

MEETING RECORD

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

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Friday, May 22, 2026, 8:30 a.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Eileen Bergt, Heidi Cuca, Kile Johnson, Andrea Gebhart and David Landis.

David Quade and Ann Post absent

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Collin Christopher and Kristi Merfeld of the Planning and Development Services Department; Carla Cosier, Lincoln Transportation and Utilities; Cole Wycoff with HDR; Sara Jensen and Jennifer Seacrest with Olsson; and other interested parties were present.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

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

Johnson then called for the approval of the minutes of the regular meeting held April 24, 2026.

Motion for approval made by Landis; seconded by Cuca

Minutes were approved 5-0: Bergt, Cuca, Gebhart, Landis, Johnson, voting "yes" Penn and Quade absent.

DISCUSS AND ADVICE:

**UDR26048 MULTI MODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER (LINCOLN)
TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES**

MAY 22, 2026

Members Present: Bergt, Cuca, Gebhart, Landis, and Johnson.

Post and Quade absent.

Collin Christopher, Planning and Development Services Department, 555 S 10th Street, Lincoln NE came forward and stated that this is an advisory review for the multimodal transportation center (MMTC) to be located just south of the county-city complex. This design was last seen in May 2024, so it has been about two years. This is a federally funded project, and the hope is that construction can start this summer still. LTU and StarTran are looking for one last round of feedback. The MMTC will sit just outside of the Capitol Environs, so a certificate of appropriateness is not required. This is simply an advisory review, though it would be helpful if this commission is supportive of the project to take a vote recommending approval. It is not an official action like a certificate would be. It is really just an informal show of support of the project.

Christopher provided a brief description of the project and some of the considerations that the commission should be focused on before handing it off to the design team.

Cole Wycoff, HDR, 1248 O Street, Lincoln Nebraska came forward and stated that this project is of great excitement to all those involved. As Collin mentioned this is an idea of blending the transit center and a park-like setting. The site as it exists today is a surface parking lot, but it will become an 18-bay bus transit center. Bus transit facilities by their nature tend to be pretty concrete-intensive. The goal through this project was to try and infuse as much natural landscape as possible. Part of the way they are exploring this is with the vacation of H Street just South of the current city-county buildings. This will transition a city street into a public outdoor space. Wycoff displayed an image of how the building is positioned on the site. A significant amount of concrete and pavement is being removed as part of this project and transitions to green space. The project team, LTU, city constituents and others have been involved in developing these project principles that drove and guided our design team through this process. Specifically, those principles include creating accessible, affordable and reliable and sustainable service for Lincoln. It is safe, universal, accommodating, climate smart and prioritizes equity integrated into the downtown multimodal

network. It functions as a gateway to our downtown and city. This project also supports the vibrancy of Lincoln's neighborhoods and the flexibility to adapt to future conditions. The area that will be vacated and turned into green space is intended for folks coming to use the Star Tran bus service and there is additional support spaces for Star Tran operations as well as offices and meeting spaces on the second floor.

The green space previously mentioned will be where the street is absorbed by StarTran and repurposed in part as a bus ingress and egress as the buses come in and access these 18 bus bays. The building is 31'-9" tall, compared to the 50' tall county-city building. The bus bays next to the building – except for two – will have canopies. Those canopies are just over 13' tall. There will be a lot of pavement around these facilities. The bus traffic and movement will have to be accommodated to minimize the amount of pavement required to the orientation of the bus bays themselves. They are slightly askew from the cardinal directions on site. So that has informed the orientation and the positioning of the bus canopies. It is the language of those bus canopies that they've started to adopt and proliferate throughout the site as a sort of a break from the cardinal grid that exists in the downtown environments. They want to make the canopies themselves feel more of a part of the landscape than perhaps of the built environment.

Meanwhile the building at the northeast corner of the site does quite the opposite. It strives to be a piece of architecture adjacent to the county-city building and respects the setback from that building.

With the canopies adjacent to each of the bus bays, the angled geometry can be seen a little better and they are infusing a bit of green space as well as improving some of it around the site. The decommissioned H street will become a public plaza with seating and plantings, as well as space reserved for bike share and scooter storage, and general public bike storage. Looking into the space at the building and the ground floor, there are primary entrances to the facility for the public on the east and west. This is also the primary public waiting space and the portion of the building that the public will use. The southern part of the second floor is designed for day-to-day use and restricted access to employees only. There will be the option to open up a portion for public use with a couple of meeting spaces. Additionally, a second entrance can be opened. The construction is inspired from the complex of buildings to the north and they were very intentional regarding this.

Making this building quiet but sturdy is important and a strong emphasis on verticality and rhythm is a regimented approach to the architectural façade. The materials of the building are intentionally restrained as they are using an ultra-high

performance concrete panel. To match the color and general texture of these buildings, they are again trying to be familiar with the neighboring context, without replicating said context. On the North elevation, the expanse of transparency roof responds to the public waiting space. It has good northern exposure, so they have opened that façade up with a lot of transparency to allow for maximum natural daylight. It also addresses the outdoor plaza to the immediate North, so there is a sense of connection from inside to out for the public. The ultra-high performance concrete makes up a large portion of the façade on the building itself. They do have a few soffits on the building that have an aluminum wood product applied to it. They are trying to infuse as much nature or natural feeling elements into parts of the landscape, beyond just plant life. Additional aluminum material for signage and other elements brings a bit more warmth to the site. From a site furniture standpoint there will be benches under the canopies and some seating area benches in the public space north of the facility itself. They do have some screening elements on the south edge of the site screening both trash and an electrical service yard.

Signage becomes very important to wayfinding at a transit facility. Signs will be embedded into the canopies themselves as well as a few freestanding signs. The signs are a warmer metal material and house a digital display for folks using the bus service to understand which buses are coming and going. This image shows the South side of the county city complex and looking South on the left side is the public outdoor space. Looking onto the bus bays and canopies this image shows the southern edge of the site looking back North. It shows a bit of the county-city building in the background and the new building adjacent to it here. The geometry sort of dissonance of the canopies are intentionally askew from the orthogonal grid of the city streets. This is trying to make the canopies feel more connected to the natural environment. The canopies play a really important role in the sustainability of this project. They are covered by photovoltaic panels that are translucent and those photovoltaic panels work together with a geothermal heat pump system. That will help heat and cool the building using the earth's temperature to offset the temperature loads. It's because of these two strategies and many others that they're anticipating that this project may achieve net zero status in terms of its energy use. In fact, the models are showing that they are generating about 110% of their electrical needs with the photovoltaics that are on-site. The excess will be able to be put back into the grid. Additionally, they are anticipating a green roof on top of the building, because it is shorter than the county-city building. The green roof will help insulate the building.

Again, the canopies do a lot of work here and there is an inclusion of green space into the configuration of these canopies. The intentional drawdown of the canopy to

grade with these slotted elements provide some additional windscreen and shade for people waiting for buses. It can be seen how the configuration of these elements situates next to some of the planting areas and addresses some of the seating areas for the bus passengers. This is probably the best image to describe these photovoltaic panels. They follow photovoltaic cells that are sandwiched between a translucent panel so they provide a healthy amount of shade. They do allow some amount of ambient light to seep through, so it is not completely an opaque system. Looking at the building at night from the extreme southeast is the entrance on the south that is predominantly a staff entrance. This overhang portion of the building is cantilevered again to provide a bit of relief and overhead weather protection for folks using this entrance. Wycoff asked if there were any questions.

Landis stated that the Gold's corner was the place that had a lot of bus traffic and pedestrian use. There was some tension between smokers and non-smokers. This is open which means it is not enclosed. Is there any anti-smoking rule that would follow given the past concern? What will happen in this space in regards to smoking and non-smoking?

Wycoff responded that the enclosed building will of course be non-smoking. They are in the process of placing smoking receptacles around the sight. It is an outdoor environment and if people are smoking somewhere they are free to do so. That is as much as they can currently share on the topic.

Johnson asked what consideration has been given to the homeless population that are in the area and may hang out around bus shelters. There is a facility across the street on J Street.

Wycoff responded that this has been a topic of much conversation. First the durability of materials is not associated with unhoused populations and will get heavy use. We are looking at using aluminum versus real wood. In terms of seating, benches are being chosen that are not too comfortable to be an incentive for folks to not sit and camp out. They want people to go to places better suited to help them. Inside the building will have the same considerations for durability and the restrooms are designed for that as well. Security will be at the top of mind. Camera visibility systems will be used so the staff managing the facility have good eyes on who is using the facility and how they are using it.

Johnson asked what the hours of operations would be?

Wycoff deferred to Carla Cosier.

Carla Cosier, Assistant Director with Transit, Lincoln Transportation and Utilities;

came forward and stated that this facility will be open from 5:30 am – 10:00 pm Monday - Friday and 6:30 am – 8:00 pm on Saturdays. Also, to speak a little bit to the homeless at this site, the plan is to hire and staff their own security so it can be open and staffed at all times. Then there would also be someone available to help people to move along to a more appropriate place.

Johnson replied that the southeast corner looks like a really nice place to bunk out. Is the light going to be on all night in that corner?

Kosier commented yes, the lighting will be there. That is the plan.

Johnson asked what multimodal mean?

Kosier stated that multimodal is connectivity with different modes of transportation and everything from transit to walkability, bikes scooters, and ride share. As was mentioned, they will have several bike stations including BikeLNK. This project will bring all modes together in one place.

Johnson asked if the city currently has inner city service?

Cosier stated that the city does not at this time. It has been talked about on several occasions, but they do have room for it on-site when it becomes available.

Johnson asked if Carla could help with the flow of buses. Where do they enter, where do they leave and do they ever cross the pedestrian space between the building and bus bays?

Wycoff displayed a diagram that showed the 18 bus bays all located in this loop. There is an entrance point for buses coming south on 9th Street. Then there is an entrance point that will provide access to staff parking as well as an entrance to the bus bays from coming northbound on 10th Street. To answer the question, there is some intermingling of pedestrian traffic predominantly here and by these two crosswalks. The way it is being designed is the configuration of this is that the public will generally come out of this waiting space and to the south or across the crosswalk to the south. They could also cross another crosswalk to the south and that is how pedestrians will flow.

Johnson asked if the buses come in on the west bank and park up against the curb?

Wycoff stated correct, there is actually two-way traffic throughout the circle, so buses will always address a curb. This would be the passenger side if you are in a personally owned vehicle. Five bays will have buses pulling up against this configuration to allow more efficient movement and parking for those buses. There are four bays coming northbound on this half and it is the same type of configuration.

Johnson commented that the graphics for the wayfinding are wonderful, the way they are big and readable. It looks like they can be seen from almost anywhere.

Wycoff responded that the orientation of the bays helps as they are all facing the transit center at an angle. They are also staggered in nature, so that visibility is improved.

Johnson asked if they are marked on both sides?

Wycoff said yes.

Landis mentioned he was glad to see that are benches and designed to be just benches.

Wycoff stated that there has been no formal selection made on the benches yet. The considerations have been discussed about ways to mitigate and tune the comfort level. They want them to be comfortable but not too comfortable. The selection will not be made until they are in the construction process and when purchasing happens, but this is the direction today.

Johnson replied that this looks like a wonderful skate park. What do you envision in that regard?

Wycoff responded that the members are doing a good job of bringing up things that they are actively discussing. There is a meeting this afternoon and there is a heightened attention to the planters adjacent to the canopies. They are designing raised elements or moments of disruption to the surface to discourage skaters.

Bergt stated that if it is designed right it can look like part of the design and not a add on to look like they are trying to stop skaters. But if it is designed to stop skaters, it should be done now rather than after the fact.

Wycoff replied in agreement, that is why it is being talked about now, so it can be placed into the construction document as opposed to buying something for this purpose later.

Bergt said she had some questions about pedestrian movement. When looking at this plan there are columns and angled patterns to cross over as a pedestrian. As a pedestrian it feels confusing and not in a continuous movement. There are benches located in the middle of the walk and the sidewalk pattern doesn't match.

Wycoff replied that this is an important point that has been made. They have been careful about pedestrian movement from this view. If the point of view was shifted slightly to the right, there would be a continuous uninterrupted corridor of space through these canopies. It does not ask someone to zig or zag and it is perfectly north and south. So all of the angular movements that they're doing to the architectural elements are sort of outside the bounds of that pathway, so people do not linger too much.

Bergt responded that the canopies do not look continuous

Wycoff commented that they are continuous and they tie into the canopy adjacent to it.

Bergt stated that if someone was walking on the main sidewalk, they would feel like they know where they are going and if it is raining, they can stay undercover.

Wycoff said they could walk and follow the same path underneath the canopies.

Bergt mentioned that they shift right.

Wycoff replied that the pavement pattern shifts but there is a zone of continuous movement.

Johnson asked if there are a lot of graphics inside the building, so people can stop and evaluate where they need to go for when they are outside, and if any of it is interactive?

Wycoff stated that there will be displays in the waiting space along with auditory announcements, indicating which buses are arriving and to which bays. Folks will have the option should they choose to wait inside and then migrate to the bay where the buses are arriving.

Johnson questioned how they were going to accommodate the visually impaired. There are benches located in the middle of the space.

Wycoff replied that is a good question. They are trying to make some of these obstacles as out of the way as possible. There will also be textured panels on the pavement at the bus stops, for knowing where the curbs are with cane detection.

Cosier stated that to add a little more to this topic, there is a member of the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired who they are working closely with. There have been several discussions and they are planning some training to make sure everyone feels comfortable on the site. They are asking other groups as well to do some hands-on training. There will also be auditory announcements outside as well. The staff will also be able to assist at the new location.

Johnson asked if there would be a place to eat lunch?

Cosier responded that there is the green space between the buildings and the whole downstairs area with a large public waiting space. There will be a drivers lounge to step off on to the first floor and take a break or whatever else they need.

Johnson asked about garbage. Bus stops accumulate garbage.

Cosier mentioned that they are working on the size of the garbage cans, but there is a contractor to pick up the garbage. They have added efficiency such as visual validation, so it has to be scanned and sent. The garbage is currently emptied three times a day at 11th and L Street. It will be checked multiple times a day to ensure all public spaces are clean.

Wycoff added that there will be labeled and color-coded areas for trash and recycling.

Bergt questioned the bike racks. The bicyclists don't like when the bike can only be attached to one location. They prefer two points of contact so they don't fall over easy.

Jennifer Seacrest, 601 P Street, Lincoln, Ne; The benches and picnic tables are from the same company – mmcite. The scooters are the same material and manufacturer. The remaining furniture is by Forms and Surfaces.

Bergt commented that she likes how the building design mimics the whole campus. The concern her is it seems a little heavy and she thought it would be a lighter

building. The windows are underneath with these heavy materials above it and no visual. The material above is just hanging there like it is glued. The openness to the north is great, but the whole building is just so dense. It seemed like it should be more open and light. There are the heavy materials and no columns coming down. The plant material and landscape feels very dense. Who is going to maintain all of it?

Cosier responded that a lot of this is pretty low maintenance and it is being looked at to work with the LTU building maintenance and management crews to see what they have to do. They have been involved in the conversations.

Bergt replied back that this is not low maintenance. The plant material is densely planted and a lot of different kinds that don't grow well here. The plant may get too large or are too dense and it gives a feeling of not being safe. There is a lot of hand weeding for the perennial and shrub beds. That cannot be done with a machine. The turf areas should be increased and the choices of trees should be reexamined. Some of them have lots of seeds that will drop and go into every planting bed. There will be a higher maintenance than what is thought to be. There is not a dedicated crew that can take that on. Parks does the malls and they can't dedicate as much time as there should be and so all of those plants have been removed. The first year it will look great but as time goes on, it is something to think about.

Landis agreed that this looks like a lot of maintenance..

Bergt commented she likes the idea of a park, but with that comes perennials which are cut down at the end of the season. In the spring there will need to be some shrubs with this. Perennials take more hand maintenance.

Johnson asked if there will be a watering system? Who will do the maintenance?

Seacrest stated that DLA had been consulted on materials and that is how they were picked. They were based on success in the urban environment in downtown. The design is well suited for them.

Cuca asked if the green roof was part of the plan and caretaking too?

Wycoff replied the green roof is a sedum tray system that is delivered pre planted and placed in place. They are a mostly succulent sort of plant material. It is not zero maintenance but intended to be low maintenance. It does need occasional maintenance throughout the year. Putting on a green roof has been talked about in

the city and the desire to do this is for a lot of reasons. They are proposing to install as low maintenance a green roof as possible.

Cuca responded that Arbor Day and Surety both have green tops and asked how they have learned from them on what they are doing?

Wycoff stated that he was not familiar with those projects, but did design a project in Grand Island with a green roof. It will require a little bit of care, but is something a novice can do.

Cuca asked how many staff members will be at this location and how will the parking lot function. Who can park there? Is it for staff only and how will they keep other people from parking there? Can people park and then ride the bus; is that part of the plan?

Cosier replied that they will have about a dozen staff members. The first floor staff will be assisting with passengers. The majority of the administration staff is moving to this building as well. They are excited to be front facing with their customers. There will also be about 50 parking stalls. Their staff will park there and some will be utilized for folks coming to public meetings. If people want to park and further ride the bus or hop on the trolley, they can do that too.

Cuca asked if someone worked in the Haymarket, could they park there for free and ride the trolley.

Cosier responded that they would hope people are parking and riding and not just taking advantage of the space. It may be something the security team will need to monitor.

Cuca replied that it is assumed that the buses are at another location to be maintained?

Cosier replied yes, the current facility at 7th and J will remain the location for the maintenance garages. They are just closing the office section. Where the dispatchers and bus drivers start and end the day will remain the same.

Gebhart asked if the city is confident that changes in bus length and height standards over the years will be able to be accommodated?

Wycoff stated that yes, Carla could speak to this also, but there is a good amount of flexibility in terms of the size of the bays. If the city every wanted bigger buses, it could get longer. We have the ability to accommodate that.

Gebhart suggested that the canopy doesn't really extend over the bus, so a passenger would step into the open air before getting out?

Wycoff responded "yes".

Gebhart asked if there were any attempts to include an overhang that actually connects the building into the canopies?

Wycoff replied that it was discussed and for a variety of reasons they moved away from that concept. They were not going to be able to cover portions of the site where buses were traveling without excessive cost.

Gebhart commented that the consideration of the ability to add that in the future would be something that feels like a more sustainable approach as far as the lighting overnight in the bays.

Wycoff stated that there will be lighting that is specific to the bus traffic thrown at the pavement from the canopies themselves. There will also be pole lights for the general site lighting and then pedestrian-like lighting underneath the canopies. This will provide more human-scale light levels. It will all be lit.

Gebhart responded that it would be nice to have a kind of evening glow. Is this going to feel like that with especially tall light poles or will this feel like the mall parking lot that is blasting light in an empty space overnight.

Wycoff replied that the hope is not to have those pole lights in the parking lot. That will be a fairly typical sort of parking light configuration. A lot of the lighting for the buses themselves are going to be embedded in the canopies and throwing light sort of toward the pavement from the canopies as opposed to 60 feet in the air.

Landis asked if the buses do not stay overnight, what happens to the lighting during off hours. Does it go away or dim down and disappear?

Wycoff stated that it is an operational question. The city and LTU have the option to go on or off. Dimming is something that could be considered if it were desired.

Gebhart asked about the southeast corner where the first floor insets. She stated that it almost feels like a hole in the building. What is the purpose of this aside from staff access? Is there some small amenities or a bench that can help? It needs to look more cozy.

Wycoff responded that once again everyone is doing a great job bringing up things that are actively being studied. They are talking about building signage at that location. It can be open to visitors who want to park and want to traverse into the waiting space. It can also be controlled if LTU wants it to be.

Landis replied that it looks like a space with an overhang if the weather was bad to seek shelter. It would be a place for a smoker to use as well. It has the ability to attract others to that space by having the overhang and the lighting. It looks attractive.

Johnson said the ground water heat pump operation looks wonderful. Approximately how much did that cost?

Wycoff was not sure of the cost. There was the option of tying into a city infrastructure versus using this system. This system was less expensive, so that helped improve operational costs.

Johnson asked how many wells there are going to be in the wellfield?

Wycoff believed there would be 18, but would need to go back and look.

Bergt asked if that location is mainly under the bus area?

Wycoff stated that generally these systems tend to not want to be underneath buildings where they are inaccessible. They are generally installed under parking lots or paved areas, in case they need to be accessed.

Johnson responded that is really neat.

Landis stated that Cole had mentioned that it might be appropriate to send some signal of reaction about this. Even though it is not a formal area of Capitol Environs, taking some action to what is being seen here today. Would a motion to approve be appropriate?

Christopher agreed that a motion to vote for advisory approval would be appropriate. This is a chance for the project team to get some final feedback before moving ahead

with construction. This is really just more like a chance to give it a thumbs up and identify any issues as it becomes more finalized.

Landis motioned for an advisory approval, with the understanding that there are still issues to be worked out.

Johnson stated that he encouraged this motion.

Landis responded that we are not saying yes to everything we are seeing today, but it is a work in progress with the general direction being quite positive.

Wycoff replied that they are preparing documents to go out for bid next month. They are far along in the design but issues are still resolvable and will continue to be so even in the construction phase.

Landis reiterated his motion to move the conceptual, advisory approval of the design, knowing that they are a work in progress.

Johnson asked if there was anyone that wished to comment. There were no comments.

Motion for approval made by Landis; seconded by Gebhart and approved 5-0: Bergt, Cuca, Gebhart, Landis, and Johnson voting "yes"

Post and Quade absent.

Staff Report and Miscellaneous

Christopher replied there were no other staff updates and no new applications yet for the next meeting. In July, Clark & Enersen could be submitting a proposal related to the restoration of St. Mary's Catholic Church. They are peeling back all the paint and exposing brick on the church currently, and are now looking at new landscape improvements along the K Street side.

Christopher mentioned that the State has a request to add concrete planter bollards for security reasons in front of the building at 505 S 14th Street. Staff views it as a positive improvement and doesn't have much concern about it. He asked if the commission wanted to see it come forward for a formal review or if it could be approved administratively.

Landis asked if the protection is against a vehicle smashing into the door?

Cuca commented that this is small enough not to need a formal review. The only thing is making sure it is still accessible.

Bergt suggested matching other planters in the area with what is in front of the Landmark building.

Landis responded that he liked this idea and it doesn't overwhelm the objective of using for security, it seems to look decorative.

Bergt suggested to match the color or something similar to the other planters down the street.

Johnson agreed this could be handled administratively.

Landis agreed also.

Bergt stated that annual plants would be placed in the planters.

Johnson asked if there was anyone that wished to speak on any item, not on the agenda.

Johnson stated that with no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.