

County to work with Lexington on viaduct

Written by Deb Egenberger
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City officials want to move forward.

LEXINGTON—Safety concerns and development ideas have drawn Dawson County officials into a cooperative agreement with the City of Lexington to pursue another highway and railroad viaduct on the east end of that town.

County commissioners authorized an interlocal agreement during their regular bimonthly meeting on Sept. 1.

The proposed viaduct would be at either Road 435 or Road 436 east of Lexington in county jurisdiction.

Since the City of Lexington is taking the lead in the project but the land is outside city limits, the two governmental agencies must have a memorandum of understanding before Union Pacific Railroad and the Nebraska Department of Roads will consider it, according to Lexington city administrator Joe Pepplitsch.

Use of local funds rather than waiting for any federal assistance for design and environmental study would also push the project ahead, Pepplitsch said.

“Money will be available from the feds to look at this in a couple of years if we want to wait that long,” he said.

Holding out for government money means pushing back construction at least six or seven years.

“We can move forward faster and possibly get ahead of other projects if we use local money for the design and environmental review process,” Pepplitsch said.

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Development and funding will run through the Lexington city budget and any requests for reimbursements from the Railroad Transportation Safety District will be made by the city.

In the end, the county's obligation would be to close at least one and maybe two railroad crossings, provide

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