

Infrastructure Task Force Lancaster County

Thursday, July 12, 2018 2:00 PM

Denton Community Center

7115 Lancaster Avenue, Denton, Nebraska

Agenda

Introductions / Sign-In

Results of Survey

Funding Gap Review

Review of Funding

Options Group Exercise

Discussion

MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
INFRASTRUCTURE TASK FORCE MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2018 – 2:00 P.M.
DENTON COMMUNITY CENTER
7115 LANCASTER AVENUE, DENTON, NEBRASKA

Task Force Members Present: Joe Bolubasz, Midwest Bank; Nathan Boone, JEO Consulting Group; Jennifer Brinkman, Lancaster County Commissioner; Jeffrey Butterfield, RBC Wealth Management; Silas Clarke, City of Hickman Administrator; Glynnis Collins, Director, Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center; Nick Cusick, Bison, Inc.; Pam Dingman, Lancaster County Engineer; DaNay Kalkowski, Attorney; Brian Maschmann, Norris Public School District; Jeff McKerrow, Olsson Associates; Russell Miller, Nebraska Recycling Center (retired); Ray Stevens, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (LPSNRD); Michael Werner, City of Waverly Mayor; Lonnie Burkland, City of Lincoln, Public Works and Utilities.

Task Force Members Absent: Jess Baker, Wilderness Construction; Rod Hollman, Agriculture Representative; Miranda Watson, Woods Bros. Realty; Roma Amundson, Lancaster County Commissioner; Debby Brehm, Lincoln Independent Business Association; Craig Gana, Gana Trucking; Doug Hanson, City of Hickman, Mayor

Others Present: Ann Ames, Lancaster County Deputy Chief Administrative Officer; Ron Bohaty, Road Maintenance Superintendent, Lancaster County Engineering; David Cary, Director, Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department; Larry Legg, Roadway Design Engineer, Lancaster County Engineering; Joe Murray, Lancaster County Resident; Deb Schorr, Lancaster County Commissioner; Dennis Meyer, Lancaster County Budget Director; Dan Nolte, Lancaster County Clerk

Advance public notice of the Infrastructure Task Force meeting was posted on the County-City Building bulletin board and the Lancaster County, Nebraska, website.

Prior to the meeting Pam Dingman, Lancaster County Engineer, led a tour of roads and bridges near Denton. Included on the tour was Waverly Mayor Mike Werner, Ron Bohaty, County Engineer's Office, and Dan Nolte, County Clerk.

Sites visited were the Denton County Shop, Bridges N138, N114, and N135.

Jeff McKerrow, Olsson Associates, opened the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

A power point presentation was given exploring the funding gap for bridge and road construction. Survey results were also covered in that presentation. Topics covered included best management practices.

Discussion followed regarding how long updates to the roads and bridges should take. With construction inflation, which is running about 5% per year, and the increasing cost of steel, spreading out improvements for a number of years will result in higher costs. With the current needs to improve roads and bridges in the County, an additional \$9,000,000 to \$15,000,000 per year is necessary.

In looking at funding sources, it was noted that 83% of property taxes in the County are generated within city and township boundaries, and that 35% of sales taxes come from outside the City of Lincoln. A sales tax for areas outside of cities or villages would generate little revenue.

Discussion continued about how to reduce the funding gap. Do you reduce the number of bridges replaced? Do you catch up on the bridges needing replacement and then level off? How quickly can this be accomplished?

The task force was split into three groups tasked with exploring options to increase funding for roads and bridges in the County.

Group 1 mentioned that as the County grows, the needs for roads increases, and that if funding does not increase, it actually results in budget reductions. A 3% levy increase would result in about \$8,000,000 but does not appear to be politically viable. A wheel tax on vehicles in the County, outside of cities or villages, would be an option to increase funding for roads and bridges. If a wheel tax was enacted in villages and cities outside of Lincoln, the group believes it should not be used in a way that would result in separation of communities that it needs to be approached as a County issue. Additionally, projects should be prioritized, and a long-term capital improvement plan should be developed.

Group 2 discussed that if the funding needs are \$176,000,000 for roads and bridges, it is important to do only critical projects. That would include replacement of bridges, but no paving. They also discussed a wheel tax on vehicles in the County. Another idea mentioned was infrastructure districts, but they concluded that this would not generate enough revenue to be a viable source of funding.

Group 3 indicated that they too thought consideration should be given for a wheel tax for vehicles outside the City of Lincoln. A property tax increase, they believed, is not currently plausible. Maintaining current pavement should be done before considering any new pavement.

Jeff McKerrow indicated that the task force members will be given another survey.

There being no further business, the meeting/tour concluded at 3:30 p.m.

Submitted by Dan Nolte, Lancaster County Clerk