

Commissioners sign agreement on proposed Lexington viaduct

Written by Deb Egenberger
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LEXINGTON—The reality of another highway and railroad viaduct on the east edge of Lexington got another step closer Monday morning.

During their regular bimonthly meeting, Dawson County commissioners offered support for an agreement between the Nebraska Department of Roads, Union Pacific Railroad and the City of Lexington.

Joe Pepplichtsch, Lexington city administrator, told board members the agreement allows the city to move forward on the project and select a design consultant before the end of the year.

Lexington and Dawson County are cooperative entities in the Railroad Transportation Safety District which levies taxes for design and study of projects such as the railroad viaduct.

The agreement shows the state department of roads will contribute 90% of the total cost of the project while UP will pay 5%.

The remaining 5%, Pepplichtsch said, will be the local cost and will be paid for with RTSD funds.

“Worst-case scenario, we’re talking about \$500,000 on an \$8 million project,” he said. “That’s not too bad at all.”

The agreement also states that two at-grade crossings on Road 435 and Road 436 must be closed when the viaduct is open for traffic.

Pepplichtsch said there is no timeline on the project but he doesn’t anticipate construction before 2016.

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It will be 18 to 24 months before the project is ready to be bid, he said.

In other county business, commissioners:

- learned both road projects in progress—the Overton to Sumner highway and the 13th Street south of Lexington—should both be finished in the next two weeks, weather permitting.

- opened two bids for the county's property and casualty insurance. The bid from current provider EMC Insurance was \$224,048 annually. The difference from the previous cost of \$287,464 comes from a decrease in the bonds for workers compensation insurance which is part of the package. Barney Insurance of Lexington is the third-party administrator for EMC. Nebraska Intergovernmental Risk Management Association (NIRMA) bid the same package for \$259,519. Commissioners voted

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