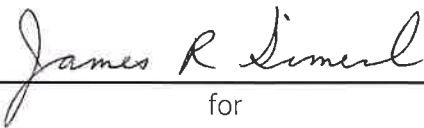


# BNSF, Bridgeport

Bridgeport, Morrill County, NE  
Project Number RRZ-TMT-26-1(161)  
Control Number 51299

## FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT – ERRATA

This Final Environmental Assessment has been prepared in accordance with provisions and requirements of 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771 and 774, relating to the implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The signatures below indicate verification that the content of the attached document/errata sheet accurately reflects the scope of this project.

  
\_\_\_\_\_ for



12/23/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_ for  
Project Sponsor



12/4/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Federal Highway Administration

Finding of No Significant Impact

for

Project Number: RRZ-TMT-26-1(161)  
Control Number: 51299

**BNSF, Bridgeport**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that this project will not have any significant impact on the human environment or natural environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the enclosed Final Environmental Assessment, which has been independently evaluated by FHWA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. FHWA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached Final Environmental Assessment.

12/23/2025

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James R. Simul", is written over a horizontal line.

Acting Division Administrator

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## Abbreviations

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| APP   | Avian Protection Plan                           |
| BGEPA | Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act            |
| BMP   | Best Management Practices                       |
| BNSF  | BNSF Railway                                    |
| CSW   | Construction Stormwater Permit                  |
| DHHA  | Department of Health and Human Services         |
| DWEE  | Department of Water, Energy, and Environment    |
| EA    | Environmental Assessment                        |
| EF    | Exposure Factor                                 |
| EPA   | Environmental Protection Agency                 |
| FHWA  | Federal Highway Administration                  |
| HPM   | Highway Project Manager                         |
| MBTA  | Migratory Bird Treaty Act                       |
| NAC   | Nebraska Administrative Code                    |
| NDEE  | Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy   |
| NDNR  | Nebraska Department of Natural Resources        |
| NDOT  | Nebraska Department of Transportation           |
| NEPA  | National Environmental Policy Act               |
| NESCA | Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act |
| NGPC  | Nebraska Game and Parks Commission              |
| NRCS  | Natural Resources Conservation Service          |
| PRRIP | Platte River Recovery Implementation Program    |
| RDCU  | Roadside Development & Compliance Unit          |
| ROW   | Right-of-Way                                    |
| SRA   | State Recreation Area                           |
| SWPPP | Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan            |
| USACE | United State Army Corps of Engineers            |
| USC   | United States Code                              |
| USDA  | United State Department of Agriculture          |
| USFWS | Unites States Fish and Wildlife Service         |
| UWAP  | Unexpected Waste Action Plan                    |
| WAPA  | Western Area Power Administration               |

## Chapter 1 Introduction

A Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above-referenced project was submitted by the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and was signed and approved by FHWA on April 8, 2025. The Draft EA was made available at the following locations for a 30-day public comment review period, which began on April 24, 2025 and ended on May 29, 2025:

- FHWA Nebraska Division Office (100 Centennial Mall North, Room 200, Lincoln, NE)
- NDOT Headquarters (1500 Nebraska Parkway, Lincoln, NE)
- NDOT District 5 Headquarters (140375 Rundell Road, Gering, NE)
- Bridgeport Public Library (722 Main Street, Bridgeport, NE)
- City of Bridgeport – City Clerk (809 Main Street, Bridgeport, NE)

In addition, an electronic version of the Draft EA was available for review on the NDOT website at <https://dot.nebraska.gov/projects/future-projects/bnsf-bridgeport>. Resource agencies, stakeholders, and other members of the public were notified via public notice and targeted mailer of the availability of the Draft EA and the public hearing. The public notification involved mailing a postcard to 762 property owners and businesses adjacent to the proposed project area, other potentially interested parties, and public and private agencies with potential interest in the project, including the Nebraska Trucking Association. A legal notice was placed in the *Bridgeport News Blade*, a Nebraska Press Association newspaper, on April 24, 2025.

The public hearing was held at the Prairie Winds Community Center at 428 Main Street, Bridgeport, Nebraska on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Temporary highway signs advertising the meeting were placed near the project location. Approximately 68 people attended the public hearing, including members of the public and personnel from NDOT, FHWA, and the consultants associated with the project. The public hearing began with an open house and continued with a formal presentation and forum for recorded public input. The presentation and public forum were followed by an open house providing additional opportunity for the public to provide input. The public was encouraged to make oral or written comments, or public statements during the hearing, if they desired.

After the public hearing, comments (written, email, phone calls) were accepted on the Draft EA until May 29, 2025. NDOT received and responded to 15 public comments summarized in Chapter 2, Table 2-1 and in **Appendix A**. The comments varied in level of approval of the project, with a majority of comments pertaining to personal property impacts or business impacts, the cost of the project, the purpose and need of the project, and suggested alternatives.

This Final EA – Errata documents public comments from the public hearing and any other comments received during the 30-day review period of the Draft EA and documents any changes to the project design or analysis, as described in the Draft EA, resulting from the comments received.

The purpose of this Final EA – Errata is to respond to comments received during the hearing process and to provide additions or changes to the Draft EA where necessary, using this errata format. This document, in conjunction with the April 8, 2025, Draft EA document, constitutes the completed National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document.

## Chapter 2 Public and Agency Involvement

### 2.1 Public Involvement

Public hearing attendees had the opportunity to submit written comments and provide verbal public testimony. Five public statements were given during the open forum. Comments were also accepted from the public via mail, email, and phone during the comment period. The Public Involvement Summary Memo and the Public Hearing Report are provided in **Appendix A**.

The memo includes the public hearing notifications, the materials presented to the public, the public hearing transcript, the public and agency comments received during the public comment period, and the official response letters. The response letters were mailed on July 17, 2025.

The report includes the public involvement plan including the public hearing plan, notification materials and distribution list, venue information, support materials including presentation and handouts, attendance sheets, the transcript of the public forum, and the public comments and responses.

Table 2-1 summarizes all written and verbal public comments received at the public hearing and during the public comment period, and NDOT/FHWA responses. No agency correspondence or comments were received on the Draft EA.

### 2.2 Agency Coordination

Coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC), the State Historical Preservation Office, Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), FHWA, and NDOT was ongoing throughout project development. Since the publication of the Draft EA, there has been no additional agency coordination.

**Table 2-1. Public and Agency Comments**

| No. | Comment  | Response   |
|-----|--|--|
| 1   | <p>Stakeholder expressed opinion that the viaduct would blight the east side of town.</p> <p>Stakeholder inquired about project purpose outside of train wait times and project cost.</p> <p>Stakeholder inquired about access to Bridgeport State Recreation Area.</p>  | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Explained the purpose and need of proposed project as stated in project materials.</p> <p>Explained that access to Bridgeport State Recreation Area would be maintained during construction.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p>  |
| 2   | <p>Stakeholder expressed concern about walking and biking routes to Bridgeport State Recreation Area once the overpass is completed.</p> <p>Asked whether the route would be 4th Street to 3rd Street and requested consideration for the safety and accessibility of pedestrians and cyclists, including the proposed J Street to Railroad Avenue to Recreation Road.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that concrete sidewalks would be constructed along the north side of N-92 from the east end of the viaduct beginning at J Street and tying back into the concrete sidewalks that would be constructed along the north side of N-92 beginning at J Street, continuing west over the viaduct to the newly constructed C Street.</p> <p>Mentioned that NDOT is responsible for state highways and is reconstructing city streets and connections affected by the project. Currently there are no sidewalks along Railroad Avenue or Recreation Road. Thus, NDOT would not include sidewalk construction within these areas as part of this project. The city streets are under the City of Bridgeport's jurisdiction and improvements to their roads would be their responsibility.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |



| No. | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|--|---|
| 3   | <p>Stakeholder stated they live at end of the property and would like to know how this will affect their property.</p> <p>Stated the shoulders currently aren't 8 ft but maybe 4 ft, doesn't think the sidewalk is 5 ft currently; would like to know how this would look during construction.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Explained that the preliminary project design shows impacts to the southwest portion of the property. Mentioned that they would be contacted during the final design stage to discuss right-of-way acquisition and temporary easements.</p> <p>Informed that project phasing and staging is determined during final design.</p> <p>Explained that NDOT would be constructing typical urban section in front of property that would include two 12' lanes, 8' shoulders, and a 5' sidewalk.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |
| 4   | <p>Stakeholder requested that the proposed project connect to Highway 88.</p>  | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Informed Stakeholder that connecting Nebraska Highway 88 (N-88) is outside the scope of the project.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p>   |

| No. | Comment   | Response   |
|-----|---|--|
| 5   | <p>Stakeholder expressed concern about emergency response times and questioned whether the project addresses a highway safety issue rather than a train delay issue.</p> <p>Cited multiple recent crashes in the area and suggested that divided highways may be more effective than an overpass.</p> <p>Questioned the frequency and duration of train delays, referencing train length and speed calculations, and raised concerns about whether the delays justify the estimated \$16 million project cost.</p> <p>Asked for data on actual conflicts at the crossing and crash history, noting limited incidents over the past decade and suggesting that crash costs may not be significant. Raised concerns about potential impacts to local businesses and emphasized the importance of preserving access and minimizing disruption in a small, rural community.</p> <p>Suggested that if funding is available, improvements to the Bridgeport State Recreation Area and other local infrastructure may be more beneficial than constructing an overpass.</p> <p>Referenced U.S. Energy Information Administration projections indicating a continued decline in coal production, questioning assumptions about increased coal train traffic.</p> <p>Cited state statutes regarding train crossing delays and questioned whether current wait times warrant the proposed investment.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that the purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays, and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. Mentioned that the location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.</p> <p>Provided a link to the draft environmental assessment for additional information regarding train counts and exposure factor. Noted that the proposed viaduct would eliminate delays caused by trains and ensure consistent, reliable access for emergency responders.</p> <p>Stated that displacement of commercial businesses is not anticipated, and if impacts occur, NDOT would work with affected businesses to mitigate them.</p> <p>Stated that right-of-way acquisitions would follow the Uniform Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Nebraska Relocation Assistance Act.</p> <p>Mentioned that a portion of the project funding comes from the train mile tax, which supports grade separation projects.</p> <p>Noted that the project cost is an estimate and NDOT strives to minimize costs while meeting project needs.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |

| No. | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|--|---|
| 6   | <p>Stakeholder asked about the environmental impact of proposed detention ponds, noting their location and potential to increase mosquito activity. Requested that this be considered during further design.</p> <p>Commented on traffic delays caused by trains, noting that delays can exceed ten minutes and cause vehicle backups into town.</p> <p>Highlighted that these backups can create issues at other intersections, especially with truck traffic and limited turning lanes.</p> <p>Suggested that these broader traffic impacts be considered when evaluating the benefits of the proposed overpass.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that these areas are designed to capture and contain the majority of rainwater within the project footprint, preventing it from spreading and inundating surrounding areas.</p> <p>Responded to concerns about queueing vehicles and traffic delays, noting that while the current crossing can cause delays due to train operations, the proposed viaduct would provide an unobstructed crossing point at all times.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |
| 7   | <p>Stakeholder recalled having child in ambulance and doing CPR while sitting at the railroad tracks waiting. Stated it is not a good feeling, the \$16 million is worth it.</p>   | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p>   |

| No. | Comment   | Response   |
|-----|---|--|
| 8   | <p>Stakeholder expressed concern about losing direct access to Highway 26 due to the proposed viaduct alignment. Noted that their office, located on the east side of the curve over the tracks, may be placed in an inferior position</p> <p>Shared that the business is an 80-year-old insurance office with ten employees and emphasized the importance of maintaining highway access for continued operations.</p> <p>Acknowledged that the overpass is needed, citing frequent delays, five to six times a day, caused by train switching operations at the nearby switch station, which can result in multiple daily interruptions.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that while the business would not have direct access to US-26, full access would be maintained via a connecting street between old and new US-26. Access to all businesses would be maintained during construction.</p> <p>Responded to concerns about traffic delays at the railroad crossing, noting that the proposed viaduct would eliminate the need for vehicles to wait for train operations.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p>   |
| 9   | <p>Stakeholder expressed concern about losing direct access to Highway 26 due to the overpass design and questioned how access to their property would be maintained.</p> <p>Raised concerns about potential devaluation of their property due to the proximity of the overpass.</p> <p>Suggested preference for an “up and over” design rather than routing the viaduct near the substation next to their home.</p> <p>Stated belief that their property may be the most significantly impacted by the proposed project.</p>   | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that the proposed project would maintain similar accessibility to the highway for the residence, with driveway access to the new highway and the ability to cross or turn in either direction.</p> <p>Explained that NDOT carefully reviews access changes, visibility, noise, proximity of structures, and other factors that may influence a property’s use and enjoyment. While NDOT does not make determinations or guarantees regarding future market trends, staff appraisers evaluate potential damages to the property caused by the project. If damages are present, this would be reflected in a compensation offer.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |

| No. | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|--|---|
| 10  | <p>Stakeholder requested NDOT verify operation factors like pusher engine delay, BNSF and UPRR track intersection.</p> <p>Raised safety concerns about potential explosions from fertilizer carts parked under the viaduct.</p> <p>Suggested BNSF may be requesting additional space for future track expansion.</p> <p>Proposed shortening the viaduct by constructing a jughandle and city street off I Street and eliminating paving on Railroad Avenue.</p> <p>Recommended a three-lane design from I Street to Main Street, with widening of 5th Street to accommodate traffic, including semi trucks.</p> <p>Proposed building a jughandle and city street west to Recreation Road, with sufficient storage length for semi-trucks accessing nearby properties.</p> <p>Stated that consideration should be given to flattening the curve on US-26 and eliminating the super elevation on the roadway.</p> <p>Asked whether NDOT has consulted Don's Disposal, which owns the building west of the former lumber yard and currently has highway access not shown in the design.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that NDOT has been in communication with Legacy Co-op and continues to evaluate plans for material storage.</p> <p>Mentioned that additional right-of-way is required to accommodate future tracks, track raises, access roads, and drainage improvements per the BNSF/UPRR Grade Separation Guidelines Manual.</p> <p>Explained that a jughandle design on the east end was considered during preliminary design but not pursued due to impacts to nearby residential properties.</p> <p>Clarified that paving Railroad Avenue is necessary to maintain access to the Bridgeport State Recreation Area and avoid closures during construction.</p> <p>Noted that changes to lane configurations on US-26 east of the project are outside the scope of the proposed work.</p> <p>Stated that the alignment of US-26 includes a skew at the railroad and appropriate superelevation to meet design criteria while minimizing property impacts.</p> <p>Mentioned that NDOT has had discussions with Don Landrigan regarding potential property impacts.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |

| No. | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|--|---|
| 11  | <p>Stakeholder stated the viaduct is not needed, stating that in over 100 crossings, they were only stopped once by a train, and the delay was minimal.</p> <p>Requested that Scottsbluff be considered for a viaduct due to frequent stops and delayed timing.</p>  | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that the purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays, and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing.</p> <p>Mentioned that NDOT identifies the need for grade separation structures based on potential conflicts, actual delays, and crash costs, and that this location meets NDOT's thresholds for such consideration.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p>  |
| 12  | <p>Stakeholder expressed disapproval of the proposed project due to the \$16 million project cost. Suggested splitting up the extra money and give each person a portion.</p>  | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that the purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays, and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing.</p> <p>Mentioned that NDOT determines the need for grade separation structures based on potential conflicts, actual delays, and crash costs, and that this location meets the thresholds for such consideration.</p> <p>Noted that the project cost is an estimate and NDOT strives to minimize costs while meeting project needs.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |
| 13  | <p>Stakeholder expressed concern that increased traffic on J Street and 3rd &amp; 4th Streets will require improvements to support the added load.</p> <p>Stated that previous comments have not been addressed and expressed skepticism that current concerns will be considered. Requested that NDOT listen and address the tax payer.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that improvements to J Street and 3rd and 4th Streets are outside the scope of the proposed project.</p> <p>Mentioned that concerns regarding these streets will be passed on to the City of Bridgeport for consideration.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p>  |

| No. | Comment   | Response  |
|-----|---|---|
| 14  | <p>Stakeholder expressed disapproval of the proposed viaduct, stating that train traffic is not as heavy as in previous years and delays are minimal based on personal experience.</p> <p>Stated that the viaduct would not have prevented recent fatal accidents and questioned its necessity for emergency services, noting an alternate route (L62A to Hwy 26 to Scottsbluff) that avoids railroad crossings and is only slightly longer.</p> <p>Raised concerns about potential negative impacts on downtown businesses and businesses on the west edge of town.</p> <p>Noted that the viaduct could increase traffic on 4th Street, affecting both local residents and visitors to the recreation area.</p> <p>Suggested that the project is unnecessary and that the funds could be better spent elsewhere.</p> | <p>Thanked Stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that the purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays, and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing.</p> <p>Mentioned that NDOT identifies the need for grade separation structures based on potential conflicts, actual delays, and crash costs, and that this location meets the thresholds for such consideration.</p> <p>Stated that NDOT does not anticipate negative impacts and has received minimal negative feedback from downtown businesses during public involvement.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |

| No. | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|--|---|
| 15  | <p>Stakeholder expressed concern about significant impacts to their commercial property on West 5th Street, which includes frontage and storage space.</p> <p>Stated that the project would result in the loss of approximately half of the property area, affecting future plans to construct an additional building.</p> <p>Raised concerns about changes to property access, which would require routing through the adjacent property and reduce usable space for future development. Asked whether gate access would be provided.</p> <p>Emphasized satisfaction with the property in its current state and stated opposition to incurring personal expenses to maintain the same level of functionality.</p> | <p>Thanked stakeholder for comment on proposed project.</p> <p>Stated that NDOT continues to evaluate impacts.</p> <p>Mentioned that during the final design stage, property owners would be contacted by a representative to discuss right-of-way acquisition and temporary easements.</p> <p>Thanked for participation.</p> |



## Chapter 3 Errata Sheet – Changes to the Draft EA

### 3.1 Universal Changes to the Draft EA

Several universal changes apply to the Draft EA text:

- References to “Preferred Alternative” are hereby changed to “Selected Alternative.”
- References to “would” in the Preferred Alternative are hereby changed to “will,” including the description of the Selected Alternative, design features, affected environment, and environmental consequences.
- In the Environmental Commitments and Mitigation chapter, all references to “would” in connection with NDOT or the Contractor’s responsibility to comply with required mitigation measures are hereby changed to “will” or “shall.”
- References to the project name are hereby changed to “BNSF, Bridgeport” throughout the Draft EA document, figures, and previously prepared technical reports.
- References to “Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy” (NDEE) and references to “Nebraska Department of Natural Resources” (NDNR) are hereby changed to “Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment” (DWEE), after the merger of the two departments.

### 3.2 Design Changes Resulting from Public Comment

There were no design changes resulting from public comment.

### 3.3 Changes to the Draft EA by Section

There were no changes to the Draft EA resulting from public comment. Changes resulting from NDOT and FHWA feedback since initial publication of the Draft EA on April 8, 2025 are described below. This included rerunning the equations in **Appendix J** for vehicle delay and accident costs using updated data; see DEA.3.2 below and the updated calculations in **Appendix J**. Any reference to past values for exposure factor (EF), vehicular delay, delay costs, crash costs, and total cost are hereby changed to the updated values throughout the Draft EA.

To provide the relevant context for each edit or change other than the universal edits, the entire original Draft EA paragraph has been included. The section numbering below corresponds with the same section number in Chapter 3 of the Draft EA. Only original Draft EA paragraphs with non-universal edits or changes are reproduced here. Draft EA text to be deleted is shown as ~~strikeout text (strikeout)~~, and additions to the Draft EA text are shown by underlining.

#### DEA.2.3 Exposure Factor

The EF is a tool used to quantify the potential for train-vehicle conflicts at at-grade crossings. NDOT has identified a minimum EF value of 50,000 at a single at-grade crossing to generally warrant a potential grade separation such as a viaduct (NDOT 2019). The EF is the product of the most recent counts of the annual average daily traffic (AADT) and the average daily train traffic at a crossing. Many trains and vehicles use the US-26/N-92 grade crossing every day, which leads to

a large potential for train-vehicle conflicts. According to NDOT, AADT volume that crosses the tracks is approximately ~~4,440~~ 3,865 vehicles (based on ~~2022~~ 2023 AADT), and according to the Federal Railroad Administration, the most recent (~~2019~~ 2023) average daily train number at this crossing is 16. Thus, the current EF at this crossing is:

$$(\del{4,440} \u{3,865} \text{ vehicles/day}) \text{ times } (16 \text{ trains/day}) = \del{71,040} \u{61,840} \text{ EF}$$

This EF exceeds the 50,000 minimum to consider a grade separation at this location.

**Vehicular Delay** – Delays can be substantial because of the number of trains. Given that the average number of trains per day at this crossing is 16, and each train closes the crossing for approximately 3.4 minutes (**Appendix J**), the at-grade crossing is blocked for approximately 55 minutes per day. The blocked crossing also impedes the response time and restricts the movement of emergency vehicles. If it is known how long the at-grade crossing is blocked, the probability of a vehicle getting stopped at the crossing can be calculated by dividing the total duration of closures throughout the day (55 minutes) by the total minutes in a day (1,440) and multiplying that ratio by the average number of vehicles crossing the tracks per day (~~4,440~~ 3,865 vehicles per day). This results in approximately ~~168~~ 146 vehicles that would each have to wait for trains to pass each day. To calculate the average duration of delay per delayed vehicle, National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report (NCHRP) 288 recommends assuming that delayed vehicles arrive to the blocked crossing uniformly, meaning that some vehicles arrive at the blocked crossing as the train is approaching and wait the entire 3.4 minutes, while an equal number of vehicles approach the crossing as the train departs from the crossing. As such, a value of 1.7 minutes is used instead of 3.4 to calculate the daily total average delay at the crossing, which is approximately ~~286~~ 249 minutes, or approximately 4 hours, ~~46~~ 9 minutes each day.

This delay has a cost as well, in terms of time spent and fuel wasted. Statewide, NDOT calculates that each minute of delay can cost a passenger vehicle and truck \$0.371<sup>1</sup> and \$0.61, respectively. Based on the traffic and train data at this crossing, over the course of a year, this adds up to a delay cost of approximately ~~\$42,197~~ \$36,671. These calculations can be found in **Appendix J**.

**Crash Costs** – Crash costs are derived by using the *Crash Prediction Model for Highway-Rail Grade Crossings in Nebraska*. This model takes into consideration train speed, type of crossing (passive, flashing lights, gates), number of daily vehicles and trains at the crossing, and accident history to develop a predicted crash rate. Crash costs are a product of multiplying the predictive crash rate by societal crash costs with a train. The average annual cost associated with this at-grade crossing is estimated to be ~~\$10,153~~ \$9,712. These calculations can be found in **Appendix J**.

Added to the cost of delays, the existing at-grade crossing results in a total average annual cost to the traveling public approximately ~~\$52,350~~ \$46,383.

#### DEA.4.2.4 Mitigation Measures

- Regarding the relocation of the shed and acquisitions of agricultural land, ROW, and temporary easements, the following shall be complied with as per the Uniform Act (NDOT ROW Division):

---

<sup>1</sup> Costs associated with delay are based upon a 1970 NCHRP Report 133, Procedures for Estimating Highway User Costs, Air Pollution and Noise Effects that established costs of \$3.00 per hour and \$5.00 per hour for cars and trucks, respectively. Annually, NDOT uses the Consumer Price Index to adjust these values.

- Provide relocation advisory services
- Provide a minimum 90 days' written notice to vacate prior to possession
- Reimburse for moving and reestablishment expenses
- Relocate the shed to the 200-foot by 200-foot lot owned by the shed owner. The relocated shed shall be oriented in the direction preferred by the shed owner. Actual disposition of the shed will be determined through ROW negotiations with the landowner.
- ~~ROW acquisition shall be conducted by paying fair market value for the property rights and damages that may occur as a result of the taking. ROW acquisition shall be completed in conformance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act), as amended (42 USC 4601 et seq.), and the Nebraska Relocation Assistance Act (Nebraska Revised Statute Section 76-1214 et seq. 1989).~~

#### DEA.4.8.4 Mitigation Measures

- ~~The contractor shall follow the guidelines of NDOT's Policy for Accommodating Utilities on State Highway ROW (NDOT 2001). It is NDOT's responsibility to notify utility companies of the need for relocation during the design stage of the proposed Project. NDOT Utility Section shall coordinate utility agreements with the utility companies before construction. It is the contractor's responsibility to notify utility companies of relocation needs during the construction phase of the proposed Project for utilities that were not relocated before construction. If utility relocations using federal funds are located outside the environmental study area, those locations shall be evaluated before construction. Any necessary mitigation requirements through WAPA shall be implemented. (NDOT Communications, NDOT District 5, Utility Provider[s])~~

## Chapter 4 Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures were presented in the Draft EA and are listed here in their final version. These mitigation measures will be implemented by NDOT by incorporating them into either the project construction documents or the final design. These mitigation measures supersede any of those identified in the Draft EA. The following mitigation measures and commitments are not subject to modification without the prior written approval of FHWA. Each mitigation measure is presented in association with the resource to which it most directly applies; although some of the listed measures apply to multiple resources, they are listed only under the resource that they most directly benefit. In addition to the mitigation measures listed herein, NDOT Standard Specifications will be applied to the Selected Alternative and will result in impact avoidance and minimization on resources.

### 4.2 Land Acquisitions, Relocations, and Land Use

- Access to individual businesses, residences, and other facilities in the area shall be maintained during construction. The contractor shall coordinate any potential access limitations, with individual landowners and the City of Bridgeport prior to construction activity to maintain access to drives and entrances via temporary roads or phased paving. (NDOT ROW Division, Contractor)
- Regarding the relocation of the shed and acquisitions of agricultural land, ROW, and temporary easements, the following shall be complied with as per the Uniform Act (NDOT ROW Division):
  - Provide relocation advisory services
  - Provide a minimum 90 days' written notice to vacate prior to possession
  - Reimburse for moving and reestablishment expenses
  - Relocate the shed to the 200-foot by 200-foot lot owned by the shed owner. The relocated shed shall be oriented in the direction preferred by the shed owner. Actual disposition of the shed will be determined through ROW negotiations with the landowner.

### 4.3 Socioeconomic, Community Continuation, Cohesion, and Pedestrian Considerations

- Per standard practice, NDOT shall notify the public at the start of construction by placing notices in the newspaper 14 calendar days before construction, and electronic message boards may be used before beginning construction activities. NDOT shall also notify emergency services such as police and fire departments before construction activities begin, as well as maintain continued coordination throughout construction. Emergency services providers shall be invited to the preconstruction meeting for this proposed Project. (NDOT Communication, NDOT District 5)
- The contractor shall at all times, to the extent practicable, provide private dwellings, commercial properties, businesses, and public facilities access to and from the nearest intersecting public road or street (NDOT 2017). Accommodations shall be made to ensure local traffic passing within the limits of the Project has access to all private dwellings,

commercial properties, businesses, and public facilities. During those periods when a road is closed, even for a short duration, limited access must be maintained for authorized local traffic. If access is to be closed longer than one day, the contractor shall coordinate with the affected property owners. (Contractor, NDOT District 5)

- During final design, NDOT will coordinate with the Nebraska Game and Parks commission on a permanent signage plan to the Bridgeport State Recreation Area. (NDOT Traffic)
- During construction, NDOT shall provide temporary signage to the Bridgeport State Recreation Area. (NDOT District, Contractor)

## 4.6 Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Properties

Access shall be provided to Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) properties (Bridgeport SRA, Morrill County Courthouse, Bridgeport West Park, Irrigation Headquarters Building, Bridgeport East Park, and Bridgeport West Park) at all times during and after construction. (NDOT District Construction, Contractor)

## 4.8 Utilities

- The length and height of power line adjustments shall be determined in the final design phase of the proposed Project. (NDOT, Utility Provider)
- If utility relocations using federal funds are located outside the environmental study area, those locations shall be evaluated before construction. Any necessary mitigation requirements through WAPA shall be implemented. (NDOT Communications, NDOT District 5, Utility Provider[s])
- If utility relocation or replacement is required in a later phase of the project, a re-evaluation shall be required if: (1) federal funds will be used for the utility work or (2) the project construction contractor will be responsible for the work. If this utility work is identified during final design, the project sponsor shall initiate the re-evaluation prior to project letting. If the work is identified during construction, the project sponsor shall initiate the re-evaluation prior to commencing utility work (NDOT Environmental, NDOT District).

If either one of the two conditions does not apply, later relocation or replacement of utilities shall be coordinated through NDOT and the Contractor.

## 4.9 Land Resources and Vegetation

Those areas disturbed during construction shall require revegetation to prevent future erosion, sedimentation, or blowout conditions. To reduce impacts on vegetation within the limits of construction and permanent ROW and to ensure successful revegetation, some or all the following measures shall be implemented (Contractor):

- Mulch, seed mixtures, seeding rates, seeding dates, and sodding will be specified in the project plans and/or specifications.
- Appropriate mulching materials will be applied and will not include brome hay. If sod is required to be applied, then it will be free from all weeds, including noxious weeds.
- Apply mulch on all slopes with concurrent seeding, where necessary, to prevent wind and water erosion and to ensure that mulch is adequately anchored.

- Develop specific procedures to prevent introducing or spreading noxious weeds. Conduct follow-up inspections of all disturbed areas after the first and second growing seasons to determine vegetation success.
- Revegetate as necessary until vegetation is successful.

#### 4.10 Streams, Drainages, and Floodplain Considerations

- Detention basins shall be constructed at various locations throughout the environmental study area and designed to draw down within 72 hours. (NDOT Environmental)
- NDOT shall obtain a CSW permit from Nebraska DWEE and shall produce an associated Project-specific SWPPP. NDOT shall incorporate soil erosion and sediment control practices into the construction plans as detailed in the CSW permit and SWPPP. Permanent drainage and water quality facilities (BMPs) may be included with the final design to mitigate adverse impacts caused by stormwater runoff. These BMPs shall protect water quality and provide a discharge velocity that is equal to or better than current conditions. The Project shall comply with construction storm water permit requirements. (NDOT Environmental)
- The Project-specific SWPPP shall outline mitigation measures for the duration of construction and maintenance requirements for all permanent BMPs. The SWPPP shall include a detailed erosion and sediment control plan as part of the roadway design set. These plans shall show temporary measures, such as silt fences, soil retention blankets, inlet protection, and stabilized construction entrances. The design of measures to be taken shall be determined during final design. (NDOT Environmental)

#### 4.11 Groundwater and Wellhead Protection Areas

- NDOT shall coordinate ROW acquisition with the owners of wells that are directly affected by the proposed Project. If the well is actively used, NDOT shall get estimates to have the property owner hire their own contractor to replace the well. NDOT shall then have an independent contractor decommission the well after ROW negotiations and acquisitions are complete. If the well is not in use, the contractor shall decommission the well after negotiations with the owner. (NDOT Environmental, NDOT ROW)
- Any registered or unregistered wells within ROW to be acquired shall be properly decommissioned. A licensed water well contractor shall decommission any wells in accordance with the Nebraska DHHS regulations under NAC Title 178, Water Well Standards, Chapter 12, Water Well Construction, Pump Installation, and Water Well Decommissioning Standards (DHHS 2014). Proper decommissioning of affected wells will not have a significant impact on groundwater quality. (NDOT Environmental, NDOT ROW)

#### 4.13 Platte River Depletions

- The contractor shall be required to provide the needed borrow material and shall identify a source of material that does not include dredging Platte River sediment. The contractor shall try to obtain borrow material from an upland site to prevent depletion issues and shall be required to submit a Materials Source Site Identification and Evaluation form to NDOT and the USACE. After receiving the form, NDOT shall forward it to the USFWS,

NGPC, Nebraska DWEE, and Highway Archaeological Program of History Nebraska.  
(NDOT Environmental, District Construction, Contractor)

- If the borrow site is located within a depletion area of concern and if it is identified that it would pond water after excavation, NDOT shall determine Project-related impacts by using the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Consumptive Use Calculator to calculate the evaporated loss of water at the borrow site. For borrow sites / detention basins that result in the exposure of groundwater in the North Platte River basin, NDOT shall submit the borrow site request information to the NGPC and USFWS. This shall be done to determine ways to avoid depletions or provide offsets if depletions are to occur. Request for borrow sites that occur outside the Platte River basin shall be submitted to the Nebraska DWEE for tracking of surface water depletions. (NDOT Environmental, District Construction, Contractor)
- Borrow sites that expose groundwater and are obtained outside of the PRRIP areas will be offset according to the biological opinion prepared by NGPC in accordance with the Nebraska Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act (NESCA). Borrow sites that pond water and that occur outside the PRRIP area, and the Platte River watershed shall be calculated using the NRCS-USDA Consumptive Use Calculator and submitted to the Nebraska DWEE to be included in the report to the governance committee. (NDOT Environmental, District Construction, Contractor)

#### 4.15 Endangered and Threatened Species, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

The concurrence package from USFWS and NGPC for the Project includes the following conservation conditions and survey protocol that shall be required for the Project based on the Programmatic Agreement for Endangered and Threatened Species (and covering the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act [BGEPA] and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act [MBTA]) (Appendix F in Draft EA). The responsible party for the measure is found in parentheses:

- **Changes in Project Scope.** If there is a change in the project scope, the project limits, or environmental commitments, the Highway Project Manager shall coordinate with the NDOT Environmental Section to evaluate potential impacts prior to implementation. Environmental commitments are not subject to change without prior written approval from the NDOT Environmental Section. (District Construction)
- **Conservation Conditions.** Conservation conditions are to be fully implemented within the project limits as shown on the plans. (District Construction, Contractor)
- **Early Construction Starts.** Contractor requests for early construction starts must be coordinated by the Project Construction Engineer with the NDOT Environmental Section for approval to ensure avoidance of listed species sensitive lifecycle timeframes. Early start requests may require consultation with the USFWS and NGPC. Agency coordination time will vary depending on species and project location. (District Construction, Contractor)
- **Threatened and Endangered Species.** If federal or state listed species are observed during construction, the Highway Project Manager will contact NDOT Environmental Section to determine if additional species conservation conditions will be required prior to continuing



project construction activities. Contact NDOT Environmental for a reference of federal and state listed species. Coordination with the USFWS and NGPC may be required depending on the species identified and construction activities. (NDOT Environmental, District Construction, Contractor)

- **Refueling.** Refueling will be conducted outside of those sensitive areas identified on the plans, in the contract, and/or marked in the field. (Contractor)
- **Restricted Activities.** The following project activities shall, to the extent possible, be restricted to between the beginning and ending points (stationing, reference posts, mile markers, and/or section-township-range references) of the project, within the right-of-way designated on the project plans: borrow sites, burn sites, construction debris waste disposal areas, concrete and asphalt plants, haul roads, stockpiling areas, staging areas, and material storage sites.

For activities outside the project limits, the contractor should refer to the Nebraska Game and Park Commission website to determine which species ranges occur within the off-site area. The contractor should plan accordingly for any species surveys that may be required to approve the use of a borrow site, or other off-site activities. The contractor should review the T&E Matrix agreement (on NDOT's website), where species survey protocols can be found, to estimate the level of effort and timing requirements for surveys.

Any project related activities that occur outside of the project limits must be environmentally cleared/permitted with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission as well as any other appropriate agencies by the contractor and those clearances/permits submitted to the District Construction Project Manager prior to the start of the above listed project activities. The contractor shall submit information such as an aerial photo showing the proposed activity site, a soil survey map with the location of the site, a plan-sheet or drawing showing the location and dimensions of the activity site, a minimum of 4 different ground photos showing the existing conditions at the proposed activity site, depth to ground water and depth of pit, and the "Platte River depletion status" of the site. The contractor must receive notice of acceptance from NDOT environmental, prior to starting the above listed project activities. These project activities cannot adversely affect state and/or federally listed species or designated critical habitat. (NDOT Environmental, District Construction, Contractor).

- **Waste/Debris.** Construction waste/debris will be disposed of in areas or a manner that will not adversely affect state and/or federally listed species and/or designated critical habitat. (Contractor)
- **Post Construction Erosion Control.** Erosion control activities carried out by NDOT Maintenance or others after construction is complete, but prior to project close-out, shall adhere to any standard conservation conditions for species designated for the project limits during construction. (NDOT Maintenance, District Construction, Contractor)
- **Fencing.** When project-related fence construction/relocation work is required to be done prior to the start of construction, and if the fence work occurs outside urban or cropland areas that are not within swift fox or mountain plover range, then fencing can be installed/relocated at any time using the following criteria:
  - the fencing is temporary in nature and/or consists of only hand-driven posts



- the work does not compact the soils (ex. through the use of heavy equipment) or cause soil disturbance beyond the driving of posts
- within the whooping crane migration corridor, work occurring within a half of a mile of wetlands or perennial waters will occur between the hours of 10:00 am to 4:00 pm when the work is between March 6 – April 29 or October 9 – November 15

If the fencing work cannot meet these criteria, then NDOT Right-of-Way Division shall coordinate with NDOT Environmental Section prior to the completion of Right-of-way negotiations.

- **Platte River Depletions.** To the maximum extent practical, efforts will be made to design the project and select borrow sites to prevent depletions to the Platte River. If there is any potential to create a depletion, NDOT (during design) and the Contractor (for borrow sites) shall follow the current Platte River depletion protocols for coordination, minimization, and mitigation. In general, the following are considered de minimis depletions but may still require agency coordination; a project which: a) creates an annual depletion less than 0.1-acrefeet, b) creates a detention basin that detains water for less than 72 hours, c) diverted water that will be returned to its natural basin within 30 days, or d) creates a one-time depletion of less than 10-acre feet. (NDOT Roadway Design, Contractor)
- **Revegetation.** All permanent seeding and plantings (excluding managed landscaped areas) shall use species and composition native to the project vicinity as shown in the Plan for the Roadside Environment. However, within the first 16 feet of the road shoulder or within high erosion prone locations, tall fescue or perennial ryegrass may be used at minimal rates to provide quick groundcover to prevent erosion, unless state or federally listed threatened or endangered plants were identified in the project area during surveys. If listed plants were identified, any seed mix requirements identified during resource agency consultations shall be used for the project. (NDOT Environmental)
- **Sensitive Areas.** Environmentally Sensitive Areas will be marked on the plans, in the field, or in the contract by NDOT Environmental for avoidance. (NDOT Environmental, NDOT Roadway Design, District Construction)
- **Species Surveys.** If species surveys are required during the construction phase of the project (including pre-construction surveys), results will be sent by NDOT Environmental Section to the USFWS, NGPC, and if applicable the USACE. (NDOT Environmental, District Construction)
- **Permanent LED Lighting (NDOT Design Commitment).** Only LED roadway luminaires listed on the NDOT "Nebraska Qualified Material Vendors List" will be considered for use on Nebraska highway lighting projects. Proposed changes to the following LED lighting requirements will require resource agency (USFWS and/or NGPC) coordination and approval prior to installation:
  - Nominal CCT – 3000 +/- 300 K
  - BUG Ratings – Maximum nominal Backlight (N/A), Uplight (0), Glare (N/A)
  - Lumen Output – N/A

Any proposed changes to the listed requirement(s) must be presented to the NDOT Environmental Section for Agency Coordination and approval.

### Swift Fox Mitigation

- Two weeks prior to the start of construction, a qualified biologist shall survey the environmental study area according to protocol to determine if active swift fox den sites are present. If an active den with young is located and it is outside the project limits, then a buffer zone shall be established around the den and all construction activities shall avoid the buffer until the den is abandoned. If an occupied den with or without young is identified within the project limits or staging areas, NDOT shall immediately coordinate with the NGPC to determine how to proceed. A buffer zone shall be established around the den and all construction activities shall avoid the buffer until NDOT gives approval to enter the buffer area. Between April 1 and August 31, the buffer zone shall be 250 yards around the active den site; other times of the year, the buffer shall be 100 yards around the active den site. (NDOT Environmental)
- Fencing shall be designed for wildlife safety and wildlife friendly passage with a bottom wire at least 16" from the ground. If different fencing design is required for safety or access control, additional coordination with resource agencies shall be required. (NDOT Design, NDOT Environmental)
- Fence posts shall not be placed within potential den sites that appear to have animal activity. If fence posts cannot avoid potential den sites that appear to have animal activity, NDOT Environmental will be notified and will re-initiate consultation with resource agencies. Work will not commence until agency concurrence is received. (Contractor)

### Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

- Suitable bald eagle nesting and/or roosting habitat exists within 0.5 miles of the environmental study area. If construction will begin between February 1 and April 15, a nest survey must be completed at least 1 but not more than 14 days prior to construction. If construction will begin between April 15 and October 1, a nest survey completed in March is sufficient, as nests will likely already be constructed if nesting will occur that year. However, a nest survey may be completed anytime during this timeframe, as long as it is completed prior to construction. If bald eagles are nesting in the area, consultation with NGPC and USFWS will be required prior to beginning construction activities. Eagle roosting surveys will be conducted if construction occurs between October 1 and January 31. (NDOT Environmental, Contractor)
- Suitable golden eagle nesting and/or roosting habitat exists within 0.5 miles of the environmental study area. If construction will begin between February 1 and April 15, a nest survey must be completed at least 1 but not more than 14 days prior to construction. If construction will begin between April 15 and October 1, a nest survey completed in March is sufficient, as nests will likely already be constructed if nesting will occur that year. However, a nest survey may be completed anytime during this timeframe, as long as it is completed prior to construction. If golden eagles are nesting in the area, consultation with NGPC and USFWS will be required prior to beginning construction activities. (NDOT Environmental, Contractor)

### Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

- NDOT has developed an APP to reduce conflicts between construction of NDOT projects and the laws governing migratory birds. This procedure is designed to protect and conserve avian populations and to reduce avian conflicts through changes in project scheduling (i.e., tree clearing outside of primary nesting period), increased migratory bird

surveys, and changes in project construction timelines. NDOT shall utilize its APP to reduce conflicts with migratory birds on this project. (NDOT Environmental)

## 4.17 Hazardous Materials

- If contaminated soils/groundwater or unexpected wastes are discovered, The Contractor shall stop all work within the immediate area. The Contractor shall secure the area of the discovery and notify the Highway Project Manager (HPM). The Contractor shall not re-enter the discovery area until notified by the HPM. At the time of discovery, the HPM and Contractor shall utilize the NDOT Unexpected Waste Action Plan (UWAP) to coordinate appropriate actions. The actions to be carried out by the HPM are (but not limited to):  
verification that the Contractor has suspended construction activities in the area of the discovery, contact the Roadside Development & Compliance Unit (RDCU) hazmat representative and make an entry into AASHTOware Project that an unexpected waste discovery was made. The HPM shall then utilize the UWAP Notification Form (NDOT Form 691) to properly document the extent and type of waste. The HPM will ensure that proper disposal of the waste and any required health and safety mitigation is implemented by the Contractor. The Contractor is required by NDOT's Standard Specification section 107.11 (Hazardous Material Discoveries) to handle and dispose of regulated material in accordance with applicable laws.
- If contaminated soils/groundwater or unexpected wastes are discovered, The Contractor shall stop all work within the immediate area. The Contractor shall limit access to authorized personnel within the area of the discovery and notify the Highway Project Manager (HPM). The Contractor shall not re-enter the discovery area until notified by the HPM. At the time of discovery, the HPM and Contractor shall utilize the NDOT Unexpected Waste Action Plan (UWAP) to coordinate appropriate actions. The Contractor is required by NDOT's Standard Specification section 107.11 (Hazardous Material Discoveries) to handle and dispose of regulated material in accordance with applicable laws.

## 4.18 Material Sources and Waste Materials

- The Contractor shall be required to provide the needed borrow material and shall identify a source of material that does not include dredging Platte River sediment or otherwise deplete Platte flows. The Contractor shall obtain borrow material from an upland site to prevent depletion issues and shall be required to submit a Materials Source Site Identification and Evaluation form to NDOT and USACE. After receiving the form, NDOT shall forward the Material Source Form to the USFWS, NGPC, Nebraska DWEE, and the Highway Archaeology Program of History Nebraska. (NDOT Environmental, District Construction, Contractor)
- If the borrow site is within a depletion area of concern, the Contractor shall coordinate with the appropriate agencies and NDOT to offset or minimize impacts. The Contractor shall have a staging area for the Project where material and equipment for the Project is stored (e.g., re-steel, forms, etc.). The Contractor shall be required to dispose of material removed as part of the Project described above and miscellaneous obstructions encountered and removed along the Project. The disposal is the responsibility of the Contractor. A waste site may be needed. The Contractor shall be responsible to obtain all permits and clearances, and all conditions of those permits shall be followed. (Contractor)

## 4.20 Temporary Construction Impacts

- Appropriate coordination with BNSF shall be conducted prior to setting girders on the proposed viaduct. (District Construction, Contractor)
- Access shall be maintained for the traveling public during the proposed Project construction. The public and emergency services shall be notified prior to any road closures. Message boards may be used to alert the public of road closures and detours. (District Construction, Contractor)
- For each affected road, access shall be constructed in phases to maintain access at all times. A note shall be included on the construction plans indicating that access is to be maintained. (District Construction, Contractor)
- Accommodations shall be made to ensure local traffic passing within the limits of the Project has access to all private dwellings, commercial properties, businesses, and public facilities. If a road is closed, limited access must be maintained for authorized local traffic. Emergency vehicle access shall always be provided. If access is closed longer than one day, the contractor will meet with the property owners to address temporary access issues. Access details shall be coordinated among NDOT's project manager, the contractor, and property owners. (District Construction, Contractor)
- Nebraska Air Quality Regulations (Title 129, Chapter 32) state that no person may cause or permit a road being constructed or repaired without applying reasonable measures to prevent particulate matter (commonly referred to as dust) from becoming airborne and remaining visible beyond the premises where it originates (NDEE 2022). Slight wetting of the soil during demolition and earthwork activities to prevent dust from affecting on-site workers and any potential off-site migration is recommended. Additionally, the EPA suggests dust suppression when dry and dusty conditions are present to reduce the inhalation of dust. This includes the use of dust masks by contractors. (Contractor)

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## Appendix A: Public Involvement

# Transcript

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2 RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

3

PUBLIC MEETING

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Held on:

6

May 13, 2025

7

Prairie Winds Community Center

8

428 North Main Street

Bridgeport, Nebraska 69336

9

APPEARANCES:

10

JOHN COBURN, Project Studies Engineer

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DOUG HOEVET, District 5 Engineer

SARAH FISHER, Public Involvement Specialist

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1                   MR. HOEVET: All right. Well, hello and  
2 good evening, everyone.

3                   Welcome to the Nebraska Department of  
4 Transportation's BNSF Bridgeport public hearing to  
5 discuss the Draft Environmental Assessment and  
6 preliminary design for the project.

7                   Please note that a court reporter is here  
8 tonight to record this presentation at the public  
9 forum. Once the presentation concludes, we'll open  
10 the public forum.

11                  For those that don't want to present their  
12 comments in front of their peers, you have the option  
13 to make one-on-one comments directly to the court  
14 reporter.

15                  The purpose of this hearing is to present the  
16 project and gather public input as part of the  
17 National Environmental Policy Act, also known as NEPA.  
18 The project team is looking forward -- or looking for  
19 feedback on the impacts of the preferred alternative  
20 in the Draft Environmental Assessment. The Nebraska  
21 Department of Transportation, NDOT, and the Federal  
22 Highway Administration, or FHWA, will formally  
23 respond in writing to all comments received during  
24 the comment period, which is open now through May 29,  
25 2025.

1           We will begin with introductions to the panel,  
2 followed by an overview of the project. Then we will  
3 discuss the Draft Environmental Assessment, potential  
4 impacts and the anticipated schedule and cost. We  
5 will conclude with the public forum, which is when we  
6 will take comments.

7           For some introductions, my name is Doug Hoevet  
8 and I am the NDOT's District 5 Engineer. Also with me  
9 from NDOT are John Coburn, Project Studies Engineer,  
10 and Sarah Fisher, Public Involvement Specialist.

11           What is the National Environmental Policy Act  
12 that is referred to as NEPA? NEPA is a law that  
13 requires federal agencies to consider the  
14 environmental impacts of their proposed actions  
15 before making decisions. FHWA, in partnership with  
16 NDOT, is the lead federal agency for this project  
17 action. Under NEPA, FHWA and NDOT must document these  
18 impacts and make the information publicly available  
19 for comment.

20           NEPA is addressed for this project through an  
21 Environmental Assessment, generally referred to as an  
22 EA. Currently, we have a draft EA ready for review  
23 and comment. The draft EA is available here tonight,  
24 on the NDOT website and at locations shown on the  
25 screen.

1           The draft EA examines project benefits and  
2 potential impacts on the natural and human environment  
3 based on conceptual design. We will discuss these  
4 impacts in detail in the upcoming slides.

5           Next, I will present a project overview and  
6 recap the project history.

7           The proposed BNSF Bridgeport Project involves  
8 constructing a viaduct where US-26 Nebraska/Highway  
9 92, or N-92, crosses the BNSF Railway's, the BNS --  
10 BNSF Railroad tracks. Throughout this presentation  
11 we'll refer to the US Highway 26/Nebraska Highway 92  
12 as US-26.

13           The existing at-grade-crossing is located west  
14 of the intersection of Recreation Road and US-26 in  
15 the City of Bridgeport. The proposed project would  
16 close the existing at-grade BNSF Railroad crossing at  
17 approximately mile marker 60.92. US-26 would diverge  
18 from the existing highway alignment about at J Street,  
19 pass to the south of the two electrical substations  
20 west of the railroad tracks, and reconnect to the  
21 existing US-26 approximately four-tenths of a mile  
22 west of the existing US-26 at-grade crossing.

23           The purpose of the proposed project is to  
24 eliminate the conflict between railroad -- rail --  
25 between trains and vehicles at the existing BNSF

1 Railroad crossing. It also reduces vehicular delays  
2 and reduces crash costs associated with US-26 crossing  
3 of the BNSF Railroad tracks.

4 US-26 is the most direct road from Bridgeport  
5 to the Gering and Scottsbluff area. As such, it is an  
6 important link in the Nebraska highway system.

7 NDOT identifies the need for railroad grade  
8 separation structures by considering the exposure  
9 factor, which is the potential number of conflicts  
10 between road users and trains, traffic delays and  
11 crash costs.

12 The highway railroad crossing of US-26 meets  
13 NDOT's threshold for considering a grade separation.

14 NDOT has also received comments from the public  
15 regarding trains blocking the crossing to switch rails  
16 and other rail operations, creating an inability for  
17 emergency responders to cross the tracks. This  
18 viaduct eliminates this concern and improves the  
19 critical emergency response time.

20 The project has been in development for many  
21 years. Initial planning became -- began in 2005 and  
22 was put on hold in 2007 due to lack of funding. In  
23 2014 the project resumed in the planning phase. At  
24 that time, a public information open house was held  
25 to present the four build alternative options that

1     were developed.

2             In 2015 another public information open house  
3     was held to share that feedback on the four build  
4     alternatives presented in 2014. Based on that  
5     feedback, the alternatives were narrowed from four to  
6     two. Those two alternatives -- two alternatives were  
7     presented for additional public input.

8             In 2024 the preliminary engineering and  
9     environmental phases continued, which brings us where  
10    you are here today.

11            Now, I will hand it off to John to discuss the  
12    project alternatives considered and present the  
13    preferred alternative.

14            MR. COBURN: Hello. I'm John Coburn,  
15    Project Studies Engineer from NDOT for this project.

16            As was mentioned earlier, four alternatives  
17    were analyzed. This map shows the four alternatives.  
18    A fifth alternative considered was a no-build option,  
19    meaning we would leave the area as it currently  
20    exists.

21            Alternative 1, shown in blue on the map,  
22    considered building a viaduct on the existing  
23    alignment from US-26 from J Street in Bridgeport,  
24    shown here (indicating), to west of the existing  
25    at-grade railroad crossing. This alternative was

1 dismissed due to unfavorable access for adjacent  
2 retail, commercial and industrial areas, noise and  
3 cost of the project.

4 Alternative 2, shown in red, is our preferred  
5 alternative. This option proposes constructing a  
6 viaduct south of the existing US-26 alignment. It  
7 would depart at J Street in Bridgeport, traverse  
8 directly south of the Western Area Power Association,  
9 or WAPA, and Wheatbelt electrical substations, and  
10 then tie into existing US-26 approximately 2,000 feet  
11 west of the railroad crossing.

12 We will discuss this alternative in more detail  
13 later in the presentation.

14 Alternative 3, shown in yellow, considered  
15 building a viaduct north of the existing US-26  
16 alignment. This alternative started at US-385 and  
17 Fourth Street, traveled through residential and  
18 commercial areas on West Fourth Street, and  
19 reconnected to existing US-26 approximately 3,000 feet  
20 west of the existing railroad crossing.

21 This alternative was dismissed due to impacts  
22 to residential properties, anticipated traffic  
23 patterns in residential, commercial and industrial  
24 areas, noise, and lack of public support.

25 Alternative 4, shown in green, considered

1 constructing a viaduct along West Eighth Street.  
2 It would have begun at US-385 and Eighth Street,  
3 traveled just south of the WAPA and Wheatbelt power  
4 substations and reconnected approximately 2,000 feet  
5 west of the existing US-26 railroad crossing.

6 This alternative was dismissed due to impacts  
7 to properties, anticipated traffic patterns in  
8 commercial and industrial areas, and lack of public  
9 support.

10 As previously mentioned, the preferred  
11 alignment involves constructing the viaduct south of  
12 the existing US-26 alignment.

13 Improvements would include new roadway paving,  
14 a viaduct, retaining walls, drainage culverts, storm  
15 sewer work, detention ponds, pavement striping,  
16 lighting, and pedestrian accommodations.

17 Connecting roads at each end of the viaduct  
18 would be reconstructed to provide access to nearby  
19 residences and businesses.

20 West Railroad Avenue would be paved from West  
21 Seventh Street, shown here (indicating), to Recreation  
22 Road, shown here (indicating), and connect to G  
23 Street, H Street and West Fifth Street. Connections  
24 to the newly constructed US-26 would be maintained  
25 from both I Street and J Street.

1           Sidewalk would be constructed from existing  
2   US-26 near J Street on the viaduct (indicating) along  
3   the north side of the new US-26 alignment, and east of  
4   the new connecting road west of the electrical  
5   substations.

6           After construction, the former US-26 pavement  
7   west and east of the railroad tracks would be left in  
8   place to provide access to businesses, electrical  
9   substations, and residences. These existing segments  
10   of former US-26 would be relinquished to the City of  
11   Bridgeport. NDOT would ensure the pavement is in good  
12   condition prior to relinquishment.

13           Here is an illustration of the proposed roadway  
14   segment -- or roadway in segment A. Segment A is on  
15   the far east end of the project near J Street  
16   (indicating.) The curbed section east of the new  
17   viaduct would include two 12-foot wide driving lanes,  
18   eight-foot wide shoulders, curb and gutter, and a  
19   five-foot wide sidewalk on the north side.

20           This illustration shows the makeup of segment  
21   B, which is the proposed viaduct. This includes two  
22   12-foot wide driving lines, ten-foot wide shoulders  
23   and a seven-foot wide sidewalk on the north side.

24           The typical section in segment C would include  
25   two 12-foot wide driving lanes, eight-foot wide



1 shoulder, curb and gutter, a five-foot wide sidewalk  
2 on the north side, and a paved eight-foot wide  
3 shoulder on the south side. Segment C is between the  
4 viaduct and the new connecting road.

5 Finally, here is the typical section for  
6 segment D, furthest west on US-26. This segment of  
7 road would feature two 12-foot wide driving lanes,  
8 and eight-foot wide paved shoulders.

9 Next I want to share information about the  
10 potential environmental impacts of Alternative 2.  
11 As required by the National Environmental Policy Act  
12 or NEPA, our project team evaluated social, economic  
13 and natural environment -- environmental resources for  
14 potential impacts due to the proposed project. Minor  
15 impacts to land use would consist of 13 acres of  
16 agricultural land and two acres of commercial land  
17 being converted into highway right-of-way. The  
18 displacement of commercial businesses may also be  
19 necessary.

20 The project would require raising of the WAPA  
21 electrical transmission lines over and to the south  
22 of the new viaduct. NDOT and FHWA have coordinated  
23 with WAPA in consideration of impacts resulting from  
24 new tower construction required to raise the  
25 transmission lines. Electric service outages or

1       disruptions would not be expected.

2               Visual aesthetics, including the view to and  
3       from courthouse and Jail Rock were considered. It  
4       was determined that the viaduct would not block the  
5       view of the courthouse and Jail Rock and would be  
6       consistent with views back towards the city,  
7       considering existing power lines, center pivots and  
8       other elevated features.

9               Additionally, no impacts were determined for  
10       social environmental impacts such as archeological  
11       resources and historic properties, parks and  
12       recreation areas that are protected under Section 4(f)  
13       of the Transportation Act, or potential to encounter  
14       subsurface hazardous material contamination.

15              Due to the urban nature of the project  
16       location, we found no impacts to natural environmental  
17       components such as wetlands, streams and floodplains,  
18       or threatened and endangered species.

19              Full details of our findings can be found in  
20       the Draft Environmental Assessment document available  
21       near the water pitcher on the side of the room and  
22       online at the website address that is included at the  
23       end of this presentation and in your handout  
24       information.

25              The proposed project would require the

1 acquisition of additional property rights, which could  
2 include new right-of-way, control of access, permanent  
3 easements and/or temporary easements. The  
4 displacement of commercial businesses may also be  
5 necessary.

6 If your property is impacted by this project,  
7 you would be contacted by a representative once the  
8 design footprint has been established. Right-of-way  
9 representatives are located near the right-of-way  
10 display board for any questions you may have here  
11 tonight.

12 The project would be constructed under traffic  
13 with lane closures controlled by appropriate traffic  
14 control devices and practices. Temporary pavement  
15 may be required to accommodate phased construction.  
16 Access to adjacent properties would be maintained  
17 during construction, but may be limited at times due  
18 to traffic phasing requirements. Access to Bridgeport  
19 State Recreation Area would be maintained during  
20 construction.

21 The proposed project cost is approximately \$16  
22 million and would come from federal, state and BNSF  
23 funding sources. This public hearing is one of the  
24 last steps before a decision document can be issued  
25 by the Federal Highway Administration, which allows

1 the project to move forward to final design.

2 We anticipate final design to begin later this  
3 year, followed by right-of-way acquisition. We expect  
4 construction to begin as early as 2028 and be  
5 completed as early as 2029.

6 Now I will hand it over to Sarah to talk about  
7 the remainder of the public forum and how to provide  
8 comments.

9 MS. FISHER: Hello. I'm Sarah Fisher,  
10 Public Involvement Specialist from NDOT.

11 The full Draft Environmental Assessment is  
12 available to view tonight and on the NDOT website, as  
13 well as several locations across the state. The  
14 project team is looking for feedback on the impacts  
15 of the preferred alternative and the Draft  
16 Environmental Assessment. Comments will be collected  
17 now through May 29, 2025.

18 The Final Environmental Assessment will address  
19 the comments we receive during the comment period.  
20 We will provide a reply to those who raise a question,  
21 need further clarification or specifically request a  
22 response. We will consider every comment before  
23 moving forward with this project.

24 The Final Environmental Assessment will be  
25 posted on the NDOT website once it's completed, and

1 will include the comments received throughout the  
2 comment period.

3 The panel is here to listen tonight, but we  
4 won't be providing responses tonight because we want  
5 time to consider your comments and concerns. All  
6 comments will be recorded by the court reporter.

7 And we are again -- as a reminder, we are  
8 looking for feedback on the impacts of the preferred  
9 alternative and draft EA. If you have additional  
10 comments after the forum ends, you can always provide  
11 them in writing, on a comment form tonight, speak to  
12 the court reporter or drop them in the comment box on  
13 your way out.

14 Comments are considered regardless of how they  
15 are provided. And remember, the more focused your  
16 remarks, the better we can respond.

17 At this time we will begin the public forum.  
18 I'll begin by calling names of those that signed up on  
19 the public forum sign-in sheet at the welcome station.  
20 And once we've gone through that list, I'll open it up  
21 to the room. And if you do not wish to speak, please  
22 remain in your seat or move around the room quietly.

23 And when you approach the microphone, please  
24 state and spell your first and last name and address  
25 so that we can get that reported by the court

1 reporter.

2 And it looks like we just had one sign-up ahead  
3 of time, so I will go ahead and move into that. If  
4 Scott Fesmire would like to come up.

5 MR. FESMIRE: I thought there were other  
6 peopled that signed up before me. Lucky me, I guess.

7 So I guess I have -- I'm Scott Fesmire,  
8 S-C-O-T-T, F-E-S-M-I-R-E. I'm a resident on the east  
9 side of town, so about a block from where this would  
10 start.

11 I guess, initial thoughts, I guess I did have  
12 some questions, but I guess since y'all aren't  
13 responding to questions at all -- yes, so I can't --  
14 it'd be nice to know how many trains per day are  
15 coming through the tracks. I know it's -- over  
16 time -- I guess I've lived here about ten years now.  
17 Be really nice to know.

18 And if we're going to spend \$16 million, how  
19 many trains are we actually impacting here?

20 Another question would be, as far as, like,  
21 emergency response times go. I know we just had a  
22 fatality crash out there two weeks ago. I think  
23 since 2019 we've had a -- let's see -- it'd be three  
24 between here and the cemetery, another one out towards  
25 Baird, another one about halfway in between. To me,

1 it kind of seems like maybe we have a highway issue,  
2 not a people-waiting-for-trains issue. Maybe we  
3 should be looking at divided highways instead of  
4 overpasses to keep people from waiting for trains.

5 So I know there are -- there are switches and  
6 stuff that happen there so it does tend to take quite  
7 a bit of time, depending on -- I know it's, like, ten  
8 minutes are required, but they can give an additional  
9 ten minutes, like -- or warning to finish their job  
10 and before they can get that train moved.

11 So I guess on that end, I mean, I don't know  
12 how many -- I guess, how often we're waiting for  
13 trains, how much we're spending time on trains. Even  
14 if coal traffic did increase -- I guess, doing the  
15 math on an 8,500-foot-long train doing 24 -- 20 miles  
16 an hour, which is pretty well a crawl -- I know they  
17 come across the bridge there pretty slow -- that's  
18 four minutes and 49 seconds for that train to come  
19 by.

20 So I don't know necessarily, in my opinion,  
21 if that justifies -- I mean, everybody's time is  
22 important, but that's going to take a lot of time to  
23 justify spending \$16 million just to keep us from  
24 waiting for trains. So I guess that's a point I had.

25 As far as eliminating the conflicts between

1 just going off the purpose and need, eliminate  
2 conflicts between trains, vehicles and existing at  
3 at-grade BNF -- BNSF Railroad crossing, how much  
4 conflict's actually happening there? I mean,  
5 throughout the country there's railroad crossings all  
6 over. I don't necessarily know that this is just the  
7 exception where we need to spend all this money.  
8 Real curious on that con -- the conflicts that are  
9 occurring there, how often that is.

10 The vehicular delays, understand we get  
11 delayed. I mean, that -- you go anywhere in the  
12 country -- we're a small town, we have 1,400 people.  
13 I don't know -- granted, they're always coming  
14 through, but don't necessarily know if the delays are  
15 worth spending \$16 million. That's assuming it all  
16 stays on budget, but we know how things go that --  
17 you know, the budgets kind of assume, we put it out  
18 ahead of time and we'll see how it goes from there.

19 Reducing crash costs associated with this  
20 crossing, it'd be nice if we had somebody from local  
21 law enforcement here that could ask about all the  
22 crashes that are occurring at this crossing. But in  
23 my ten years here, I think somebody got drunk one time  
24 and, like, crashed into the little tower deal, but I  
25 don't necessarily know if we have a lot of crashes



1 occurring at this crossing. So another question there  
2 that would be nice to have ironed out.

3 Let's see what else we have. Yeah. Some  
4 traffic delays and crash costs, seems like that's a  
5 pretty big point there.

6 We get to the right-of-way section, we start  
7 looking at the -- the displacement of commercial  
8 businesses. I mean, throughout the state, I mean,  
9 especially in rural America, we have these small towns  
10 that are dying at a rapid rate. I mean, we have some  
11 thriving businesses here in Bridgeport. We're going  
12 to screw up -- I mean, even if there's a change and a  
13 way to get down to Plummer's, there's a way to get  
14 down to Bomgaars, 21st Century, Lapaseoteses have a  
15 building over there. Even if we have it, that's going  
16 to disrupt something in this small town, which so few  
17 of them are truly thriving right now. So questions  
18 about that and how are we going to address those  
19 commercial business' disruptions?

20 When, I mean, you have a small town, the few  
21 businesses we have are critically important. It's not  
22 like a big city where we, oh, we lose a business,  
23 we'll be fine.

24 So I did -- I mean, the Bridgeport State  
25 Recreation Area, I had a question on that. It says

1     it will be maintained during construction. I guess,  
2     if we have \$16 million sitting around, we could  
3     enhance that a little bit, make it easier to get --  
4     I know right now the road's just crap going across  
5     those tracks, so, I mean, we can make things -- and we  
6     have -- we apparently have \$16 million sitting around,  
7     and I think there's a lot we could do with that other  
8     than build a bridge out through a guy's pasture,  
9     through an alfalfa field, just to avoid waiting on  
10    trains and avoiding the crashes that occur at the  
11    tracks.

12           So, I guess, other things -- since I'm up here,  
13    I guess I might as well take all the time I have.  
14    Are you ready for me to stop talking yet?

15           So I guess another piece here is that there has  
16    been a renewed conversation about coal energy in the  
17    U.S. That's great. We want to thrive in the U.S.

18           I looked at the U.S. Energy Information  
19    Administration, because I know there's concern, like,  
20    if we have this level of coal trains coming through  
21    right now, you know, maybe two, three, four years from  
22    now and we're going to have coal just flowing through  
23    like crazy.

24           So I looked at the U.S. Energy Information  
25    Administration's website, and this is an agency that

1 is in charge of projecting things like that. So  
2 looked to kind of what they're projecting.

3 This report was dated May 6, 2025, so came out  
4 roughly last week, and this is just addressing that,  
5 you know, increased traffic.

6 With U.S. coal power, fire power plants  
7 generating more electricity this year, we now expect  
8 coal production will decline by less than we  
9 previously expected. So we're not necessarily --  
10 even with the current policy changes, the government  
11 agencies in charge of projecting these things isn't  
12 necessarily projecting things to increase. They're  
13 saying no, it's not going to decline as much as we  
14 thought.

15 So just -- I mean, some comment -- that's not  
16 necessarily a need to comment on, that's just what the  
17 government agency that's working with the current  
18 administration's saying.

19 So I don't know if we necessarily -- I know  
20 there's some conversation about we're going to have  
21 a lot of coal coming through. The agency that's in  
22 charge of tracking that's not saying that's going to  
23 happen. So it'd be great. I like to see a great  
24 America, but at the same time, when the agencies  
25 aren't saying we're going to have more coal traffic,

1 I don't necessarily know that we're going to have a  
2 ton -- ton more trains coming through. So just  
3 something there.

4 Here's a graphic showing what they predict.  
5 This is since 2014 (indicating) so -- and that's a  
6 steady decline in coal production since 2014. This  
7 ends in 2022, so I don't know y'all -- about y'all,  
8 but if you park a pickup in the garage or out in the  
9 shop, or a tractor or whatever, if you let it sit for  
10 ten years, it's going to take a while to get that  
11 ramped up. So just something to consider there as far  
12 as if we're thinking we're going to have just this  
13 huge burst and, I mean, just cranking out coal like  
14 crazy. I don't know if we're necessarily going to see  
15 all this traffic that we might hope to see.

16 Let's see. Another thing I did look at, and  
17 this is -- I think this is going to be the last thing,  
18 is going into statute and looking, I know we all get  
19 frustrated about -- I worked at Nutrien for, what,  
20 eight years, and the amount of times you'd have to  
21 wait at that track for trains to come by, I mean,  
22 there's some time you're sitting there over 20  
23 minutes. And so I went and looked at statute there.  
24 I mean, again, we're talking about spending \$16  
25 million. They're required -- the best I could tell,

1     they're required to spend no more than about ten  
2     minutes. Law enforcement give them a warning, if  
3     they're still in the process of working on things, it  
4     appears they can get another ten minutes. So I don't  
5     -- it -- to me, it's not necessary -- I don't know.  
6     I'm just -- I struggle with the fact that we're going  
7     to spend so much money on something that's -- \$16  
8     million is a boatload of money. I'd just like some  
9     of that addressed.

10           I mean, how do we justify this in a way that  
11     really makes sense to the public?

12           And having not heard anybody else speak, y'all  
13     may be thinking, man, this is an awesome idea. I'm  
14     not saying it's necessarily a terrible idea. \$16  
15     million is a boatload of money for something that,  
16     you know, might not be as big of a deal as we perceive  
17     it to be.

18           So I don't know how many of those were  
19     questions so -- but I do appreciate the time. Thank  
20     y'all.

21           MS. FISHER: Thank you. Is there anyone  
22     else that would like to come up?

23           And just a reminder to please state and spell  
24     your first and last name and address. Thank you.

25           MS. COOLIDGE: And I'm not timing myself,

1 so please make sure I stay three minutes.

2 Michelle Coolidge, M-I-C-H-E-L-L-E, and I  
3 actually reside in Baird, Nebraska.

4 Just a couple of things I want to make sure is  
5 on record as part of my comments that we've overheard  
6 in working with the city, just to make sure it's on  
7 public record, and -- and kind of looking at the map,  
8 there are a few big ponds that are on the drawing,  
9 and the question did just come up about how that might  
10 impact the retention ponds that are there and how that  
11 might impact the environment that's there and based on  
12 the location are kind of buggie, so just want to make  
13 sure it's on public record that that's in our further  
14 design, that that's part of the conversation.

15 And I just wanted to comment about the traffic  
16 and the impact by the trains. One of the things that  
17 we had in a conversation, actually with the engineers  
18 that were here, it is a real pain to have to sit and  
19 wait. And there have been times the delay has been  
20 more than ten minutes. But we also have to figure the  
21 backed up traffic that comes clear into town because  
22 the train was there when there's a long wait, and the  
23 number of vehicles that are there. And it actually  
24 has created some issues at other intersections farther  
25 into town with the highway coming this way, with truck

1 traffic and -- and the turning lanes that aren't  
2 there. So factoring that into how the impact for the  
3 overpass may or may not benefit that as well. Thank  
4 you.

5 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Anyone else?

6 MR. WICKARD: My name is Mark Wickard,  
7 W-I-C-K-A-R-D, City of Bridgeport resident and council  
8 member of the City of Bridgeport.

9 Scott brought up some about the impact of the  
10 wait times and stuff like that.

11 Being a past EMS, driving ambulances and being  
12 an EMT, probably one of the worst feelings I ever had  
13 was having an eight-year-old boy in the ambulance and  
14 we're doing CPR and sitting at the railroad tracks  
15 waiting.

16 My fellow firemen probably know the feeling.  
17 It's not a good feeling. So I don't know. The \$16  
18 million to me is worth the money. Thank you.

19 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Anyone else?

20 Okay. If there are no other questions or  
21 comments, we will end the public forum. The time is  
22 now 6:33 p.m.

23 And just as a reminder, the project team will  
24 remain here until 7:30 tonight to continue to discuss  
25 the project with you. We have lots of displays and

1 stations around the room in the back if you haven't  
2 had a chance to look at those yet. And just thank you  
3 all for coming and thanks for your time tonight.  
4 Take care.

5 (The following statements were provided to the  
6 court reporter privately as follows:)

7 MR. PLUMMER: Steve Plummer, P-L-U-M-M-  
8 E-R.

9 So we have Highway 26 access right now.  
10 We are right here (indicating.) When this takes off  
11 and goes here (indicating), we are right there, so  
12 we're going to lose access to Highway 26.

13 Eastbound, when the viaduct turns to the right  
14 and curves over the tracks, our office is on the east  
15 side of that turn that heads over the tracks, so we're  
16 going to lose Highway 26 access.

17 We have ten employees, it's an 80-year-old  
18 insurance business. We're very concerned that we're  
19 going to lose highway access to -- to our office and  
20 we're going to be backed up -- it looks like it'll  
21 be -- you know, it's putting us in an inferior  
22 position than that we are now. That's all I have to  
23 say. We're real concerned.

24 I will also add, the overpass is desperately  
25 needed. The gentleman before said there -- there



1     isn't that much traffic there. We wait constantly to  
2     go back and forth and back and forth to our office  
3     every day. Sometimes I'll get stopped five, six times  
4     a day, because they switch right there.

5                   MS. FISHER: Okay.

6                   MR. PLUMMER: That's the problem. It's  
7     not the trains coming through, it's the switch  
8     station. And they're constantly switching cars in and  
9     out of those -- in and out of those sidings.

10                  MS. FISHER: And did you give her your  
11     address just so we can look at that exact property?

12                  MR. PLUMMER: My access -- or my mailing  
13     address is P.O. Box 51 in Bridgeport.

14                  MS. FISHER: Thank you.

15                  MS. LIRAS: Okay. So my address, I live  
16     on --

17                  MR. PLUMMER: Tell them who you are.

18                  MS. LIRAS: My name -- my name is Allison  
19     Liras and this is my husband George Liras, and we live  
20     at --

21                  MR. PLUMMER: L-I-R-A-S.

22                  MS. LIRAS: L-I-R-A-S. And we live at  
23     9733 US Highway 26, which is right here (indicating.)

24                  Our property now is not impacted by any access  
25     to that road so we come in and out of that highway

1 just completely fine.

2 We have the same concern as my dad who is --  
3 his office is on the other side of the highway, is  
4 that how is our access going to be impacted by this  
5 overpass and how are we going to get in and out of  
6 our property from -- and how is our property going to  
7 be --

8 MR. PLUMMER: Devalued because of --

9 MS. LIRAS: -- devalued because of the  
10 fact that an overpass is now, like, directly over our  
11 houses? And so we're concerned about that, the  
12 access and the -- again, we don't think that an  
13 overpass isn't needed. I would prefer the up and over  
14 idea kind of versus the go through the substation  
15 right directly next to our house.

16 And so those are my two concerns, how is it  
17 going to devalue my husband and my property, how's  
18 our access going to work from the road down to the  
19 highway, and I would say that we're probably the  
20 number one property owner that's going to be impacted  
21 by this issue so --

22 MR. PLUMMER: Because their house is  
23 right there (indicating.)

24 MS. LIRAS: It's literally right there  
25 (indicating.)

1 MR. PLUMMER: Okay. Just because we're  
2 shy doesn't mean we're not interested.

3 (Proceedings concluded.)  
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## 1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2  
3 STATE OF NEBRASKA )  
4 COUNTY OF LINCOLN )  
5

6 I, Dorisa "Muffy" Morris, Registered  
7 Professional Reporter and General Notary Public for  
8 the State of Nebraska, do hereby certify that said  
9 proceedings were taken in stenotype by me and that  
10 the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of  
11 my notes thereof;

12 That I am not attorney nor counsel, nor in any  
13 way am I connected with any attorney nor counsel  
14 for any of the parties to said action, nor  
15 otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

16 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have affixed my signature  
17 this 14th day of May, 2025.  
18

19 My commission expires September 9, 2028.  
20

21   
22 DORISA "MUFFY" MORRIS  
23 Court Reporter  
24  
25

# Public Comments



*Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759*

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very Dissatisfied

Somewhat Dissatisfied

Neutral  
○

Somewhat Satisfied

Very Satisfied

Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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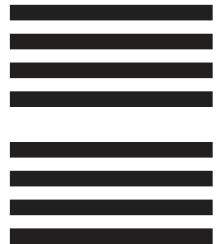
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ATTN: **Public Involvement**  
NEBRASKA DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION  
PO BOX 94759  
LINCOLN, NE 68509-9983



(Fold here)

(Tape closed - Do not staple)

RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299  
Public Hearing Comment Matrix

| No. | Name  | Comment  | Response   |
|-----|---|--|--|
| 1   | <p>Scott Fesmire<br/>402-310-5763</p> <p><i>Comment received: 4/30/25</i></p>   | <p>Called back and left a voicemail. Called again on 5-8-25, 11:24 am and spoke with Scott. He lives on the east side of proposed viaduct, thinks viaduct would almost be a blight on that side of town. Wonders if the project is actually warranted to justify the cost of the project and questioned what the need for the project was - if it was only to not have to wait for trains to go across the tracks. He also asked about access to Bridgeport State Recreation Area.</p> | <p><i>(Sarah Fisher's response notes below; this person also provided comments at the public forum.)</i></p> <p>I mentioned the project purpose as stated in our materials. I explained that access to Bridgeport State Recreation Area would be maintained during construction. Caller said he wanted our conversation documented as an official comment. He stated he was planning to attend the hearing to speak with other project personnel and get any other questions he may have answered.</p> <p><i>No additional response needed.</i></p>    |
| 2   | <p>Janelle Visser<br/>PO Box 337<br/>Hemingford, NE 69348<br/><a href="mailto:jvisser@pphd.ne.gov">jvisser@pphd.ne.gov</a><br/>308-760-6493</p> | <p>A concern... for walking &amp; biking Once the overpass is done, what route will people take to go to the Lake? 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>? Please consider the safety and accessibility of walkers and bikers. – also on the “proposed” J street to Railroad Ave to Recreation Rd. Thank you :)</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Somewhat Satisfied</p>  | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about safety and accessibility for walking and biking, concrete sidewalks would be constructed along the north side of N-92 from the east end of the viaduct beginning at J Street and tying back into the concrete sidewalks that would be constructed along the north side of N-92 beginning at J Street, continuing west over the viaduct to the newly constructed C Street.</p> |

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Public Hearing Comment Matrix

| No. | Name   | Comment   | Response  |
|-----|--|---|---|
|     |  |   | <p>NDOT is responsible for state highways. NDOT is reconstructing city streets and connections affected by the project. Currently there are no sidewalks along Railroad Avenue or Recreation Road. Thus, NDOT would not include sidewalk construction within these areas as part of this project. The city streets are under the City of Bridgeport's jurisdiction and improvements to their roads would be their responsibility.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p>       |
| 3   | <p>Katherine Coombs<br/>402 W 5<sup>th</sup> St<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336<br/><a href="mailto:minibagz1203@yahoo.com">minibagz1203@yahoo.com</a><br/>716-548-6186</p> | <p>I Live at the end of the property. And I would like to know how this will affect my property. The shoulders currently aren't 8ft but maybe 4ft. And the sidewalk I don't think is 5ft currently. I also would like to know how this would look during construction.</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Neutral</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about potential property impacts, the preliminary design proposed at the public meeting shows potential impacts to the southwest portion of your property at 402 W. 5<sup>th</sup> Street due to sidewalk reconstruction. During the final design stage, you would be contacted by a representative to discuss right-of-way acquisition and temporary easements.</p> |

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|-----|---|---|--|
|     |   |   | <p>Regarding your comments about construction, the plan for phasing and staging would be determined during final design.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about the width of the existing shoulders and sidewalks, NDOT would be constructing a typical urban section in front of your property that would include two 12' lanes, 8' shoulders, and a 5' sidewalk.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |
| 4   | Tim Riggs<br>9182 Hwy 2<br>Bridgeport, NE 69336   | <p>Connect to Hwy 88</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Very Dissatisfied</p>   | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about Nebraska Highway 88 (N-88), connecting the proposed project to N-88 is outside of the scope and purpose of the project.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p>  |
| 5   | <p>Scott Fesmire<br/>516 K Street<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336</p> <p><i>Comment Received 5/13/25</i></p> | <p>I thought there were other 6 people that signed up before me. Lucky me, I guess. So I guess I have -- I'm Scott Fesmire, S-C-O-T-T, F-E-S-M-I-R-E. I'm a resident on the</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p>  |

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Public Hearing Comment Matrix

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|     |      | <p>east side of town, so about a block from where this would Start. I guess, initial thoughts, I guess I did have some questions, but I guess since y'all aren't responding to questions at all -- yes, so I can't -- it'd be nice to know how many trains per day are coming through the tracks. I know it's -- over time -- I guess I've lived here about ten years now. Be really nice to know. And if we're going to spend \$16 million, how many trains are we actually impacting here? Another question would be, as far as, like, emergency response times go. I know we just had a fatality crash out there two weeks ago. I think since 2019 we've had a -- let's see -- it'd be three between here and the cemetery, another one out towards Baird, another one about halfway in between. To me, it kind of seems like maybe we have a highway issue, not a people-waiting-for-trains issue. Maybe we should be looking at divided highways instead of overpasses to keep people from waiting for trains. So I know there are -- there are switches and stuff that happen there so it does tend to take quite a</p> | <p>The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.</p> <p>For additional information regarding train counts and exposure factor, please refer to the draft environmental assessment located at <a href="http://ndot.info/51299">ndot.info/51299</a>.</p> <p>While the current crossing can result in delays when trains block the tracks, the proposed viaduct would provide an unobstructed crossing point at all times, helping to ensure consistent and reliable access for emergency responders.</p> <p>The displacement of commercial businesses is not anticipated. If impacts to commercial businesses are necessary NDOT would work with businesses to mitigate impacts.</p> <p>Right-of-way acquisitions would be conducted in conformance with the Uniform Act (42 USC 4601 et seq.), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of</p> |

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|     |      | <p>bit of time, depending on -- I know it's, like, ten minutes are required, but they can give an additional ten minutes, like -- or warning to finish their job and before they can get that train moved. So I guess on that end, I mean, I don't know how many -- I guess, how often we're waiting for trains, how much we're spending time on trains. Even if coal traffic did increase -- I guess, doing the math on an 8,500-foot-long train doing 24 -- 20 mile an hour, which is pretty well a crawl -- I know they come across the bridge there pretty slow -- that's four minutes and 49 seconds for that train to come by. So I don't know necessarily, in my opinion, if that justifies -- I mean, everybody's time is important, but that's going to take a lot of time to justify spending \$16 million just to keep us from waiting for trains. So I guess that's a point I had. As far as eliminating the conflicts between just going off the purpose and need, eliminate conflicts between trains, vehicles and existing at at-grade BNF -- BNSF Railroad crossing, how much conflict's actually happening there? I mean,</p> | <p>1964, and the Nebraska Relocation Assistance Act (Nebraska Revised Statutes Section 76-1214 et seq.).</p> <p>A portion of the funding for this project comes from the train mile tax. The purpose of that funding is to facilitate grade separation projects.</p> <p>The project cost is an estimate and NDOT strives to minimize costs while meeting the needs of the project.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

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|     |      | <p>throughout the country there's railroad crossings all over. I don't necessarily know that this is just the exception where we need to spend all this money. Real curious on that con -- the conflicts that are occurring there, how often that is. The vehicular delays, understand we get delayed. I mean, that -- you go anywhere in the country -- we're a small town, we have 1,400 people I don't know -- granted, they're always coming through, but don't necessarily know if the delays are worth spending \$16 million. That's assuming it all stays on budget, but we know how things go that -you know, the budgets kind of assume, we put it out ahead of time and we'll see how it goes from there. Reducing crash costs associated with this crossing, it'd be nice if we had somebody from local law enforcement here that could ask about all the crashes that are occurring at this crossing. But in my ten years here, I think somebody got drunk one time and, like, crashed into the little tower deal, but I don't necessarily know if we have a lot of crashes occurring at this crossing. So another</p> |          |

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|     |      | <p>question there that would be nice to have ironed out. Let's see what else we have. Yeah. Some traffic delays and crash costs, seems like that's a pretty big point there. We get to the right-of-way section, we start looking at the -- the displacement of commercial businesses. I mean, throughout the state, I mean, especially in rural America, we have these small towns that are dying at a rapid rate. I mean, we have some thriving businesses here in Bridgeport. We're going to screw up -- I mean, even if there's a change and a way to get down to Plummer's, there's a way to get down to Bomgaars, 21st Century, Lapaseoteses have a building over there. Even if we have it, that's going to disrupt something in this small town, which so few of them are truly thriving right now. So questions about that and how are we going to address those commercial business' disruptions? When, I mean, you have a small town, the few businesses we have are critically important. It's not like a big city where we, oh, we lose a business, we'll be fine. So I did -- I mean, the</p> |          |

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|     |      | <p>Bridgeport State Recreation Area, I had a question on that. It says it will be maintained during construction. I guess, if we have \$16 million sitting around, we could enhance that a little bit, make it easier to get -- I know right now the road's just crap going across those tracks, so, I mean, we can make things -- and we have -- we apparently have \$16 million sitting around and I think there's a lot we could do with that other than build a bridge out through a guy's pasture, through an alfalfa field, just to avoid waiting on trains and avoiding the crashes that occur at the tracks. So, I guess, other things -- since I'm up here, I guess I might as well take all the time I have. Are you ready for me to stop talking yet? So I guess another piece here is that there has been a renewed conversation about coal energy in the U.S. That's great. We want to thrive in the U.S. I looked at the U.S. Energy Information Administration, because I know there's concern, like, if we have this level of coal trains coming through right now, you know, maybe two, three, four years from</p> |          |

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|     |      | <p>now and we're going to have coal just flowing through like crazy. So I looked at the U.S. Energy Information Administration's website, and this is an agency that is in charge of projecting things like that. So looked to kind of what they're projecting. This report was dated May 6, 2025, so came out roughly last week, and this is just addressing that, you know, increased traffic. With U.S. coal power, fire power plants generating more electricity this year, we now expect coal production will decline by less than we previously expected. So we're not necessarily --even with the current policy changes, the government agencies in charge of projecting these things isn't necessarily projecting things to increase. They're saying no, it's not going to decline as much as we thought. So just -- I mean, some comment -- that's not necessarily a need to comment on, that's just what the government agency that's working with the current administration's saying. So I don't know if we necessarily -- I know there's some conversation about we're going to have a lot of coal</p> |          |

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|     |      | <p>coming through. The agency that's in charge of tracking that's not saying that's going to happen. So it'd be great. I like to see a great America, but at the same time, when the agencies aren't saying we're going to have more coal traffic, I don't necessarily know that we're going to have a ton -- ton more trains coming through. So just something there. Here's a graphic showing what they predict. This is since 2014 (indicating) so -- and that's a steady decline in coal production since 2014. This ends in 2022, so I don't know y'all -- about y'all, but if you park a pickup in the garage or out in the shop, or a tractor or whatever, if you let it sit for ten years, it's going to take a while to get that ramped up. So just something to consider there as far as if we're thinking we're going to have just this huge burst and, I mean, just cranking out coal like crazy. I don't know if we're necessarily going to see all this traffic that we might hope to see. Let's see. Another thing I did look at, and this is -- I think this is going to be the last thing, is going into statute and looking, I know we all</p> |          |

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|     |      | <p>get frustrated about -- I worked at Nutrien for, what, eight years, and the amount of times you'd have to wait at that track for trains to come by, I mean, there's some time you're sitting there over 20 minutes. And so I went and looked at statute there I mean, again, we're talking about spending \$16 million. They're required -- the best I could tell, they're required to spend no more than about ten minutes. Law enforcement give them a warning, if they're still in the process of working on things, it appears they can get another ten minutes. So I don't - it -- to me, it's not necessary -- I don't know. I'm just -- I struggle with the fact that we're going to spend so much money on something that's -- \$16 million is a boatload of money. I'd just like some of that addressed. I mean, how do we justify this in a way that really makes sense to the public? And having not heard anybody else speak, y'all may be thinking, man, this is an awesome idea. I'm not saying it's necessarily a terrible idea. \$16 million is a boatload of money for something that, you know, might not be as big</p> |          |

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|-----|---|---|---|
|     |   | of a deal as we perceive it to be. So I don't know how many of those were questions so -- but I do appreciate the time. Thank y'all.  |   |
| 6   | <p>Michelle Coolidge<br/> <a href="mailto:Cityadmin@cityofbport.com">Cityadmin@cityofbport.com</a><br/> <i>Comment Received 5/13/25</i></p> | <p>And I'm not timing myself, so please make sure I stay three minutes. Michelle Coolidge, M-I-C-H-E-L-L-E, and I actually reside in Baird [Bayard], Nebraska. Just a couple of things I want to make sure is on record as part of my comments that we've overheard in working with the city, just to make sure it's on public record, and -- and kind of looking at the map, there are a few big ponds that are on the drawing, and the question did just come up about how that might impact the retention ponds that are there and how that might impact the environment that's there and based on the location are kind of buggy, so just want to make sure it's on public record that that's in our further design, that that's part of the conversation. And I just wanted to comment about the traffic and the impact by the trains. One of the things that we had in a conversation, actually with the engineers that were here, it is a real pain to have to sit and wait.</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about the detention ponds, these areas are designed to capture and contain a majority of the rainwater that falls within the project footprint rather than allowing that rainwater to spread out and inundate the surrounding area as it does today.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about the queueing vehicles impacting traffic movements, while the current crossing can result in delays when trains block the tracks, the proposed viaduct would provide an unobstructed crossing point at all times.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

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|     |  | <p>And there have been times the delay has been more than ten minutes. But we also have to figure the backed-up traffic that comes clear into town because the train was there when there's a long wait, and the number of vehicles that are there. And it actually has created some issues at other intersections farther into town with the highway coming this way, with truck traffic and -- and the turning lanes that aren't there. So factoring that into how the impact for the overpass may or may not benefit that as well. Thank you.</p> |   |
| 7   | <p>Mark Wickard<br/>PO Box 716<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336</p> <p><i>Comment Received 5/13/25</i></p> | <p>My name is Mark Wickard, W-I-C-K-A-R-D, City of Bridgeport resident and council member of the City of Bridgeport. Scott brought up some about the impact of the wait times and stuff like that. Being a past EMS, driving ambulances and being an EMT, probably one of the worst feelings I ever had was having an eight-year-old boy in the ambulance and we're doing CPR and sitting at the railroad tracks waiting. My fellow firemen probably know the feeling. It's not a good feeling. So I don't know. The \$16</p>                        | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

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|-----|--|---|--|
|     |  | million to me is worth the money.<br>Thank you.   |  |
| 8   | <p>Steve Plummer<br/>P.O. Box 51<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336</p> <p><i>Comment Received 5/13/25</i></p> | <p>MR. PLUMMER: Steve Plummer, P-L-U-M-M- E-R. So we have Highway 26 access right now. We are right here (indicating). When this takes off and goes here (indicating), we are right there, so we're going to lose access to Highway 26. Eastbound, when the viaduct turns to the right and curves over the tracks, our office is on the east side of that turn that heads over the tracks, so we're going to lose Highway 26 access. We have ten employees, it's an 80-year-old insurance business. We're very concerned that we're going to lose highway access to -- to our office and we're going to be backed up -- it looks like it'll be -- you know, it's putting us in an inferior position than that we are now. That's all I have to say. We're real concerned. I will also add, the overpass is desperately needed. The gentleman before said there -- there isn't that much traffic there. We wait constantly to go back and forth and back and forth to our office every day. Sometimes I'll get</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about property access, while your business would not have direct access to US-26, it would still have full access to relocated US-26 via a connecting street that connects old US-26 to new US-26. Access to all businesses would be maintained during construction.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about traffic delays at the railroad crossing, the proposed viaduct project would eliminate the need for vehicles to wait for train operations.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

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|     |   | <p>stopped five, six times a day, because they switch right there.<br/>MS. FISHER: Okay.<br/>MR. PLUMMER: That's the problem. It's not the trains coming through, it's the switch station. And they're constantly switching cars in and out of those -- in and out of those sidings.<br/>MS. FISHER: And did you give her your address just so we can look at that exact property?<br/>MR. PLUMMER: My access -- or my mailing address is P.O. Box 51 in Bridgeport.<br/>MS. FISHER: Thank you.</p> |   |
| 9   | <p>Allison and George Liras<br/>P.O. Box 272<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336<br/><a href="mailto:Allisioniviliras@gmail.com">Allisioniviliras@gmail.com</a></p> <p><i>Comment Received 5/13/25</i></p> | <p>MS. LIRAS: Okay. So my address, I live on --<br/>MR. PLUMMER: Tell them who you are.<br/>MS. LIRAS: My name -- my name is Allison Liras and this is my husband George Liras, and we live at --<br/>MR. PLUMMER: L-I-R-A-S.<br/>MS. LIRAS: L-I-R-A-S. And we live at 9733 US Highway 26, which is right here (indicating). Our property now is not impacted by any access to that road so we come in and out of that highway just completely fine. We have the same concern as</p>                | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about property access, the proposed project would maintain similar accessibility to the highway for your residence. Your driveway would be connected to the new highway location with the ability to proceed directly across the highway to the businesses and/or turn either direction onto the highway.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about the future value of your property near the proposed</p> |

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|     |      | <p>my dad who is -- his office is on the other side of the highway, is that how is our access going to be impacted by this overpass and how are we going to get in and out of our property from -- and how is our property going to be --</p> <p>MR. PLUMMER: Devalued because of --</p> <p>MS. LIRAS: -- devalued because of the fact that an overpass is now, like, directly over our houses? And so we're concerned about that, the access and the -- again, we don't think that an overpass isn't needed. I would prefer the up and over idea kind of versus the go through the substation right directly next to our house. And so those are my two concerns, how is it going to devalue my husband and my property, how's our access going to work from the road down to the highway, and I would say that we're probably the number one property owner that's going to be impacted by this issue so --</p> <p>MR. PLUMMER: Because their house is right there (indicating).</p> <p>MS. LIRAS: It's literally right there (indicating).</p> | <p>project, as part of our process, NDOT carefully reviews access changes, visibility, noise, proximity of structures, and other factors that may influence a property's use and enjoyment. While NDOT does not make determinations or guarantees regarding future market trends, staff appraisers evaluate potential damages to the property caused by the project. If damages are present, this would be reflected in a compensation offer.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

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|-----|---|--|--|
|     |   | MR. PLUMMER: Okay. Just because we're 2 shy doesn't mean we're not interested.   |  |
| 10  | <p>Craig Lind<br/> <a href="mailto:macrl76@msn.com">macrl76@msn.com</a></p> <p><i>Comment received: 5/14/25</i></p> | <p>Comments of the proposed Design.</p> <p>1. Delays at the US26/BNSF crossing are affected by several factors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. BNSF has pusher engines station at Bridgeport, they are required to push coal trains up Angora Hill on the line to Alliance.</li> <li>b. BNSF north- south track, and BNSF track from the west cross with the double UPPR tracks north of the Platte River. UPPR has track rights and ROW over BNSF. This causes the BNSF to start from a stop condition when the ROW is cleared. The train count on the UPPR is more than the count on the BNSF.</li> <li>c. These items should be verified by NDOT</li> </ul> <p>2. The length of the Viaduct .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Has the NDOT considered the possibility of accidental explosion from the fertilizer carts parked under the Viaduct?</li> </ul> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about the storage tanks, NDOT has had conversations with the Legacy Co-op and continues to evaluate a plan for storing materials.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about additional right-of-way, designing to accommodate future tracks is a requirement per the BNSF/UPRR Grade Separation Guidelines Manual: "Permanent clearances shall accommodate future tracks, future track raises, Access Roads and drainage ditch improvements as determined by the Railroad."</p> <p>Regarding your comments about a jughandle design on the east end of the proposed project, this was considered during preliminary design and was not carried forward due to impacts to residential properties in the area.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about eliminating the paving on Railroad Avenue, paving and utilizing Railroad Avenue during construction</p> |

All comments have been transcribed verbatim as submitted by the commenter



RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299  
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| No. | Name | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|------|--|---|
|     |      | <p>b. BNSF is probably telling the NDOT that they want room for additional track.</p> <p>c. Every foot of Viaduct cost around \$10K.</p> <p>d. Length of the visduct could be shorten if a jughandle and city street constructed off I Street. Eliminated the paving on Railroad Ave.</p> <p>3. Lanes on US26</p> <p>a. Consider a three-lane design from the I Street intersection to Main street. 5th Street(US26) would need to be widened to accommodate the three-lane design. Three lane design exists on the north/south legs of the Main Street intersection. The design should take in consideration future traffic signals. There are probably 20-30 Yellow Cake semi-trucks daily using the NB to WB turning movement(from the Ethanol Plant).</p> <p>4. Intersection at I Street.</p> <p>a. Build a Jug handle and city street to the west to Recreation</p> | <p>would allow for continued access to the Bridgeport State Recreation Area and avoid closures during construction.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about lanes on US-26 further east of the project, changing the lane configuration is outside of the scope of the proposed project.</p> <p>Regarding your comments on the alignment of US-26, the design incorporates a skew at the railroad and superelevation of the roadway where appropriate in order to meet design criteria while minimizing property impacts to the extent possible.</p> <p>Regarding your comments on Don Landrigan's property, NDOT has had conversations with this property owner about potential property impacts.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

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|-----|------|--|----------|
|     |      | <p>RD. The connection to the Frontage Road(city Street) should have sufficient storage length for semi-trucks off the Highway. There are several properties that the owners have semi-trucks.</p> <p>5. The Jug handle could be moved to the west. The tract with the greenhouse sold the other day for \$16700 (online auction). Grades on the highway may a problem with shifting the intersection. The four trailers west of the I street are not in the best condition.</p> <p>6. The horizontal curve on US26 (south of substation) , consideration should be given to flattening the curve and eliminating the super elevation on the roadway. At one time we looked at skewing the Viaduct to flatten the curve. The Lumber has closed, and City of Bridgeport Public Works Department occupies the building.</p> <p>a. Have you talked to Don's Disposal? He owns the building west of lumber yard and has access to existing highway(no access is shown). At the public</p> |          |

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RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299  
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| No. | Name   | Comment   | Response   |
|-----|--|---|--|
|     |  | <p>hearing earlier, he was very defensive on the property.</p> <p>Craig Lind<br/>Retired DE District 5</p>  |  |
| 11  | <p>Ronald Erickson<br/>1418 Mockingbird Dr<br/>Scottsbluff, NE 69361<br/><a href="mailto:ronerickson55@yahoo.com">ronerickson55@yahoo.com</a><br/>308-631-4042</p> <p><i>Comment received: 5/15/25</i></p> | <p>Bridgeport viaduct NOT NEEDED. I've gone through there 100 or more times and only been stopped by a train once. It took one minute to clear the road (2 minutes total - it was halfway when I got there. If you have extra money for viaducts, Scottsbluff has ZERO viaducts and I get stopped by them nearly every day. Plus there are times when they are very slow and take up to 7 minutes to clear. WITH LONG car lines when done. Ron Erickson 308-631-4042</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Neutral</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |
| 12  | <p>Ben Raymond<br/>1218 Q St<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336<br/><a href="mailto:beray54659@daupload.com">beray54659@daupload.com</a></p> <p><i>Comment received: 5/16/25</i></p>                                 | <p>Seriously 16 million is an insane amount of money for this glorified concrete bridge. Why not let the citizens of Bridgeport decide what they want with this money. If you have an extra 16 mil, why not split it up and give each person \$11,000. I bet they would be happy</p>  | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad</p>  |

All comments have been transcribed verbatim as submitted by the commenter

RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299  
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| No. | Name   | Comment  | Response  |
|-----|--|--|---|
|     |  | <p>to wait 2 min for a train once every 100 crossings in exchange for 11 grand each. Talk about a way to revitalize our economy!!!! Come on!!!! Be creative!!!! Keep your big city ideas out of our town! Just give us cash! -Ben Raymond, Data Access Uploads LLC.</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Very Dissatisfied</p>   | <p>crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.</p> <p>The project cost is an estimate and NDOT strives to minimize costs while meeting the needs of the project.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p>                                     |
| 13  | <p>Brian Peters<br/>9926 RD 94 A<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336<br/>262-0628</p> <p><i>Comment received: 5/20/25</i></p> | <p>The one thing that will change for the city is the extra traffic for J street and 3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 4<sup>th</sup> as these streets need improvement to withstand extra traffic. It should be addressed is my opinion. : as my previous comments have not Been addressed. I don't suppose these will be either. The way that NDOT can improve Public Outreach, to listen to the tax payer. And to address the tax payers concerns would be appreciated.</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Neutral</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comment about improvements to J Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> streets, these streets are outside of the scope of the proposed project and your concerns will be passed on to the City of Bridgeport for consideration.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

All comments have been transcribed verbatim as submitted by the commenter

RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299  
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| No. | Name   | Comment  | Response   |
|-----|--|--|--|
| 14  | <p>Gary Oltmann<br/>402 "G" St<br/>Bridgeport NE 69336<br/><a href="mailto:goltmann@allophone.com">goltmann@allophone.com</a><br/>308-212-1247</p> <p><i>Comment received: 5/22/25</i></p> | <p>This could be a waste of money because I feel it is not needed. Train traffic does not seem to be as heavy as it was in earlier years. The viaduct would not made any difference in the fatal accidents. As for as EMS, time if you go north to Angora hill take L62A to Hwy 26 to Scottsbluff you do not cross a railroad track and its only a couple of miles longer from Bridgeport. The viaduct could have a negative effect on downtown businesses as well as the businesses on the west edge of town. It could create much more traffic on 4th street with more locals using 4th street as well as people going to the recreation area. We don't need a viaduct just to save people a little time. Save the money.</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Somewhat Dissatisfied</p> | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.</p> <p>In regard to your concerns about downtown businesses, NDOT does not anticipate any negative impacts as a result of the proposed project and has received minimal negative comments from downtown businesses during the public involvement process.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |
| 15  | <p>Donald E. Landrigan<br/>705 P St.<br/>P.O Box 292<br/>Bridgeport, NE 69336<br/>308-279-1090<br/><a href="mailto:Deland@g.com">Deland@g.com</a></p>                                      | <p>My building on West 5<sup>th</sup> Street is greatly affected. I own that property because of location and value to me. Commercial frontage and storage. I have concerns about moving building and keeping it</p>   | <p>The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed <i>BNSF, Bridgeport</i> project.</p> <p>Regarding your comments about potential property impacts, NDOT continues to evaluate</p>  |

All comments have been transcribed verbatim as submitted by the commenter

RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299  
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| No. | Name                             | Comment   | Response   |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|--|
|     | <i>Comment received: 5/29/25</i> | <p>square with three overhead doors. Plus I will lose half of my area. My future plans were to construct another building on that property. My access changes causing inconvenience through Croell property, and smaller area to place and construct another building. Will the property be referenced with some gate access? I am completely satisfied with the property as is. I am not interested in spending any out of pocket money to have the same functional facility. I'm sure I will have more concerns.</p> <p>Overall Satisfaction: Somewhat Dissatisfied</p> | <p>impacts. During the final design stage, you would be contacted by a representative to discuss right-of-way acquisition and temporary easements.</p> <p>We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.</p> |

All comments have been transcribed verbatim as submitted by the commenter

# Phone Log

Date:

4-30-25

Time:

8:53AM

## Caller

Name:

Scott Fesmire

Company:

Address:

Phone No.:

402-310-5763

## Receiver

Name:

Sarah Fisher (via voicemail)

Company:

NDOT

Address:

Phone No.:

402-479-3832

Re:

Caller received our 51299 mailer and had some questions

Discussion:

Called back and left a voicemail. Called again on 5-8-25, 11:24 am and spoke with Scott. He lives on the east side of proposed viaduct, thinks viaduct would almost be a blight on that side of town. Wonders if the project is actually warranted to justify the cost of the project and questioned what the need for the project was - if it was only to not have to wait for trains to go across the tracks. He also asked about access to Bridgeport State Recreation Area.

Resolution:

I mentioned the project purpose as stated in our materials. I explained that access to Bridgeport State Recreation Area would be maintained during construction. Caller said he wanted our conversation documented as an official comment. He stated he was planning to attend the hearing to speak with other project personnel and get any other questions he may have answered.

☐ For Your Concurrence

☐ For Your Information

## RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

Please submit your written comments by May 29, 2025

Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

A concern...for walking & biking  
Once the overpass is done,  
what route will people take to  
go to the Lake? 4th to 3rd?

Please consider the safety and  
accessibility of walkers & bikers.--  
also on the "proposed" T Street to  
Railroad Ave to Recreation Rd.

Thank you ☺

The Nebraska Department of  
Transportation (NDOT) and the  
Federal Highway Administration  
(FHWA) appreciate your input.  
Your comments, questions, and  
suggestions will be reviewed  
by appropriate personnel.  
Thank you for your participation.

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very  
Dissatisfied  
☐

Somewhat  
Dissatisfied  
☐

Neutral  
☐

Somewhat  
Satisfied  
☒

Very  
Satisfied  
☐

Name: (Please Print)

Janella Visser

Address:

PO Box 337

City, State, Zip:

Hemingford, NE 69348

Phone:

308 260 6493

Email:

jvisser@pphd.ne.gov





Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

JANELLE VISSER  
PO BOX 337  
HEMINGFORD NE 69348

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Janelle:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comments about safety and accessibility for walking and biking, concrete sidewalks would be constructed along the north side of N-92 from the east end of the viaduct beginning at J Street and tying back into the concrete sidewalks that would be constructed along the north side of N-92 beginning at J Street, continuing west over the viaduct to the newly constructed C Street.

NDOT is responsible for state highways. NDOT is reconstructing city streets and connections affected by the project. Currently there are no sidewalks along Railroad Avenue or Recreation Road. Thus, NDOT would not include sidewalk construction within these areas as part of this project. The city streets are under the City of Bridgeport's jurisdiction and improvements to their roads would be their responsibility.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

1500 Nebraska Parkway  
Lincoln, NE 68502

PHONE 402-471-4567

EMAIL [NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov)

[dot.nebraska.gov](http://dot.nebraska.gov)



## RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

Please submit your written comments by May 29, 2025

Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

I live at the end of the property. And I would like to know how this will affect my property. The shoulders currently aren't 8ft but maybe 4ft. And the sidewalk I don't think is 5ft currently. I also would like to know how this would look during construction.

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) appreciate your input. Your comments, questions, and suggestions will be reviewed by appropriate personnel. Thank you for your participation.

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very Dissatisfied  
☐

Somewhat Dissatisfied  
☐

Neutral  
☒

Somewhat Satisfied  
☐

Very Satisfied  
☐

Name: (Please Print) Katherine Coombs  
Address: 402 W 5th St.  
City, State, Zip: Bridgeport, NE 69336  
Phone: (716) 548-6786 Email: mini bagz1203@yahoo.com



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

KATHERINE COOMBS  
402 W 5TH ST  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Katherine:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comments about potential property impacts, the preliminary design proposed at the public meeting shows potential impacts to the southwest portion of your property at 402 W. 5th Street due to sidewalk reconstruction. During the final design stage, you would be contacted by a representative to discuss right-of-way acquisition and temporary easements.

Regarding your comments about construction, the plan for phasing and staging would be determined during final design.

Regarding your comments about the width of the existing shoulders and sidewalks, NDOT would be constructing a typical urban section in front of your property that would include two 12' lanes, 8' shoulders, and a 5' sidewalk.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

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1500 Nebraska Parkway  
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## RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

Please submit your written comments by May 29, 2025

Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

CONNECT TO HWY 88

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) appreciate your input. Your comments, questions, and suggestions will be reviewed by appropriate personnel. Thank you for your participation.

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very Dissatisfied



Somewhat Dissatisfied



Neutral



Somewhat Satisfied



Very Satisfied



Name: (Please Print)

Tina Riggs

Address:

9182 Hwy

City, State, Zip:

Bridgeport Ne 69556

Phone:

Email:





Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

TIM RIGGS  
9182 HWY 2  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Tim:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comment about Nebraska Highway 88 (N-88), connecting the proposed project to N-88 is outside of the scope and purpose of the project.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

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EMAIL [NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov)

[dot.nebraska.gov](http://dot.nebraska.gov)

1 reporter.

2 And it looks like we just had one sign-up ahead  
3 of time, so I will go ahead and move into that. If  
4 Scott Fesmire would like to come up.

5 MR. FESMIRE: I thought there were other  
6 peopled that signed up before me. Lucky me, I guess.

7 So I guess I have -- I'm Scott Fesmire,  
8 S-C-O-T-T, F-E-S-M-I-R-E. I'm a resident on the east  
9 side of town, so about a block from where this would  
10 start.

11 I guess, initial thoughts, I guess I did have  
12 some questions, but I guess since y'all aren't  
13 responding to questions at all -- yes, so I can't --  
14 it'd be nice to know how many trains per day are  
15 coming through the tracks. I know it's -- over  
16 time -- I guess I've lived here about ten years now.  
17 Be really nice to know.

18 And if we're going to spend \$16 million, how  
19 many trains are we actually impacting here?

20 Another question would be, as far as, like,  
21 emergency response times go. I know we just had a  
22 fatality crash out there two weeks ago. I think  
23 since 2019 we've had a -- let's see -- it'd be three  
24 between here and the cemetery, another one out towards  
25 Baird, another one about halfway in between. To me,

1 it kind of seems like maybe we have a highway issue,  
2 not a people-waiting-for-trains issue. Maybe we  
3 should be looking at divided highways instead of  
4 overpasses to keep people from waiting for trains.

5 So I know there are -- there are switches and  
6 stuff that happen there so it does tend to take quite  
7 a bit of time, depending on -- I know it's, like, ten  
8 minutes are required, but they can give an additional  
9 ten minutes, like -- or warning to finish their job  
10 and before they can get that train moved.

11 So I guess on that end, I mean, I don't know  
12 how many -- I guess, how often we're waiting for  
13 trains, how much we're spending time on trains. Even  
14 if coal traffic did increase -- I guess, doing the  
15 math on an 8,500-foot-long train doing 24 -- 20 miles  
16 an hour, which is pretty well a crawl -- I know they  
17 come across the bridge there pretty slow -- that's  
18 four minutes and 49 seconds for that train to come  
19 by.

20 So I don't know necessarily, in my opinion,  
21 if that justifies -- I mean, everybody's time is  
22 important, but that's going to take a lot of time to  
23 justify spending \$16 million just to keep us from  
24 waiting for trains. So I guess that's a point I had.

25 As far as eliminating the conflicts between

1 just going off the purpose and need, eliminate  
2 conflicts between trains, vehicles and existing at  
3 at-grade BNF -- BNSF Railroad crossing, how much  
4 conflict's actually happening there? I mean,  
5 throughout the country there's railroad crossings all  
6 over. I don't necessarily know that this is just the  
7 exception where we need to spend all this money.  
8 Real curious on that con -- the conflicts that are  
9 occurring there, how often that is.

10 The vehicular delays, understand we get  
11 delayed. I mean, that -- you go anywhere in the  
12 country -- we're a small town, we have 1,400 people.  
13 I don't know -- granted, they're always coming  
14 through, but don't necessarily know if the delays are  
15 worth spending \$16 million. That's assuming it all  
16 stays on budget, but we know how things go that --  
17 you know, the budgets kind of assume, we put it out  
18 ahead of time and we'll see how it goes from there.

19 Reducing crash costs associated with this  
20 crossing, it'd be nice if we had somebody from local  
21 law enforcement here that could ask about all the  
22 crashes that are occurring at this crossing. But in  
23 my ten years here, I think somebody got drunk one time  
24 and, like, crashed into the little tower deal, but I  
25 don't necessarily know if we have a lot of crashes



1 occurring at this crossing. So another question there  
2 that would be nice to have ironed out.

3 Let's see what else we have. Yeah. Some  
4 traffic delays and crash costs, seems like that's a  
5 pretty big point there.

6 We get to the right-of-way section, we start  
7 looking at the -- the displacement of commercial  
8 businesses. I mean, throughout the state, I mean,  
9 especially in rural America, we have these small towns  
10 that are dying at a rapid rate. I mean, we have some  
11 thriving businesses here in Bridgeport. We're going  
12 to screw up -- I mean, even if there's a change and a  
13 way to get down to Plummer's, there's a way to get  
14 down to Bomgaars, 21st Century, Lapaseoteses have a  
15 building over there. Even if we have it, that's going  
16 to disrupt something in this small town, which so few  
17 of them are truly thriving right now. So questions  
18 about that and how are we going to address those  
19 commercial business' disruptions?

20 When, I mean, you have a small town, the few  
21 businesses we have are critically important. It's not  
22 like a big city where we, oh, we lose a business,  
23 we'll be fine.

24 So I did -- I mean, the Bridgeport State  
25 Recreation Area, I had a question on that. It says

1 it will be maintained during construction. I guess,  
2 if we have \$16 million sitting around, we could  
3 enhance that a little bit, make it easier to get --  
4 I know right now the road's just crap going across  
5 those tracks, so, I mean, we can make things -- and we  
6 have -- we apparently have \$16 million sitting around,  
7 and I think there's a lot we could do with that other  
8 than build a bridge out through a guy's pasture,  
9 through an alfalfa field, just to avoid waiting on  
10 trains and avoiding the crashes that occur at the  
11 tracks.

12 So, I guess, other things -- since I'm up here,  
13 I guess I might as well take all the time I have.  
14 Are you ready for me to stop talking yet?

15 So I guess another piece here is that there has  
16 been a renewed conversation about coal energy in the  
17 U.S. That's great. We want to thrive in the U.S.

18 I looked at the U.S. Energy Information  
19 Administration, because I know there's concern, like,  
20 if we have this level of coal trains coming through  
21 right now, you know, maybe two, three, four years from  
22 now and we're going to have coal just flowing through  
23 like crazy.

24 So I looked at the U.S. Energy Information  
25 Administration's website, and this is an agency that

1 is in charge of projecting things like that. So  
2 looked to kind of what they're projecting.

3 This report was dated May 6, 2025, so came out  
4 roughly last week, and this is just addressing that,  
5 you know, increased traffic.

6 With U.S. coal power, fire power plants  
7 generating more electricity this year, we now expect  
8 coal production will decline by less than we  
9 previously expected. So we're not necessarily --  
10 even with the current policy changes, the government  
11 agencies in charge of projecting these things isn't  
12 necessarily projecting things to increase. They're  
13 saying no, it's not going to decline as much as we  
14 thought.

15 So just -- I mean, some comment -- that's not  
16 necessarily a need to comment on, that's just what the  
17 government agency that's working with the current  
18 administration's saying.

19 So I don't know if we necessarily -- I know  
20 there's some conversation about we're going to have  
21 a lot of coal coming through. The agency that's in  
22 charge of tracking that's not saying that's going to  
23 happen. So it'd be great. I like to see a great  
24 America, but at the same time, when the agencies  
25 aren't saying we're going to have more coal traffic,

1 I don't necessarily know that we're going to have a  
2 ton -- ton more trains coming through. So just  
3 something there.

4 Here's a graphic showing what they predict.  
5 This is since 2014 (indicating) so -- and that's a  
6 steady decline in coal production since 2014. This  
7 ends in 2022, so I don't know y'all -- about y'all,  
8 but if you park a pickup in the garage or out in the  
9 shop, or a tractor or whatever, if you let it sit for  
10 ten years, it's going to take a while to get that  
11 ramped up. So just something to consider there as far  
12 as if we're thinking we're going to have just this  
13 huge burst and, I mean, just cranking out coal like  
14 crazy. I don't know if we're necessarily going to see  
15 all this traffic that we might hope to see.

16 Let's see. Another thing I did look at, and  
17 this is -- I think this is going to be the last thing,  
18 is going into statute and looking, I know we all get  
19 frustrated about -- I worked at Nutrien for, what,  
20 eight years, and the amount of times you'd have to  
21 wait at that track for trains to come by, I mean,  
22 there's some time you're sitting there over 20  
23 minutes. And so I went and looked at statute there.  
24 I mean, again, we're talking about spending \$16  
25 million. They're required -- the best I could tell,

1 they're required to spend no more than about ten  
2 minutes. Law enforcement give them a warning, if  
3 they're still in the process of working on things, it  
4 appears they can get another ten minutes. So I don't  
5 -- it -- to me, it's not necessary -- I don't know.  
6 I'm just -- I struggle with the fact that we're going  
7 to spend so much money on something that's -- \$16  
8 million is a boatload of money. I'd just like some  
9 of that addressed.

10 I mean, how do we justify this in a way that  
11 really makes sense to the public?

12 And having not heard anybody else speak, y'all  
13 may be thinking, man, this is an awesome idea. I'm  
14 not saying it's necessarily a terrible idea. \$16  
15 million is a boatload of money for something that,  
16 you know, might not be as big of a deal as we perceive  
17 it to be.

18 So I don't know how many of those were  
19 questions so -- but I do appreciate the time. Thank  
20 y'all.

21 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Is there anyone  
22 else that would like to come up?

23 And just a reminder to please state and spell  
24 your first and last name and address. Thank you.

25 MS. COOLIDGE: And I'm not timing myself,



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

SCOTT FESMIRE  
516 K ST  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Scott:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.

For additional information regarding train counts and exposure factor, please refer to the draft environmental assessment located at [ndot.info/51299](http://ndot.info/51299).

While the current crossing can result in delays when trains block the tracks, the proposed viaduct would provide an unobstructed crossing point at all times, helping to ensure consistent and reliable access for emergency responders.

The displacement of commercial businesses is not anticipated. If impacts to commercial businesses are necessary NDOT would work with businesses to mitigate impacts.

Right-of-way acquisitions would be conducted in conformance with the Uniform Act (42 USC 4601 et seq.), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Nebraska Relocation Assistance Act (Nebraska Revised Statutes Section 76-1214 et seq.).

A portion of the funding for this project comes from the train mile tax. The purpose of that funding is to facilitate grade separation projects.

The project cost is an estimate and NDOT strives to minimize costs while meeting the needs of the project.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher, Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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[dot.nebraska.gov](http://dot.nebraska.gov)

1 so please make sure I stay three minutes.

2 Michelle Coolidge, M-I-C-H-E-L-L-E, and I  
3 actually reside in Baird, Nebraska.

4 Just a couple of things I want to make sure is  
5 on record as part of my comments that we've overheard  
6 in working with the city, just to make sure it's on  
7 public record, and -- and kind of looking at the map,  
8 there are a few big ponds that are on the drawing,  
9 and the question did just come up about how that might  
10 impact the retention ponds that are there and how that  
11 might impact the environment that's there and based on  
12 the location are kind of buggie, so just want to make  
13 sure it's on public record that that's in our further  
14 design, that that's part of the conversation.

15 And I just wanted to comment about the traffic  
16 and the impact by the trains. One of the things that  
17 we had in a conversation, actually with the engineers  
18 that were here, it is a real pain to have to sit and  
19 wait. And there have been times the delay has been  
20 more than ten minutes. But we also have to figure the  
21 backed up traffic that comes clear into town because  
22 the train was there when there's a long wait, and the  
23 number of vehicles that are there. And it actually  
24 has created some issues at other intersections farther  
25 into town with the highway coming this way, with truck

1 traffic and -- and the turning lanes that aren't  
2 there. So factoring that into how the impact for the  
3 overpass may or may not benefit that as well. Thank  
4 you.

5 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Anyone else?

6 MR. WICKARD: My name is Mark Wickard,  
7 W-I-C-K-A-R-D, City of Bridgeport resident and council  
8 member of the City of Bridgeport.

9 Scott brought up some about the impact of the  
10 wait times and stuff like that.

11 Being a past EMS, driving ambulances and being  
12 an EMT, probably one of the worst feelings I ever had  
13 was having an eight-year-old boy in the ambulance and  
14 we're doing CPR and sitting at the railroad tracks  
15 waiting.

16 My fellow firemen probably know the feeling.  
17 It's not a good feeling. So I don't know. The \$16  
18 million to me is worth the money. Thank you.

19 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Anyone else?

20 Okay. If there are no other questions or  
21 comments, we will end the public forum. The time is  
22 now 6:33 p.m.

23 And just as a reminder, the project team will  
24 remain here until 7:30 tonight to continue to discuss  
25 the project with you. We have lots of displays and





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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

MICHELLE COOLIDGE  
cityadmin@cityofbport.com

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Michelle:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comment about the detention ponds, these areas are designed to capture and contain a majority of the rainwater that falls within the project footprint rather than allowing that rainwater to spread out and inundate the surrounding area as it does today.

Regarding your comment about the queueing vehicles impacting traffic movements, while the current crossing can result in delays when trains block the tracks, the proposed viaduct would provide an unobstructed crossing point at all times.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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1 traffic and -- and the turning lanes that aren't  
2 there. So factoring that into how the impact for the  
3 overpass may or may not benefit that as well. Thank  
4 you.

5 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Anyone else?

6 MR. WICKARD: My name is Mark Wickard,  
7 W-I-C-K-A-R-D, City of Bridgeport resident and council  
8 member of the City of Bridgeport.

9 Scott brought up some about the impact of the  
10 wait times and stuff like that.

11 Being a past EMS, driving ambulances and being  
12 an EMT, probably one of the worst feelings I ever had  
13 was having an eight-year-old boy in the ambulance and  
14 we're doing CPR and sitting at the railroad tracks  
15 waiting.

16 My fellow firemen probably know the feeling.  
17 It's not a good feeling. So I don't know. The \$16  
18 million to me is worth the money. Thank you.

19 MS. FISHER: Thank you. Anyone else?

20 Okay. If there are no other questions or  
21 comments, we will end the public forum. The time is  
22 now 6:33 p.m.

23 And just as a reminder, the project team will  
24 remain here until 7:30 tonight to continue to discuss  
25 the project with you. We have lots of displays and



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

MARK WICKARD  
PO BOX 716  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Mark:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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1 stations around the room in the back if you haven't  
2 had a chance to look at those yet. And just thank you  
3 all for coming and thanks for your time tonight.  
4 Take care.

5 (The following statements were provided to the  
6 court reporter privately as follows:)

7 MR. PLUMMER: Steve Plummer, P-L-U-M-M-  
8 E-R.

9 So we have Highway 26 access right now.  
10 We are right here (indicating.) When this takes off  
11 and goes here (indicating), we are right there, so  
12 we're going to lose access to Highway 26.

13 Eastbound, when the viaduct turns to the right  
14 and curves over the tracks, our office is on the east  
15 side of that turn that heads over the tracks, so we're  
16 going to lose Highway 26 access.

17 We have ten employees, it's an 80-year-old  
18 insurance business. We're very concerned that we're  
19 going to lose highway access to -- to our office and  
20 we're going to be backed up -- it looks like it'll  
21 be -- you know, it's putting us in an inferior  
22 position than that we are now. That's all I have to  
23 say. We're real concerned.

24 I will also add, the overpass is desperately  
25 needed. The gentleman before said there -- there

1     isn't that much traffic there. We wait constantly to  
2     go back and forth and back and forth to our office  
3     every day. Sometimes I'll get stopped five, six times  
4     a day, because they switch right there.

5                   MS. FISHER: Okay.

6                   MR. PLUMMER: That's the problem. It's  
7     not the trains coming through, it's the switch  
8     station. And they're constantly switching cars in and  
9     out of those -- in and out of those sidings.

10                  MS. FISHER: And did you give her your  
11     address just so we can look at that exact property?

12                  MR. PLUMMER: My access -- or my mailing  
13     address is P.O. Box 51 in Bridgeport.

14                  MS. FISHER: Thank you.

15                  MS. LIRAS: Okay. So my address, I live  
16     on --

17                  MR. PLUMMER: Tell them who you are.

18                  MS. LIRAS: My name -- my name is Allison  
19     Liras and this is my husband George Liras, and we live  
20     at --

21                  MR. PLUMMER: L-I-R-A-S.

22                  MS. LIRAS: L-I-R-A-S. And we live at  
23     9733 US Highway 26, which is right here (indicating.)

24                  Our property now is not impacted by any access  
25     to that road so we come in and out of that highway



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

STEVE PLUMMER  
PO BOX 51  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Steve:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comment about property access, while your business would not have direct access to US-26, it would still have full access to relocated US-26 via a connecting street that connects old US-26 to new US-26. Access to all businesses would be maintained during construction.

Regarding your comment about traffic delays at the railroad crossing, the proposed viaduct project would eliminate the need for vehicles to wait for train operations.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

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1     isn't that much traffic there. We wait constantly to  
2     go back and forth and back and forth to our office  
3     every day. Sometimes I'll get stopped five, six times  
4     a day, because they switch right there.

5                   MS. FISHER: Okay.

6                   MR. PLUMMER: That's the problem. It's  
7     not the trains coming through, it's the switch  
8     station. And they're constantly switching cars in and  
9     out of those -- in and out of those sidings.

10                  MS. FISHER: And did you give her your  
11     address just so we can look at that exact property?

12                  MR. PLUMMER: My access -- or my mailing  
13     address is P.O. Box 51 in Bridgeport.

14                  MS. FISHER: Thank you.

15                  MS. LIRAS: Okay. So my address, I live  
16     on --

17                  MR. PLUMMER: Tell them who you are.

18                  MS. LIRAS: My name -- my name is Allison  
19     Liras and this is my husband George Liras, and we live  
20     at --

21                  MR. PLUMMER: L-I-R-A-S.

22                  MS. LIRAS: L-I-R-A-S. And we live at  
23     9733 US Highway 26, which is right here (indicating.)

24                  Our property now is not impacted by any access  
25     to that road so we come in and out of that highway

1 just completely fine.

2 We have the same concern as my dad who is --  
3 his office is on the other side of the highway, is  
4 that how is our access going to be impacted by this  
5 overpass and how are we going to get in and out of  
6 our property from -- and how is our property going to  
7 be --

8 MR. PLUMMER: Devalued because of --

9 MS. LIRAS: -- devalued because of the  
10 fact that an overpass is now, like, directly over our  
11 houses? And so we're concerned about that, the  
12 access and the -- again, we don't think that an  
13 overpass isn't needed. I would prefer the up and over  
14 idea kind of versus the go through the substation  
15 right directly next to our house.

16 And so those are my two concerns, how is it  
17 going to devalue my husband and my property, how's  
18 our access going to work from the road down to the  
19 highway, and I would say that we're probably the  
20 number one property owner that's going to be impacted  
21 by this issue so --

22 MR. PLUMMER: Because their house is  
23 right there (indicating.)

24 MS. LIRAS: It's literally right there  
25 (indicating.)



1 MR. PLUMMER: Okay. Just because we're  
2 shy doesn't mean we're not interested.

3 (Proceedings concluded.)  
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

ALLISON AND GEORGE LIRAS  
PO BOX 272  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Allison & George:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comment about property access, the proposed project would maintain similar accessibility to the highway for your residence. Your driveway would be connected to the new highway location with the ability to proceed directly across the highway to the businesses and/or turn either direction onto the highway.

Regarding your comment about the future value of your property near the proposed project, as part of our process, NDOT carefully reviews access changes, visibility, noise, proximity of structures, and other factors that may influence a property's use and enjoyment. While NDOT does not make determinations or guarantees regarding future market trends, staff appraisers evaluate potential damages to the property caused by the project. If damages are present, this would be reflected in a compensation offer.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

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**From:** [CRAIG R LIND](#)  
**To:** [Fisher, Sarah](#)  
**Subject:** BNST VIADUCT RRZ-TMT-26-1(161)  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 14, 2025 10:16:43 AM

---

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## **Comments of the proposed Design.**

1. **Delays at the US26/BNSF crossing are affected by several factors.**
  - a. **BNSF has pusher engines station at Bridgeport, they are required to push coal trains up Angora Hill on the line to Alliance.**
  - b. **BNSF north- south track, and BNSF track from the west cross with the double UPPR tracks north of the Platte River. UPPR has track rights and ROW over BNSF. This causes the BNSF to start from a stop condition when the ROW is cleared. The train count on the UPPR is more than the count on the BNSF.**
  - c. **These items should be verified by NDOT**
2. **The length of the Viaduct .**
  - a. **Has the NDOT considered the possibility of accidental explosion from the fertilizer carts parked under the Viaduct?**
  - b. **BNSF is probably telling the NDOT that they want room for additional track.**
  - c. **Every foot of Viaduct cost around \$10K.**
  - d. **Length of the visduct could be shorten if a jughandle and city street constructed off I Street. Eliminated the paving on Railroad Ave.**
3. **Lanes on US26**
  - a. **Consider a three-lane design from the I Street intersection to Main street. 5<sup>th</sup> Street(US26) would need to be widened to accommodate the three-lane design. Three lane design exists on the north/south legs of the Main Street intersection. The design should take in consideration future traffic signals. There are probably 20-30 Yellow Cake semi-trucks daily using the NB to WB turning movement(from the Ethanol Plant).**

4. **Intersection at I Street.**
  - a. **Build a Jug handle and city street to the west to Recreation RD. The connection to the Frontage Road(city Street) should have sufficient storage length for semi-trucks off the Highway. There are several properties that the owners have semi-trucks.**
5. **The Jug handle could be moved to the west. The tract with the greenhouse sold the other day for \$16700 (online auction). Grades on the highway may a problem with shifting the intersection. The four trailers west of the I street are not in the best condition.**
6. **The horizontal curve on US26 (south of substation) , consideration should be given to flatting the curve and eliminating the super elevation on the roadway. At one time we looked at skewing the Viaduct to flatten the curve. The Lumber has closed, and City of Bridgeport Public Works Department occupies the building.**
  - a. **Have you talked to Don's Disposal? He owns the building west of lumber yard and has access to existing highway(no access is shown). At the public hearing earlier, he was very defensive on the property.**

**Craig Lind**

**Retired DE District 5**



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025

CRAIG LIND  
macrl76@msn.com



Jim Pillen, Governor

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Craig:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comments about the storage tanks, NDOT has had conversations with the Legacy Co-op and continues to evaluate a plan for storing materials.

Regarding your comment about additional right-of-way, designing to accommodate future tracks is a requirement per the BNSF/UPRR Grade Separation Guidelines Manual: "Permanent clearances shall accommodate future tracks, future track raises, Access Roads and drainage ditch improvements as determined by the Railroad."

Regarding your comments about a jughandle design on the east end of the proposed project, this was considered during preliminary design and was not carried forward due to impacts to residential properties in the area.

Regarding your comments about eliminating the paving on Railroad Avenue, paving and utilizing Railroad Avenue during construction would allow for continued access to the Bridgeport State Recreation Area and avoid closures during construction.

Regarding your comments about lanes on US-26 further east of the project, changing the lane configuration is outside of the scope of the proposed project.

Regarding your comments on the alignment of US-26, the design incorporates a skew at the railroad and superelevation of the roadway where appropriate in order to meet design criteria while minimizing property impacts to the extent possible.

Regarding your comments on Don Landrigan's property, NDOT has had conversations with this property owner about potential property impacts.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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**From:** [noreply@nebraska.gov](mailto:noreply@nebraska.gov)  
**To:** [NDOT, Public Involvement](#)  
**Cc:** [ronerickson55@yahoo.com](mailto:ronerickson55@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Comment Inquiry for BNSF, Bridgeport  
**Date:** Thursday, May 15, 2025 3:11:39 PM

---

## Form Results

### Project

BNSF, Bridgeport

### Project URL

<https://dot.nebraska.gov/projects/future-projects/bnsf-bridgeport/>

### Full Name

ronald erickson

### Email

ronerickson55@yahoo.com

### Address

1418 MOCKINGBIRD DR

### City

Scottsbluff

### State

Nebraska

### Zip

69361-4931

### Comment

Bridgeport viaduct NOT NEEDED. I've gone through there 100 or more times and only been stopped by a train once. It took one minute to clear the road (2 minutes total - it was halfway when I got there. If you have extra money for viaducts, Scottsbluff has ZERO viaducts and I get stopped by them nearly every day. Plus there are times when they are very slow and take up to 7 minutes to clear. WITH LONG car lines when done. Ron Erickson 308-631-4042

**How satisfied are you with this project?**

Neutral



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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

RONALD ERICKSON  
1418 MOCKINGBIRD DR  
SCOTTSBLUFF NE 69361

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Ronald:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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**To:** [NDOT, Public Involvement](#)  
**Cc:** [beray54659@daupload.com](mailto:beray54659@daupload.com)  
**Subject:** Comment Inquiry for BNSF, Bridgeport  
**Date:** Friday, May 16, 2025 10:21:45 AM

---

## Form Results

### Project

BNSF, Bridgeport

### Project URL

<https://dot.nebraska.gov/projects/future-projects/bnsf-bridgeport/>

### Full Name

Ben Raymond

### Email

[beray54659@daupload.com](mailto:beray54659@daupload.com)

### Address

1218 Q St

### City

Bridgeport

### State

Nebraska

### Zip

69336

### Comment

Seriously 16 million is an insane amount of money for this glorified concrete bridge. Why not let the citizens of Bridgeport decide what they want with this money. If you have an extra 16 mil, why not split it up and give each person \$11,000. I bet they would be happy to wait 2 min for a train once every 100 crossings in exchange for 11 grand each. Talk about a way to revitalize our economy!!!! Come on!!!! Be creative!!!! Keep your big city ideas out of our town! Just

give us cash! -Ben Raymond, Data Access Uploads LLC.

**How satisfied are you with this project?**

Very dissatisfied



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

BEN RAYMOND  
1218 Q ST  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Ben:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.

The project cost is an estimate and NDOT strives to minimize costs while meeting the needs of the project.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

1500 Nebraska Parkway  
Lincoln, NE 68502

PHONE 402-471-4567

EMAIL [NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOT.ContactUs@nebraska.gov)

[dot.nebraska.gov](http://dot.nebraska.gov)

## RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

Please submit your written comments by May 29, 2025

Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

The One thing that will change for the City, is. The extra traffic for 1st street, and 3rd & 4th. as these streets need improvement to withstand this extra traffic. it should be addressed in my opinion. as my previous comments have not been addressed. I don't suppose these will be either. the way that NDOT can improve Public Outreach, is to Listen to the taxpayer.  
And to address the taxpayers concerns would be appreciated.



RECEIVED

AY 20

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) appreciate your input. Your comments, questions, and suggestions will be reviewed by appropriate personnel. Thank you for your participation.

MAY 20 2025

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very Dissatisfied  
☐

Somewhat Dissatisfied  
☐

Neutral  
☒

Somewhat Satisfied  
☐

Very Satisfied  
☐

Name: (Please Print)

Brian Peters

Address:

9926 Rd 94A

City, State, Zip:

Bridgeport

Phone:

262 0628

Email:

NA



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

BRIAN PETERS  
9926 RD 94 A  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Brian:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comment about improvements to J Street and 3rd and 4th streets, these streets are outside of the scope of the proposed project and your concerns will be passed on to the City of Bridgeport for consideration.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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## RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

Please submit your written comments by May 29, 2025

**RECEIVED**

Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

MAY 22 2025

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

This could be a waste of money because I feel it is not needed. Train traffic does not seem to be as heavy as it was in earlier years. The viaduct would not made any difference in the fatal accidents.

As for as EMS, time if you go north to Angora hill take L62A to Hwy 26 to Scottsbluff you do not cross a railroad track and its only a couple of miles longer from Bridgeport.

The viaduct could have a negative effect on downtown businesses as well as the businesses on the west edge of town. It could create much more traffic on 4<sup>th</sup> street with more locals using 4<sup>th</sup> street as well as people going to the recreation area.

We don't need a viaduct just to save people a little time. Save the money.

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very Dissatisfied ☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied ☒ Neutral ☐ Somewhat Satisfied ☐ Very Satisfied ☐

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) appreciate your input. Your comments, questions, and suggestions will be reviewed by appropriate personnel.

Thank you for your participation.

Name: (Please Print) GARY OITMANIN  
Address: 402 "G" ST.  
City, State, Zip: BRIDGEPORT NE 69336  
Phone: 308/262/1297 Email: GOITMANN@GOLLOPHONE.COM



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

GARY OLTMANN  
402 G ST  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Gary:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles, reduce vehicular delays and reduce crash costs at the US-26/N-92 railroad crossing. NDOT identifies the need for railroad crossing separation structures by considering the potential for conflicts and actual delays and crash costs. This location meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation.

In regard to your concerns about downtown businesses, NDOT does not anticipate any negative impacts as a result of the proposed project and has received minimal negative comments from downtown businesses during the public involvement process.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

MAILING ADDRESS

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## RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; C.N. 51299

Please submit your written comments by May 29, 2025

Return to: Sarah Fisher  
NDOT Public Involvement  
P.O. Box 94759  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4759

[sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov](mailto:sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov)  
402-479-3832 Office  
402-479-3989 Fax

My building on West 5th is greatly affected. I own that property because of location and value to me. Commercial frontage and storage. I have concerns about moving building and keeping it square with three overhead doors. Plus I will lose half of my area. My future plans were to construct another building on that property. My access changes causing inconvenience through Croell property, and smaller area to place and construct another building.

Will property be re fenced with same gate access?

I am completely satisfied with the property as is.

I am not interested in spending any out of pocket money to have the same functional facility.

I'm sure I will have more concerns.

RECEIVED

MAY 29 2025

What is your overall satisfaction with the proposed project?

Very  
Dissatisfied  
☐

Somewhat  
Dissatisfied  
☒

Neutral  
☐

Somewhat  
Satisfied  
☐

Very  
Satisfied  
☐

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) appreciate your input. Your comments, questions, and suggestions will be reviewed by appropriate personnel.

Thank you for your participation.

Name: (Please Print) Donald E. Landrigan

Address: P.O. Box 292 705 P. St

City, State, Zip: Bridgeport, Ne. 69336

Phone: 308-279-1090 Email: dc lande@g.com





Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

July 17, 2025



Jim Pillen, Governor

DONALD E. LANDRIGAN  
705 P ST  
P.O BOX 292  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

NDOT Project: **RRZ-TMT-26-1(161) BNSF, Bridgeport; CN 51299**

Dear Donald:

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) appreciates your input concerning the proposed *BNSF, Bridgeport* project.

Regarding your comments about potential property impacts, NDOT continues to evaluate impacts. During the final design stage, you would be contacted by a representative to discuss right-of-way acquisition and temporary easements.

We appreciate the feedback that you have provided. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fisher  
Public Involvement Specialist  
(402) 479-3832  
sarah.fisher@nebraska.gov

Vicki Kramer, Director

Department of Transportation

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## Appendix J: Delay Cost Calculations and Grade Separation Priority Ranking of Crossings

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Summary of Vehicle Delay and Accident Costs at Railroad-Highway At-Grade Crossing  
CN 51299, Bridgeport Viaduct

|                      |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| Annual Cost of Delay | \$36,671 |
| Annual Accident Cost | \$9,712  |
| Total                | \$46,383 |

## Cost of Vehicle Delay at Railroad-Highway At-Grade Crossing

### CN 51299, Bridgeport Viaduct

Inputs: Requires entry of project specific data

Outputs: Results from methodology

Equation 1: Minutes of blocked time per day

$$M = \left[ \left( \frac{L}{S} \right) (60 \text{ min/hr}) + 0.6 \text{ min} + .05 \text{ min} \right] \times ADTT$$

L= 1.610

L = Average train length (miles/train) (Default is 1.610 miles)

S= 35

S = Average train speed (miles/hour)

60

60 min/hour = conversion to change mile/hour to miles/minute

0.6

0.6 min = Time crossing signals are active before and after the train passes (minutes/train)

0.05

0.05 min = Average time for motorists to react and start up after train passes (minutes/train)\*

ADTT= 16

ADTT = Number of trains per day (trains/day)

\* The start-up time term was in prior NDOR formulas and comes from work in Virginia

M= 54.6

M = Minutes of crossing blocked time on an average day (minutes/day)

Equation 2: Probability of vehicular delay on an average day

$$P = \frac{M}{1440}$$

1440

Number of minutes in one day (minutes/day)

P= 0.038

P = Proportion of the day that the crossing is blocked

Equation 3: Number of vehicles delayed at the crossing on an average day

$$V = P \times AADT$$

AADT= 3865

AADT = Number of vehicles per day at crossing (vehicles/day)

V= 146

V = Vehicles delayed during an average day (vehicles/day) [rounded to nearest vehicle]

Equation 4: Average duration of delay per delayed vehicle

$$D = M / ADTT / 2$$

2

Assumption of uniform highway vehicle arrivals (2 = ratio of train blocked time to avg delayed vehicle blocked time)

D= 1.71

D = Duration of delay for a delayed vehicle (minutes/vehicle)

Note: NCHRP 288 had a typographic error and called for AADT instead of ADTT in this equation

Additional Equations and Delay Terms not in the Original NCHRP 288

$$MT = M / ADTT$$

MT= 3.41

Time for one train to pass (minutes/train)

$$AD = TD \times AADT$$

AD= 0.06

Average delay per vehicle - based on AADT - at crossing (minutes/vehicle)

$$TD = D \times V$$

TD= 248.9

Total delay on an average day (minutes/day)

$$\text{Annual Delay} = \frac{TD \times (365 \frac{\text{day}}{\text{year}})}{(60 \text{ min/hr})}$$

Annual Delay 1,514

Total annual delay (hours/year)

NDOT equations for cost of vehicular delay (these equations are not in NCHRP 288)

Equation 5: Cost of highway vehicle delay per day

$$CD = [(1 - \%T)(\$Pass) + (\%T)(\$Trucks)] \times TD$$

%T= 0.14

Percent trucks for subject crossing in decimal form

\$Pass= \$0.37

Cost of delay for passenger cars (\$/minute) [2022: \$0.37]

\$Trucks= \$0.61

Cost of delay for trucks (\$/minute) [2022: \$0.61]

CD= \$100.47

Cost of highway vehicle delay per day (\$/day) [time only, rounded to nearest \$0.01]

Equation 6: Cost of highway vehicle delay per vehicle

$$CV = CD / V$$

CV= \$0.688

Cost of highway vehicle delay per delayed vehicle (\$/vehicle) [time only, rounded to nearest \$0.01]

Equation 7: Annual cost of highway vehicle delay

$$C = CV \times V \times 365$$

C= \$36,671

Cost of delay per year (\$/year) [time only]

## Accident Prediction Model for Highway Rail Crossings

### User Defined Variables

|                                   |                     |             |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Chose Existing Crossing Type      | Crossing with Gates |             |
| ADT in both directions - ( c )    | 3865                | vehicles    |
| Trains Per Day (NE Inventory) (t) | 16                  | Trains/Day  |
| Speed of Train @ Crossing (ms)    | 35                  | MPH         |
| Number of Crossings (mt)          | 1                   | Main Tracks |
| Number of Accidents (N)           | 0                   | accidents   |
| Years Observed at Crossing (T)    | 5                   | years       |
| Urban or Rural?                   | Urban               |             |

### 2021 Accident Costs w/Train (Provided by Traffic Accidents Group)

Urban: CONFIDENTIAL

Rural: CONFIDENTIAL

### Accident Prediction Equations

#### Initial Accident Prediction Equations

where.

a = initial accident prediction (accidents per year at a particular crossing)

c = annual average number of highway vehicles per day (total for both directions)

t = average total train movements per day

ms = maximum timetable speed for trains, mph

mt = number of main tracks

#### Passive Crossing Equation

$$a = 0.2e^{-6.9006} \times (ct)^{0.5606} \times e^{0.0142ms}$$

a = -

#### Crossing with Flashing Lights Equation

$$a = 0.2e^{-9.9968} \times (ct)^{0.7355} \times e^{0.0275ms}$$

a = -

#### Crossing with Gates Equation

$$a = 0.2e^{-7.1516} \times (ct)^{0.3490} \times e^{0.0162ms} \times e^{0.5375 \times mt}$$

a = **0.0222**

#### Final Accident Prediction Equation

where.

To = Weighting Factor

a = Initial Accident Rate (calculated above)

T = number years accidents were observed

N = number accidents observed at particular crossing

A = Final Predicted Accident Rate

#### Weighting Factor

$$T_o = \frac{1.0}{0.05 + a}$$

T<sub>o</sub> = **13.84445**

#### Final Accident Prediction Factor

$$A = \frac{T_o}{T_o + T} (a) + \frac{T}{T_o + T} \left(\frac{N}{T}\right)$$

A = **0.0163**

### Total Accident Cost

**\$9,711.97**

Source: Development of An Accident Prediction Model for Highway-Rail Grade Crossings in Nebraska - MRI Global