

## K. Comments





## City of Waverly, Nebraska

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William D. Gerdes

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### Deputy Clerk

Cheris R. Cadwell

January 11, 2023

Rachel Christopher, AICP

Transportation Planner

Lincoln MPO / Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department

FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program Input

Dear Ms. Christopher,

The City of Waverly would like to provide this Letter of Support for projects that will positively impact northeastern Lancaster County. Many of our citizens work outside of our community and are traveling Interstate 80, Highway 6 and the local County roads daily. School District 145 encompasses a large area, and many students drive several miles to get to school each day. Our rural neighbors need roadways that ensure safe means to access their fields and bring their harvest to market. Any efforts to improve safe routes to and from work, school and home are a benefit to Waverly.

Projects of specific interest are:

- Construction of East Beltway
- Paving of Fletcher Road—84<sup>th</sup> St to N 148<sup>th</sup> St
- Widening of N 148<sup>th</sup> St—Highway 2 to Highway 6
- Addition of turn lanes on N 148<sup>th</sup> St—Highway 2 to Highway 6

These projects will help create safer means to travel in northeast Lancaster County. Our people are our most precious asset, and we need to make the improvements needed to keep them safe.

We appreciate being a member of the MPO Technical Committee and offer our continued support for the above-mentioned projects.

Sincerely,

William D. Gerdes

Mayor

## MEETING RECORD

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

**NAME OF GROUP:** TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** April 13, 2023, 1:00 p.m., Conference Room 113, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln, NE

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** David Cary – Planning Department; Elizabeth Elliott – Lincoln Transportation and Utilities; Pam Dingman – County Engineer; Paul Barnes and Stephanie Rouse – Planning Department; Gary Bergstrom – Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department; Carla Cosier – StarTran; Roger Figard – Railroad Transportation Safety District; Stephanie Fisher – City of Waverly; Tom Goodbarn and Craig Wacker – Nebraska Department of Transportation; Chad Lay – Lincoln Airport Authority; Larry Legg – County Engineer; Rich Bishop – Urban Development Department; Sara Hartzell – Parks and Recreation; Erin Sokolik – Lincoln Transportation and Utilities; (Kelly Oelke – City of Hickman and Thomas Shafer – Lincoln Transportation and Utilities absent). Rachel Christopher and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Jarrod Walker and Jodi Gibson – Nebraska Department of Transportation; Brian Praeuner – StarTran; and other interested parties.

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

### **REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FY 2024-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** **April 13, 2023**

Members present: Barnes, Bergstrom, Bishop, Cary, Cosier, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Fisher, Goodbarn, Hartzell, Lay, Legg, Rouse, Sokolik and Wacker; Oelke and Shafer absent.

Christopher stated that the TIP is a federally required program. It looks at a four year period. The current program is 2023-2026. It shows all project listings for those projects that receive federal funds. It also shows locally funded regionally significant projects as well. This document is developed in coordination with NDOT. NDOT has their own State TIP. It is updated annually as well. The TIP is adopted every year and can be amended as needed in the interim to add, delete and modify projects. All projects must conform to the LRTP.

This effort is coordinated with all agencies having applicable projects needing to be listed in the TIP. NDOT includes their improvements to the Interstate and highway systems. StarTran shows operational and

capital public transportation projects. Lincoln Airport Authority lists operational and capital improvement projects funded through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and local funds. FTA Section 5310 and 5311 funds are for rural area formula grants for vanpool and other public transportation services. Pedestrian, Trail and On-Street Bike facilities are listed for Parks and Recreation and Planning Department. Railroad Transportation Safety District (RTSD) projects are also shown.

New with this proposed TIP is an interactive online map. The tables for each program are still provided as well. The map allows the user to see the project in its context. More information about the project and a link to the program tables is available on the side of the map. Also, a Google Street View has been integrated. In addition, there are new review elements for equity and congestion management. These were in response to recommendations from the FTA and FHWA from the MPO's four year certification review. Information at the project level will inform decision making for the Technical Committee and Officials Committee. It will apply to new projects as they are added to the TIP, starting with this TIP for most programs. The TIP review will be integrated with other MPO plans and processes such as the LRTP and the MPO Congestion Management process through these review elements. There is an equity goal in the LRTP to help identify underserved and overburdened communities. Analysis will be done for the proposed projects. Also in the LRTP, project scoring was done. The score will be included in the analysis. The Congestion Management is a required adopted document due to the size of the Metropolitan Planning Area being over 200,000 people. It identifies congested corridors and also has some strategies listed to help address congestion from a variety of different directions. Some analysis was done in the LRTP using modeling to identify congested areas. Information from the Congestion Management Plan and LRTP related to congestion mitigation will be included in the review of new projects.

A new project proposed for this TIP qualifying for these new reviews is the W. South Street bridge over Salt Creek. This is a new proposed Lincoln Transportation and Utilities (LTU) project. There will be a variety of benefits with this project and analysis provided on the equity and congestion management reviews was included in the staff report.

The Planning Commission will be briefed on the proposed TIP on April 19, 2024. The Officials Committee will hold their public hearing on May 10, 2023. The MPO will then submit the TIP to the State for inclusion in the State TIP. Ultimately, the proposed TIP will go into effect on October 1, 2023. TIP amendments that were acted upon earlier in this meeting are included in the proposed document.

Cary appreciates everyone's work. It is a joint document in process that everyone takes part in at some point. There is a lot of funding that flows through this document.

**ACTION:**

Elliott moved approval of the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program as recommended by staff, seconded by Barnes and carried 16-0: Barnes, Bergstrom, Bishop, Cary, Cosier, Dingman, Elliott, Figard, Fisher, Goodbarn, Hartzell, Lay, Legg, Rouse, Sokolik and Wacker voting 'yes'; Oelke and Shafer absent.

## MEETING RECORD

*Advanced public notice of the Planning Commission meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website. In addition, a public notice was emailed to the Lincoln Journal Star for publication on Tuesday, April 25, 2023.*

**NAME OF GROUP:** PLANNING COMMISSION

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** Wednesday, May 3, 2023, 1:00 p.m., Hearing Room 112, on the first floor of the County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Dick Campbell, Tracy Corr, Gloria Eddins, Rich Rodenburg, Cindy Ryman Yost and Tracy Edgerton; Lorenzo Ball, Maribel Cruz and Cristy Joy absent. David Cary, Steve Henrichsen, Paul Barnes, Shelli Reid, Jennifer McDonald, Stephanie Rouse, and Andrew Thierolf of the Planning Department; media and other interested citizens.

**STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:** Regular Planning Commission Hearing

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

**MISCELLANEOUS 23003**  
**FOR REVIEW OF THE DRAFT FY2024 TO FY2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR CONFORMANCE WITH THE CURRENT LINCOLN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN.**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** May 3, 2023

Members present: Campbell, Corr, Eddins, Rodenburg, Ryman Yost and Edgerton; Ball, Cruz, and Joy absent.

**Staff Recommendation:** In Conformance with the Long-Range Transportation Plan

There were no ex-parte communications disclosed.

There were no ex-parte communications disclosed relating to site visits.

**Staff Presentation:**

**Paul Barnes, Planning Department, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE**, came forward and stated this application is the draft of the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The

TIP is a four-year program of projects that includes those expecting federal funds, projects that require federal review or projects that are considered regionally significant. Barnes stated that if approved, the TIP will start October 1, 2023. Some of the departments that area included in the TIP are the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, The Nebraska Department of Transportation, StarTran, Lincoln Airport Authority, Railroad Transportation Safety District, and other entities that use Federal Transportation System. Barnes stated that this includes 19 projects. All these projects coordinated with the state's TIP and is in conformance with the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. Barnes stated that the TIP has been reviewed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) funding subcommittee, technical committee, and staff and is recommending approval. There has currently been 262 views of the online map between April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.

Campbell asked if railroad transportation has any other projects on their agenda besides the 33<sup>rd</sup> and Cornhusker Street crossing? Barnes stated that there are other projects, but they are not as big as the 33<sup>rd</sup> and Cornhusker Street project, so they are not required to be put into the TIP.

Edgerton asked why some projects are listed as priority projects and others are not designated. Barnes stated that they could be a priority at each agency or made a priority from the community wide scoring, online engagement, and interactions. Edgerton stated that there is a conversation at the end of the staff report about looking at it with relation to underserved communities and how does that score is incorporated into the evaluation. Barnes noted that the scoring is done by the equity score and the congestion management score. There are also conversations about how the TIP will impact the community.

Rodenburg asked if the Cornhusker and 33<sup>rd</sup> Street bridge project was originally going to eliminate the restaurant and now it is replanned to save the restaurant. Barnes stated that it is in the Environmental Review Process.

**Proponents:**

No one came forward in support.

**Neutral:**

No one came forward in neutral testimony.

**Opposition:**

No one came forward in opposition testimony.

Campbell moved to close public hearing, seconded Eddins. Motion carried 6-0: Campbell, Corr, Eddins, Rodenburg, Ryman Yost and Edgerton voting "yes"; Ball, Cruz, and Joy absent.

**MISCELLANEOUS 23003**

**ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:**

**May 3, 2023**

Campbell moved to approve Miscellaneous 23003, second by Eddins.

Campbell thinks that this is a very good program that has been put together. It addresses a lot of the needs and staff have done a good job. Campbell will be voting in support.

Edgerton stated that she will support this and appreciates the interactive map and to be able to go into it and see. Edgerton will be voting in support.

Motion carried 6-0: Campbell, Corr, Eddins, Rodenburg, Ryman Yost and Edgerton voting "yes"; Ball, Cruz, and Joy absent.

Edgerton stated that anyone wishing to speak on an item not on the agenda, may come forward and do so.

Campbell moved to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting of May 5, 2023, seconded by Eddins.

Motion carried 6-0: Campbell, Corr, Eddins, Rodenburg, Ryman Yost and Edgerton voting "yes"; Ball, Cruz, and Joy absent.

## 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:** OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** May 10, 2023, 1:30 p.m., City Council Chambers, County-City Building, 555 S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Tom Beckius, Ryan Huff, Tammy Ward and Christ Yoakum; Mayor Leirion Gaylor Baird and Sean Flowerday absent. David Cary, Paul Barnes, Rachel Christopher, Stephanie Rouse and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; and other interested parties.

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

### **REVIEW AND ACTION ON THE PROPOSED FY 2024-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** **May 10, 2023**

Members present: Beckius, Huff, Ward and Yoakum; Mayor Gaylor Baird and Flowerday absent.

Christopher stated that the TIP is a four year program of projects in Lancaster County that use federal or state funds. It also lists projects that are regionally funded for information purposes. The TIP is adopted every year. It is a federally required document. We are headed into the new fiscal year of 2024. City, County and State agencies list their applicable projects. The document follows the federal fiscal year. In between, it can be amended as needed. Importantly, all projects in the TIP must be found to be in conformance with the LRTP. It is also important that the TIP must be fiscally constrained. Any funding shown in the TIP must be reasonably anticipated or already awarded. The projects are broken out by phase and year. She showed a map of the area that is covered by the MPO.

Process wise, staff coordinates with many agencies to create the TIP. We also brought it through the Programming and Funding Committee and they provided comments. The Technical Committee reviewed this as well. A briefing was given to the Planning Commission. Comments received must be included in the document. One comment was received from the City of Waverly. They noted their support for some projects in Lincoln and Lancaster County and their support is appreciated.

The proposed TIP will be forwarded onto the State for inclusion into the State's TIP. In terms of what kinds of projects the tip includes, it covers all transportation modes. The sections include Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT), Lancaster County Engineering, Lincoln Transportation and Utilities, StarTran,



Lincoln Airport Authority, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Sections 5310 and 5311 funds, Pedestrian-Bike and Trails, and Railroad Transportation Safety District.

There are a few things that are new with this year's TIP. There is an online project map. It shows a series of icons noting the different projects. There is the ability to filter projects. Zooming in allows the aerial map to be viewed. You can click on a project and it will show project details. Also new are two aspects of reviewing projects. These come from recommendations that arose out of the four year federal review. Equity and congestion management are the new review areas. These reviews will apply to any projects that are being added to the TIP for most programs except NDOT, Airport and FTA. These reviews integrate the TIP with other MPO plans and processes such as the 2050 LRTP and MPO Congestion Management Process. In the LRTP, one of the eight goals is equity. There is some mapping that was done on overburdened and underserved communities. In addition to that there was project scoring that was done to prioritize projects. This information will be pulled into the review of a project.

Beckius can envision what is intended with equity. He thinks sometimes a lower socioeconomic situation, he thinks how transportation has impacted those communities. He is trying to understand the balance. There is also trying to understand how transportation issues go through neighborhoods and what comes to mind. We have to deal with the built environment as it stands today. Christopher noted that another example could be looking at a road project and if it could include alternative modes of transportation. What ways could this project be more friendly to those who don't get around by car? We aren't requiring them to make changes. We want to start a conversation. For equity and congestion management, this is our first iteration of including these reviews and we will assess in the future whether they can be improved. Beckius is always interested in hearing how the equity discussions go and how they manifest themselves into the built environment.

Christopher continued that the second review element is congestion management. We have a Congestion Management Process (CMP). Relevant information from the MPO Congestion Management Process will also be part of the review in order to assess how a project impacts congestion. We ask applicants if the project is in the Lincoln MPO CMP network, is it on a high congestion segment from the LRTP and lastly identify which CMP strategies the project supports.

Christopher stated that a new project was added to the 2024-2027 TIP for the W. South Street bridge over Salt Creek. This is a new project subject to the new review elements. On equity, this project is on the boundary between high and moderate-to-high underserved communities. Regarding the benefits of this project, LTU identified firstly being able to continue vehicle connectivity. In addition to that there are trails that run either side of the creek. On the east, there is an at-grade trail crossing. With this project, it will ultimately allow for a crossing to go underneath. Another project on the equity side is there are currently no sidewalks. They would be able to add those. As far as congestion management, it is not in the network but they did note the project would benefit to move goods. She would note the addition of pedestrian facilities on the bridge as well. This was presented to the Programming and Funding Subcommittee, the Technical Committee, and Planning Commission. If approved today, it will be sent to the State for inclusion in the State TIP. She wanted to mention a few changes that have been made to the TIP since it originally went through the Programming and Funding Committee. The proposed amendments on today's agenda will be reflected in the document. There was an administrative modification approved to an LTU project

for their Hyperflow traffic management software. Parks and Recreation also had some last minute updates and fixes to their Fletcher Landmark trail project. Those have been incorporated into the draft document.

Huff asked for clarification of the process regarding new projects for the LRTP, as well as amendments. He wondered if there is a separate public process, if they go back to the public. Christopher stated that LRTP amendments go to the Technical Committee along with Planning Commission before the Officials Committee votes on them. Those are all public meetings. Planning Commission has some additional advertisement requirements. The agency or owner of that project also does what they need to do for notification on their side. For example, a county project appearing in the County Road and Bridge Program would have their own notification process.

Beckius wondered sometimes if there is new funding or a new project that draws some public interest, if that is the impetus to getting these items added to a plan. Is there usually public participation on the front end before this is added to the plan? Huff noted it could be for something such as needed road work or a bridge with some deterioration that wasn't anticipated. Paul Barnes pointed out that the County's 68<sup>th</sup> Street and 148<sup>th</sup> Street projects have had specific studies done on them. There are other things that happen before the documents are amended and staff moves forward with these.

Huff was curious about the equity piece. Everyone at the State has the Federal process on their mind. They are still trying to figure out how to leverage socioeconomic data on a project. He was curious if staff has used the travel demand model and its origins of destination analysis and trace them back to the neighborhood they come from. He is thinking about how to better identify the users of the road at the state level. Christopher is not aware that the MPO's travel demand model has been used for that specific purpose yet. She thinks that is a good next step. She can also speak to the equity piece as there are performance measures that are tracked every year. We look at the map to see where on-street bike lanes and trails are, along with the frequency of bus service compared to where undeserved communities are located. Huff doesn't think anyone has all the answers yet. They are trying to gather data sets and plug them into all these groups.

Yoakum saw data from the Census yesterday and was just talking about how people get around and how they use the services.

**ACTION:**

Ward moved approval of the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program as recommended by staff, seconded by Beckius and carried 4-0: Beckius, Huff, Ward and Yoakum voting 'yes'; Mayor Gaylor Baird and Flowerday absent.



**U.S. Department of Transportation**

**Federal Transit Administration**  
901 Locust Street, Room 404  
Kansas City, MO 64106  
816-329-3920  
816-329-3921 (fax)

**Federal Highway Administration**  
100 Centennial Mall North, Rm 220  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
402-742-8460  
402-742-8480 (fax)

September 27, 2023

Vicki Kramer, Director  
Nebraska Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Director Kramer:

**FHWA/FTA Approval of the Nebraska FY 2024 - 2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program**

This letter is to inform you of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) review and approval of the highway and transit projects contained in the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) FY 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), including the projects from the incorporated Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) for Lincoln MPO (City of Lincoln and Lancaster County), South Sioux City (SIMPCO), Omaha (MAPA), and Grand Island (GIAMPO).

The Draft FY 2024-2027 STIP was available for public comment from August 15, 2023 to August 31, 2023. NDOT received no comments on the proposed STIP during this public comment period.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency's (MAPA) Board of Directors approved the TIP on June 22, 2023. The Lincoln MPO TIP was approved by the Officials Committee on May 10, 2023. The Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) TIP Policy Board approved the TIP on June 29, 2023. The Grand Island TIP was approved by the Policy Board on May 23, 2023. NDOT approved all of the Metropolitan TIPs for inclusion into the STIP on August 2, 2023.

Throughout the year, FHWA and FTA have had ongoing communication with the NDOT, the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and the state's transit agencies. In accordance with 23 CFR Part 450.218(b) and 23 CFR Part 450.334(a), FHWA and FTA have jointly determined that the highway and transit projects included in the STIP and the metropolitan TIPs are based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements.

The enclosed planning finding was prepared to demonstrate how the NDOT's statewide and metropolitan transportation planning and programming processes meet the Federal requirements. Based on FHWA and FTA review of the FY 2024-2027 STIP, the monitoring activities throughout the year, the MPO's self-certifications, and the enclosed planning finding, the FY 2024-2027 STIP is hereby approved.


If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Justin Luther, FHWA, at (402)742-8464 or Daniel Nguyen, FTA, at (816)329-3938.



Mokhtee Ahmad  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration

Sincerely,

**RICHARD W  
FEDORA**



Digitally signed by RICHARD W  
FEDORA  
Date: 2023.09.27 10:22:34 -05'00'

Richard Wayne Fedora, P.E.  
Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration

cc:

Amy Starr, NDOT  
Ryan Huff, NDOT  
Craig Wacker, NDOT  
Curtis Nosal, NDOT  
Jaime Kamarad, NDOT  
Michael Helgerson, MAPA  
David Cary, Lincoln MPO  
Allan Zafft, GIAMPO  
Michelle Bostinelos, SIMPCO

## **Nebraska FY 2024-2027 STIP FHWA and FTA Joint Planning Finding**

As part of the stewardship and oversight responsibilities, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must ensure that both the statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes satisfy the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, 49 U.S.C 5303-5304, and 23 CFR 450. From a statewide perspective, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) certifies the process through the submittal of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), while the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) certify the metropolitan transportation planning process through the submittal of their respective Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and self-certifications.

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.220 and 450.330 (a), the FHWA and the FTA hereby find that the projects included in the fiscal year 2024-2027 STIP are based on a transportation planning process that substantially meets the requirements of 23 CFR Part 450 subpart A, B, C, 49 U.S.C. Sections 5303-5304, and 23 U.S.C. Sections 134 and 135. This joint finding is based on the certification of the statewide transportation planning process for and within Nebraska as well as FHWA's and FTA's ongoing participation in both statewide and metropolitan transportation planning processes (including certification reviews conducted in transportation management areas).

### **TIP/STIP:**

The NDOT STIP is composed of a listing and description of all regionally significant capital and non-capital projects or phases of project development which are FHWA and FTA funded projects. The listing shows a project or phase of a project to be advanced by year for the next four-year period. The MPO TIPs contain a listing and description of all regionally significant capital and non-capital projects or phases of project development which are FHWA and FTA funded projects. The listing shows a project or phase of a project to be advanced by year for the next four-year period.

During the review of the FY 2024-2027 STIP, it was noted that the apportionment amounts and beginning balance forecasts were inaccurate. The main reason for this discrepancy is that the NDOT STIP was prepared prior to the fiscal year ending. FHWA and FTA recognizes a substantial portion of the NDOT, and the MPOs' programs were obligated between the time the STIP was prepared and the end of the 2023 federal fiscal year. To address this issue, please ensure the next STIP amendment accurately portrays the beginning balances.

NDOT approved all the MPO TIPs on August 2, 2023 for inclusion into the NDOT 2024 - 2027 STIP. The MPOs' TIPs were approved by their respective policy committees on the following dates:

- The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency's (MAPA) Board of Directors approved the TIP on June 22, 2023.
- The Lincoln MPO (City of Lincoln and Lancaster County) TIP was approved by the Officials Committee on May 10, 2023.
- The Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO) TIP Policy Board

approved the TIP on June 29, 2023.

- The Grand Island TIP was approved by the Policy Board on May 23, 2023.

FHWA and FTA have jointly determined that the FY 2024-2027 NDOT STIP, which is inclusive of each MPO TIP, adequately demonstrates fiscal constraint by year. All the TIPs included self-certifications and discussion on Transportation Performance Management target establishment.

The STIP and TIPs are all developed utilizing the Nebraska STIP Development Guidelines which were agreed to by FHWA, FTA and NDOT in April 2011 and most recently in March 2023. This document contains many of the administrative procedures for developing the STIP and TIPs. Also, this document outlines the amendment thresholds that the transportation partners have agreed to in Nebraska for both TIPs and Long-Range Transportation Plan amendments. This document continues to be a major streamlining tool to help advance projects through the planning process in Nebraska. FHWA is available to assist NDOT in continuing to update the STIP Development Guidelines upon request.

### **Public Involvement:**

Public involvement is required in the development of the STIP. Specific to the planning process, NDOT has developed a Public Involvement Plan specific to the process of outreach efforts for development and approval of the STIP. This document helps to ensure the State meets federal requirements regarding public participation during the development of the STIP. A letter is sent annually to all non-metropolitan elected and appointed officials offering them an opportunity to comment on the STIP. In the letter, a link is provided to the online STIP to facilitate review and comment by non-metropolitan local officials. The draft STIP is posted on the website and made available at the eight district offices.

In addition, NDOT prepares a news release for media outlets informing the public that the draft STIP is available for public comment. The 2024 -2027 STIP outreach was disseminated as follows:

- A press release to 4,365 recipients, including 315 media outlets statewide.
- A Tweet to 30,800 NDOT followers.
- Gov. Delivery (web-based email subscription service) note to the 1,619 subscribers of RSS feed of NDOT Twitter page.
- Gov. Delivery note to the 918 subscribers of the NDOT STIP page.

In addition to the STIP, NDOT prepares a six- year surface transportation program book. This program book contains many of the projects listed in the STIP. The program book seeks public involvement through the Highway Commission meetings and is approved by the Governor. The latest six-year surface transportation book can be found at the following link: [NDOT six-year transportation program book](#)

The Draft FY 2024-2027 STIP was available for public comment from August 15, 2023 to August 31, 2023. NDOT received no comments on the proposed STIP during this public comment period.

FHWA and FTA recommend NDOT analyze the process for outreach to ensure the STIP outreach process is adequately capturing public comment on the STIP. There may be opportunities to enhance public engagement in the STIP development process, including how NDOT is targeting the public when requesting public comment. A potential area of focus could be determining if the public engagement methods are adequately reaching all demographics and communities to encourage greater public engagement and comments on the program. FHWA is available to assist NDOT develop and enhance engagement activities contained in the NDOT public participation plan.

### **Self-Certification Statements:**

The self-certification statements are an opportunity for the MPOs and NDOT to present how they have incorporated participation in the transportation planning process -- be it citizens or contractors. These agencies use these statements to outline how their operations are conducted in a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuous (3C) manner. It ensures that the transportation planning process occurs to satisfy the objectives of a non-discriminatory, environmentally respectful and citizen-oriented atmosphere.

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.220 (a), NDOT has completed its self-certification requirements and has posted the statement as part of their letter transmitting the STIP to FHWA and FTA. In addition, each of the MPO self-certifications are included by reference, as required under 23 CFR 450.336 (a). NDOT and each of the MPOs have self-certified that the transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements found in 23 CFR 450.220 (a) and 23 CFR 450.336 (a), respectively.

### **Planning Finding:**

Corrective Action: Items that are compliance issues failing to meet one or more requirements of the federal planning statute and regulations.

Recommendation: Items that address technical improvements to the conditions described by the observation involving processes or procedures that are not regulatory.

### **Corrective Action:**

There are no corrective actions identified for the FY 2024 Planning Finding.

### **Recommendations:**

FHWA and FTA recommend NDOT analyze the process for outreach to ensure the STIP outreach process is adequately capturing public comment on the STIP. There may be opportunities to enhance public engagement in the STIP development process, including how NDOT is targeting the public when requesting public comment. A potential area of focus could be determining if the public engagement methods are adequately reaching all demographics and communities to encourage greater public engagement and comments on the program. FHWA is available to assist NDOT develop and enhance engagement activities contained in the NDOT public participation plan.