

Build Nebraska Act Regional Meeting

Alliance, NE - January 12, 2016

NDOR staff hit the road this week for a series of regional meetings to talk about how to best invest \$600 million in state highway improvement projects under the next cycle of the Build Nebraska Act (BNA).

We're starting to update and expand our project prioritization process so that we can better consider economic impacts and include more stakeholder input. The first stop was in Alliance on Tuesday, January 12 to get feedback on the new process. We also shared the current list of candidate projects to be considered for the next round of BNA funding and asked for suggestions on additional projects that should be considered.

There was a lot of good conversation in Alliance. Some of the key messages we heard were:

- **Support of updating the prioritization process:** Overall, attendees supported the enhancement of economic and stakeholder input into NDOR's project prioritization process.
- **Look at how traffic counts influence the prioritization process:** While attendees support the use of engineering data in the process, some are worried about how heavily traffic counts influence both engineering and economic performance.
- **Support for more consideration of economic performance in the project prioritization process,** keeping the following in mind:
 - When reviewing corridors, look for a way to incorporate how connections to other states play a role in the overall economic impact.
 - Consider temporary residents (e.g., students) and tourism visitors for economic impact.
 - Have the weighting for economic performance be as high as possible without overshadowing safety – safety needs to remain a primary criteria.
 - Make sure the economic impact factors reflect the differences between urban and rural areas and that the economic model isn't biased towards one or the other.
- **Geographic distribution is important:** Make sure geographic distribution is considered in the selection process.

In addition, we heard about six projects to be added to the candidate list and a request to remove one project from the list.

We're headed to Lexington on Thursday, January 14. Check out our website for future meeting dates and locations as well as all the information being presented at the meetings:

<http://www.roads.nebraska.gov/projects/bna/next10/>. Don't forget to share your input – look for the comment card on the website.