

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, December 18, 2024; 5:30 – 7:30 PM

**Performing Arts Center, Central City High School and Middle School
1510 28th Street, Central City, NE 68826**

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) will give a formal presentation starting at 6:00 PM, with an open house to follow until 7:30 PM.

RRZ-TMT-14-2 (123) Central City Viaduct; C.N. 42013

NDOT will hold a public hearing regarding the preliminary design and draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the construction of a viaduct in Central City, Nebraska. The public hearing will be held in the Performing Arts Center at the Central City High School and Middle School at 1510 28th Street in Central City, Nebraska, on Wednesday, December 18, 2024, from 5:30 – 7:30 PM. A formal presentation will begin at 6:00 PM, with an open house to follow.

Identified as *Central City Viaduct*, the proposed project would construct a viaduct in Central City, Nebraska located in Merrick County. The preferred alternative would be located on U.S. Highway 30 (US-30) between C Avenue and 13th Avenue and on Nebraska Highway 14 (N-14) between 19th Street and just north of 10th Street.

The existing US-30 and N-14 intersection downtown would be realigned to the west to approximately B Avenue. US-30 would be reconstructed as a three-lane curbed urban roadway with 12-foot-wide lanes, sidewalks and parking between C Avenue and B Avenue, and between 16th Avenue and 13th Avenue. Between B Avenue and 16th Avenue, US-30 would be a two-lane divided urban roadway with a 4-foot-wide raised median and 20-foot-wide lanes with sidewalks. C Avenue and existing N-14 from US-30 to I Street would be designated as one-way pairs for northbound and southbound N-14. N-14 would be reconstructed as a curbed urban roadway with 12-foot-wide lanes, sidewalks, and parking.

A portion of N-14 would be constructed on a new alignment starting from US-30 halfway between 14th Avenue and 13th Avenue, proceeding north crossing over the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and then proceeding west to connect back to existing N-14 at 10th Street. These improvements would consist of constructing a 580-foot-long viaduct over the UPRR. The roadway would be a two-lane curbed urban roadway with 12-foot-wide lanes and 6-foot-wide shoulders and a sidewalk on one side of the roadway. The two existing at-grade UPRR crossings at N-14/17th Avenue and 13th Street would be closed as part of this project. The north intersection that ties into existing N-14 would be a roundabout. The south intersection with US-30 would be a T-intersection.

Existing N-14 from US-30 to just south of 10th Street would be repaired and relinquished to Central City.

Improvements include new paving, culvert and storm sewer work, guardrail, MSE walls, fencing, bridge, new intersections, improved intersections, sidewalks, pavement striping, lighting, pedestrian accommodations, and traffic signals.

The purpose of this project is to:

- Eliminate conflicts between trains and vehicles at the existing N-14 at-grade UPRR crossing.
- Reduce traffic congestion and associated delays at the N-14 crossing of the UPRR tracks and at the intersection with US-30.
- Improve operations and reduce crash costs associated with the existing N-14 and US-30 intersection.

NDOT identifies the need for railroad grade separation structures by considering the exposure factor, traffic delays, and crash costs. The highway-rail crossing of N-14 and the UPRR mainline meets NDOT's thresholds for considering a grade separation. NDOT has also determined a need to address operational challenges at the existing intersection of N-14 and US-30.

The proposed project would require the acquisition of additional property rights, which could include new right-of-way (ROW), control of access (CA), permanent easements (PE) and/or temporary easements (TE). Commercial relocations are anticipated. If your property is impacted by this project, you would be contacted by a representative once the design footprint has been

established. Access to adjacent properties would be maintained during construction but may be limited at times due to traffic phasing requirements.

The proposed project would be constructed primarily under traffic with lane closures controlled by appropriate traffic control devices and practices; however designated detours would be provided for through truck traffic on N-14 and US-30. The detour for N-14 would utilize Nebraska Highway 92 (N-92), U.S. Highway 81 (US-81), and Nebraska Highway 66 (N-66). The detours for US-30 would vary depending on the stage of construction and would utilize either N-92 and U.S. Highway 281 (US-281) or Nebraska Highway 39 (N-39), U.S. Highway 81 (US-81), Nebraska Highway 66 (N-66), N-14, and U.S. Highway 34 (US-34). For local traffic there may be short term closures of side roads.

The preferred alternative would modify parking in downtown Central City. The loss of some parking stalls downtown is anticipated, with an additional reduction of a few stalls from 16th Avenue to 14th Avenue on US-30. Off-street parking would remain available at specific businesses.

The proposed project would require the temporary occupancy of the north end of the Dark Island Trail where it meets US-30. Dark Island Trail would remain open to the public and continue to operate normally. Alternative access would be maintained from the Fox Theater parking lot and the Central Park parking lot. Impacts on streams, irrigation canals, and drains would include construction of a new box culvert for Warm Slough and lengthening the existing N-14 box culvert. The proposed project would encroach on or run parallel to the Trouble Creek and Warm Slough floodplains. Temporary impacts on floodplains during construction may occur in the form of construction access and temporary structures. A floodplain development permit and certifications would be obtained prior to construction, and the Project would comply with local floodplain regulations. The proposed project would permanently affect approximately 0.091 acres of wetlands. Temporary impacts to wetlands are anticipated and would be restored to pre-construction or improved conditions.

Construction could begin as early as 2027 with anticipated completion by 2029.

A draft EA has been prepared for this project and is available for public review at the following locations:

- NDOT Headquarters (1500 Nebraska Parkway, Lincoln, NE)
- FHWA Nebraska Division (100 Centennial Mall N, Ste 220, Lincoln, NE)
- NDOT District 4 Headquarters (211 N Tilden Street, Grand Island, NE)
- Central City Public Library (1604 15th Avenue, Central City, NE)

An electronic version of the draft EA is available for review on the project website at: ndot.info/42013.

The public hearing is being held in compliance with the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act, to provide information regarding the project and to receive the public's input. All interested persons are invited to attend, provide comments, and ask questions. Project information will be displayed, and personnel from NDOT will be present to answer questions and receive comments. Comments can be provided verbally at the hearing, submitted in writing as a statement, or by filling out a comment form available at the hearing. Comments for the draft EA can also be submitted by emailing, calling, or mailing to the contact listed below by the end of the comment period, January 7, 2025. Project design plans and the Environmental Assessment document will be further developed after public input is received following the public hearing and comment period.

NDOT will make every reasonable accommodation to provide an accessible meeting facility for all persons. Appropriate provisions for the hearing and visually challenged or persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) will be made if NDOT is notified by December 11, 2024.

Information regarding the proposed project will be available on the day of the hearing at ndot.info/42013. For those without internet access, information may be obtained at NDOT Headquarters: 1500 Nebraska Parkway, Lincoln, NE 68502, or by contacting: Wes Wahlgren, NDOT District 4 Engineer, at wes.wahlgren@nebraska.gov or (308) 385-6265.

Comments will be collected through January 7, 2025, and should be submitted to:

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