

BRIEFING NOTES

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

NAME OF GROUP:	PLANNING COMMISSION
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	Wednesday, October 15, 12:00 pm, City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 South 10 th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Dick Campbell, Maribel Cruz, Bailey Feit, Christy Joy, and Rich Rodenburg and Lorenzo Ball arrived at 12:15pm. Gloria Eddins, Cindy Ryman Yost and Brett Ebert absent.
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	David Cary, Paul Barnes, Andrew Thierolf, Rachel Christopher, and Kristi Merfeld of the Planning and Development Services Department; Greg Youell of Felsburg Holt & Ullevig and other interested parties.
STATED PURPOSE:	Briefing on “Long Range Transportation Plan Update, Lincoln Mobility Plan, and Comprehensive Plan Update”

Rachel Christopher, Planning Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln, NE came forward and stated that this is our second briefing for planning efforts on the Long Range Transportation Plan Update, the Mobility Plan and Comprehensive Plan minor update. These are our topics and we will provide updates for you. First, she explained the proposed marble activity to conduct with the Planning Commissioners that has been used at our public events and pop-ups. There are 9 jars with a variety of priorities relating to transportation. You will be given three marbles to drop into the jars that you feel are the most important priority. Members came forward and participated in the exercise. Christopher summarized some of the top choices among the members as smoother traffic flow, access to key destinations, and pedestrian facilities. We will talk about the results from other pop-up events and public engagement at the following briefing. Christopher introduced Greg Youell with Felsburg Holt & Ullevig as the project manager on the consultant side for the Long Range Transportation Plan Update and Lincoln Mobility Plan.

Greg Youell, Project Manager, FHU, 14606 Branch Street, Omaha, NE 68154 came forward and stated that this is the third Long Range Transportation Plan project with the city and county that FHU has been able to work on. Youell proceeded to state his background at MAPA, which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Omaha and Council Bluffs region. The project team has been out and about holding several pop-up events. These include Lincoln Unites, Latino

Festival, Food Truck Festival, the Nacho Ride event, and others. The top unscientific feedback received so far was to prioritize transportation for everyone. This priority means that regardless of age, income or disability, there is transportation available. Traffic flow and congestion and places to walk have also been other top priorities. Several of the events had very similar feedback to one another. However, the Nacho Ride had very different ideas in line with its focus on bicycle users. Also at the pop-ups, staff displayed a board where people could comment on all aspects of transportation. One of the more popular comments in addition to serving all people was a lot of discussion about aging. Safety has been a common comment when thinking about bicycles. Also, driving concerns, transit, and roundabouts have had many comments among citizens. Other comments have related to becoming less car-centric relating to the fact that we have built areas around cars and getting around with cars. Roadway conditions and the condition of them were mentioned. A few comments were also about trail usage by motor bikes and e-bikes.

As mentioned at a previous briefing, the transportation planning effort is to create two plans. One is the Long Range Transportation Plan, which is the plan for the MPO, federally required and updated every 5 years. The projects that get listed in the LRTP have to be identified there to be eligible for federal funding. There are a lot of federal requirements that go along with the Long Range Plan process. In addition, there is the Mobility Plan focused on the City of Lincoln. It expands on previous bike and pedestrians plans from about a decade ago. We are trying to update and bring those into one refreshed plan for the community. This includes all active transportation related modes and a little bit of transit planning, though StarTran has their own detailed transit plan. Public outreach on the plans is live and people are being asked to weigh in on the web site. We have asked people to rank draft Long Range Transportation Plan goals that have been reviewed and modified from the last update. These are used to make performance metrics for the planning projects. The Mobility Plan has its own set of goals which focus on multimodal methods of transportation.

Feit asked how many more times will you be collecting data? There would need to be an end at some point.

Youell responded that this is the first phase of public engagement and is generally asking what people like and don't like. This phase will go through late October or early November. Next Spring we will come back with different scenarios based on some of their opinions. Information will be presented with different proposals and different directions that we could go and these could be listed in the LRTP. That will be a really important time.

Christopher added that the end of October is approximately the end of the first phase. There are a couple of last pop-up events coming up. One is in Belmont and one in Hickman, plus an open house, that will wrap up the listening and learning part of phase one.

Youell commented that the event in Hickman will be a trick-or-treat event.

Campbell responded that doesn't surprise him that maintenance is a top priority on the list since citizens have voted twice for the extra quarter cent sales tax. People are seeing the results from that.

Youell agreed, that there have been several comments on that topic. Maintenance is a common issue though in his experience, not one that we have heard as much about with this update compared to the previous update.

Campbell commented that construction should be spread apart. There is not a street in South Lincoln that doesn't have construction on it right now.

Feit suggested that at the Hickman event, the information for the jar activity is made aware to the people in line, so they are ready to place marbles in jars.

Christopher said that is a great idea and several members agreed.

Christopher asked if there were any other comments before moving to the Comprehensive Plan. There were none.

Andrew Thierolf, Planning Department, 555 South 10th Street, Lincoln, NE came forward and stated he had a couple updates for the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use and Growth Tier maps are the initial steps. Those maps are really important, as they inform the traffic model for the Transportation Plan. The Comprehensive Plan will not be adopted until the end of 2026, but it needs to be looked at well before that time. The 2050 Growth Horizon will remain the same. This will not change. However in the next five years, the map will be pushed out to the year 2060. There is just several minor changes to make to the map and cleaning up some items from past approvals. One project is the city owned property in Northeast Lincoln, and it is being looked at what can be done with that. Right now it is shown as Future Urban Residential. Since it is city owned property, more details can be included with what the future could be for this area, and that is exciting. We will also be looking at the 2050 Growth Tier boundary and seeing if some of those boundaries would be moved closer to 2030 or 2040. We could also make adjustments from what is seen on the map today and change those growth opportunities. We have been collecting staff input for the last five years, since the last Comprehensive Plan was updated. So, this minor cleanup will take place. There will be a virtual and a regular open house with an activity where comments can be left on the Future Land Use Map and the Growth Tier Map.

There is also a land use proposal process. This is done with each Comprehensive Plan update, and it used to be called the Developer's proposal. We don't call it that anymore, because it is not just for developers. It is on the website and was sent out to the mailing list. It applies to outside the city limits. They can submit proposals for development outside the city limits, that is not on the Comprehensive Plan. That will be next month's topic on the proposals that are received.

Those just went out and we have already gotten a call about the empty lot by the Bethany Library. They are interested in submitting a proposal on what the city could do with that empty lot. The proposals are due November 7, 2025.

Joy asked how do those get sent out and who do they get sent to?

Thierolf replied that they get sent to the developer list and a few others that expressed interest. It is also on the website. Last time we did this, there were 7 or 8 proposals.

Thierolf proceeded to state that there are about 25 staff identified changes that are going to be updated. A big change is updating the environmental resource boundaries in the rural areas. The different categories are dark green which is land to be preserved. Light green is green space and includes parks. The ag stream corridor, which is flood plan land that is also farmland outside the city limits. This version of the map is from 20 years ago. We know that they have changed and will continue to change. It was something we fell behind on updating these maps, so minor boundary changes with the flood plans will be done. Also, we have brought in several new conservation easements in the past few years and just making sure that they will be reflected on the map outside our growth area. These are spaces that will not be developed.

One of the things we are looking at and is the biggest change right now is West of Airpark. It has shown on the growth plan since the 1970's and was never developed. The city put a sewer line out here in the 1970's. It has not been used, and is 50 years old so is most likely not functioning. This is South of 9 mile prairie. Five years ago we worked on increasing the green space at 9 mile prairie. The next step would be to remove this from the growth area map and show it as agricultural. It is ready to go, but there has not been much interest in this space. Most property owners are opposed to doing anything with this land.

Another project is , 21st and Y Street. The city approved a PUD on this area in the last couple years. The PUD is not reflected on the industrial future land use map. So we are going to reflect it to be a commercial land use zoning on the map. Many of the items that need to be cleaned up include reflecting the current zoning that is in place and showing that on the maps.

Also, an item on the map that is now Hwy 2 is the former South and East beltway that shows a green corridor on either side of the highways. That was part of the Salt Valley Greenway concept. This is still in the Comprehensive Plan and we still want to follow it. We are now starting to get approvals working down to Highway 2. What are we going to do with the green corridor and do we still want this like that? So we are going to work with the Parks Department to figure this out. It had been marked on the map 20 years in the future, as something we would deal with later and now that time has come that we need to decide.

Ball asked for an explanation of the Salt Valley Greenway and what it is?

Thierolf explained that Salt Valley Greenway is a concept in the Comprehensive Plan that is creating nature corridors that connect different drainages within Salt Valley. It is a circle of greenways around the city and another loop of connected greenways for a natural habitat for animals, so they are not stranded in certain areas. This was added in the 2000 Comprehensive Plan. It has been a successful concept and a long-standing policy. We are still deciding if we want to follow the greenway along the beltway and make it more permanent. Most other greenways follow the drainage ways.

Ball commented that it doesn't sound like an "and option" but an "or option". You would remove the greenway for future development.

Thierolf replied we would have to get a better confirmation from Parks and Recreation. It is not being said that we are getting rid of this, but with more approvals in this area, are we going to require 100 feet of greenway for example, along the beltway?

Thierolf stated the final piece is the SW Lincoln industrial area by Wilderness Park that does not have city utilities, but is an industrial use. There is a parcel shown as agricultural. It is isolated from everything else. I think this will be changed to industrial for more opportunities. It is already showing as an industrial park.

Thierolf asked if there are any questions about the Comprehensive Plan, that has not been discussed?

Cruz requested more discussion on the green corridors vs the waterway corridors. She lives in this area and drives Saltillo or 54th Street. There are so many animals that end up as roadkill. They need to be kept safe, but with a busy arterial like Highway 2 it is just asking for animals to be injured or killed.

Feit agreed that this is interesting, the comment of wanting to keep a green space along a fast paced busy road. What is the reasoning behind this? Does it support the protection of wildlife or not. We want to protect their space, but is it safe? It seems counter intuitive. There could be partial reasoning for that.

Cruz commented that this is close to railroad crossings. That can't be natural.

Thierolf replied that they are setting up one on one meetings with departments to talk about Comprehensive Plan issues. We can discuss this more after the meeting with Parks and Recreation as to what their thoughts are on this concept.

Campbell asked how many acres on the maps are being reserved for development and different types of development?

Thierolf stated he was not sure of the exact number. It was enough to get them through the year 2060 on the growth map.

Campbell questioned, is this where the developers are asking for Annexation and Change of Zones or are the applications coming from outside of the areas that are presently identified?

Thierolf asked are you talking about the Change of Zone and Annexations? Those are areas that are already identified. We are able to calculate the amount of land we have available on the map through GIS. We start by looking at future residential on the map. We want to make sure there is enough to accommodate growth. Thierolf displayed this on a map. Different areas are then removed that are not able to be developed and this goes into the inventory for the amount of available land. A ten year buffer was added into this and it has been very accurate over the last five years. We have had a few Comprehensive Plan Annexations. That is why we are keeping the boundary at 2050.

Campbell commented on the S 68th Street, there is space that is not identified. This is North of Roca Road. Should there be some changes with the new high school out there.

Thierolf replied, this could be in the 2060 plan for possible growth. The challenge is the infrastructure. Everything is draining North along Stevens Creek or West into Salt Creek. The Southeast part of Lincoln is the last piece that will get city sewer because it is coming from other directions. This is why there is not much seen on the map for this area. The infrastructure would be more expensive.

Campbell commented that this will require another pumping station, as one of the options.

Thierolf agreed, yes and there has been some talk about a future treatment plant like on Teresa Street.

Joy responded; she had wondered if that wouldn't be the next step.

Thierolf said the conclusion is that the 2050 Comprehensive Plan has the capacity for growth, but the 2060 plan and future plans will require more treatment and more pumping. It will need more infrastructure as the main lines into the treatment plant will be at capacity before that date. Another treatment station will probably be needed someplace else and LTU is working on that.

Campbell said it would be several hundred million.

Thierolf agreed it would be a very serious project that will be in the CIP someday.

Joy responded and then deciding on the location of this treatment plant.

Thierolf asked if it was ok to switch gears and talk about some upcoming events that will be happening. All of our events are under the umbrella of Plan Forward. That includes the Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Plan, Mobility Plan, Lincoln on the Move and Vision Zero on some of the items. We are trying to put it into one open house to make it simple. It is October 23, 5:30-7:30pm. at Culler Middle School. There will be fun activities.

Christopher commented this will be the first time all these groups will be together. Activities will include ranking the goals. Lincoln on the Move will be requesting suggestions for top projects. More of the marble activities will be a part of this also.

Thierolf mentioned to the members that they do not attend all at the same time. Space it out. There is also a virtual open house. Our consultants put this together for us. Virtual meetings were started 5 years ago and have been very successful. This is available through the end of October.

Feit stated she is curious about getting the word out. Have they tried large email groups like LPS?

Christopher replied that they sent out postcards, a large email blast, and social media will be going out next week. They are also reaching out to smaller cities and villages in Lancaster County to help with outreach.

Thierolf responded that interpreters will be present at the open house for Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

Youell mentioned a series of maps that will be at the public meeting. The project team is working on reports on the existing transportation system of Lancaster County.

Ball commented that there is a lot of information being presented and asked if it will be available on the website.

Christopher stated that yes, the website will remain up and the content will change as we move through the public engagement phases.

Thierolf said next month the topics would include the results from the open house. Also any proposals that may come in and we will add the green space discussion. We will try to add fun activities again.

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

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