

## BRIEFING NOTES

*Advanced public notice of the Planning Commission briefing was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website.*

<b>NAME OF GROUP:</b>	PLANNING COMMISSION
<b>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:</b>	Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 12:00 noon, City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 South 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.
<b>MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Lorenzo Ball, Dick Campbell, Tracy Corr, Maribel Cruz, Gloria Eddins, Tracy Edgerton, Rich Rodenburg and Cindy Ryman Yost; (Cristy Joy absent).
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	David Cary, Paul Barnes, Steve Henrichsen, Rachel Christopher, Arvin Gopalakrishnan and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; and other interested parties.
<b>STATED PURPOSE:</b>	Briefing on <b>"2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program"</b>

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

Rachel Christopher stated that a briefing for Planning Commission is usually held every year regarding the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The public hearing before Planning Commission will be on May 3, 2023. The Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a federally mandated program that covers all of Lincoln and Lancaster County. The MPO also works on the Long Range Transportation Program (LRTP) and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO is also the recipient of certain federal funds which are then distributed for different projects. Most of these are federally funded through a grant with an 80/20 local match. The TIP is a document we are required to adopt by the federal government. It is a list of projects in Lancaster county that will receive federal or state funds, as well as other regionally significant local projects. This TIP is done annually and is coordinated with the Nebraska state TIP. It looks at a four year period that follows a federal fiscal year from October 1 through September 30. Amendments and modifications are also reviewed throughout the year. Amendments to the TIP don't get reviewed by Planning Commission. All projects are to be included in the LRTP. When a project is added to the TIP, it must be consistent with the LRTP. Another important aspect is that the TIP must be fiscally constrained. The project funding, schedule, and budget by phase is listed.

The TIP is coordinated with City, County, and State programs to make sure it is consistent. The TIP must go through a public review, along with a Planning Commission public review. All comments will be included in the final document. One comment was already received, which is a letter of support from the City of Waverly. The MPO Technical Committee reviews all input and forwards their recommendation to the MPO Officials Committee. The Technical Committee met on April 13, 2023 and recommended approval of the TIP. The MPO Officials Committee will meet on May 10, 2023. Then, the TIP is forwarded to the state for inclusion into their TIP. Types of projects programmed are capital improvements, traffic system technology, specific safety projects, and all different alternative transportation modes. The TIP itself is structured in sections and include the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), Lancaster County Engineer, Lincoln Transportation and Utilities (LTU), StarTran, Lincoln Airport Authority (LAA), Federal Transit Administration Sections 5310 and 5311 funds, Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD), and Pedestrian, Bike, and Trails. There are a few amendments to the current TIP which are making their way through the process. She showed a new interactive online project map that has been created for the new TIP. She believes this will be a vast improvement. The standard project tables in PDF format are listed. Below that is a map that can be searched. Different icons are shown depending on who is responsible for the project. You can click on a project and it will pull up some information. There is also a link for an integrated street view.

Campbell inquired if there is any way of tracking internet hits. Christopher would think so. She can ask the staff in the Planning Dept. who put this together. She believes it would be a good idea to see who is using it.

Christopher continued that there are new layers of review including equity and congestion management. These are the result of some recommendations that we received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through their formal review. These reviews apply to any new projects being added to the TIP. Planning staff decided it also makes sense to apply these to all program areas, with the exception of NDOT, LAA and FTA. This will integrate the TIP review with other MPO plans and processes such as the LRTP. The equity map shows different levels of underserved and overburdened populations being served. This stemmed from an equity goal in the LRTP. This mapping was used for some performance measures that we track through the MPO.

Corr inquired if the map is available online. Christopher responded it is in the LRTP. She has updated the map with the release of the 2020 Census.

Campbell noted that it appears to him in looking at some of the areas, that this isn't based on the economics of the area, but based on access to transit. Christopher stated it is based on socio-economic factors. Access to transit with performance measures are looked at. A cross comparison is done with the performance measures. This report is done every year.

Paul Barnes stated that Section 4, Figure 4.5 Equity Index is the map in the LRTP. He also noted that these goals and performance measures are reviewed annually. We continuously add new data. He pointed out that the 2022 report isn't out yet.

Christopher continued that also as part of the LRTP, priority projects are scored. One of those score elements includes an equity score. The Congestion Management Process is required by federal requirements for metropolitan areas with more than 200,000 population. For equity, staff will look at if the project is located in an area with high, or moderate to high, overburdened and underserved communities. If yes, we ask how the project can be improved to better serve those communities. Regarding congestion management, we ask if the project is in the Lincoln MPO Congestion Management Process (CMP) network, and if the project scored high on a high congestion segment as identified in the 2050 LRTP. With this TIP, the only new project added that these reviews applied to is the W. South Street Bridge over Salt Creek. LTU provided us all the information. On equity, they identified it as right on the boundary of high and moderate underserved communities. In terms of providing benefits, this project is a replacement of the bridge. It has needed a lot of repairs over the years. Continuing to allow vehicle traffic to flow, it will also add sidewalks. There are also two trails which run either side of Salt Creek, one of which has an at-grade crossing. This would allow for that crossing to become an underpass. We also asked them to pull in the scoring information from the LRTP. Their equity score was 100 percent and total score was 50.54 out of 100. There aren't a lot of projects that get a score over 50, so this project scored fairly high. For congestion management, this particular street isn't in the CMP network or on a high congestion segment. This initially went through the funding subcommittee. She reminded everyone that this will appear at Planning Commission on May 3, 2023 and Officials Committee on May 10, 2023. The TIP will then be submitted to the state for inclusion in the state tip.

Campbell wondered if there are any projects that get removed. Christopher responded yes. As projects are completed or go under construction they are taken off the main list. They are shown at the bottom of the section under status of Previous Years Projects. Campbell asked if some are removed because a better option was found. Christopher stated that has not happened under her time as a transportation planner. The federal process can be very expensive. Usually these projects have a long timeframe. They show up in multiple TIP's. They take a lot of time and money to prepare. Campbell stated that it was his understanding several years ago that the state would resurface Highway 2 before it was turned over to Lincoln. He wondered if it is still on the list. Barnes recalls something to that effect as well. He thought some funds were used to complete striping. As far as complete resurfacing, he doesn't see that in the TIP. Campbell doesn't see that happening now that it is turned over to the City.

Ball inquired how these are evaluated. Christopher replied that equity is one of the goals. Another is related to sustainability and environment. The reviews for equity and congestion management being added are for enhanced review. Generally, we are looking for conformance with the LRTP.

Under the sustainability section of the report, we track a number of performance measures for aspects of the transportation system. Barnes added that the funding sources that are programmed are pretty specific as to what you can use the funds for. We follow priorities when programming these dollars. When doing a competitive grant, other items are looked at. Carbon reduction fund is a new program. We are working internally with agencies to come up with a process for those dollars. This funding is aimed at carbon reduction and climate change initiatives. Christopher added that there are also Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds which is a longstanding federal funding source which has historically gone towards trails.

- Barnes introduced a new employee with the Planning Dept., Arvind Gopalakrishnan.

Arvind Gopalakrishnan stated that he was born and raised in Mumbai, India. He obtained his Planning degree in Calgary, Canada. He became engaged to someone who is going to med school in Omaha. He moved to the States from Nova Scotia. He is looking forward to working in Lincoln.

Planning Commission members welcomed him.

There being no further questions, the briefing was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.