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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Transportation Enhancement Projects Awarded

The Nebraska Department of Roads announced today that a total of \$5,177,042 has been awarded for 16 community and agency projects, statewide, through the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program.

According to Roads Director John Craig, "Many positive things are being done in Nebraska as a result of the Transportation Enhancement Program. Since 1993, the Department of Roads has awarded \$70 million for 530 transportation enhancement projects across the state. These projects are making a significant contribution to the quality of life in Nebraska communities --- from the smallest village to the largest city." Transportation Enhancement dollars have been spent in 1 of every 3 Nebraska communities.

The Transportation Enhancement Program, part of the federal highway bill, provides funding to local, state, and regional governmental entities to construct and restore transportation infrastructure that are not eligible to be funded through other programs. Examples of transportation infrastructure projects that are eligible under this program include non-motorized facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, development of scenic byways, restoration of historic transportation facilities, and other projects directly related to the historic, current, or future transportation infrastructure.

The 16 projects recommended by the Transportation Enhancement Selection Committee total \$5,177,042. Following is a list of brief descriptions of the 16 successful projects receiving funding:

NEBRASKA FOREST SERVICE / UNL STATEWIDE ARBORETUM

The Nebraska Forest Service and University of Nebraska-Lincoln was awarded \$350,000 in funding for continuation of the Nebraska Community Enhancement Program. This program provides funds to communities and other public entities in Nebraska for landscaping projects that improve transportation corridors.

COWBOY TRAIL SURFACING PROGRAM

The Nebraska Game & Parks Commission was awarded \$645,000 in funding to surface 21.5 miles of the Cowboy Trail from Stuart to Bassett completing 135 continuous miles of trail. Established in 1999, this set-aside program allows the Department of Roads to annually approve funding up to 10 percent of Transportation Enhancement funds for surfacing of the Cowboy Trail.

SHERIDAN COUNTY BRIDGE REHABILITATION

Sheridan County was awarded \$57,011 for analysis, design and retrofitting of the historic Colclessor Bridge over the Niobrara River. Funding for this project will achieve three objectives. First, the analysis, design, and retrofitting will increase the load carrying capacity from 5 tons to approximately 18 tons. The second objective is to build on research previously conducted on historic truss bridges by the University of Nebraska. This research is intended to establish methods to increase the load-carrying capacity of historic bridges thereby saving counties money on bridge replacement and preserving these historic structures. Another goal of this project is to develop informational literature about the repair techniques that will be distributed through the University of Nebraska's Technology Squared program so that other counties can take advantage of this technology. Sheridan County is providing a cash match of \$17,500.

WINNEBAGO HO-CHUNK VILLAGE TRAIL

The Village of Winnebago was awarded \$190,085 for engineering and construction of a one-half mile long, 10-foot wide concrete trail located on the west side of Highway US-75/77. The trail starts at the intersection of US-75/77 and Mathewson Avenue immediately across from the Winnebago Public School. The trail proceeds north on the east side of the highway making a connection with new commercial and residential developments in Ho-Chunk Village. The Village of Winnebago is providing a local cash match of \$47,521.

PLATTE RIVER TRAIL - PHASE 3

The Papio-Missouri River NRD was awarded \$500,000 for construction of a 4.5 miles long 10' wide limestone trail. The trail begins near the Springfield soccer complex and follow Springfield Creek north for approximately one-half mile. At this point the trail will begin to parallel Highway 50 and be located within the highway right of way. The trail will end at the intersection of Highway 50 and Highway 370. The trail will be constructed by the Department of Roads under an agreement with the Papio-Missouri River NRD as a portion of the Highway 50 reconstruction project scheduled for 2005. The Papio-Missouri River NRD is providing a cash match of \$322,068.

RAVENNA TRAIL

The City of Ravenna was awarded \$500,000 for engineering and construction of a one-mile long, 8-foot wide concrete trail. The purpose of the project is to connect the Buffalo County Recreation Area to downtown Ravenna. The trail begins at Nebraska Highway 68, where the trail will connect to an 8-foot wide sidewalk being constructed by the Nebraska Department of Roads as part of a highway improvement project scheduled for 2005. The improvement of Nebraska Highway 68 includes a new overpass over the Burlington Northern Railroad, which will have provisions for pedestrians and cyclists, and connects to downtown Ravenna. The trail extends eastward and crosses the South Loup River on a new pedestrian bridge. The trail ends at the Buffalo County Recreation Area. The City of Ravenna is providing a local cash match of \$162,398.

UNL EAST CAMPUS HUNTINGTON - LEIGHTON TRAIL

The University of Nebraska - Lincoln (UNL) was awarded \$402,139 for engineering and construction of a 10-foot wide, one-mile long trail in Lincoln. The proposed trail is located on the East Campus of UNL and will follow the south side of Huntington and Leighton Avenues from North 33rd Street to North 48th Street. The trail will include two pedestrian bridges to span Deadmans Run and a nearby tributary. The University will install plantings along the trail corridor and is providing a cash match of \$268,100 to help construct the trail.

SPRINGFIELD TRAIL & TRAILHEAD

The City of Springfield was awarded \$113,324 for engineering and construction of an 1,800-foot long, 10-foot wide concrete trail. The project also includes a concrete parking area that will serve as a trailhead for trail users. The project is phase 1 of Springfield's two-phase trail plan to connect with the 60-mile Lincoln to Omaha regional trail system. The Springfield trail will begin at the trailhead parking area and extend northward under Platteview Road. The trail will follow the west bank of Springfield Creek adjacent to the Southern Sarpy Athletic Program Soccer Complex. The trail will then connect to a trail to be constructed by the Papio-Missouri River NRD as part of the Highway 50 improvement project. The Highway #50 trail was also funded through the Nebraska Transportation Enhancement Program and is scheduled for construction in 2005. The City of Springfield is providing a local cash match of \$28,331.

OMAHA TURNER BOULEVARD TRAIL

The City of Omaha was awarded \$478,282 for engineering and construction of a 1.4 mile, 8-foot wide concrete trail. The trail begins at Turner Park near 30th & Dodge Street and will parallel Turner Boulevard connecting to Dewey Park, Leavenworth Park, and the existing Field Club Trail as the end point. The trail is located in midtown Omaha, which consists of mixed residential housing, offices, and commercial and retail stores. The City of Omaha is providing a local cash match of \$119,571.

MISSOURI RIVER TRAIL

The Papio-Missouri River NRD was awarded \$500,000 for engineering and construction of a 1.5 mile, 10-foot wide concrete trail. The project will begin at N.P. Dodge Park, at the end of Back to the River Phase I, and extend northward along John J. Pershing Drive and North River Road to the Douglas/Washington County line. A future phase of this trail will extend another mile north where it will connect to the recently completed Washington County Road P-57 Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge Trail. The Papio-Missouri River NRD is providing a cash match of \$531,524.

PLATTE RIVER TRAIL - PHASE 1

The Papio-Missouri River NRD was awarded \$500,000 for construction of a 5-mile segment in the 60-mile Lincoln to Omaha regional trail system. The trail will consist of 10-foot wide limestone and begins at the existing trailhead of the Mopac-Louisville to Springfield trail. This recently constructed trailhead is adjacent the Highway 50 bridge over the Platte River. The trail will extend 5 miles west on the south side of Highway 31 and connect to the Lied Platte River Bridge trailhead. The Papio-Missouri River NRD is providing a cash match of \$798,337.

FAIRBURY DOWNTOWN HISTORICAL LIGHTING

The City of Fairbury was awarded \$142,400 for purchase and installation of 36 historic replica lights in the historic Jefferson County Courthouse square. The courthouse and surrounding business district are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Historic photographs of the courthouse district were used to select historically accurate replica poles and lights. Installation of historic replica light poles is part of a larger downtown improvement project being undertaken by the City of Fairbury. The city has received a Public Works grant from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. This project is scheduled for construction in 2005 and will remove and replace existing water lines, storm sewer and curb and gutters. Existing sidewalks will be removed and reconstructed to allow greater accessibility to the store entrances around the courthouse square. The City will coordinate the lighting project with the downtown improvement project to maximize cost efficiencies. The City of Fairbury is providing a local cash match of \$35,600.

SUTTON SCHOOL CREEK TRAIL

The City of Sutton was awarded \$151,800 for engineering and construction of a 10-foot wide, concrete trail. The proposed trail will be approximately one-half a mile in length and will be an extension of an existing trail. The existing trail, also funded through the Nebraska Transportation Enhancement Program in 1994, begins at the north end of the City's business district and travels through the City Park, ending near the new aquatic center. The new trail will extend north, crossing a city street into an area that was previously used as the City's golf course. The trail will proceed around a new housing development, and end at the Sutton K-12 Public School. The City of Sutton is providing a local cash match of \$37,950.

WEEPING WATER TRAIL

The City of Weeping Water was awarded \$311,526 for engineering and construction of a 3,000 foot long concrete trail. The proposed trail will begin at the public swimming pool and will travel east along the north side of Weeping Water Creek. The trail will then turn south through town and connect to the Weeping Water Public School. The trail terminates at the track, football, and soccer field complex. The City will incorporate a state historical bridge that will cross Weeping Water Creek just north of the public swimming pool. The City of Weeping Water will provide \$77,882 in local cash match.

RALSTON CONNECTOR TRAIL - PHASE 2 (EAST)

The City of Ralston was awarded \$119,610 for engineering and construction of a 1,300-foot section of their Phase 2 trail system. This east segment connects to the Big Papio Trail near 72nd Street and extends south where it will connect to the Phase 1 trail at 72nd and Main Street. The City of Ralston also received funds last August from the Nebraska Transportation Enhancement Program to complete a second trail segment (west), which begins at 78th Street in Wildewood Park. This segment extends west through the park and follows an abandoned portion of the MoPac rail corridor. The trail will cross the Ralston Creek and pass below 84th Street and end at a cul-de-sac within a commercial area just west of 84th. The City of Ralston is providing a local cash match of \$29,903 for the east section of the Phase 2 trail.

ARLINGTON TRAIL

The Village of Arlington was awarded \$215,865 for engineering and construction of an 8-foot wide concrete trail that will be approximately one-mile in length. The trail begins at the City Park, travels north along the existing baseball fields to the new Two Rivers Ball Field Complex, which is currently under construction. It will follow along the west side of the new ball complex parking area and then turn west at Bell Street. The trail will travel along Bell Street, past a new housing addition, and end at the Arlington Public School. The Village of Arlington will be providing a local cash match of \$53,966.

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Additional Projects Selected Pending Available Funding

The Nebraska Transportation Enhancement Selection Committee endorsed, and Roads Director John Craig approved, the following four project proposals **for conditional approval pending available funding**. The following four projects recommended by the Selection Committee total \$1,468,040:

BEATRICE HOMESTEAD TRAIL - PICKRELL TO BEATRICE

The City of Beatrice was awarded \$500,000 for engineering and construction of a 7-mile segment of the regionally planned Homestead Trail. The 55-mile Homestead Trail is located on the former Union Pacific (U.P.) Railroad line between Lincoln and Marysville, Kansas. The Lincoln to Princeton segment of the Homestead trail was funded this past summer as part of the 2003 Transportation Enhancement selection cycle. Plans call for the development of three additional segments, which will eventually complete the trail to Marysville. When completed, the Homestead Trail will link eight Nebraska communities, including Lincoln and Beatrice. This proposed phase of the trail will be 10-foot wide with crushed limestone or concrete surfacing placed over the existing railroad ballast. Crushed limestone will be used within the rural areas and concrete will be used within the City of Beatrice and Village of Pickrell. All bridges will have wood railings installed and those without a ballast surface will receive a wood deck surface. Bollards will be installed at the intersection of all county roads. The City of Beatrice is providing \$100,000 in railbank match and a local cash match of \$37,710.

GRAND ISLAND RIVER WAY TRAIL

The City of Grand Island was awarded \$347,907 for engineering and construction of a 1.8 mile, 10-foot wide concrete trail. The project begins at the northeast corner of Hall County Park and extends eastward on top of a recently completed levee that is part of the Wood River flood diversion project. The trail intersects with Locust Street, crosses at grade, and then turns north where it will connect to a 1/4 mile long trail being developed as part of a Wal-Mart retail outlet. The City of Grand Island is providing a local cash match of \$86,977.

ANTELOPE CREEK TRAIL - PHASE 2

The City of Lincoln was awarded \$445,743 for engineering and construction of a 2-mile long, 10-foot wide concrete trail in east Lincoln. The trail is an extension of the existing Billy Wolff Trail; Lincoln's oldest trail which follows the Antelope Creek drainage basin. This funding award for Phase 2 of the Antelope Creek Trail consists of completing surfacing from 86th and Old Cheney to Highway #2. Phase 1 of the Antelope Creek Trail was funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program in 2003 and will begin in the Holmes Park Dog Run near 70th Street and extend in a southeast direction to 86th and Old Cheney Road. When both phases are complete, the City will have developed an east-west trail route that spans from the University of Nebraska campus at 19th & Vine Street (via Billy Wolff Trail) to the southeast entrance of the City at Highway #2. The City of Lincoln will provide a local cash match of \$111,436.

CUMING COUNTY - BANCROFT HISTORICAL BRIDGE RELOCATION

Cuming County was awarded \$174,390 for the removal, rehabilitation and installation of the historic Rattle Creek Bridge. The bridge will be moved from its current location three miles northwest of Bancroft to the West Point City Park. The bridge currently carries a minimum maintenance road that is used as a field entrance. The bridge does not allow farm equipment to cross because of the narrow roadway between the truss members. The City of West Point wants to preserve the bridge and use it to provide emergency and pedestrian access within the park boundaries. Cuming County will provide a cash match of \$43,598.

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NR816