



*City of Lincoln*  
NEBRASKA



*Mayor's Recommended*

**ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET**

2001 - 2002





## *To the Citizens of Lincoln,*

I am honored to be your Mayor. Lincoln is a vibrant, prosperous city. Lincoln is a great place to live, work and raise our families. Our population has soared to over 225,000 people. The area of the city grew 20 percent during the past decade.

As we celebrate the success of our community, we also must recognize the challenges we face. My challenge for the 2001-2002 city budget is to provide the increased level of services needed while holding the line on property taxes.

Factors making that a challenge include large cost increases in health insurance and fuel, complying with new federal stormwater mandates and opening new parks, trails, libraries and other city facilities. We also recognize that previous reductions in staffing have hurt our ability to keep up as the city grows.

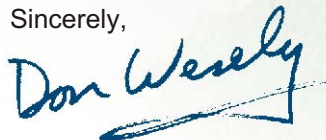
### ***My proposed budget will cut the city's property tax rate by 3.1 percent.***

Key to this year's budget is an increase in the telecommunications occupation tax. Raising it from 3.8 percent to 5.75 percent (Omaha's current rate) will generate more than \$2 million a year. If the occupation tax is not increased, the property tax cut may not be possible, and we will face major budget cuts.

The budget I have proposed is balanced. It funds essential city services and lowers the property tax rate. Your comments and suggestions are welcome at the City Council public hearing on the budget at 5:30 p.m. Monday, August 6.

This community enjoys a high quality of life because we work together to accomplish our goals. As I said in my State of the City Address, ***"We can be excited about our future, confident that together we can face any challenge and take advantage of any opportunity. It is our time, and we are ready."***

Sincerely,



Don Wesely  
Mayor of Lincoln

# NEW FACILITIES OPENING

*Lincoln grew in population and geographic area during the last 10 years. While the city grew, so did the demand for city services and the number of facilities such as libraries, pools, parks, trails, fire stations and water treatment facilities. Since 1990, more than a dozen new city facilities have opened, but the number of city civilian employees has declined from 1,435 to 1,429.*

*In 1998, voters approved a bond issue to fund two new libraries in conjunction with two new parks. Those projects are just a few of the new facilities opening in 2001-2002 in all parts of our community. With the new facilities that have opened and those scheduled to open in the coming year, there is a need to add staff to operate the new facilities and meet the growing demand for services.*



**ANTELOPE PARK ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUND**

The **Bess Dodson Walt Branch Library** (above) at 14th Street and Thunderbird Boulevard and the **Loren Corey Eiseley Branch Library** at 14th and Superior streets are set to open in February 2002. The two new state-of-the-art libraries will require a total of about eight semi-truck loads of books and 25 full-time staff people. (Employees will be phased in, so the impact on the 2001-2002 budget is 19.8 FTEs.)

**Colonel Densmore Park**, set along South 14th Street between Old Cheney and Pine Lake roads, is being developed in tandem with the new Walt Library and the Southwest Branch YMCA. Facilities opening later this summer include a picnic shelter, a playground with a rubber matted surface, tennis and basketball courts and walking paths. The ball fields will be ready next spring.

**Keech Park** at 14th and Superior is home to the Eiseley Library, and the two will share a small outdoor amphitheater. When the park opens this fall, it will include a playground, picnic shelter and playing field. A walkway will include footprints of prehistoric animals as a tribute to Eiseley's love of natural history.

New **neighborhood parks and natural areas** include a park at 43rd and "Y" streets; Phares Park; two pocket parks in Vavrina Meadows; and the Warner Wetland and Interpretive Trail.

The new **"F" Street Community Center** on 13th Street is scheduled to open early next year. The 34,000-square-foot center will feature a gym, an outdoor basketball court, fitness areas, a jogging track, a large kitchen and meeting rooms. Recreation and human service programs will be offered to residents of the area.

Construction of the new **University Place Swimming Pool** began this summer. The old pool, built in 1955, was the city's oldest public swimming pool in operation, and its mechanical system was failing. When the new pool opens in June 2002, it will hold more than 600 swimmers and will feature zero-depth entry and landscaped lawn areas.

Improvements to the **Woods Tennis Center** and **Woods Pool** are part of a master plan for Woods Park developed about a decade ago. Fund raising efforts have made it possible to build a new tennis clubhouse, entry plaza and seating areas. An interactive "sprayground" and a sculpture walk are also planned.

More miles and new facilities are being added to the city's nationally recognized **trail system**. Those additions include 1 mile at the Williamsburg/Tierra Trail and a playground; 1.2 miles from the Williamsburg Trail to Cavett Elementary School and the underpass at Pine Lake Road; .5 miles at the Pine Lake Road Trail; 3 miles at the Highlands Trail loop; 1.25 miles at the Holmes Lake Dam Trail; 2 miles at the Murdock Trail east of 84th Street; 1 mile at the Oak Lake Trail; the pedestrian bridge from Haymarket Park to the Haymarket area of downtown; and the MoPac Rest Station at the trailhead on South 84th Street.



# City of Lincoln

## NEBRASKA

### PROGRESS REPORT

Mayor Wesely has endorsed the recommendation of the Planning and Public Works Departments on the **east and south beltways**. Three routes were proposed for the east beltway, and the middle route was the one endorsed. The City Council and County Board are scheduled to hold joint public hearings on the beltways at 4 p.m. Wednesday, August 15 and 3 p.m. Wednesday, August 22 in the City Council Chambers. The City Council and County Board are scheduled to take action on the proposal at a 7 p.m. meeting August 22.

The preparation of a new **City-County Comprehensive Plan** remains on schedule, with completion targeted for early next year. This long range plan will chart the course of Lincoln's growth over the next 25 years by showing future locations for new homes, businesses, parks and schools. The process is being managed by a 14-member citizen committee with assistance from the Planning Department. The effort has produced a draft vision statement, three alternatives for city growth and planning guidelines for the Stevens Creek Basin. Community involvement in the process is a high priority, and public workshops are being planned.

The city stepped up its **residential street resurfacing program** in calendar year 2000, taking care of 70 blocks instead of the 30 originally proposed. One-hundred blocks are being resurfaced in 2001. The 2001-2002 budget again calls for resurfacing up to 100 blocks.

The goal of the **Infrastructure Financing Study (IFS)** is to determine how the community will pay for providing services in expanding areas of the city. The IFS Advisory Committee's report was issued in January 2001. The Committee made various recommendations on financing water, sanitary sewer, roads, parks and storm sewer improvements. The city is currently working on an implementation program for many of the committee's recommendations.

The demand for **sidewalk repair** is huge, with more than 1,500 miles of sidewalks in the city and another 18 miles added every year. The city was able to increase its sidewalk repair efforts last year to reduce the nearly 40-year backlog, and this year's budget includes \$250,000 for the effort, which remains a city priority.

Construction is scheduled to begin early next spring on the **East "O" Street Project**. When the project is completed in late fall 2003, "O" Street will be six lanes wide with dual left turns at intersections east of Cotner. Left turns will be prohibited on "O" at 56th and Cotner. In addition, 56th Street will be one-way south from "P" to Randolph. Cotner Boulevard will be one-way north from Randolph to "P."

Construction is expected to begin August 13 on the **84th Street Rehabilitation Project**, which is scheduled for completion in July 2002. The project, which affects the area from Pinedale Avenue to Northwoods Drive, includes a new water main, a center left-turn lane and the restoration of pavement on Vine Street. Additional turn lanes will be added at Vine, "O" and "A" streets, and the main entrance to State Farm Insurance Company's Regional Office.



**STREET WORK ON NORMAL BOULEVARD**

Earlier this year, the State of Nebraska approved \$15 million in cigarette tax revenue to help finance the **Antelope Valley Project**, a flood control, traffic improvement and neighborhood revitalization effort. Nebraska's congressional delegation continues to seek additional federal funding for this major project.



The **Beal Slough Stormwater Master Plan** addresses flooding problems along the slough, which runs along Highway 2 from the village of Cheney to Wilderness Park. Flooding in the area has occurred in 1989, 1996 and 1998. The plan's goals are to reduce the flooding potential; to improve water quality, stream stability and conveyance;



## ANTELOPE VALLEY PROJECT

and to guide development in the upper portions of the basin. The recent passage of the storm sewer bond issue has allowed for funds to be set aside to purchase the required right of way, and the design process is about 30 percent completed.

Private developers plan to build a \$30 million **theater, entertainment and shopping complex** in the downtown block bounded by 11th, 12th, "O" and "P" streets. The developers are lining up final agreements to buy the property. Architects and leasing agents are also working on the project, which developers hope to open in 2003.

Mayor Wesely has appointed a citizen group to review three private sector proposals to redevelop the **Old Federal Building** at 10th and "P" streets. The historic building, now home to various government offices, has long been considered a prime development opportunity for housing, retail or office space. The citizen group will recommend a project for the building to the Mayor later this year.

Last year, the city and county adopted a "boulevard" concept for future **public way corridors**, the major arterial routes for traffic and utilities as the city grows. Proposed design standards and ordinance revisions to facilitate implementation of this concept will be available for public review in August. A committee has been formed to develop policies and guidelines for the transition from a rural to an urban roadway, and to work on advanced right-of-way acquisition.



In mid-July, the city awarded a bid to build the **pedestrian-bicycle overpass** connecting Haymarket Park with the Haymarket area of downtown. Construction is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2002.

## HAYMARKET PARK

*photo courtesy of Lincoln Saltdogs*

## PROPOSED REDUCTIONS

### Parks and Recreation: \$16,252

Have private foundation operate Woods Tennis Center.

### Public Works/Utilities: \$118,000 - \$212,000

Eliminate or reduce the Midtown bus route, but retain the Lux booster portion of the route.

### Police Department: \$16,240

Eliminate Neighborhood Watch mini-grants and a quarter-time position.

### Law and Personnel Departments: \$16,500

Reduce conferences, schools and other training.

### Aging: \$16,011

Close Heritage Gift Shop.

## PROPOSED REVENUE CHANGES

Increase the rate of the Telecommunications Occupation Tax from 3.8 percent to 5.75 percent of gross receipts - \$1,692,000 (collections for 10 months).

Increase fines for non-moving traffic violations - \$418,000.

Increase bus fares from 85 cents to \$1; child fares from 50 cents to \$1; multi-ride passes accordingly; and Big Red Shuttle from \$2 to \$3 - \$222,969.

Minor increases in fees for recreation programs - \$33,746.

## PROPOSED INITIATIVES

### Libraries: \$965,479

Open the two new branch libraries February 1, 2002.

### Parks and Recreation: \$491,850

Open the new "F" Street Recreation Center by March 1, 2002. Cost net of revenues - \$134,000.

Open the new University Place Pool in the summer of 2002. Cost net of revenues - \$38,000.

Add 9.75 miles to the city trail system - \$93,116.

Add operating costs and staffing for new parks and natural areas - \$76,134.

Enhance fee-supported recreation programming.

Add maintenance costs for chemicals and fencing of 240 new acres at Nature Center - \$15,600.

Add funding to pay more competitive wages to seasonal workers and officials in recreation programs - \$110,000.

Fund backflow prevention devices for the Department's water services to comply with city regulations - \$25,000.

### Planning Department: \$75,000

Add funding to finalize the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Police Department: \$92,022

Add three new officers, cruiser and equipment (\$167,022 minus \$75,000 grant revenue).

### Police and Fire Pension Plans: \$250,000

Phase-in increased funding to a level closer to the actuarially determined cost.

### Public Works and Utilities: \$669,190

Add staffing and operating costs to comply with stormwater discharge permit requirements and to better administer floodplain regulations (includes a position in Building and Safety) - \$400,300.

Add an Environmental Lab Specialist for the Lincoln Water System in order to meet new EPA requirements - \$36,000.

Add four traffic engineers - \$232,890.

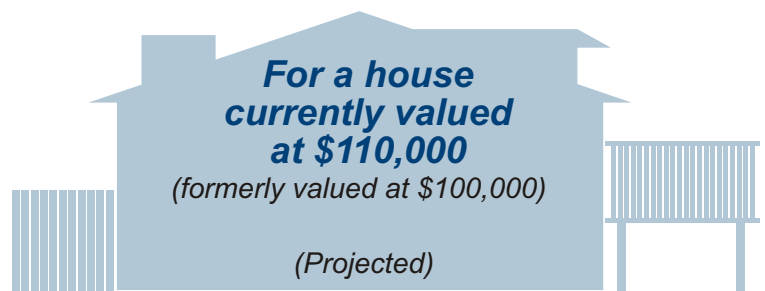
### Urban Development: \$52,000

Add a position to staff community revitalization efforts associated with the Antelope Valley Project.

### Miscellaneous: \$475,000

Provide funds for higher fuel prices.

## CITY PROPERTY TAX BILL



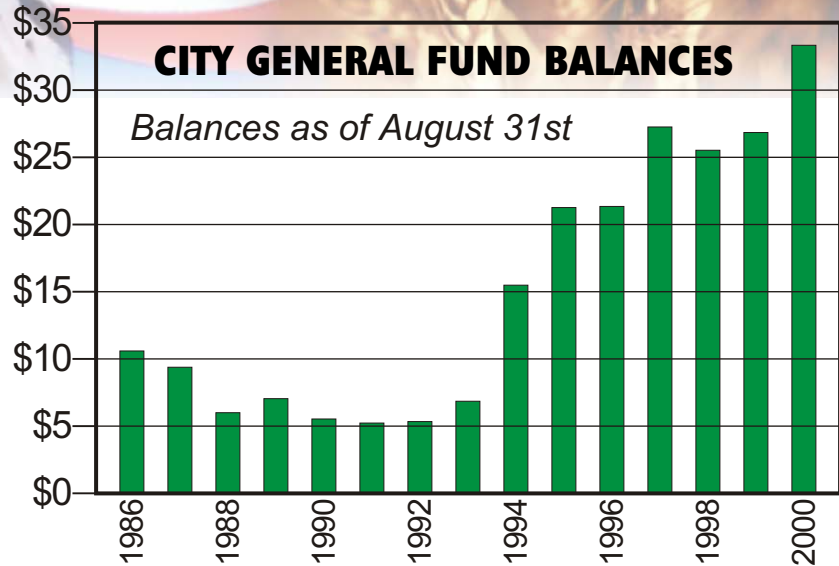
	2000-2001	2001-2002	Change	Change
<b>Property Tax Bill</b>	\$323.87	\$345.34	\$21.47	6.63%
<b>Tax Rate per \$100</b>	.32387	.31395	-.00992	-3.1%



## BOND RATINGS

The General Fund balances (shown in the chart to the right) remain strong and help ensure the city maintains a strong bond rating. Lincoln's consistently high ratings from the nation's bond rating agencies are a key to keeping interest costs low on money borrowed by the city. In May 2000, Standard and Poor's reaffirmed Lincoln's AAA bond rating, citing the city's excellent financial performance; extremely strong creditworthiness; low debt ratios; large, growing diversified tax base; strong local economy; and excellent financial performance. Moody's also affirms the Aa1 rating on the city's outstanding general obligation bonds, saying the agency expects Lincoln's debt position will "remain favorable going forward... over the next five years."

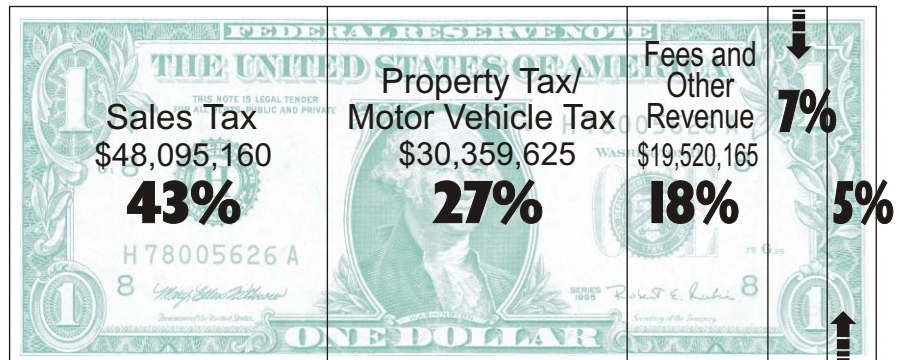
Millions



## REVENUES (Where the money comes from)

(Total: \$111,074,738)

Occupation Tax  
\$8,036,669

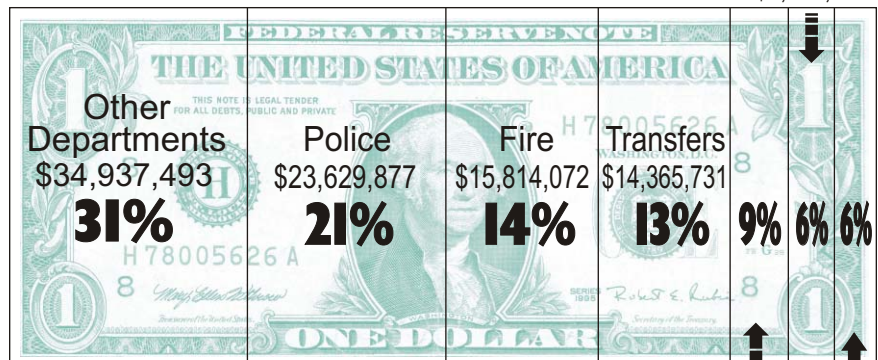


Appropriated Balances  
\$5,063,119

## EXPENDITURES (Where the money goes)

(Total: \$111,074,738)

Debt Service  
\$6,282,100



### Increases in FTEs

(full-time equivalent positions)

Libraries	19.8
EMS Transport	17.1
Parks and Recreation	15.8
Traffic	4.0
Watershed management/ stormwater permit	3.7
Uniformed Police Officers	3.0
Other	5.5

**TOTAL 68.9**

Parks and Recreation \$9,676,444

Library \$6,369,021

# City of Lincoln

## NEBRASKA



### CITY COUNCIL



Front row from left - Glenn Friendt, At Large; Annette McRoy, Chair, Northwest District; Jonathan Cook, Vice Chair, Southwest District. Back row from left - Coleen Seng, Northeast District; Ken Svoboda, At Large; Jon Camp, Southeast District; Terry Werner, At Large.



### MAYOR DON WESELY

555 S. 10th Street, Room 208  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
Phone: (402) 441-7511  
Fax: (402) 441-7120  
Email: mayor@ci.lincoln.ne.us

### FISCAL YEAR 2001 - 2002

### BUDGET CALENDAR

#### MONDAY, AUGUST 6TH

The City Council holds a public hearing on the proposed budget at 5:30 p.m.

#### THURSDAY, AUGUST 9TH

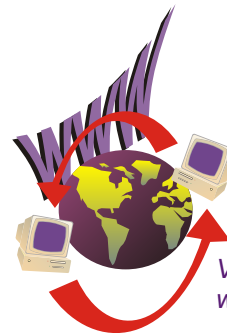
The City Council votes on changes to the Mayor's recommended budget at 11:00 a.m.

#### MONDAY, AUGUST 20TH

The City Council adopts the budget at 1:30 p.m.

*The meetings August 6th and 20th are in the City Council Chambers. The meeting August 9th is next door in Room 113. Both rooms are on the first floor of the County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street.*

*The City Council will hold a public hearing and adopt the final tax rate prior to October 15.*



Visit the city web site at [www.ci.lincoln.ne.us](http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us).

To make comments or ask questions about the city budget or city operations, contact the Mayor's Office at the address or phone listed above.

This publication was designed by Citizen Information Center 7/2001

### DEPARTMENTS

#### Affirmative Action

Director Joyce Quinn - 441-3871

#### Aging Services

Director Gina Dunning - 441-6157

#### Building and Safety

Director Mike Merwick - 441-7521

#### Citizen Information Center

Manager Diane Gonzolas - 441-7375

#### Finance

Director Don Herz - 441-7411

#### Fire and Rescue

Chief Mike Spadt - 441-7363

#### Health

Director Bruce Dart - 441-8000

#### Human Rights

Director Larry Williams - 441-7624

#### Law

City Attorney Dana Roper - 441-7281

#### Library

Director Carol Connor - 441-8500

#### Parks and Recreation

Director Lynn Johnson - 441-7847

#### Personnel

Director Georgia Glass - 441-7517

#### Planning

Director Kathleen Sellman - 441-7491

#### Police

Chief Tom Casady - 441-7204

#### Public Works and Utilities

Director Allan Abbott - 441-7548

#### Urban Development

Director Marc Wullschleger - 441-7606

#### Women's Commission

Director Bonnie Coffey - 441-7716

