

I-80 Corridor **Environs**

The I-80 charrette team defined interchanges as gateways to destinations, and not destinations themselves. In this rendering a research park is set behind a wide, green buffer and designed in a vernacular that blends with natural surroundings. Retail “lifestyle centers” at exits are discouraged because they compete with existing communities and create visual clutter. New residential and retail development is designed contiguous to existing towns & cities. Preserving the landscape and protecting environmental resources are among key factors in attracting new investment and talent to the Flatwater Metroplex region.



Robert Hanna

I-80 RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Interchanges are gateways to destinations, not destinations themselves. New development does not compete with existing municipalities.**
- **Offer transit alternatives such as light rail.**
- **Develop a comprehensive regional plan validated through community participation.**
- **Protect environmental, natural, cultural & historic assets (farmland, habitat, open space).**



- **Development should consist of uses that that directly benefit from proximity to Lincoln and Omaha but are not viable without entire region.**
- **Market agriculture as a unique regional asset. Encourage local food markets.**
- **Protect visual quality of corridor with green buffer & uniform design standards.**
- **Economic synergy through cooperation. Economic benefits include entire state.**
- **Develop conservation subdivision policies to address sprawl and land conversion.**

The I-80 charrette team examined growth issues along the 50-mile, six-lane corridor linking Nebraska's two largest cities while pondering this question: How does the region and the state attract and manage new growth in ways that will not harm the environment or impair the natural beauty of the corridor?

Infrastructure is a key issue as corridor communities ponder costs to support an anticipated eight-fold increase in commuter traffic in the next forty years. Recent projections suggest that funding required to meet highway needs in the Metroplex alone exceeds what Nebraska currently spends on the entire state road system. Some suggested that to keep pace the region needs to explore transit alternatives such as passenger rail service. Continued trail expansion and improvements were also deemed critical for transit and recreational uses.

There was strong support for coordinated regional comprehensive plan including uniform development of regional codes and standards, and both the state and region need to be involved in developing and implementing a funding plan to address infrastructure, economic, environmental and community needs.

The I-80 teams broke into three sub-groups to examine these focus areas:

Waverly/Greenwood There is a lack of cooperation and jurisdictional coordination and an urgent need to protect environmental assets and view corridors, with floodplains preserved for natural or agricultural uses. Commercial zoning at the Greenwood exit hasn't adequately addressed water/sewer issues, and conflicts have arisen from property value/tax inequities.

Gretna, H370, 180th Street This area is losing identity and needs to identify landmarks/aesthetic assets and become a gateway to Highway 6 scenic routes, parks and other attractions. Discourage growth that is disconnected from Gretna.

Ashland, Platte Valley, Pflug Road The Platte Valley is a unique asset to be protected. The subgroup recommended preservation of valley ridgelines, Loess Hills habitat and prime farmlands and creation of new parks. Develop policies for conservation subdivisions and promote compact, contiguous growth in cities.

Based on the discussions and findings of the I-80 team, the following indicators for the I-80 Corridor were identified:

Environmental

- Number of miles of zoned/protected edges along the corridor/500 yard green zone, either side of the corridor.
- Corridor Landscape Plan/ID miles of implementation.
- Landscape plans for each interchange along the Corridor & number of interchanges with implemented plans.

Socio-cultural

- Centennial Public Art projects extended along Corridor at rest stops/interchanges.
- Coordinated exhibits/information systems at rest stops.
- Nebraska Blueprint information system/"Visions for Nebraska."

Technological

- Multimodal transportation systems through Corridor.
- Uniform sign system that designates places and communities of interest.
- WIFI & alternative energy technologies along Corridor.

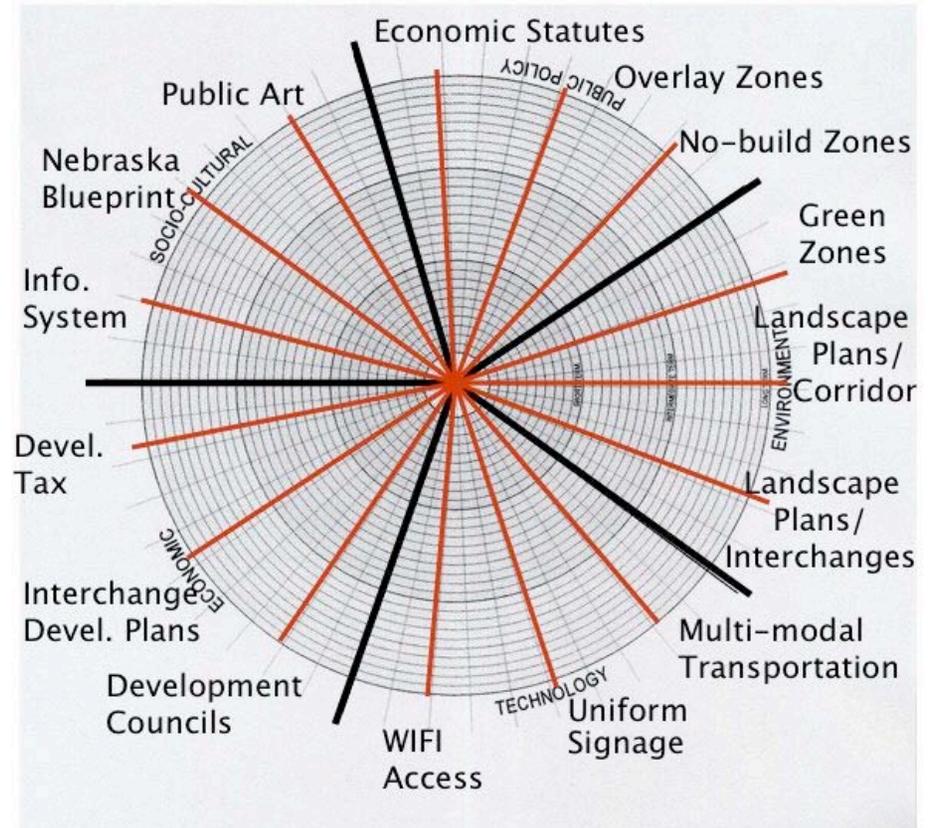
Economic

- Transportation/consumer tax on businesses and development within 2 miles either side of Corridor/Interchanges.
- Interchange Development Plans required for new and existing interchanges; plans to be based on principle of cost sharing between public/private interests.
- Economic Planning & Development Councils along Corridor (i.e., Omaha, Platte Valley, Lincoln regions) with municipal, county, stakeholder representatives whose interests are within 10 miles either side of Corridor.

Public Policy

- Statutes to enable the above economic conditions.
- Standard system of Corridor Overlay Zones for all present and future interchanges and 2 miles wide along either side of the I-80 Corridor.
- "No-build" green space at a minimum width of 500 yards along either side of the Corridor and around exits.

INDICATORS: I-80 CORRIDOR



Recommended indicators include a series of Economic Planning & Development Councils along the I-80 Corridor with municipal, county, and stakeholder representatives whose interests are within 10 miles either side of Corridor.