

## **Capital Improvement Projects Regional Meetings**

### **Beatrice, NE – July 13, 2016**

In the first of eight regional stakeholder meetings, the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) met with Nebraska residents on Wednesday, July 13, in Beatrice to provide the results of potential capital improvement projects analyzed under the expanded project prioritization process.

In addition to sharing the engineering and economic analysis results, NDOR also sought input on local and regional project priorities from the stakeholders. NDOR staff recognize that residents have important information about how projects can best support local priorities, and staff wanted to hear firsthand from stakeholders why some projects should be prioritized over others from the candidate list.

Participants expressed support for a variety of projects in the region, and NDOR described that there are always more transportation needs than funding. Based on facilitated discussions at that meeting, the breakout groups identified the following projects as their priorities for important reasons such as safety and economic development:

- **N-4 from Beatrice West (improved and relocated 2-lane highway, \$9M)**
  - Discussion: potential economic benefits, traffic volumes in the area.
- **US-75 from Kansas State Line to N-128 (Super 2, \$74M)**
  - Discussion: safety, passenger car and truck traffic volumes potential economic benefits in the region.
  - Scope options: stakeholder groups indicated that they would prefer the 4-lane scope option, but recognizing that limited funds are available, stated that a Super 2 would be helpful.
- **Lincoln East Beltway (4-lane divided highway, \$247M)**
  - Discussion: safety, potential job growth and economic development, expected population growth in the region, improved connectivity to the Interstate.
  - Scope options: a stakeholder group suggested that NDOR should consider building a 2-lane highway first and then expand to a 4-lane in the future as funding becomes available.

More than 275 comments were also received online during the comment period, which was open through Friday, July 29. Comments related to candidate projects in the southeast region supported the projects above, including:

- Lincoln East Beltway

NDOR staff is now taking a hard look at some of the candidate project scopes and evaluating stakeholder feedback from the regional meetings. In addition to engineering performance, economic performance and stakeholder input, NDOR has to balance many other important considerations, such as geographic inclusion, corridor completion, and the availability of supplemental funding. NDOR will announce a list of initial projects selected under the Build Nebraska Act and Transportation Innovation Act programs this fall. It is likely that less than \$1 billion in projects will be selected so that some funds

will be available in future years to address evolving capital improvement project needs. This approach will allow NDOR to create an ongoing evaluation process to identify sets of projects that are best suited to address Nebraska's needs.