



## Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization

County-City Building  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street - Suite 213  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508  
(402) 441-7491

### Lincoln South Beltway Lincoln MPO Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment

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**Report to Lincoln MPO Officials Committee: June 22, 2017**

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**Proposal:** The Nebraska Department of Roads in coordination with the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County is requesting an amendment to the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) *2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)* to reflect an updated project cost of \$297.315 million for the Lincoln South Beltway project.

**Conclusion:** The Lincoln MPO Technical Committee agrees with the Nebraska Department of Roads proposal to amend the Lincoln MPO *2040 Long Range Transportation Plan* to reflect the updated project cost of \$297.315 million for the Lincoln South Beltway project. The Project is already in the LRTP, the project scope has not changed and it continues as a committed State Project in the long range transportation plan which remains fiscally constrained over the life of the plan. The specific LRTP document revisions are outlined below in this report.

<b>MPO Technical Committee Recommendation:</b>
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Approval
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#### General Information:

**Applicant:** Nebraska Department of Roads

**Contact:** Ryan Huff, Division Engineer  
Intermodal Planning Division  
Nebraska Department of Roads  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

**Description:** Lincoln South Beltway project is for a new four-lane divided roadway located in Lancaster County south of the City of Lincoln. The 11-mile roadway will be engineered to State Freeway standards with access at freeway designed interchanges only and will be the new alignment of Nebraska Highway 2.

**Location:** The roadway will begin on Nebraska Highway 2 (N-2) at South 148th Street, diverge at the intersection of South 120th Street, and run south of Saltillo Road,

proceeding west to U.S. Highway 77 (US-77) between Saltillo Road and Bennet Road. The new facility will include interchanges at US-77, Saltillo Road, 27th Street, 68th Street, 84th Street, and 120th Street. Overpass structures are proposed at 25th Street, Homestead Trail, BNSF Railroad, 54th Street, Saltillo Road (east of 98th Street), OPPD Rail Spur, and 134th Street.

#### **South Beltway Amendment Schedule:**

- MPO/City/NDOR project review and discussions with Lincoln MPO Project Programming Committee: March 30, 2017, April 6, 2017 and May 11, 2017
- Lincoln MPO Project Programming Committee Recommendation: May 11, 2017
- Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Commission Public Hearing: May 24, 2017
- Review by the Lincoln MPO Technical Committee: June 1, 2017
- Review and action by the Lincoln MPO Officials Committee: June 22, 2017

#### **Lincoln MPO 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan**

The *2040 Long Range Transportation Plan* provides the blueprint for the planning area's transportation planning process through year 2040. The transportation planning process was a collaborative effort between the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR), StarTran transit and other agencies, where the multi-modal transportation system was evaluated and recommendations were made with extensive public input. The plan reflects road improvement types according to specific street design standards, identifying the number of lanes and the right-of-way required for proposed improvements. The Transportation Plan was reviewed at a series of public hearings by the Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Commission and adopted by the Lincoln MPO on January 13, 2017. The Transportation Plan meets all federal requirements and addresses the goals, objectives, and strategies to meet the community's vision for the future.

**Title 23 of the Federal Rules & Regulations, Section 450.332:** "The metropolitan planning process shall include the development of a transportation plan addressing no less than a 20 year planning horizon..." and "... shall include both long-range and short-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated multi-modal transportation system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand."

#### **Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment Threshold**

There are four main components that are used to determine whether a project change rises to the level of a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) amendment:

- Project costs: Determination will be made based on the percentage change or dollar amount of change in federal aid. Projects in which the federal aid has been changed by 20% or \$2 million, whichever is greater, will require an LRTP amendment. Anything less can be processed with an administrative modification. For projects financed with non-

federal funds, NDOR suggests the MPO's use the same 20%/\$2 million threshold in order to provide transparency to the public.

- Adding a Regionally Significant Project which requires FHWA or FTA funding or approval
- Funding sources: Adding federal funding sources or changing from one federal funding category to another (including converting advanced construction) will require an amendment.
- Scope and termini changes: Substantial changes to project scope shown in the approved STIP or project termini changes greater than 0.25 mile will require an amendment.

A project change that meets or exceeds this above criteria will need to be considered for an amendment to the LRTP prior to programming. The public involvement procedure and reviews for LRTP amendments are determined by the MPO and outlined in the MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) and LRTP.

### **Lincoln South Beltway**

The Lincoln South Beltway has long been a project included in the Lincoln and Lancaster County Plans. This roadway is expected to provide an alternative route for traffic traveling around the City of Lincoln, particularly truck traffic. Together with the West Bypass (US-77) it will form a route around the urban core of the City of Lincoln. The Lincoln South Beltway project is listed as a fully funded State project in the current *Long Range Transportation Plan*. The project is supported with a combination of federal, state and local funding with the primary funding coming from the Build Nebraska Act (LB-84) statewide funding plan.

**Estimated Construction Schedule:** Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2020 and could be completed in five to seven years.

**Right-of-way:** Permanent property right acquisitions for right-of-way (ROW) are projected at about 730 acres. One commercial and three residential relocations may need to be acquired. Temporary easements (TE) and Control of Access (CA) rights will be necessary through the project area. ROW activities are scheduled to begin in 2017.

**Relinquishments:** The existing N-2 roadway between approximately 120th Street and US-77 will be relinquished or roadway control turned over to Lancaster County and the City of Lincoln at the completion of the beltway construction. Nebraska Link 55W (L-55W) between US-77 and N-2 (also known as Warlick Boulevard and 14th Street) will also be relinquished to the City of Lincoln.

**Environmental:** Impacts were previously considered and are being reevaluated. Permanent wetland impacts are anticipated and will be mitigated locally or at a regional wetlands bank.

**Estimated Cost:** The estimated cost of the entire project was initially estimated at \$200 million based upon previous planning level concepts. As construction details and estimates became more clear over the past year, the actual costs became more clear and are now estimated at \$297.315

million. The primary reasons for the cost increases are due to:

1. A better defined footprint that considers and minimizes environmental impacts, such as wetlands which require more bridges and longer bridges, which has increased cost.
2. The Right of Way limits and cost estimates have been refined for better projections.
3. The timing and delays for actual construction of the project has resulted in significant increases in construction prices. Current roadway construction costs have been rising at a rate of 3-5% per year for a project this large. This has added to the project cost since the last project cost estimate.

**State of Nebraska Funding:** The project is supported with a combination of federal, state and local funding with the primary funding coming from phase three of the Build Nebraska Act (LB-84) statewide funding plan.

**Local Share Funding Plan:** Mayor Chris Beutler and officials from the Nebraska Department of Roads, City of Lincoln, Lancaster County and the Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) have negotiated a new funding agreement that will reduce the City's previously agreed to 20 percent matched contribution to the project by \$10 million.

The newly agreed upon local contribution to the Lincoln South Beltway project is to be capped at \$50 million which will allow the project to progress on schedule and not delay other important roads projects in the LRTP. The local funding is to come from a combination of sources:

- \$18.6 million previously paid by the City to the State
- \$11.4 million from the City's Capital Improvement Program
- \$13 million previously committed by the RTSD for rail crossings
- \$7 million from the RTSD

(Date: May 31, 2017)

## **STAFF ANALYSIS:**

### **Long Range Transportation Plan**

The development of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a collaborative effort using input provided from state and local governments, agencies, citizens, committees and staff that focuses on promoting an integrated multi-modal transportation network. The LRTP guides investment in the Lincoln metropolitan area's transportation system for the next 20 years based upon the region's future transportation goals and objectives, and allocates projected revenue to transportation programs and projects consistent with the Lincoln MPO's goals. The LRTP also is the basis for the development of the short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) — a set of transportation improvement projects that the MPO expects to implement during the next four years.

The projects listed in the LRTP are reviewed in greater detail as they approach implementation and the final engineering and design process. This phase of project development produces detailed plans, specifications, and cost estimates (PS&E). These documents contain all the

construction details, contract provisions, permits, agreements, and certifications required to purchase ROW and administer a construction contract. The local agency responsible for the development of the construction plan, reviews these plans with the MPO for programming in the TIP. If the project is not meeting the four main criteria used to determine project conformance with the LRTP, an amendment is considered in order to maintain conformance.

### **Process for Amending the MPO LRTP Financially Constrained Transportation Plan**

Changes to the Financially Constrained Transportation Plan are to be made by a formal plan amendment through the MPO planning process. These may take the form of a standalone amendment or as a package of amendments during the annual development of the TIP. All projects listed in the TIP need to reflect the scope and cost of projects listed in the LRTP. All amendments to the Long Range Transportation Plan will adhere to the MPO's Public Participation Plan to ensure opportunities for public engagement and information dissemination and be reviewed and approved by the MPO Technical and Officials Committee.

### **Lincoln MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Document Revisions for the Lincoln South Beltway Amendment**

#### Page 33

*South and East Beltways:*

“The South Beltway is a ~~\$200~~ \$297.315 million State project that is in the State's programmed budget. The State has completed preliminary engineering and done some level of work with landowners within the planned corridor. With the passage of the Build Nebraska Act (LB-84) during the 2011 State legislative session, road funding for the State's expressway system became available beginning in 2013.

#### Page 62

*Table 9: Fiscally Constrained Roadway Capital Projects*

Update Table 9 to reflect the South Beltway

*Project Cost (2016 \$):* ~~\$200,000,000~~ \$297,315,000

*Local Portion:* at ~~\$15,400,000~~ \$50,000,000

Update Table 9 Foot Note:

~~#6 The \$15.4M local portion for the South Beltway project is the Wheel Tax funding only. By agreement, the local portion for the South Beltway project funding is capped at \$50M with funding to come from the City of Lincoln and the RTSD.~~

### **Technical Report Document Revisions**

#### Page 122

*Table 24: Fiscally Constrained Roadway Capital Projects*

Update Table 24 to reflect the South Beltway

*Project Cost (2016 \$):* ~~\$200,000,000~~ \$297,315,000

*Local Portion:* at ~~\$15,400,000~~ \$50,000,000

Update Table 24 Foot Note:

*#6 ~~The \$15.4M local portion for the South Beltway project is the Wheel Tax funding only.~~  
By agreement, the local portion for the South Beltway project funding is capped at \$50M  
with funding to come from the City of Lincoln and the RTSD.*

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### **Public Review and Comments:**

Public comments will be received during the public review period, May 15 to June 15, 2017 and all comments received will be forwarded to the MPO Officials Committee.

The Planning Commission review and comments along with additional comments received at the public hearing will be forwarded to the MPO Technical Committee and MPO Officials Committee for review. The LRTP Amendment is scheduled for review and approval by the MPO Officials Committee at the June 22, 2017 Committee meeting.

Prepared by:

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Michael D. Brienzo, Transportation Planner  
Lincoln MPO / Lincoln-Lancaster Planning Department  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street / Suite 213  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone: (402) 441-6369  
email: [mbrienzo@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:mbrienzo@lincoln.ne.gov)

Attachments (3)

# NEBRASKA

Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF ROADS



Pete Ricketts, Governor

May 11, 2017

Mike Brienzo – Transportation Planning Manager  
Lincoln – Lancaster County Planning Department  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Mr. Brienzo:

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) is requesting the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (Lincoln MPO) amend the Lincoln MPO 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Lincoln South Beltway Project (CN 12578D) to indicate an estimated cost of \$297 Million, per information provided previously.

The project team is in a preliminary design phase to support the Environmental Assessment document. In this development phase, cost estimates were generated reflecting the referenced cost increase. This is due to several factors, more detail in the design concept and more detail in the environmental impacts and project limits. This additional detail has better defined the estimated cost. Right-of-Way limits have been better defined reflecting increased costs. This increased cost should be amended to your LRTP and be financially constrained.

Sincerely,

Ryan Huff, P.E.  
Intermodal Planning Engineer

Cc: Mike Owen, Roadway Design Engineer  
Amy Starr, Program Management Engineer  
Noel Salac, Assistant Planning Engineer

Kyle Schneweis, P.E., Director

Department of Roads

1500 Highway 2  
PO Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

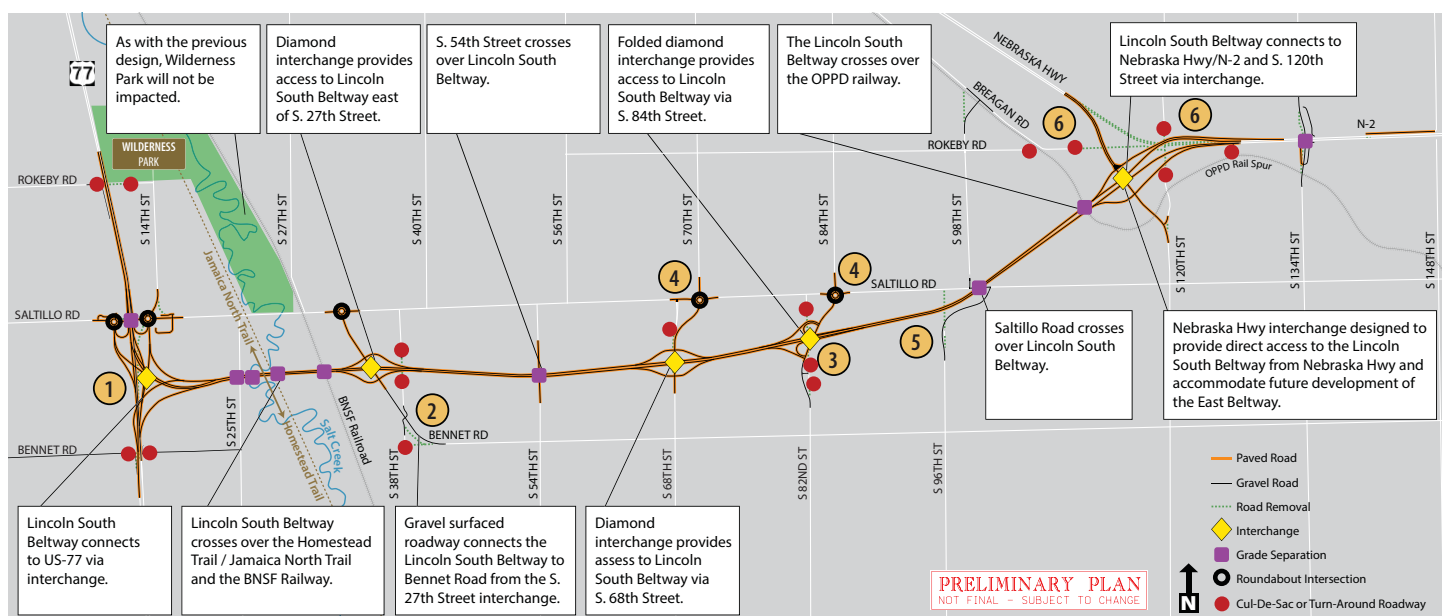
[roads.nebraska.gov](http://roads.nebraska.gov)

OFFICE 402-471-4567 FAX 402-479-4325  
DOR.ContactUs@nebraska.gov

## DPU-LIN-2-6(120), CN 12578D

### CORRIDOR ALIGNMENT

The figure below represents the current alignment of the Lincoln South Beltway. It includes four, 12-foot lanes, 12-foot paved outside shoulders and a 54-foot wide median. Key features have been noted. This is a preliminary plan that is still being refined through the design process. It is subject to change based on social, economic and environmental reviews.



### Key modifications or changes since the previous design presented in June 2013.

- 1 The West System Interchange has been modified based on design speed and traffic projections. Changes have resulted in improved mainline and ramp design speeds.
- 2 The Bennet Road connector has an updated design providing a better connection and direct access.
- 3 The interchange at S. 84th Street has been modified to reduce impacts to environmental resources.
- 4 New, single-lane roundabout intersections have been added along Saittillo Road, east of S. 27th Street.
- 5 Eliminated freeway bridges over undercrossing driveway.
- 6 Cul-de-sacs, or turn-around locations, have changed at the East System Interchange. New cul-de-sac locations are at S. 120th Street north of the interchange and at Rokeby Road, east of Breagan Road.



## PUBLIC INFORMATION FACT SHEET

Environmental Assessment &amp; Preliminary Engineering

## BICYCLE CONNECTIVITY

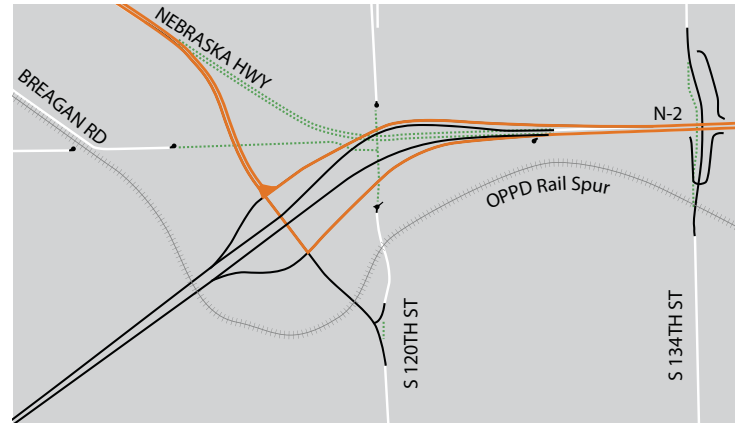
Bicycle connectivity will be accommodated through the Highway 77 and N-2 system interchanges. See the maps below for details. The City of Lincoln and NDOR are coordinating to identify opportunities to accommodate planned trails in south Lincoln.

## WEST INTERCHANGE



**PRELIMINARY PLAN**  
NOT FINAL - SUBJECT TO CHANGE

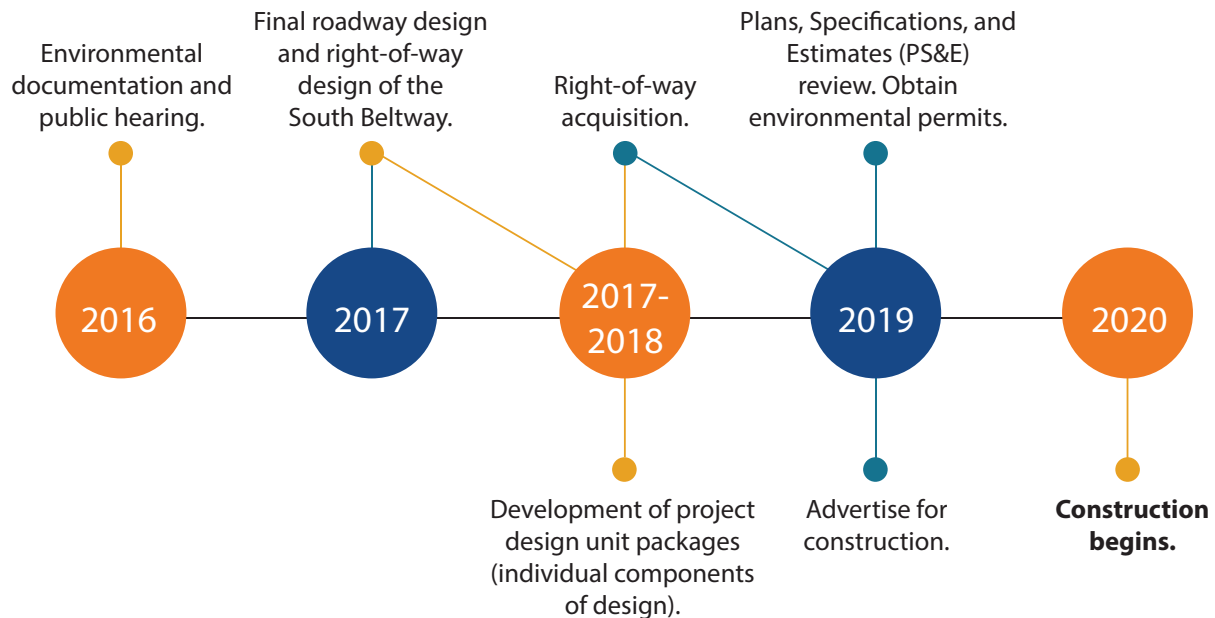
## EAST INTERCHANGE



— Paved Road      ..... Road Removal  
— Bicycle Access Across the South Beltway      • Cul-de-sac



## NEXT STEPS





Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF ROADS



May 25, 2017

Ms. Miki Esposito  
Public Works Director  
City of Lincoln  
555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 208  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Ms. Esposito:

I am writing in response to your proposal dated May 4, 2017 regarding a capped and early payment of the local share of the Lincoln South Beltway. The Beltway is a high priority for the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) as it will provide long awaited safety and mobility improvements to the City and State transportation systems as well a myriad of economic impacts to Lincoln and eastern Nebraska. The complexity and scope of the project requires that we maintain the strong partnership that has been so critical to the success of the project planning and development to date.

The proposal from the City of Lincoln comes at a time when our Department is trying to balance many transportation needs. Communities all over Nebraska are anxious to see the projects made possible by the Build Nebraska Act and the Transportation Innovation Act delivered. In an attempt to meet these demands, we are exploring and implementing policies and models that might accelerate delivery of projects across the State.

We believe that an agreement that accelerates and caps the City of Lincoln's share of the project is of mutual benefit. For the City, the cap will provide budget certainty on a project that has seen significant cost escalations. For NDOR, receiving the funds early will potentially allow the State to accelerate additional projects that otherwise would be delivered years from now.

As you requested, the Department will give consideration to a reimbursement or credit to the City should we receive a transportation grant directed specifically to the Lincoln South Beltway. How much consideration is given would be dependent on the type of grant and the funding level.

Kyle Schneweis, P.E., Director

**Department of Roads**

1500 Highway 2  
PO Box 94759  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4759  
[roads.nebraska.gov](http://roads.nebraska.gov)

OFFICE 402-471-4567 FAX 402-479-4325  
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Ms. Miki Esposito  
May 25, 2017  
Page 2

The Department is eager to work closely with the City as we advance this project to construction. Following this letter, my staff will start the communications to draft an agreement that formalizes the details of this arrangement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KS', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Schneweis, P.E.  
Director

KS:KJ:MO:z

cc: Amy Starr, Program Management Engineer  
Ryan Huff, Intermodal Planning Engineer  
Mike Owen, Roadway Design Engineer  
Tom Goodbarn, District 1 Engineer



**City of Lincoln  
Mayor's Office**

## **2017 Media Releases**

**Date:**

May 31, 2017

**For More Information Contact:**

Jon Taylor, Citizen Information Center, 402-441-7547

## **Mayor, Local Officials Announce South Beltway Funding Plan**

Mayor Chris Beutler and officials from the City, County and the Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) today announced a funding plan that will allow construction of the South Beltway project to begin in 2020. The beltway is designed to relieve traffic congestion and improve safety, mobility and efficiency in Lincoln by connecting Highway 77, south of Saltillo Road, to Highway 2, near S. 120th Street and Rokeby Road.

"The distant dream of a South Beltway has become a reality because of the planning and partnership between the people standing with me today and our State transportation leaders. We put our heads together and found a solution that gets the job done," Beutler said.

The City's \$50 million matched contribution will not increase taxes or delay other important roads projects, Beutler said. The funding comes from a combination of sources:

- \$18.6 million previously paid by the City to the State
- \$11.4 million from the City's Capital Improvement Program
- \$13 million previously committed by the RTSD for rail crossings
- \$7 million from the RTSD

The City and State are negotiating an agreement that will reduce the City's 20 percent matched contribution to the project by \$10 million, Beutler said. The adjustment would be made possible because City payments made over the next 16 months allow the State to immediately move forward on important highway needs, allowing it to avoid inflated construction costs.

"The agreement is a great example of how government ought to work," Beutler said. "Four different levels of government came together and dealt a winning hand for the City and the State. We found a path forward and as a result, we can look forward to getting together again for a South Beltway ground breaking in 2020."

City Council Chair Roy Christensen said that the project will relieve traffic congestion in the City.

"Completion of the South Beltway will help divert semi-truck traffic from Highway 2, increasing safety and improving traffic flow," he said.

The RTSD provides funding for railroad safety related projects throughout Lincoln and Lancaster County. Since 1971, the RTSD has helped reduce train/vehicle fatality accidents by nearly 90 percent.

"The South Beltway passes over two different railroad crossings and the necessary overpasses will be paid for by RTSD funds. This will connect streets and reduce conflicts between cars, trains and pedestrians, increasing safety for Lincoln and Lancaster County drivers," said Deb Schorr, RTSD chair.

"The County Board is committed to ensuring the successful completion of the South Beltway. It will benefit both residents and businesses in Lincoln and Lancaster County," said Todd Wiltgen, Lancaster County Board Chair. "Investing \$300 million in transportation infrastructure will create good paying jobs and spur additional economic development."

[Mayor's Office](#)

[Media Releases](#)