



## **Directors' Meeting Agenda**

2 p.m. Monday, August 4, 2025

555 S. 10th St., Lincoln, NE

Bill Luxford Studio

- I. Open Meetings Law Announcement**
- II. Approval of Directors' Meeting Minutes from July 21**
- III. City Clerk Advisories**
- IV. City Council Advisories**
- V. Director Advisories**
- VI. Councilmember Commission, Committee, and Event Updates**
- VII. Public Comment**
- VIII. Post-Meeting Council Members' Calls to City Directors**
- IX. Adjournment**

Next Directors' Meeting – 2 p.m. Monday, August 11

### **City Correspondence**

City Clerk	City Council Action 7/28/25
Planning	Administrative Approvals
Urban Development	August 11 Mayors Neighborhood Roundtable

### **Constituent Correspondence**

Jude Hansen	Pool Hours Suggestion
Peter Katt	Lincoln/Omaha Affordable Housing
Nancy Hicks Rose	"A" Street Repair Appreciation

**From:** [Kimberly N. Behrens](#)  
**To:** ["KOLN/KGIN"](#); [Aishah S. Witte](#); [Angela Quinn](#); [Barb D. McIntyre](#); [Benjamin A. Sobel](#); [Bennie R. Shobe](#); [Brenda J. Thomas](#); [Brodey B. Weber](#); [Carl J. Steffen](#); [Chad D. Mohr](#); [Cheri L. Howard](#); [Chris J. Connolly](#); [Chris S. Jones](#); [City Clerk All](#); [Claire Y. Oglesby](#); [Cynthia J. Roth](#); [Daley C. Eldorado](#); [Daniel K. Marvin](#); [David R. Cary](#); [David T. Engler](#); [Elizabeth D. Elliott](#); [Geri K. Rorabaugh](#); [Hallie E. Salem](#); [Holly L. Lewis](#); [James M. Bowers](#); [Jamie Phillips](#); [Jenni R. Ryan](#); [Jennifer L. Mommens](#); [Jessica Loos](#); [Jocelyn W. Golden](#); [Jon D. Carlson](#); [Joseph P. Dondlinger](#); [Justin P. Carlson](#); [Karen Eurich](#); [Kasey L. Simonson](#); [Kerry L. Kernen](#); [Kristi K. Nydahl](#); [Laura A. Tinnerstet](#); [Lin Quenzer](#); [Liza A. Alderman](#); [Maggie J. Stuckey-Ross](#); [Marcia L. Huenink](#); [Mary E. Lowe](#); [Mayor](#); [Melissa M. Ramos-Lamml](#); [Michele M. Abendroth](#); [Michon Morrow](#); [Nicole K. Gross](#); [Peter A. Kroll](#); [Philip L. Dush](#); [Randall S. Jones](#); [Rhonda M. Haas](#); [Ron L. Cane](#); [Ryan S. Wieber](#); [Sandra J. Washington](#); [Sara J. Hoyle](#); [Sara Slama](#); [Scott Parker](#); [Sharon R. Mulder](#); [Shelli K. Reid](#); [Shelly L. Dostal](#); [Sherry Wolf](#); [Souriya Osman](#); [ssahling](#); [ssprackling](#); [Steve R. Owen](#); [Tammy B. Wissing](#); [Thomas A Schaffer](#); [Tim L. Byrne](#); [Tom Duden](#); [Tom J. Beckius](#)  
**Subject:** City Council Action 7/28/25  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 29, 2025 8:29:45 AM  
**Attachments:** [Action072825.pdf](#)  
[Action072825.docx](#)

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Good morning,

Please see the attached for the action from the City Council meeting of 7/28/25.

Thank you,



**Kimberly Behrens**

Office Specialist | City Clerk

City of Lincoln | Office of the City Clerk

Office: 402-441-7438 | Fax: 402-441-8325

555 S 10th St, Rm 103

Lincoln, NE 68508

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**ACTION FROM THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD  
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2025 5:30 PM**

**ALL PRESENT EXCEPT CARLSON**

**PUBLIC HEARING - CONSENT AGENDA**

Anyone wishing to address an item on the Consent Agenda may do so at this time.

**1. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS**

- 1.a. 25R-300**  
Appointing Marilyn Moore to the Lincoln City Library Board for a term to expire August 31, 2032. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95281)**
- 1.b. 25R-301**  
Appointing Lauren Obermier to the StarTran Advisory Board for a term to expire October 20, 2027. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95282)**
- 1.c. 25R-303**  
Appointing Brian Murray to the Telecommunication/Cable Television Advisory Board for a term to expire July 1, 2028. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95283)**
- 1.d. 25R-304**  
Reappointing Bennie Shobe to the Telecommunication/Cable Television Advisory Board for a term to expire July 1, 2027. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95284)**
- 1.e. 25R-306**  
Approving the On-Call Construction Engineering Services Task Order Agreement between the City of Lincoln and Alfred Benesch & Company for the 9th and 10th Streets at A and D Streets signal project, Project No. LCLC-5261(1), Control No. 13436, City Project No. 702144. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95285)**
- 1.f. Lincoln Electric Financial and Operating Statement for June 2025. (PLACED ON FILE)**
- 1.g. Clerk's Letter & Mayor's Approval of Resolutions and Ordinances passed by City Council on July 14, 2025. (PLACED ON FILE)**

**2. PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS**

- 2.a. PLACED ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK:**  
Administrative Amendment 25019, to Final Plat 24078 - Southwest Village Heights 9th Addition, an Affidavit of Surveyor, was approved by the Planning Director on July 8, 2025, to correct typographical errors related to the minimum opening elevation table on the Southwest Village Heights 9th Addition Final Plat, generally located southeast of SW 12th Street and W Old Cheney Road.

Administrative Amendment 25015, to Pre-Existing Use Permit 3AI, Gateway Shopping Center, was approved by the Planning Director July 9, 2025, to revise Area A to relocate commercial floor area to add 7,000 SF to a new pad site, show 9,000 SF as unassigned, revise Note 4 and provide an additional access to Lot 132 I. T., generally located at 6400 O Street.

**3. MISCELLANEOUS REFERRALS – NONE.**

**- VOTE ON CONSENT ITEMS -**

**4. PUBLIC HEARING - LIQUOR RESOLUTIONS**

**4.a. 25R-311**

Application of Escape Lincoln, LLC dba Escape Lincoln for a Class C Liquor License located at 815 O Street, Suites 100-200. **(ADOPTED FOR APPROVAL, 6-0; A-95286)**

**4.b. 25R-312**

Manager Application of Abby Bartholomew for Escape Lincoln, LLC dba Escape Lincoln located at 815 O Street, Suites 100-200. **(ADOPTED FOR APPROVAL, 6-0; A-95287)**

**- VOTE ON LIQUORS -**

**5. PUBLIC HEARING - RESOLUTIONS**

**5.a. 25R-305**

Authorizing an application to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant for renovating and upgrading two ballfields at Jensen Park. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95288)**

**5.b. 25R-307**

Accepting and approving the report of new and pending claims against the City for July 1 through July 15, 2025. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95289)**

**5.c. 25R-308**

Approving an Agreement between the City of Lincoln on behalf of the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department and the Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors to accept a two year sub-grant in the amount of \$199,000. to address issues associated with health equity concerns and social determinants of health (SDOH) through Community Health Workers in community settings to screen, educate, and empower diverse community members to address a range of prevention and health care issues, from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027. **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95290)**

- 5.d. 25R-309**  
Comprehensive Plan Conformance 25003 - Application of the Lincoln Police Department to review as to conformance with the 2050 Lincoln-Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan, for a proposed amendment to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) by adding the "Police Property Storage Remodel for FY2024/2025, on the property generally located at 635 J Street." **(ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95291)**
- 5.e. 25R-310**  
Miscellaneous 25007 - Application of Oxford House, Inc. and Oxford House Hanna Pointe, to request a Reasonable Accommodation under the Fair Housing Act and Chapter 1.28 of the Lincoln Municipal Code to the occupancy limits for Collaborative Living Facilities established by Section 27.62.050(d). Applicants request an accommodation to allow up to 8 persons to occupy the Collaborative Living Facility at 6010 S. 81st Street. **(ADOPTED, 5-1; A-95292)**

**- VOTE ON RESOLUTIONS -**

**6. PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCES 2ND READING & RELATED RESOLUTIONS (ITEM 6.a. HAD 1ST READING)**

- 6.a. 25-71**  
Change of Zone 07018B - Application of Hampton Enterprises, Inc., to amend the Glynoaks Plaza Planned Unit Development to increase the commercial floor area by 78,977 square feet for a total of 258,000 square feet and to add 100 dwelling units on the property generally located at South 84th Street and Glynoaks Drive.

**- END PUBLIC HEARING -**

**7. ORDINANCES - 3RD READING & RELATED RESOLUTIONS**

- 7.a. 25-59**  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'N'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21754)**
- 7.b. 25-60**  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'N'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21755)**

- 7.c. 25-61  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'X'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21756)**
- 7.d. 25-62  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'E'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21757)**
- 7.e. 25-63  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'W'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21758)**
- 7.f. 25-64  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'DSS'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21759)**
- 7.g. 25-65  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'B'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21760)**
- 7.h. 25-66  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'A'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21761)**
- 7.i. 25-67  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'C'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21762)**
- 7.j. 25-68  
Amending the pay schedule for a certain employee group by adjusting the schedules of annual, monthly, biweekly and hourly pay range equivalents for employees of the City of Lincoln whose classifications are assigned to pay ranges prefixed by 'F'. **(PASSED, 6-0; #21763)**

**7.k. 25-69**

An Ordinance authorizing and providing for the issuance, sale or delivery of municipal improvement bonds, in an amount not to exceed \$25,000,000. for the purpose of acquiring, equipping, renovating or reusing an existing building for a new central library. **(Related Items: 25-69, 25-70, 25R-294) (PASSED, 6-0; #21764)**

**7.l. 25-70**

Approving the Real Estate Purchase and Sale Agreement between Southeast Community College Area and the City of Lincoln on behalf of Lincoln City Libraries for the purchase of property generally located at 1111 O Street, Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska for a new downtown central library. **(Related Items: 25-69, 25-70, 25R-294) (PASSED, 6-0; #21765)**

**7.m. 25R-294**

Amending the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Downtown Central Library project to decrease the funding amount and amend the funding source. **(Related Items: 25-69, 25-70, 25R-294) (Action Date: 7/28/25) (ADOPTED, 6-0; A-95293)**

**8. RESOLUTIONS - 1ST READING (ITEMS 8.a. THROUGH 8.f. HAD 1ST READING)**

**8.a. 25R-313**

Reappointing Cindy Ryman Yost, Lorenzo Ball Jr. and Cristy Joy to the Lincoln Lancaster County Planning Commission for terms to expire August 24, 2031.

**8.b. 25R-314**

Reappointing Don Schroeder to the Electrical Advisory, Appeals and Examining Board for a term to expire August 15, 2028.

**8.c. 25R-315**

Approving a Professional Services Agreement Supplement No. 2 for preliminary engineering services between the city of Lincoln and Schemmer Associates, Inc., for Waterford Trail, Project No. TAP-55(192), Control Number 13554.

**8.d. 25R-316**

Approving a Professional Services Agreement Supplement No. 1 for preliminary engineering services between the City of Lincoln and Schemmer Associates, Inc., for Rock Island Trail, A Street to Boosalis Trail, Project No. CRP-55(198), Control No. 13583.

**8.e. 25R-317**

Accepting the Air Quality Program Section 103 Workplan for PM2.5 Activities from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2027.

**8.f. 25R-318**

Approving the Community Health Endowment of Lincoln Grant Contract between the Board of Trustees of the Community Health Endowment, and the City of Lincoln, on behalf of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, in the amount of \$15,000, to provide home pregnancy tests and pregnancy resources through public health vending machines, pharmacies, community cultural centers, and community partners, for a term effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028.

**9. ORDINANCES - 1ST READING & RELATED RESOLUTIONS (ITEMS 9.a. THROUGH 9.e. HAD 1ST READING)**

**9.a. 25-72**

Amending the pay schedule for employee group whose classification is assigned to the pay range which is prefixed by the letter "A" by changing the pay range for Class 3662 "Public Health Nurse" A11 to A13.

**9.b. 25-73**

Amending the pay schedule for the employee group whose classifications are assigned to the pay range prefixed by the letter "A" by deleting the classification for " Public Health Nurse I.

**9.c. 25R-319**

Comprehensive Plan Conformance 25006 - Application of the City of Lincoln Urban Development Department to review as to conformance with the 2050 Lincoln Lancaster Comprehensive Plan, an amendment to the Lincoln Center Redevelopment Plan, Antelope Valley Redevelopment Plan and the North 27th Street Corridor and Environs Redevelopment Plan to amend the "Greater Downtown Principal Corridors Revitalization Project", to extend the length of the TIF period from 15 to 20 years; to increase the estimated amount of TIF available to complete the Project, and to update the cost-benefit analysis, with an overall project boundary including publicly-and privately-owned property roughly bounded by 9th to 28th Streets between north side of P and south side of N, and 9th and 10th Streets from south side of K to north side of S Streets, generally located at N to P Streets from 9th to 28th and 9th to 10th Streets from K to S Streets. **(Related Items: 25R-319, 25-74, 25R-320)**

**9.d. 25-74**

Authorizing the issuance of Tax Allocation Bonds for the Greater Downtown Principal Corridors Revitalization Project in an amount not to exceed \$31.2 million. **(Related Items: 25R-319, 25-74, 25R-320)**

**9.e. 25R-320**

Amending the FY 2024-2025 CIP to authorize and appropriate an additional \$29 million in TIF funds for the Downtown Corridors Project generally located between 9th and 28th Streets from P and N Streets, as well as between 9th Street and 10th Street from T to K Streets, including adjacent alleys and rights-of-way in Greater Downtown Lincoln. **(Related Items: 25R-319, 25-74, 25R-320)**



## 10. PENDING LIST (EXTENDED ONE WEEK)

### 10.a. 24-130

Change of Zone 24018 - Application of Sesostris Temple Holding Corp., to change the zoning designation from AG Agricultural District to H-4 Highway Commercial District, on approximately 15 acres on the property generally located north of the O Street and Anthony Lane intersection. **(Related Items: 24-130, 24R-526, 24R-527) (11/18/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay with continued Public Hearing & Action two weeks to 12/2/24) (12/2/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay with continued Public Hearing & Action two weeks to 12/16/24) (12/16/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay and Move to Pending List No Date Certain)**

### 10.b. 24R-526

Special Permit 24030 - Application of Sesostris Temple Holding Corp., to allow a planned service commercial development with associated waivers on the property generally located north of the O Street and Anthony Lane intersection. **(Related Items: 24-130, 24R-526, 24R-527) (Action Date: 12/2/24) (11/18/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay with continued Public Hearing & Action two weeks to 12/2/24) (12/2/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay with continued Public Hearing & Action two weeks to 12/16/24) (12/16/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay and Move to Pending List No Date Certain)**

### 10.c. 24R-527

Approving the Conditional Zoning Agreement between the City and Sesostris Temple Holding Corp., for the property generally located at 95th and O Street. **(Related Items: 24-130, 24R-526, 24R-527) (Action Date: 12/2/24) (11/18/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay with continued Public Hearing & Action two weeks to 12/2/24) (12/2/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay with continued Public Hearing & Action two weeks to 12/16/24) (12/16/24 - Verbal Motion to Delay and Move to Pending List No Date Certain)**

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone wishing to address the council on a matter not on this agenda, and not planned to appear on a future agenda, may do so at the open microphone session. Individuals are allowed a total of 5 minutes to speak regardless of the number of topics. For the month of July, open microphone sessions will be held on Jul. 21 & Jul. 28, 2025.

## ADJOURNMENT 9:00P.M.

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The Lincoln City Council meets every Monday at 3 p.m. except for the last Monday of the month which begins at 5:30 p.m. All City Council meetings are aired live on LNKTV City and re-aired later. For a schedule, visit [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov) (keyword: LNKTV). LNKTV City can be found on all three cable television systems: ALLOChannel 2; Spectrum Channel 1300; Kinetic Channel 1005. Meetings are also streamed live at [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov)(keyword: LNKTV) and available later at [youtube.com/LNKTVcity](http://youtube.com/LNKTVcity).

LNKTV, the City government access group of channels, is now available on Roku and Apple TV. The free apps allow people without cable and those living outside of Lincoln to view livestreamed and archived LNKTV City, Health, and Education programs. Residents with Roku or Apple TV devices will find LNKTV in the channel guide or app store.

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The City Council Agenda and Action Sheet may be accessed on the Internet at: [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov)

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### **ACCOMMODATION NOTICE**

*The City of Lincoln complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guidelines. Ensuring the public's access to and participating in public meetings is a priority for the City of Lincoln. In the event you are in need of a reasonable accommodation in order to attend or participate in a public meeting conducted by the City of Lincoln, please contact the Lincoln Commission on Human Rights at 402-441-7624, or the City Ombudsman at 402-441-7511 as soon as possible before the scheduled meeting date in order to make your request.*

**From:** [Laura A. Tinnerstet](#)  
**To:** [Benjamin A. Sobel](#)  
**Cc:** [David R. Cary](#); [Steve S. Henrichsen](#)  
**Subject:** Administrative Approvals  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 29, 2025 8:54:04 AM

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Good morning,

There were no Administrative Approvals this week.

Thank you,



**Laura Tinnerstet**  
Administrative Aide II

Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department  
Office: 402-441-6365 | Fax: 402-441-3894

555 S 10th St, Ste 213  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
[lincoln.ne.gov/Planning](http://lincoln.ne.gov/Planning)

**From:** [Stephanie L. Rouse](#)  
**Subject:** August 11 Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable  
**Date:** Friday, August 1, 2025 7:56:30 AM

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Hello Mayor's Neighborhood Roundtable representatives,

Our next meeting is coming up on August 11<sup>th</sup> and will focus on the upcoming budget discussions. See the agenda below along with the meetings notes from July.

- August Agenda: [https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/urban-development/neighborhoods/roundtable/2025\\_august-11-mayors-roundtable-agenda.pdf](https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/urban-development/neighborhoods/roundtable/2025_august-11-mayors-roundtable-agenda.pdf)
- July Notes: [https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/urban-development/neighborhoods/roundtable/2025\\_july-14-mayors-neighborhood-roundtable-meeting-notes.pdf](https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/urban-development/neighborhoods/roundtable/2025_july-14-mayors-neighborhood-roundtable-meeting-notes.pdf)



**Stephanie Rouse, AICP**

Community Development Manager  
Livable Neighborhoods Division

City of Lincoln | Urban Development  
Office: 402-441-8211 | Cell: 531-350-0783

555 S 10th St, Ste 205  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
[lincoln.ne.gov/Urban](https://lincoln.ne.gov/Urban)

**From:** [OpenForms](#)  
**To:** [Benjamin A. Sobel](#)  
**Subject:** Council Comment - Jude Hansen  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 29, 2025 10:40:28 AM  
**Attachments:** [SubmissionReceipt-SubmitAComment-177.pdf](#)



## Council Comment - Jude Hansen

Jude Hansen has submitted a comment for Council. Please see the attached comment

Name	Jude Hansen
Phone number	[REDACTED]
Email address	[REDACTED]
Your comment	<p>Dear Lincoln City Council, My name is Jude Hansen and I'm a 14 year old teenager who goes swimming at Woods pool a lot during the summer. But when school starts and it's still hot but the pools close, I don't like that. So my idea is when the last Sunday in August hits and all the pools sadly close, you should keep Woods pool and Star City Shores open since they make the most money and keep them open until Labor day. My proposal for hours is Monday-Friday 4-7 PM, then 1-6 on the weekends. Then on Labor day, you should have them open from 1-5. Please let me know what you think and if you have any questions. Sincerely Jude.H</p>

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Council Packet](#)  
**Cc:** [Janet L. Hayes](#); [Rick D. Hoppe](#); [Tim Gergen](#)  
**Subject:** Omaha mayor urges 'single largest investment' in affordable housing, with help from streetcar • Nebraska Examiner  
**Date:** Thursday, July 31, 2025 10:46:48 AM  
**Attachments:** [Omaha mayor urges 'single largest investment' in affordable housing, with help f.pdf](#)

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Wow! What bold creative ideas does Lincoln have to invest in affordable housing for Lincoln?

Peter

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Peter Katt [REDACTED]  
**Date:** July 31, 2025 at 10:17:20 AM CDT  
**To:** Peter Katt [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Omaha mayor urges 'single largest investment' in affordable housing, with help from streetcar • Nebraska Examiner

Sent from my iPhone



GOVERNMENT &amp; POLITICS

HOUSING

LABOR &amp; GROWTH

# Omaha mayor urges 'single largest investment' in affordable housing, with help from streetcar

BY: **CINDY GONZALEZ** - JULY 31, 2025 5:00 AM



An affordable housing development in the Omaha area. (Cindy Gonzalez/Nebraska Examiner)

OMAHA — The City of Omaha is poised to make what Mayor John Ewing Jr. called its “single largest investment” in affordable housing as part of his effort to close the gap between the “haves and have-nots.”





📷 Omaha Mayor John Ewing Jr. in his downtown City Hall office. (Courtesy of Mayor's Office)

Seed money would come, the mayor and his team said, via the sale of bonds to be repaid by anticipated tax-increment financing revenue tied to the streetcar project.

The city's plan for the controversial streetcar already had called for some TIF-related proceeds to help create affordable housing – but not until around 2031 or later, said Ewing, who campaigned partly on finding solutions to make renting or buying homes more accessible.

“I don't want to wait that long,” he told the Examiner. “We're moving that process up five or six years ... jump-starting affordable housing now rather than waiting until that income starts coming in.”

Ewing declined to provide certain details, including the level of proposed investment and projected number of new dwellings, saying his team planned a media event Friday.

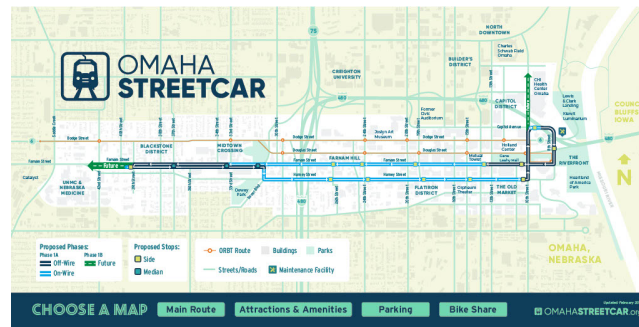
The City Council would have to approve the change.

### **'Smart economics'**

Omaha took a big swing at affordable housing production in 2022 when the city forwarded \$20 million in federal pandemic dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act to nonprofit [Front Porch Investments](#), which helps emerging and other housing developers tap into low-interest loans and grants to produce housing at more affordable rates.

In 2023, the city announced another \$20 million award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to expand the availability of affordable housing.





Omaha Streetcar route. (Courtesy of Omaha Streetcar Authority)

Ewing spoke about his vision to accelerate housing production during the sit down this week. He said he learned more about the streetcar's potential in that area after taking office in June, and that helped sway his opinion in favor of the project.

Omaha officials recently updated the city's price tag for the modern-day streetcar to \$421 million, to be covered by bond funding earlier authorized by the City Council. Property taxes generated by new development along the route are to pay off the bonds using TIF.

Ewing, the former longtime Douglas County treasurer who ousted three-term Republican mayor Jean Stothert to become the city's first Black elected mayor, said a key goal overall is to increase the number of people who can contribute to the tax base and health of the city.

He spoke about his intent to reevaluate tools — namely TIF — that the city currently taps to spur real estate and other investment. He said his administration would explore other incentives to build up hard-to-develop census tracts.

"I think it's critically important that we do it from a standpoint of: This is smart economics," he said.

Regarding TIF, he said he believes Omaha at times has "stretched" the definition of "blighted" and "extremely blighted" beyond what the Legislature intended.

"Some of the areas where it's been implemented wouldn't fit that definition for me," he said.

## TIF critics

Authorized decades ago by the Nebraska Legislature, TIF was a tool designed to stimulate economic development and jobs in blighted areas. The incentive has faced criticism, including by some state lawmakers and Nebraska State Auditor Mike Foley, who have questioned whether cities use the tool too generously.

Debate over TIF and its use for the streetcar project was stoked during the mayor's race.

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## How TIF works:

Typically under tax-increment financing, developers of city-approved projects take out a loan. Over the loan span of 15 or 20 years, the property taxes generated by new improvements on the project site go toward paying eligible costs of transforming the area. That means the difference during that time does not go to the usual recipients of property tax, such as schools and local municipalities.

Meanwhile, the value of a site that existed prior to TIF approval is essentially “frozen” during the TIF loan period, and the fixed property tax revenue generated from it continues to be collected from the owner and distributed to the usual recipients. After the developer’s loan is paid off, all property taxes flow to traditional tax recipients. The idea is that the project site would then be worth more.

Ewing said he likely would not advocate for a change in state law governing TIF but said he would support a move by Omaha to steer the tool toward older, eastern parts of the city.

“I think it should be utilized in areas where development otherwise would not take place,” he said.

According to the city’s latest 2024 analysis, Omaha has approved an average of 21 TIF-boosted projects per year since 2015 when tracking began, for a total of about 272 redevelopment projects.

The latest report from the Nebraska Revenue Department said that 4% of Omaha’s property taxes was diverted by TIF loans.


Ewing said he wants to explore other strategies – including enterprise zones, land trusts and creative tax rebates – that could encourage investment or make housing more accessible to lower-income families.

“When we rely on one tool, we’re not being as creative as we could be,” he said.

## Poverty elimination

Omaha’s Legislature-ordered Poverty Elimination Action plan, approved by the City Council as Ewing started his term, contrasts poverty rates among various Omaha

populations.

 A homebuilder puts finishing touches on a new North Omaha home set to transfer to its first owners assisted by affordable housing programs. (Cindy Gonzalez/Nebraska Examiner)

The poverty rate among Black households was nearly 33%, Latino households was about 16% and white households was 9.3%.

“That really creates a city where you have haves and have-nots, and that’s not sustainable in the long run,” he said.

Noting such disparities, Ewing said he wants to encourage development in disproportionately-affected census tracts of North and South Omaha.

He said the city was assembling an advisory team to help implement recommendations from the five-year poverty plan, which was required in a state law pushed and passed last year by State Sen. Terrell McKinney of North Omaha.

“If we leave people behind, they become takers in society versus contributors,” said Ewing. “The more we can get people to the point where they’re contributing in tax dollars and helping to build our economy, grow businesses, it increases the viability of the state.”



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**CINDY GONZALEZ**  

Senior Reporter Cindy Gonzalez, an Omaha native, has more than 35 years of experience, largely at the Omaha World-Herald. Her coverage areas have included business and real estate development; regional reporting; immigration, demographics and diverse communities; and City Hall and local politics.

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## Council Comment - Nancy Hicks Rose

Nancy Hicks Rose has submitted a comment for Council. Please see the attached comment

Name	Nancy Hicks Rose
Phone number	[REDACTED]
Email address	[REDACTED]
Your comment	Thank you so much for fixing A street. It is great to drive on now.