

Capital Improvement Projects Regional Meetings

Valentine, NE – July 18, 2016

In the seventh of eight regional stakeholder meetings, the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) met with Nebraska residents on Monday, July 18, in Valentine to provide the results of potential capital improvement projects analyzed under the expanded project prioritization process.

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

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

- **N-7 from Bassett to Springview (2-lane highway modernization, \$2M)**
 - Discussion: safety, transport of turbines.
- **US-275 from O'Neil to Norfolk (Super 2, \$103M)**
 - Discussion: traffic volume, regional benefits from improved connectivity, safety, improve passing opportunities.
 - Scope options: stakeholders stated that they would be willing to accept a reduced project length, if that meant getting the corridor partially completed.
- **US-275 from Scribner North and South (4-lane divided expressway with bypass, \$56M)**
 - Discussion: traffic volume, improve passing opportunities.
 - Scope options: stakeholders stated that they would prefer the entire US 275 from Pilger to Scribner corridor, however, they understand that limited funds are available. Therefore, they would prefer this segment to be completed first due to higher traffic volumes near the ends of the corridor.

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

- N-7 from Bassett to Springview

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

will allow NDOR to create an ongoing evaluation process to identify sets of projects that are best suited to address Nebraska's needs.