minute presentation showing at 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm. In addition to the presentations, three stations were set-up featuring water quality, best management practices, and floodplain issues. The City provided a rain barrel door prize, information on rain barrels, and a sign-up for rain garden classes. A large table map of the Basin Plan project area was also provided, along with markers, to allow participants a bird's eye view and the opportunity to locate their property or indicate to the project team potential problem areas. The majority of the core working group and members of the Advisory Council attended as well as members of the consulting team which delivered the presentation.



Picture 4: A participant at Open House #1 reviews the Basin Plan area map

The bulk of the audience's questions concerned current pollutants present in Antelope Creek and what they could do to help improve the water quality. Other questions focused on the differences between the Antelope Creek Basin Plan and other plans which had primarily focused on flood control improvements. Sign-in sheets and a meeting summary are provided in Appendix B.

Basin Plan Open House #2

Auld Pavilion, 3140 Sumner, Thursday December 1, 2011, 5:00 to 7:00 pm

Summary—Nearly 40 citizens attended the final Open House that included two 15 minute presentations and three stations with information on the Basin Plan recommendations, both structural and non-structural. One station included information on existing programs of the City and LPSNRD and a rain barrel which was given as a door prize.

2.5. Stakeholder Meetings

Six stakeholder groups allowed the project team to more thoroughly identify issues and expand opportunities to educate those that live and work in the project area. Based upon recommendations of the Advisory Council, the project team reached out to groups that may be impacted by activities recommended in the Basin Plan, such as neighborhood associations, the Lincoln Children's Zoo, and other community organizations. The project area includes portions of 20 neighborhood associations, each of which received a letter offering opportunities to learn about the Basin Plan. Stakeholder group actions are detailed in Table 2-3 below.

Table 2-3. Stakeholder Group Action Summary

Stakeholder	Activity	Date	Notes
Homebuilders Association of Lincoln (HBAL)	Basin Plan article in monthly newsletter	March 2011	The HBAL newsletter is distributed to approximately 750 businesses.
Lincoln Children’s Zoo	Meeting with Zoo staff	March 2011	Project team members received an update on existing water quality projects at zoo and discussion of planned activities and projects to be included in the plan
Witherbee Neighborhood Association	Basin Plan article in monthly newsletter and presentation at monthly meeting	July 2011	Project team members Jonathan Mohr and Ed Kouma presented at a monthly meeting July 7, 2011.
Colonial Hills Neighborhood Association	Basin Plan article in monthly newsletter	May 2011	Project team members provided a summary for the monthly newsletter
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	Focus group meeting	June 2011	Project team members Jon Trombino, Jonathan Mohr, Paul Zillig, and Ed Kouma met with six separate department representatives to discuss water quality in Antelope Creek.
40 th and A Street Neighborhood Association	Presentation at monthly meeting	October 2011	Project team members Jon Trombino and Ed Kouma presented general information on components of the Basin Plan with an emphasis on what citizens can do to help water quality.

2.6. Newsletter and Website

Watershed News

Four issues of Watershed News, a newsletter used to provide general information on the Basin Plan, were mailed during the project. Newsletters highlighted different components of the Basin Plan in an educational format and were distributed to a list of more than 1,100 individuals representing businesses, community organizations, neighborhood associations, non-profits, and local, state, and Federal agencies throughout the City and the Basin Plan project area. Newsletters were also distributed at each Open House, and made available to the Mayor's roundtable and posted on the City's website. Each volume is summarized below:

- **Volume One, August 2010**—Introduced the Basin Plan, discussed water quality issues present in Antelope Creek, generally described typical BMPs, and invited readers to Open House #1.
- **Volume Two, January 2011**—Focused on stormwater runoff, land-uses and pollutant sources, and included a summary from the first open house.
- **Volume Three, September 2011**—Summarized what we have learned after modeling the watershed and conducting surface water sampling. Discussed source of *E. coli* being non-point from diffuse sources in the watershed.
- **Volume Four, April 2012**—Summarized final recommendations in the Basin Plan for reducing pollutant loads in the watershed and highlighted the implementation strategy. Featured both structural and non-structural solutions.

A copy of each Watershed News newsletter is located in Appendix B.

City Website

The City's website (lincoln.ne.gov: keyword 'watershed') was used to feature an array of information on the Basin Plan. The website included an informative project description, frequently asked questions, information on project team members and Advisory Council, public participation, and newsletters. The website was regularly updated by City staff, and included interactive definitions of key terms and several images.

