

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** April 17, 2020, 2:00 p.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln, NE

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** David Cary – Planning Department, Pam Dingman – County Engineering, Elizabeth Elliott – Lincoln Transportation and Utilities; Paul Barnes – Planning Dept.; Lonnie Burklund and Thomas Shafer – Lincoln Transportation and Utilities (LTU); Michael Davis – StarTran; Roger Figard – Railroad Transportation Safety District; Sara Hartzell – Parks and Recreation; Larry Legg – Lancaster County Engineer; Rick Bishop – Urban Development; Kellee Van Bruggen – Planning Dept.; Gary Bergstrom, Thomas Goodbarn, David Haring and Craig Wacker absent. Allan Zafft of the Planning Dept.; and Jesse Poore of Felsburg Holt & Ullevig.

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

Cary then requested a motion approving the minutes of the meeting held January 23, 2020. Motion for made by Figard, seconded by Hartzell and carried 12-0: Barnes, Bishop, Burklund, Cary, Davis, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Hartzell, Legg, Shafer and Van Bruggen voting ‘yes’; Bergstrom, Goodbarn, Haring and Wacker absent.

### **REVIEW AND ACTION ON REVISIONS TO THE FY 2020-2023 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP); A) SALTILLO ROAD, 27<sup>TH</sup> STREET TO 68<sup>TH</sup> STREET, REVISE THE PROGRAMMING FOR PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING TO ADD FEDERAL FUNDS:**

Allan Zafft stated that Lancaster County Engineering requested an amendment to add federal funding to a new project phase. This is for 27<sup>th</sup> and Saltillo Rd. project.

### **ACTION:**

Legg moved approval of revisions to the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a) Saltillo Road, 27<sup>th</sup> Street to 68<sup>th</sup> Street, revise the programming for preliminary engineering to add federal funds, seconded by Dingman and carried 12-0: Barnes, Bishop, Burklund, Cary, Davis, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Hartzell, Legg, Shafer and Van Bruggen voting ‘yes’; Bergstrom, Goodbarn, Haring and Wacker absent.

Cary stated that he is very happy to move this project forward. It is an important one.

**REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED LINCOLN MPO CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS (CMP):**

Zafft stated that we just completed a draft of the Congestion Management document. It is an eight step framework that must be developed as an integrated part of the Metropolitan Planning process. In 2017, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration performed a certification review that happens once every four years. One of their findings was a recommendation to update the CMP with current activities. One of those items was the 2009 CMP document and along with that incorporate the newly established performance measures. We hired Felsburg Holt & Ullevig (FHU) to help us develop and update the CMP document.

Jesse Poore with Felsburg Holt & Ullevig stated that the subcommittee reviewed this in November 2019. We need to establish specific goals related to congestion. The data was brought back to the subcommittee in March 2020 with some suggested strategies that could be considered. The document is laid out in three sections. We looked at trends and found them interesting. The annual hours of congestion are higher in other parts of the country than here. Lincoln is doing very well in terms of congestion on the national highway system. State trends are helpful as well. Two of the numbers jumped out. Public transit transportation percentage is significantly lower than the national average. Bicyclers to work is about twice as much than the national average. Current trends of work from home aren't sustainable, but Nebraska lags a little from the national average. We established two very specific objectives; manage efficient performance and manage reliable performance. We defined the road network and transit system. Then we developed performance measures and reflected to what exists. The first group is mandated measures that exist today. The other category is the existing ones in the LRTP. Two were added directly to address congestion related to congestion factor and average annual crashes per mile. There are two more federal measures that will come along in 2022. Congestion factor is a measure that we identify. We looked at about 70 travel corridors and travel times. We found the data was a bit inconclusive, but it was illustrated and helpful. We looked at crash data. The subcommittee looked at about 45 potential strategies. The group identified 9 strategies with higher applicability. They are all helpful strategies. This isn't what must be done, but what must be considered.

Mike Davis wanted to highlight that transit is still under the national average with mode split.

Cary wanted to know about the expectation of the regular update process. Zafft responded that this ensures we are incorporating the CMP into the TIP process. He believes when we do the annual transportation report, we can evaluate congestion. This can also be evaluated in the LRTP (Long Range Transportation Plan) update.

Cary pointed out that this is a good thing to have gotten done. It is required but the last federal certification review wanted this done before the next review. He appreciates the effort that went into this. This is a good launchpad for up to incorporate these ideas and efforts into our regular operations.

**ACTION:**

Figard made a motion to approve the Lincoln MPO Congestion Management Process, seconded by Van Bruggen and carried 12-0: Barnes, Bishop, Burklund, Cary, Davis, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Hartzell, Legg, Shafer and Van Bruggen voting 'yes'; Bergstrom, Goodbarn, Haring and Wacker absent.

**REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FY 2020-2021 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP):**

Zafft stated that the UPWP is essentially the MPO budget. This goes on a state fiscal year. It is also the basis for federal contracts. This work program is primarily funded with PL funds. Those are funds that go through the state from the federal government. For fiscal year 2021, we get \$763,013.00 in federal dollars. The first section is administration and management activities. The second is interagency and public outreach activities. The next is short range planning and programming, maintaining the TIP. The next work activity is transportation planning such as updating the LRTP. The last is transportation system planning such as updating the model and implementing the CMP. The next is the transit work program, StarTran takes the lead on that. They receive federal funding for that program. There are also other activities and programs included such as the urban air quality program.

Dingman noted that in particular with this program, which once again has the annual MPO funds in it, she wanted to state that as she had previously stated at the Planning Commission meeting on April 15, 2020, that she believes that the process is inherently flawed and biased against Lancaster County. She had also stated her views at the MPO Project Selection Committee meeting. She continues to have concerns that as like last year, the city came forward with projects that were in groups such as System Maintenance and System Optimization without naming individual projects. Lancaster County named individual projects. She is questioning how Lancaster County lost to undefined projects. She is asking the system be modified. Last year was the first time that Lancaster County has received funds in the 19 year history. Now we are on year 20 and we are still having trouble being included in the game. The projects that Lancaster County brought forward are all close on the urban development fringe. She feels these projects should be included.

Cary stated that the work program is obviously very heavy on the LRTP update for next year. The bulk of that work will happen next year. A lot of that has to do with updating the travel demand model as well. Zafft added that there is the cost of the consultant as well. Cary noted that Dingman's comments would apply to the TIP as well.

**ACTION:**

Figard moved approval of the FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program, seconded by Barnes and carried 12-0: Barnes, Bishop, Burklund, Cary, Davis, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Hartzell, Legg, Shafer and Van Bruggen voting 'yes'; Bergstrom, Goodbarn, Haring and Wacker absent.

**REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE SELF-CERTIFICATION REVIEW:**

Zafft stated that we are required annually by the MPO to do a review of the metropolitan planning process. This occurs concurrently with the TIP. This is to make sure we are following the laws and regulations relating to a number of items. There are ten items listed on the review and we point out how we are meeting each one.

Cary mentioned that this is an annual process.

**ACTION:**

Van Bruggen made a motion to recommend to the MPO Officials Committee that the Executive Officer sign the self-certification statement, seconded by Burklund and carried 12-0: Barnes, Bishop, Burklund, Cary, Davis, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Hartzell, Legg, Shafer and Van Bruggen voting 'yes'; Bergstrom, Goodbarn, Haring and Wacker absent.

**REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FY 2021-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP):**

Zafft stated that the TIP is done annually. The purpose is to coordinate a list of transportation projects for the Lincoln MPO. These are transportation projects that typically receive federal transportation funds, regionally significant and are subject to federally required actions. The TIP is a four year schedule based on a federal fiscal year which is October 1 to September 30. The projects must be consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan. The State has the South Beltway and roadway projects, along with bridge, culvert, and maintenance projects. Lancaster County Engineering has one safety project and two roadway capital projects. Lincoln Transportation & Utilities has seven projects for Transportation System Preservation. The next is Transportation System Optimization that has four projects listed. There is also Transportation System Growth, Transportation Livable Neighborhoods and the Transportation Sidewalk Program. Then there are four projects highlighted for the Capital Roadway Program which we see as regionally significant. StarTran has a number of projects listed which includes replacing some buses and handivans along with maintenance, amongst other items. Lincoln Airport Authority has a number of projects such as runway improvements. Federal Transit Programs highlights the 5310 program. We work with NDOT (Nebraska Dept. of Transportation). The next section is Ped, Bike & Trails. This includes projects from the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District and City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation. The last is Railroad Transportation Safety District which lists the 33<sup>rd</sup> and Cornhusker Highway project.

The TIP appeared before Planning Commission on April 15, 2020 and they found the TIP to be in general conformance with the LRTP. The next step is for this item to go before the MPO Officials Committee on May 1, 2020.

Dingman pointed out that the comments she made on the Unified Planning Work Program also apply to this item.

Figard inquired if Dingman was indicating that the County had not received any federal aid in a 20 year period or hadn't received an appropriate share of any federal aid in that 20 year period. Dingman responded that for this particular funding source, County Engineer has not received an appropriate share over the duration of that period. Figard is concerned that regarding transparency and talking to the public, he thinks everyone would agree, he started in this process in 1991 and over the years, none of us have had the resources to do the breadth of everything that they wanted to do. On the City website, the TIP is available for viewing back to 2003. There are ten programs in there that totaled almost \$60 million. Each of those programs had around \$5.9 million in Federal aid. He thinks there was always an effort to put dollars where they needed to be. We never did have enough. He knows in 2013, there was a change in the process and program. Dingman acknowledges there were changes in 2013. Her statements are in regard to the funding that was allotted on an annual basis to the MPO for projects, not to funding allotted overall to the program. Figard stated that the majority of funding that comes from the state is for projects. The MPO planning money is a pretty small percent. There are safety funds, STP funds and other categories. No one has all the money they want. It is a challenge for all of us. Dingman noted that in particular, she is referring to the STP funds that are allotted to the MPO and project selection process which has been laid out for those funds.

**ACTION:**

Figard moved approval of the FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program, seconded by Barnes and carried 10-0: Barnes, Bishop, Burklund, Cary, Davis, Elliott, Figard, Hartzell, Shafer and Van Bruggen voting 'yes'; Dingman and Legg voting 'no'; Bergstrom, Goodbarn, Haring and Wacker absent.

**REPORT ON THE 2040 STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN:**

Zafft stated that the State is in the process of updating their long range transportation plan. They are calling it the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. Like the MPO, they are required to do a LRTP for the state with at least a 20 year plan horizon. They consider the future trends and needs for people and goods. Unlike the MPO's, theirs does not need to be project specific or fiscally constrained. This will be more policy. A lot of states do it that way. They have a website established for the project. The project started in 2019. They will have public involvement. They were going to have a Future of Transportation forum last month. It was delayed due to the ongoing pandemic. The document was due to be completed in early 2021. He would think that date is probably going to be delayed a little.

**REPORT ON UPDATING THE MPO LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN:**

Zafft stated that as an MPO, we are required to update the LRTP every five years. This is the blueprint for transportation planning over the next 30 years. We must be in compliance with federal requirements to receive federal funding. This is an effort among City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, NDOT, StarTran and other agencies. The current LRTP was adopted in 2017. We kicked off our update effort with the consultant, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig. Some major work tasks will include updating the Travel Demand Model. We will also do a peak travel enhancement model. We will do a current and future needs assessment, identify goals, objectives and Performance Measures, and Alternatives Development and Analysis. The Implementation Plan will be threefold with financial outlook, putting together a fiscally constrained plan and recommended policies and strategies. Next is the documentation and lastly, public engagement. Public engagement will include websites, press releases, social media outreach pop up events and committees, along with focus groups. The LRTP update process is an 18 month schedule. Right now, we are in the data collection mode with this project.

Cary had a question on the update process and the challenges with the current and possible long lasting restrictions on larger groups being able to get together. He is assuming and expecting that the consultant team is thinking how to go through this process and still engage and meet that requirement of public participation. He inquired if Zafft had any initial thoughts on how this could all be achieved. Zafft responded that he has been in contact with him. He indicated we will need to do virtual meetings. He believes we will need to do some public meetings, possibly later in the summer. Hopefully things will have dialed down by then in terms of social distancing. This will be fluid. We will have to respond to the current situation most likely for the rest of the year. We will be doing a lot of online meetings and social media outreach. He has been thinking on how to reach certain groups. Cary agreed. This will have to be thought out on how we do things.

**OTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:**

Cary stated that he appreciated everyone attending today. He know that these are extraordinary times and a lot of our efforts are meant to keep the City, County and State moving forward. He appreciates everyone's willingness to come out, participate and be part of the process.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.