

Extension requested for grant deadline

By Dan Dwinell
Staff Reporter

Lincoln's request to extend the deadline for an Urban Development Action grant is common, said Jack Flynn, public affairs officer for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"It's not a totally unusual thing," he said.

The grant, awarded to the city of Lincoln in July 1986 for downtown redevelopment, has a March 9 deadline for a lease agreement and verification of the financing.

Flynn said problems often occur in development.

Although Flynn wouldn't predict what Lincoln's chances are for an extension, he said it is normal to award them.

"There's no way to guarantee an extension," he said. "We do frequently grant extensions. The purpose of the grant is to improve, not just to meet deadlines."

Nebraska congressmen in Washington are working to extend the deadline for a \$6.5 million Urban Development Action Grant.

Sen. J.J. Exon announced he has written a letter to Samuel Pierce, the secretary of housing and urban development, urging for an extension.

In the letter to Pierce, Exon said he asked for the extension "to provide the city with enough time to secure a replacement developer. They will need several months."

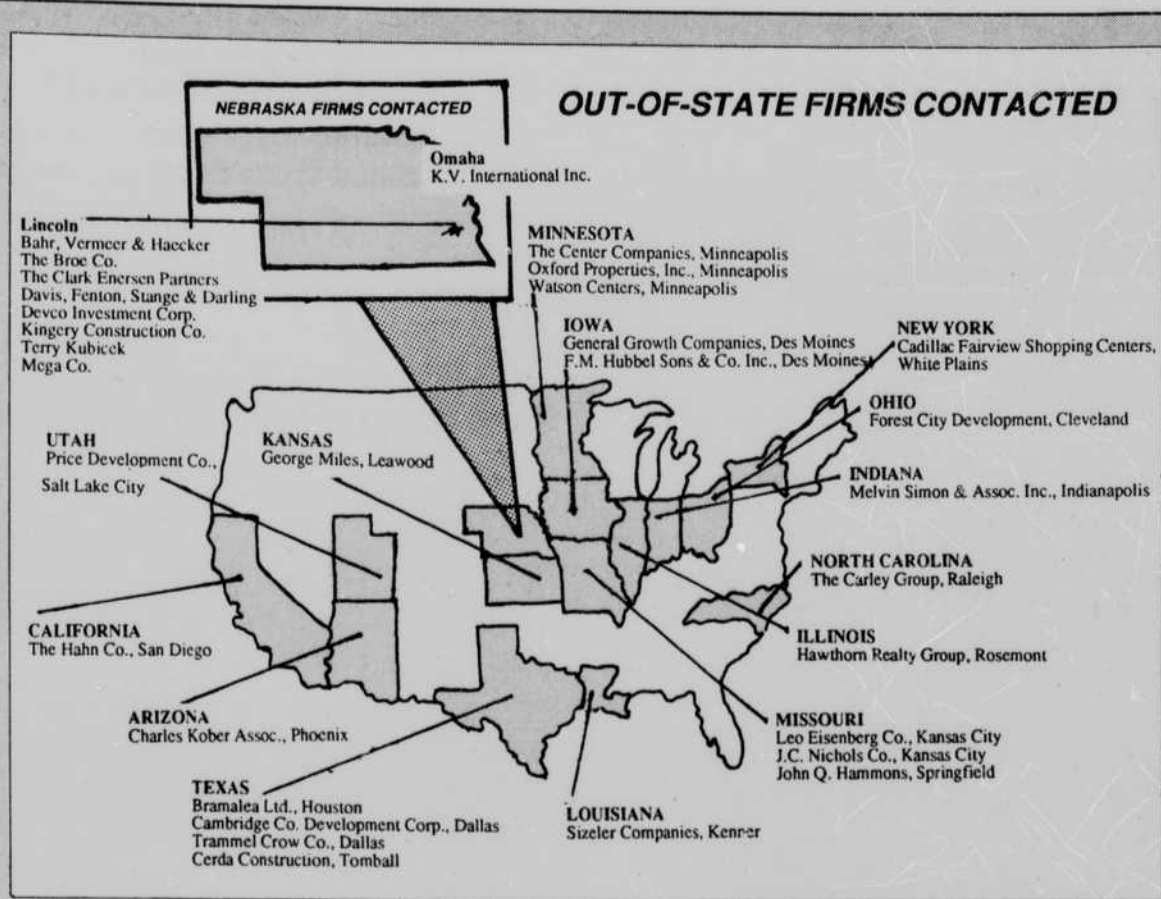
"This is an important project for Lincoln and for Nebraska and it would be very disappointing to have our federal government assist unnecessarily in its demise," Exon wrote.

"The redevelopment of the downtown area is an important aspect of Lincoln's attempts to withstand the negative effects of our lagging farm economy," Exon wrote.

Lincoln was forced to find a new developer when the city and Taubman Co. Inc. of Kansas City, Mo., parted ways last week.

Carol Lawrence, press secretary to Rep. Doug Bereuter, said Bereuter will also work for an extension. Lawrence said Bereuter will talk with Pierce as well.

Other Nebraska congressmen could not be reached for comment.



Christina Geiger/Daily Nebraskan

Plan still attractive to some

DOWNTOWN from Page 1

oped Georgian Place, 11th and P streets, in 1983 and more recently Centerstone on 12th and O streets.

Arter said the downtown area is a good investment from both the public and private standpoints.

As far as out-of-town investment, Arter said, there is a "mystique attached with investors from out of town."

Some Lincoln companies simply aren't equipped to handle the projected size of the redevelopment project, he said.

"We don't have the connections with major department stores," he said.

Taubman had all the connections with the major investors, Arter said. "You won't find better credentials anywhere," he said.

Haymarket district to get improvements

By Lisa Richardson
Staff Reporter

More than \$1 million in improvements are proposed for Lincoln's Haymarket district.

The Lincoln Haymarket Development Corporation unveiled its plans at a meeting Tuesday night. Proposed improvements include repaving 8th Street from R to O streets, and changing P and Q streets to 2-way traffic west of 9th Street.

Improvements such as ornamental streetlights, brick kiosks, sidewalk nodes, and bike racks are also planned.

Sidewalk nodes are circular extensions of the sidewalk at corners, designed to slow traffic and for pedestrians convenience, said John Sinclair, chairman of the design committee for the Haymarket Group. The kiosks will be decorative brick and limestone structures that will hold benches and planters.

Placing the kiosks on the nodes will provide gateways to the district, he said.

Reconstruction of water mains and storm sewers in the district is underway, Sinclair said. The city is paying the cost, estimated at \$287,000.

The 8th Street reconstruction is expected to cost \$500,000, according to information provided at the meeting. The various streetscape improvements are priced at \$350,000.

Streetscape costs will be split equally between the city and property owners whose buildings face the improved streets.

Exact details of the plan must be approved by 51 percent of the property owners, Sinclair said.

He said he hopes the improvements can begin May 1989.

Warehouse, retail and office owners will benefit from the improvement projects, said Dan Cornejo, coordinator for Lincoln's economic development division.

Although some warehouse owners oppose the improvements, others support them, he said. All property in the district will increase in value because of the project, he said.

Lou Shields, a Haymarket property owner who co-owns the Sample Outlet, said she feels the improvement plan is needed.

"The city is ready, and Haymarket is ready," Shields said. "We are fortunate to have the city's support for this project."

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