

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

The City of Lincoln's recent update to the Downtown Master Plan demonstrates its commitment to the concept that a strong and vibrant downtown is the heart of a growing community. Downtown Lincoln has long served as a hub for business, sporting events, live entertainment, restaurants, and bars. Over the last 30 years, the city has invested in downtown Lincoln through projects such as the Historic Haymarket District Redevelopment, Antelope Valley Revitalization, Haymarket Park Stadium, West Haymarket Redevelopment and Pinnacle Bank Arena. In recent years, new residential options within downtown Lincoln have been fueled by growth of the University of Nebraska (UNL) and a directed movement at keeping young professionals in Lincoln. Today, it is a place that attracts business, people of all ages, and accommodates many transportation modes.

Transportation planning in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was vehicle centric and prioritized mobility in and out of downtown economic hubs. Using one-way street couplets, capacity was maximized on existing streets and an efficient way to move vehicles in and out of downtowns was implemented. Over time, businesses, parking facilities, and communities have grown around this concept. Perceptions of vehicle centric models have since shifted amongst the transportation community and city leaders, with livable communities that benefit all types of users becoming a priority.

The *2018 City of Lincoln Downtown Master Plan Update* identified potential two-way conversion of several downtown Lincoln streets (11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, M, N, Q, and P) to make traffic circulation and mobility less complex, maximize visibility and access to businesses to spur economic growth, better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, and create opportunities for green and sustainable streetscapes. The purpose of this study is to identify the pros and cons of converting existing one-way streets to two-way streets and discuss potential limitations to implementation. The feasibility analysis includes such factors as:

- Traffic operations
- Multimodal accommodations
- Parking
- Economic impact
- Vehicular and pedestrian safety
- Design constraints

The *2018 City of Lincoln Downtown Master Plan Update* identified the following three corridor groups for conversion from one-way to two-way operations with the listed potential time frames.

### Group 1 – Near-Term (0 to 18 months)

- 13th Street: K to O streets

Group 2 – Mid-Term (18 months to 5 years)

- 11th Street: K to Q streets
- 12<sup>th</sup> Street: K to N streets
- 14<sup>th</sup> Street: Lincoln Mall to Q Street
- M Street: 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> streets
- N Street: 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> streets

Group 3 – Long-Term (5 years to 10 years)

- P Street: 9<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> streets
- Q Street: 9<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> streets
- 16<sup>th</sup> Street: Q to South streets
- 17<sup>th</sup> Street Q to South streets

For purposes of this study, Group 1 and 2 corridors were combined and evaluated as short-term (1-5 year) projects while Group 3 was evaluated as long-term (5-10 year) projects for potential conversion. Traffic operations were analyzed for the following three scenarios:

- Scenario 1 – No action (existing street network)
- Scenario 2 – Short-term conversion of Group 1 and 2 corridors (two build alternatives)
- Scenario 3 – Long-term conversion including Group 3 corridor

A map showing the study area and the analyzed scenarios are illustrated in **Figure 2**.

As potential two-way concepts were developed and general priorities identified as achievable goals for the downtown vision, two different build alternatives were considered for Scenario 2 analysis. The first alternative is a 3-lane section with one lane in each direction and a center two-way left-turn lane (TWLTL). The 3-lane section was developed for all corridors except when prohibited by existing roadway widths. As a result, a 2-lane section was utilized on N Street between 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> streets and on 14<sup>th</sup> Street between K and L streets.

The second alternative is a 2-lane section with one lane in each direction and no left turn lanes at intersections. The 2-lane section was developed for all corridors except between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> streets along M and N streets where weekday peak hour and event traffic volumes are expected to require exclusive left-turn lanes.

During the concept development process, the original study area limits were expanded to allow development of transitions and incorporate *Lincoln Bike Plan* recommendations. The revised study limits were expanded for the following streets:

- 12<sup>th</sup> Street – K to Q streets
- 13<sup>th</sup> Street – Lincoln Mall to R Street
- 14<sup>th</sup> Street – Lincoln Mall to R Street

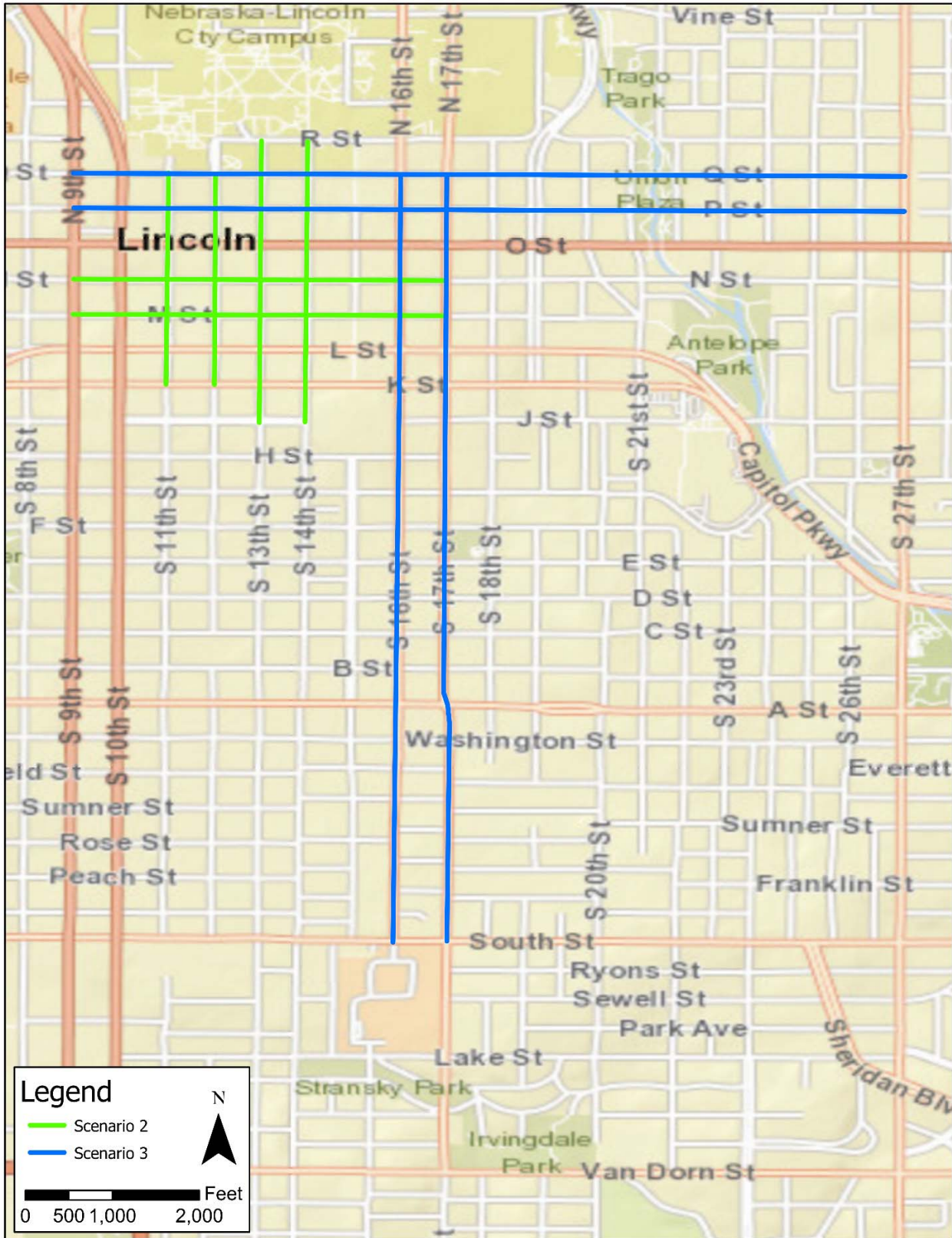


Figure 2. Study Area Map