

MEETING RECORD

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

NAME OF GROUP:	MPO OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	May 2, 2025, 2:00 p.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10 th Street, Lincoln, NE
MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE	Tom Beckius, Ryan Huff, Rick Vest, Matt Schulte and S�ndra Washington; (Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.) Allison Speicher from the Parks and Recreation Department; Carla Cosier and Kris Humphrey from Lincoln Transportation and Utilities; Roger Figard from the Railroad Transportation Safety District; Paul Barnes, Rachel Christopher, Kristi Merfeld and Laura Tinnerstet of the Planning Department, and other interested parties.

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

Vest then called for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held February 7, 2025. Vest asked if there had been any comments or changes to them and there were none.

Beckius made the motion for approval, which was seconded by Washington and carried 4-0. Beckius, Huff, Vest, and Washington voted 'yes'; Schulte abstained; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

PUBLIC HEARING:

May 2, 2025

Members Present: Beckius, Huff, Vest, Schulte and Washington present; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

REVIEW AND ACTION ON REVISIONS TO THE 2050 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) **May 2, 2025**

Rachel Christopher with the Lincoln MPO and Lincoln/Lancaster Planning Department, 555 S. 10th Street stated that this item is for a proposed amendment to the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. The revisions are for a Lincoln Transportation and Utilities (LTU) project under the Urban Roadway Capital projects for N. 14th Street, and there will be updates to the project, the limits, description as well as the costs and year of expenditure. The changes are being made by LTU because they want to bring it forward and begin work on it as soon as possible.

The project extends along N. 14th Street from Salt Creek to Adams Street and includes bridge improvements, bridge reconstruction, and pedestrian facilities. It also includes intersection improvements at of N. 14th and Adams Streets, and the cost will be increased significantly from \$10 million to 29 million. That is based on the most recent cost estimate and the updates to the project limits. The year of expenditure would be moved up from 2027 to 2026. This is in the Long Range plan already, but it would be updated. It is ranked first on the Urban Roadway Capitol project list and therefore in conformance with the Long Range Plan. There is an associated TIP amendment later in the agenda. This item went to the Planning Commission and the MPO Technical Committee, and both groups recommended approval of this item. This project is located on the south end of the Belmont neighborhood. There is a redevelopment plan in progress for Belmont led by the Urban Development Department. A number of comments were received from the public related to the crossing at 14th Street and improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, so the intent of this project will also address neighborhood concerns.

Washington said she appreciated the details of the change in the geography of the project, because it had changed with this update. She asked for a summary of why the project has gotten more expensive and had a change of scope.

Christopher mentioned that staff members present from other departments should be able to respond including LTU.

Washington said she would like the scope change to be explained.

With LTU being unable to answer, Christopher stated a follow-up may be needed to answer this question.

Paul Barnes with the Lincoln MPO and Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department, 555 S. 10th Street, came forward and stated that he could not speak on the project scope, however, the Long Range Transportation Plan has costs from 2021 and this is 2026 so project cost increases over five years may also be a factor.

Christopher went on to state that item 2.b. also includes the same fiscally constrained table in the Long Range Transportation Plan, and the project at the end of the table would have a further decrease in how much it is partially funded to account for the increase in the N. 14th Street project. Thereby, we are ensuring the numbers in the table total correctly and remain fiscally constrained.

ACTION:

Motion to approve by Beckius; seconded by Schulte; motion carried 5-0; Beckius, Huff, Vest, Schulte, and Washington voting 'yes'; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

REVIEW AND ACTION ON REVISIONS TO THE FY2025-2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

May 2, 2025

Christopher stated that the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) lists various kinds of transportation projects that are anticipated over the next four years. This amendment has a couple of changes to note. The first is to add the project we just spoke about for N. 14th Street, Salt Creek to Adams Street to the TIP. There is also a revision to the Cotner Boulevard, O Street to Starr Street project where the construction schedule has been pushed out by one fiscal year. These are the two changes proposed to the current TIP.

The 14th Street project is proposed to use federal funds from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program through the MPO. It is possible that there could be other local funds to put towards this project resulting from the redevelopment plan process. For now, it is using federal funds with a local match. The MPO Technical Committee recommended approval on this item at their meeting on April 9.

ACTION:

Motion to approve by Washington; seconded by Beckius and carried 5-0 ; Beckius, Huff, Vest, Schulte and Washington voting 'yes'; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FY2026 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)**May 2, 2025**

Christopher said this is one of several annual work items that the MPO puts together, which is the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). This UPWP is for the 2026 fiscal year. It follows the State Fiscal Year, which would begin on July 1. The timeframe of the UPWP is from July to June and the document describes the transportation planning activities of the MPO and Star Tran. It also includes the activities from several other departments that conduct work in support of metropolitan transportation planning such as the Lincoln Airport Authority, LTU, Lancaster County Engineering, Planning, and the Health Department. The budgets are also included. The MPO is funded through federal funds called PL (Planning) funds through the Federal Highway Administration with a local City match. The eligible activities are funded at an 80/20 split with 80 percent coming from federal funds and 20 percent from local funds. Star Tran receives federal planning funds as well for transit.

Many of the items carry forward from year to year. This year, there is some significant work that is going to continue going forward, which is the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Update and the Lincoln Mobility Plan. Another work item this year is the Safe Streets and Roads for All planning under the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, the City of Waverly and the City of Bennet. The MPO will serve on committees to support that work as needed.

The budget for the federal PL funds are based a formula that considers population. The PL budget breakdown for this year is about 1.5 million dollars to 1.6 million dollars. This includes some funds that were de-obligated from a couple of years ago rolled forward into the new budget. This item went to the MPO Technical Committee for recommendation on April 9, and their action was a recommendation of approval.

ACTION:

Motion for approval by Beckius; seconded by Washington and carried 5-0; Beckius, Huff, Vest, Schulte and Washington voting 'yes,'; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE 2025 SELF-CERTIFICATION REVIEW**May 2, 2025**

Christopher stated that this is the annual self-certification that the MPO is required to do to certify to the federal government that the federal laws applying to MPOs are continuing to be met. This annual self-certification review is different than the MPO review by Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration that occurs every four years. The State of Nebraska signs this document, and the Mayor is

authorized to sign also. This certification becomes part of the TIP when submitted for federal approval. There are not any issues that we anticipate. Of note this year is the Federal Highway Administration requested revisions to remove references to the MPO's Environmental Justice Strategy to align with more recent federal policies.

Vest asked if we are authorizing that we have examined the standards and comply with those standards.

Christopher stated that the committee action is authorizing the Mayor to sign on behalf of the MPO as its executive officer.

ACTION:

Motion for approval by Beckius; seconded by Washington; and carried 4-0; Beckius, Schulte, Vest, and Washington voting 'yes,' Huff abstained; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FY 2026-2029 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

May2, 2025

Christopher presented on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is put together every year. It is coordinated with help from many other staff from the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County and other state and federal agencies. The next 4 year period is from 2026-2029. The TIP follows the Federal Fiscal Year. Fiscal Year 2026 starts on October 1.

The MPO is a federally required organization that is housed within the City/County Planning Department and the City of Lincoln is the designated organization for federal metropolitan planning. The MPO boundary includes all of Lancaster County including Lincoln and surrounding towns and cities. The TIP must cover at least four years. We do annual updates and it can also be amended or revised as needed.

The projects from the TIP are required to be consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan. Most of the projects in the TIP are using federal and state funds and must be listed. Regionally significant projects are also listed even if they are locally funded. The TIP is coordinated with Lincoln's CIP and the Lancaster County Road and Bridge program. Lincoln's TIP is submitted to the state and include in the State TIP. The process included a draft sent out for review to the agencies followed by the opportunity to submit any changes or add and remove projects as needed. The new projects must be consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plans as the guiding document. Most projects are carried over from year to year. In March following the creation of the draft, there was an MPO Programming and Funding subcommittee meeting (staff committee) where they recommended the proposed TIP. It then went to the MPO Technical Committee and on April 16 there was a

briefing before the Planning Commission hearing. At both meetings, the TIP was recommended for approval. The MPO Officials Committee is the final local action. Approval is then required by the Nebraska Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Hopefully, approval will come by the end of September and the TIP will go into effect in the new fiscal year starting October 1, 2025.

Christopher mentioned a new program used for the TIP called ClearGov. This is software that is already being used with the Lincoln CIP and results of the TIP are in a web version as well as a PDF and departments can submit project changes electronically. Christopher demonstrated this program for everyone to see.

Vest asked if this was open to the public.

Christopher said yes, it is, and demonstrated that public accessibility.

Vest asked if there were any changes to the TIP.

Christopher went on to state that the Nebraska Department of Transportation has a section listed, and every year, they have numerous projects that they add or remove for different highway and interstate projects within Lancaster County.

The Airport Authority had one project removed for a Snow Removal Equipment building as it will be locally funded only. There was also a project removed by the Planning Department for the B Street Bicycle Boulevard that was awarded Transportation Alternative program funds through a competitive process. Planning wants this project to go forward, but at this time there is not an available staff person to be a Responsible Charge for the project. So, it has been removed and the funds have been reallocated to a trail projects also using these funds. The Airport Authority Runway 18/36 sensors project has been combined with another project for the runway. Lastly, the removed NDOT projects are due to the anticipation that they cannot be completed within the four years of the TIP or a few years after due to funding restrictions, so they have been removed temporarily.

There have been a few changes to project information since the Technical Committee met in April. One of those is the 33rd and Cornhusker RTSD project and updated costs for it. The second is the 48th and Calvert/56th and Calvert project to convert a portion of the project to Advanced Construction, which means doing the work with local funds and getting paid back later with federal funds. All of the projects in the proposed TIP have been found to be in conformance with the Long Range Transportation Plan. There have been some language changes to conform to the latest U.S. Department of Transportation policy.

Washington asked about the projects that were removed, what is happening to the funding and how likely will it be to get funding back for these projects.

Christopher stated that the assumption is made that Transportation Alternatives funds will continue and be renewed after 2026 with the next federal transportation

bill. It is not a guarantee, but assuming the funds will continue in the TIP is still considered financially constrained. What is shown in the TIP under those projects would require a renewal.

Washington asked which trail projects are getting the funds from the B Street Bicycle Boulevard.

Christopher responded that the Beal Slough and Waterford trails will receive the funds.

Barnes added that the B Street Boulevard project has been hard work to move forward and has been in TIP for a few years. A member of the Planning staff was going to take the lead and then there were staffing changes. Since this funding has timing issues, we did not want to lose the funds, so they were reallocated to another project. That ended up being trails.

Washington was glad to have that confirmed.

Barnes commented that Nebraska Department of Transportation will sometimes sponsor projects for small jurisdictions that do not have staff. This option was explored for Lincoln on this project but was not successful.

Christopher concluded by stating this item has been recommended for approval by the MPO Technical Committee and the Planning Commission.

ACTION:

Motion for approval by Beckius; seconded by Schulte and carried 5-0; Beckius, Huff, Vest, Schulte and Washington voting 'yes,'; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

OTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

- a. Staff Update on the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Update and Lincoln Mobility Plan

Barnes stated that work on the Long Range Transportation Plan is done every five years as required by the federal government. The final consulting team is working with Nebraska Department of Transportation to draft an agreement. This is in the hands of the state and we are told it would be completed around May 5, 2025. This will then be taken through the process for signature approval. There has already been interest from people wanting to be involved. The Planning process will include related city committees along with neighborhood group. There will be a lot of planning policies and land use updates with the transportation and mobility plans.

Also noted is that Bike to Work Week is May 12-16, and some of our private sector partners are putting together a set of events.

OTHER:

There were no other topics for discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Anyone wishing to address the committee on a matter not on this agenda, and not planned to appear on a future agenda, may do so.

There was no public comment.

The motion was made to adjourn by Vest; Beckius, Huff, Schulte, Washington and Vest voting 'yes,'; Mayor Gaylor Baird absent.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:46 pm.