

## Legal Notice

### NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

#### Public Hearing

**Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024 | 5:30–7:30 p.m. | Cross County Community School, 1270 123<sup>rd</sup> Rd, Stromsburg, NE 68666**

*The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) will give a formal presentation at 6 p.m., with an open house to follow until 7:30 p.m.*

#### **S-81-2(1051) York - Columbus; C.N. 42967**

NDOT will hold a public hearing regarding the conceptual design and Draft Environmental Assessment for the **York – Columbus** project, which would expand approximately 41 miles of U.S. Highway 81 (US-81) in York, Polk and Butler counties in Nebraska. The public hearing will be held at Cross County Community School, 1270 123<sup>rd</sup> Road in Stromsburg, Nebraska on Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. A formal presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m., with an open house to follow.

Identified as **York - Columbus**, the proposed project would expand the existing two-lane highway to a four-lane expressway, changing to three lanes in urban areas and returning to four lanes through the rural segments. The proposed project would start near the north U.S. Highway 34 (US-34)/US-81 intersection at the end of the existing four-lane York bypass. It would extend north to just north of the Nebraska Highway 64 (N-64) and US-81 intersection, where it would connect to the existing four-lane roadway.

The purpose of the project is to fulfill legislative intent to continue the development of the expressway system identified in the *1988 Nebraska Highway Needs Study*; improve regional connectivity for vehicles, including commercial vehicles, in east-central Nebraska by providing important expressway connections with US-34, Nebraska Highway 66 (N-66), Nebraska Highway 92 (N-92), Nebraska Highway 69 (N-69) and N-64, while maintaining convenient highway access for communities in the area; improve the condition of the existing infrastructure. The project is needed because there is a gap in the US-81 Expressway from the Kansas-Nebraska border to Norfolk, a lack of connectivity in east-central Nebraska and existing infrastructure deficiencies.

A Draft Environmental Assessment has been prepared for this project and is available for public review at the following locations:

- NDOT Headquarters (1500 Nebraska Pkwy., Lincoln, NE 68502)
- FHWA Nebraska Division (100 Centennial Mall N., Lincoln, NE 68508)
- NDOT District 4 Headquarters (211 N. Tilden St., Grand Island, NE 68803)
- Kilgore Memorial Library (520 Nebraska Ave., York, NE 68467)
- Stromsburg Public Library (320 Central St., Stromsburg, NE 68666)
- Osceola Public Library (131 N. Main St., Osceola, NE 68651)
- Shelby Community Library (648 N. Walnut St., Shelby, NE 68662)
- Columbus Public Library (2500 14<sup>th</sup> St., Ste. 2, Columbus, NE 68602)

An electronic version of the Draft Environmental Assessment is available for review on the project website at: [www.ndot.info/42967](http://www.ndot.info/42967).

The proposed project would require the acquisition of additional property rights, which could include new right-of-way (ROW), control of access (CA), permanent easements (PE) and/or temporary easements (TE). Relocations are anticipated. If your property is impacted by this project, you will be contacted by a representative once the design footprint has been established. Access to adjacent properties would be maintained during construction but may be limited at times due to traffic phasing requirements.

Impacts to wetlands and streams are anticipated and would be mitigated as necessary. No adverse effects to historic properties are anticipated.

Proposed project costs are estimated at approximately \$400 million to \$450 million and would come from federal and state funding sources. Construction could begin as early as fall 2028 and is subject to funding availability.

This public hearing is being held in compliance with the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act, to provide information regarding the project and to receive the public's input. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn more, ask questions to the project team and provide comments. At the hearing, comments can be provided 1) verbally, 2) via written statement or 3) on the comment forms provided. After the hearing, they can be provided by Oct. 16, 2024, via email, phone or mail to the contact listed below. Design plans and the Environmental Assessment document will be further developed after public input is received following the public hearing and comment period.

NDOT will make every reasonable accommodation to provide an accessible meeting facility for all persons. Appropriate provisions to provide effective communication, including accommodations for people with hearing challenges, visual impairments or Limited English Proficiency (LEP), will be arranged if NDOT is notified by Sept. 24, 2024.

Information regarding the proposed project will be available at [www.ndot.info/42967](http://www.ndot.info/42967). For those without internet access, information may be obtained at NDOT Headquarters: 1500 Nebraska Pkwy., Lincoln, NE 68502, or by contacting: Wes Wahlgren, NDOT District 4 Engineer, at (308) 385-6265 or [wes.wahlgren@nebraska.gov](mailto:wes.wahlgren@nebraska.gov).

Comments will be collected through Oct. 16, 2024 and should be submitted to:

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P.O. Box 94759  
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