

LPLAN 2040 2016 UPDATE



LINCOLN/LANCASTER COUNTY 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



ADOPTED DECEMBER 2016

LPlan 2040 is the Lincoln-Lancaster County 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Plan embodies Lincoln and Lancaster County's shared vision for the future, out to the year 2040. It outlines where, how and when the community intends to grow, how to preserve and enhance the things that make it special, and strategies for implementing the vision for how we will live, work, play and get around in the future.

LPlan 2040 was developed through a broad-based community input process that included the work of the LPlan Advisory Committee (LPAC), a 20-person citizen group appointed by the Mayor representing a broad range of interests in the City and County which included the nine members of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Commission. LPAC members were as follows:

Brett Baker, Small Towns
Michael Cornelius, Planning Commission
Scott Ernstmeyer, Education
Dick Esseks, Planning Commission
Wendy Francis, Planning Commission
Leirion Gaylor Baird, Planning Commission
David Grimes, Farmer
Randy Harre, Business
Tom Huston, Attorney
Bill Langdon, Commercial Realty
Roger Larson, Planning Commission
Jeanelle Lust, Planning Commission
Patte Newman, Neighborhood
Jim Partington, Planning Commission
Mike Rezac, Builder
Dennis Scheer, Design
Cecil Steward, Sustainability
Lynn Sunderman, Planning Commission
Tommy Taylor, Planning Commission
Donna Woudenberg, Natural Resources

LPAC met from June of 2010 through June of 2011. During the same time period, broad input was sought from the community, as well as from City-County departments and numerous other agencies and organizations. The technical elements of the Transportation chapter were developed with consulting assistance from LSA Associates, Inc.

A 5-year update to LPlan 2040 was completed in 2016 which coincided with the required update of the Long Range Transportation Plan. The Planning Commission was the main public body for the update process and met regularly throughout the update to provide feedback and participate in topical discussions. The Planning Commission included the following members:

Chris Hove
Dennis Scheer
Michael Cornelius
Tracy Corr
Maja Harris
Jeanelle Lust
Lynn Sunderman
Ken Weber

Multiple public meetings were held, and web-based information was shared with the public. Participation and input from various stakeholders contributed to the updated 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

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1 VISION & PLAN

The LPlan 2040 Vision provides a broadly painted horizon for the community's future. The vision statements and goals describing the desired future condition provide guidance for individual land use decisions and other actions that collectively will determine the future of Lincoln and Lancaster County.



INTRODUCTION

The core promise embedded in LPlan 2040 is to maintain and enhance the health, safety and welfare of our community during times of change, to promote our ideals and values as changes occur, and to meet the needs of today without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. LPlan 2040 is specific to Lincoln and Lancaster County and it recognizes the factors that make us unique. This Plan acknowledges the importance and interconnectedness of economic, environmental, and socio-cultural domains, and the ways in which technology and public policy are applied and affect outcomes in these domains. The Plan therefore is a combination of practicality and vision, and provides guidelines for sustaining the rich mosaic that now characterizes our growing community.

The Vision Statements that follow include goals that are worded as descriptions of the desired future conditions.

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VISION STATEMENTS

LINCOLN AND LANCASTER COUNTY: ONE COMMUNITY

For a “good quality of life,” a community has more than jobs, shelter, utilities and roads — there are numerous services, education, historic, natural and cultural resources that are fundamental to enriching lives.

Lincoln and Lancaster County contain a rich mosaic of households, living in a variety of urban and rural settings. But we share a common bond and work cooperatively to promote future growth that offers new opportunities for living and working while conserving our local environmental and cultural resources for future generations.

The following goals are based on this *One Community* statement:

- All of the communities and people of Lancaster County work together to implement a common plan providing for mutual benefit.
- An important relationship exists between the urban, rural, and natural landscapes. Urban and rural development maximize the use of land in order to preserve agriculture and natural resources.
- Policies of managing urban growth, maintaining an “edge” between urban and rural land uses, and preserving prime agricultural land form a distinctive and attractive built environment for Lincoln and Lancaster County.
- Lincoln remains a unified community. The policies of a single public school district, drainage basin development, and provision

of city utilities only within the city limits continue to be a positive influence and help shape the City for decades to come. These policies are sustained in

order to preserve our ability to move forward as one community.

QUALITY OF LIFE ASSETS

Lincoln and Lancaster County are home to many major assets that enhance the quality of life for all residents. However, access to our quality of life assets is impossible without adequate infrastructure. LPlan 2040 acknowledges this fact, and commits us to use access to quality of life assets as a decision-making criterion.

The following goals are based on the *Quality of Life Assets* statement:

- Preservation and enhancement of the many quality of life assets within the community continues. For a “good quality of life,” a community has more than jobs, shelter, utilities and roads — there are numerous services, education, historic, natural and cultural resources that are fundamental to enriching lives. As the population continues to become more diverse, the richness and variety of Lincoln and Lancaster County’s cultural assets will enrich the quality of life for all those living here.
- The community continues its commitment to strong, diverse neighborhoods. Neighborhoods remain one of Lincoln’s great strengths and their conservation is fundamental to this plan. The health of Lincoln’s varied neighborhoods and districts depends on implementing appropriate and individualized policies.
- LPlan 2040 is the basis for zoning and land development decisions. It guides decisions that will maintain the quality and character of the community’s new and established neighborhoods.
- The community continues its commitment to a strong Downtown. A strong, vital Downtown provides a common center for all of Lincoln and Lancaster County and will be a catalyst



for future growth. LPlan 2040 acknowledges Downtown's unique role and will guide decisions that will maintain Downtown's vitality and enhance its contribution to the quality of life of all Lincoln and Lancaster County.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Lincoln and Lancaster County must have a sustainable tax base to provide quality services to residents. LPlan 2040 recognizes that technological change and global economic forces have a direct impact on local employment and quality of life.

The following goals are based on this *Economic Opportunity* statement:

- Existing businesses flourish and there are opportunities for new businesses within Lincoln and the incorporated communities. The Plan provides new employment locations and supports retention of existing businesses.
- Residential, commercial, and industrial development takes place in the City of Lincoln and within incorporated towns. This ensures that there are convenient jobs and a healthy tax base to support public safety, infrastructure and other services within the communities. While location in the cities and towns of the county is a priority, unique site requirements of a business may necessitate consideration of other suitable and appropriate locations in the county.
- The community has adapted and thrives in an ever changing world economy. Reliable and affordable energy and utilities, along with a strong information technology infrastructure support business growth and the demands of a growing community. New technologies have led to new modes of living and working. A skilled and educated workforce continues to adapt to economic and cultural changes.

DOWNTOWN LINCOLN — THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Downtown Lincoln is the heart of our community, a unique common ground for all Lincoln and Lancaster County residents. It is also emerging as an attractive place to live, becoming an increasingly vibrant mixed use neighborhood. At the same time, Downtown Lincoln belongs to all residents of Nebraska because "downtown" is synonymous with the University of Nebraska, state government, and the State Capitol building. This state-wide ownership has strong economic implications. LPlan 2040 will ensure that downtown remains a special place.

The following goals are based on this *Downtown Lincoln* statement:

- Downtown Lincoln continues to serve as the heart of our community and is an asset for all Nebraska residents.
- Downtown Lincoln continues to serve its role as the central location for commerce, government, entertainment and the arts.
- Views to the State Capitol are preserved, as they have been in the past, as part of our community form.
- Downtown Lincoln is promoted as a vibrant mixed use neighborhood, offering choices for residential lifestyles and daily needs commerce in a walkable and bicycle-friendly environment.

HEALTHY COMMUNITY

The interaction between people and their environments, natural as well as human-made, has re-emerged as a major public health issue. A healthy community is one



that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments. It also provides easy access and connectivity to other communities - places where every person is free to make choices amid a variety of healthy, available, accessible, and affordable options. Since 1900, life expectancy in the United States has increased by approximately 40 years. Only 7 of those years can be attributed to improvements in disease care; the rest are the result of improved prevention efforts and improved environmental conditions, including sanitation and water. Examining the interaction between health and the environment requires considering the effects of factors in the broad physical and social environments, which include housing, urban development, land use, transportation, industry, and agriculture.

The following goals are based on this *Healthy Community* statement:

- Urban design encourages walking and bicycling which improve environmental and physical health.
- Neighborhoods are friendly to pedestrians, children, bicycles, the elderly and people with disabilities.
- Redevelopment projects consider the use of existing infrastructure and buildings in their design.
- Mixed use communities that integrate a variety of housing types and commercial services and serve a variety of income levels allow people to live, work and shop within walking and biking distance.

preservation of unique and sensitive habitats and the encouragement of creative integration of natural systems into developments. The importance of building sustainable communities — communities that conserve and efficiently utilize our economic, social, and environmental resources so that the welfare of future generations is not compromised – has long been recognized. This concept has grown in importance with increased understanding of the limits to energy supplies and community resources, the likelihood that energy costs will continue to increase in the future, the climatic impacts of energy consumption, and the impacts on the physical and economic health of the community. LPlan 2040 describes a community that values natural and human resources, supports advances in technology, and encourages development that improves the health and quality of life of all citizens.

The following goals are based on this *Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability* statement:

- Natural and environmentally sensitive areas are preserved and thrive. Wetlands, native prairies, endangered species, and stream (riparian) corridors are preserved to ensure the ecological health of the community.
- Residents and visitors to the city and county enjoy an interconnected network of trails, parks, open space and natural resources called the Salt Valley Greenway that contributes to the community's unique sense of place.
- Natural features such as tree masses in areas for future development are integrated into new development to provide for green spaces within the built environment.
- Incentives are used to encourage more projects and neighborhoods that incorporate best practices for mixing uses and reducing vehicle trips, which will reduce energy demands and harmful emissions.



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

LPlan 2040 commits Lincoln and Lancaster County to sustainable growth through

- Local food production is encouraged, building a stronger relationship between city and rural communities and greater security for our food supplies.
- Reduced energy consumption is encouraged in new building construction and in retrofitting existing buildings.
- Re-use, recycling, and conservation of natural resources and man-made materials are encouraged.
- Efforts are made to attract new and expanding industries that serve the emerging market for more sustainable products and services.

INTERACTION BETWEEN LPLAN 2040 AND THE CITIZENS

Although LPlan 2040 is intended primarily to guide the physical development of our community, the results of such development are ultimately felt by individuals and their families. The planning process aspires to make this interaction between people and their physical landscape one in which all facets of our community can prosper, not only economically, but also intellectually, aesthetically, and spiritually. LPlan 2040 seeks to accommodate and encourage the participation of all citizens of the city and county in the making of public policies to implement the visions of the community.

Comprehensive planning is a continuous process, requiring a continuing, equitable, and frequent interaction between governments and their constituencies.

The following goals are based on this *Interaction between the Comprehensive Plan and the Citizens* statement:

The Comprehensive Plan continues to be updated regularly with extensive citizen participation.

The Plan is a successful guide, shaping development, yet remaining responsive to changing conditions.

2040 AND BEYOND

LPlan 2040 is a vision for the next 24 years. However, it is also wise to envision our community beyond this point. Lincoln and Lancaster County will continue to grow over the next 44 years and the year 2060 will see a population of well over a half million people. The community in which these people live may be radically different from the one we experience today.

Energy, food, and water are just a few of the necessities whose future abundance is not guaranteed. Development decisions made today will affect the choices available in the community of the future.



The following goals are based on this *Vision for 2040 and Beyond*:

- Greater Downtown and nodes and corridors incorporate a mix of uses that accommodate the daily needs of residents.
- Nodes and corridors with higher density are transit-oriented and have higher service levels.
- The economy provides opportunities for local food production and sales, renewable energy production, and the benefit of natural resources produced in the area and integrates them into the land use pattern.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

A community should be prepared for the unforeseen. Natural or man-made disruptions to our way of life on a variety of scales are inevitable. Many of the greatest challenges facing Lincoln and Lancaster County will be due to widespread global/international pressures. The trend of climate change could lead to unfamiliar seasons with more severe weather and extremes from prolonged droughts to major flooding. Prices of fossil fuels will

likely continue to be volatile based on increasing worldwide demand. Technological advances and urban policies should work together to prepare us to meet these challenges.

The following goals are based on this Vision for Community Resiliency:

- Raise public awareness of the impacts of global issues on the local environment and economy.
- Identify points of vulnerability based on different impact scenarios.
- Facilitate policies that support various means to make Lincoln and Lancaster County more resilient in the face of natural or man-made disruptions.

- Utilize technology to efficiently adapt to change based on the situation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VISION

SUMMARY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

These assumptions represent the agreement of the Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Commission which assisted in the development of LPlan 2040. The following assumptions guide the planning process for Lincoln and Lancaster County:

1. A City and County population growth rate of 1.2 percent per year was used for the 24 and 44 year planning periods. This adds approximately 106,000 persons to the current County population of 306,000 over the next twenty-four years and about 217,000 over the next forty-four years.
2. The assumed County population distribution would remain ninety percent in the City of Lincoln, four percent in other incorporated towns and villages, and six percent on rural acreages, farms and unincorporated villages.
3. Approximately 40,000 dwelling units will need to be added in Lancaster County to support the additional population of 106,000 persons by 2040.
4. For transportation modeling purposes, an urban residential density factor of 3 dwelling units per gross acre was assumed for a majority of the designated future growth areas.
5. Approximately 20% of new dwelling units will be built within the existing City, with about 3,000 in the Downtown and Antelope Valley areas, 1,000 in existing neighborhoods, and 4,000 in mixed use redevelopment nodes and corridors.

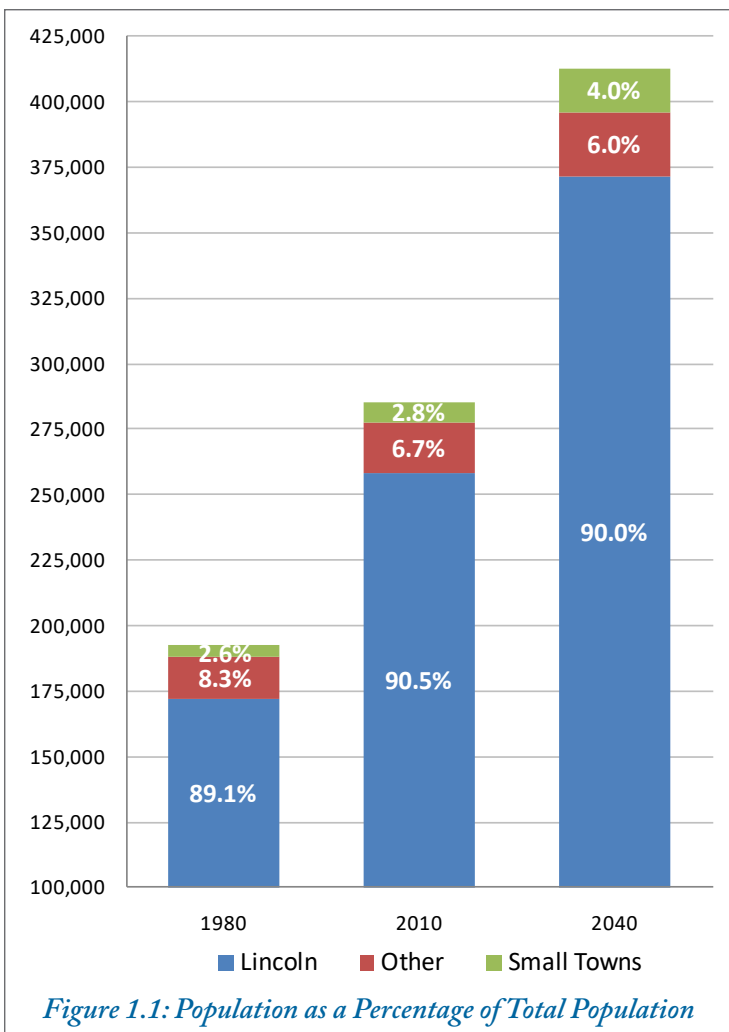


Figure 1.1: Population as a Percentage of Total Population

LAND USE PLAN

The Vision is the basis for decision making within the community. The challenge is turning these statements and goals into reality. Implementing these guiding principles requires additional details that come in three distinct forms:

1. The principles and strategies found in this Plan
2. The land use relationships in the future land use plan
3. The direction and timing of future development projected by the future urban growth tiers

There is one land use plan for both the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County. This one land use plan is displayed in two figures for the purpose of providing greater clarity of display within the Lincoln urban area. The first figure displays the entire Lincoln/Lancaster County Future Land Use Plan. The second figure is an enlarged portion of the same plan, focused on the Lincoln urban area.

The future land use plan displays the generalized location of each land use. It is not intended to be used to determine the exact boundaries of each designation. The area of transition from one land use to another is often gradual. LPlan 2040 also encourages the integration of compatible land uses, rather than a strict segregation of different land uses.

The comprehensive plans adopted by surrounding towns and counties are listed in the Plan Realization chapter.

TIMING: FUTURE GROWTH TIER MAP

TIER I, II AND III

The Comprehensive Plan includes three tiers of growth for the City of Lincoln.

Tier I reflects the “Future Service Limit,” 52 square miles where urban services and inclusion in the city limits are anticipated within the 24 year planning period. This area should remain in its current use in order to permit future urbanization by the City.

Tier II is an area of approximately 34 square miles that defines the geographic area the city is assumed to grow into immediately beyond Tier I. Infrastructure planning, especially for water and sanitary sewer facilities is anticipated to reach beyond the 24 year time horizon to 44 years and further. Tier II shows areas where long term utility planning is occurring today. Tier II should remain in its current use in order to allow for future urban development. It also acts as a secondary reserve should Tier I develop faster than anticipated.

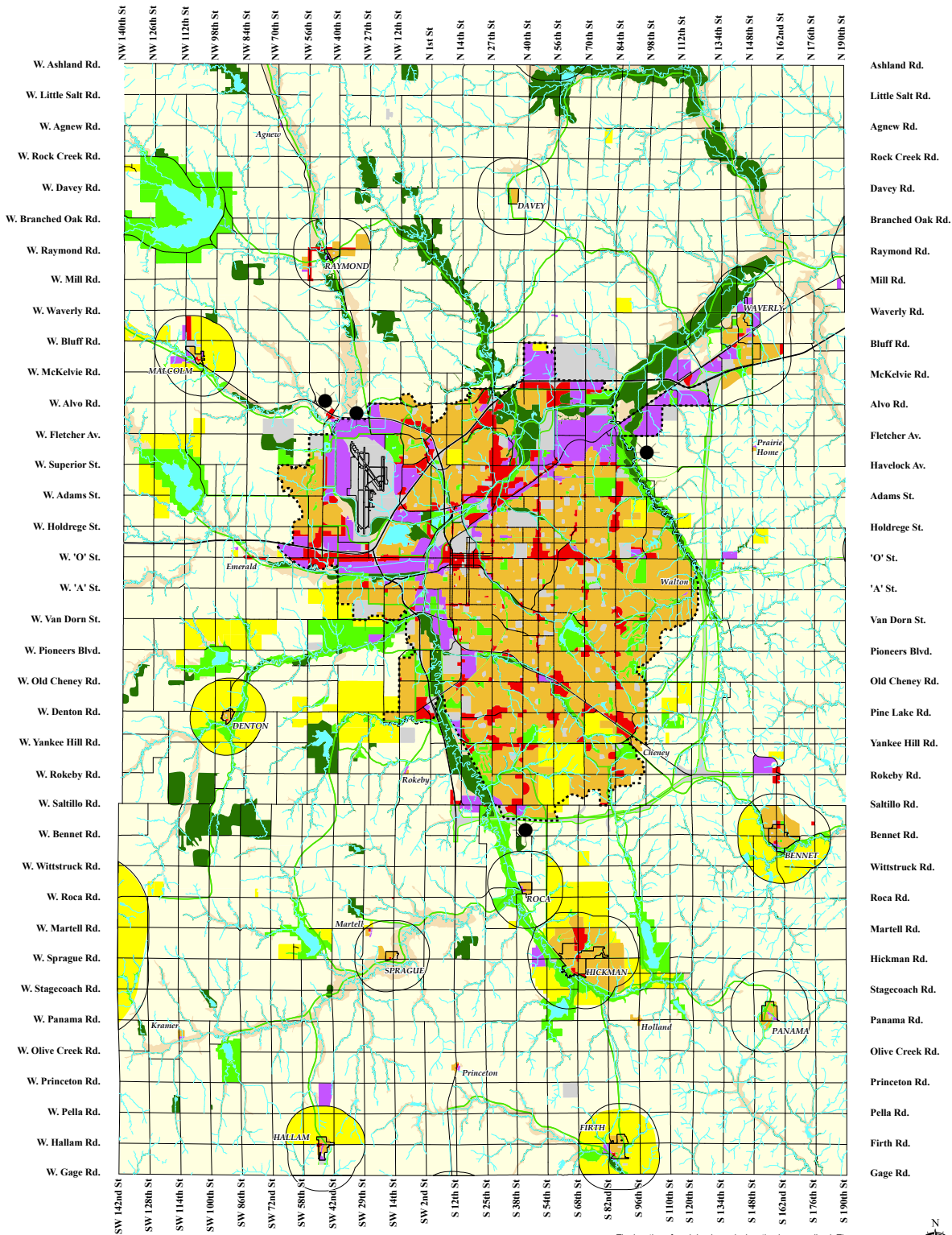
Tier III provides an approximately 131 square mile area for Lincoln’s longer term growth potential – perhaps 44 years and beyond. Little active planning of utilities or service delivery is likely to occur in the near term in Tier III; however, it should also remain in its present use in order to be available for future urban development.

SUBAREA PLANNING PROCESS

Subarea planning for neighborhoods or other small geographic areas can address issues at a more refined scale than can be included in LPlan 2040. Subarea plans may then become incorporated into LPlan 2040 through a formal adoption process. Subarea plans can serve as an official guide for elected decision makers, individuals and various City or County departments to promote improvements in areas such as land use, housing, transportation, parks and recreation, public safety, infrastructure and the built and natural environments.

Subarea plans adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan are discussed in the [Plan Realization](#) chapter.

Subarea planning for neighborhoods or other small geographic areas can address issues at a more refined scale than can be included in the Comprehensive Plan.



2040 LANCASTER COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

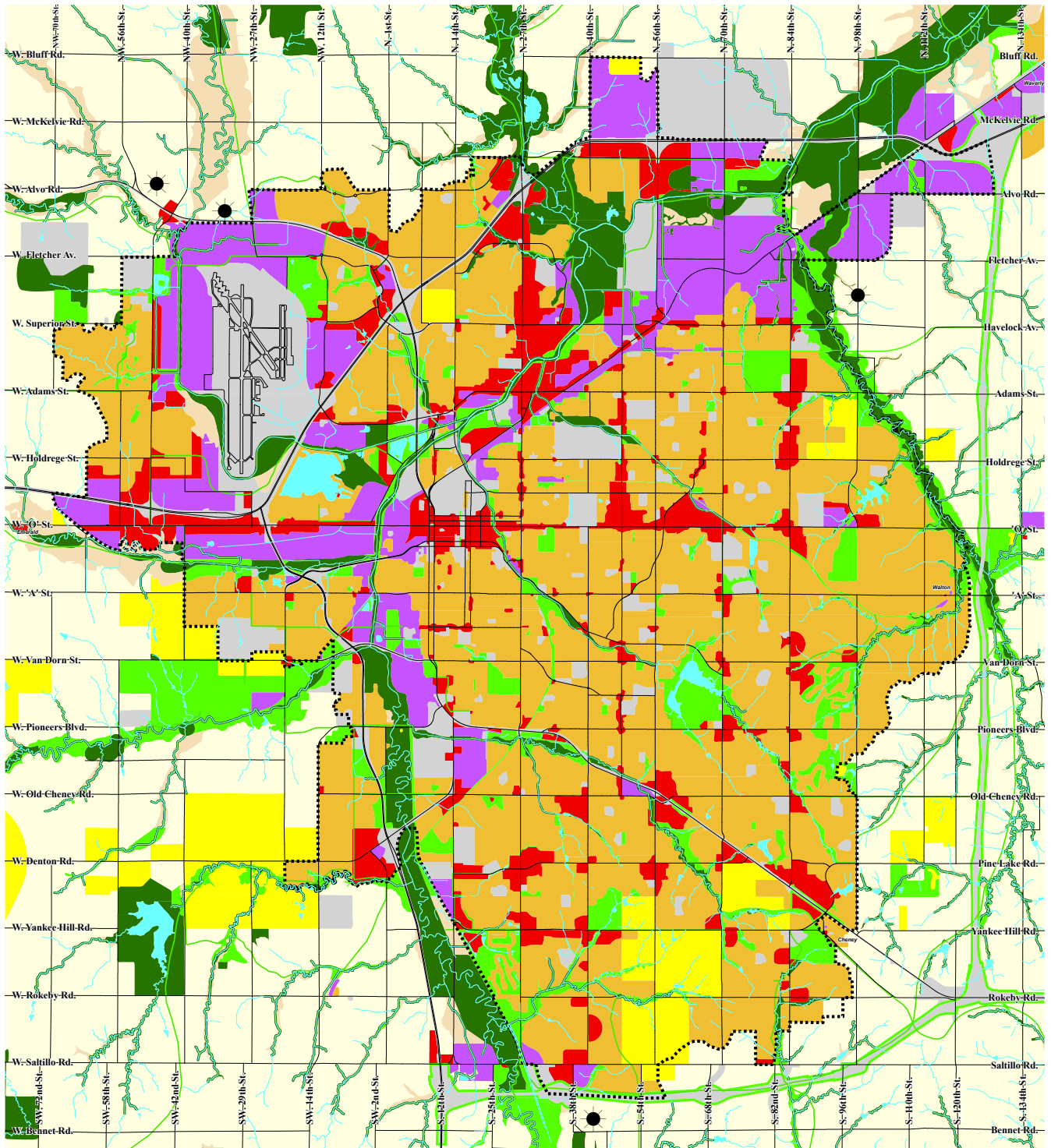
- Agricultural
- Residential - Urban Density
- Residential - Low Density
- Potential Large Employer Opportunity Areas
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public & Semi-Public
- Agricultural Stream Corridor
- Green Space
- Environmental Resources
- Lakes & Streams
- Future Service Limit

The location of each land use designation is generalized. The appropriateness of a particular zoning district for a particular piece of property will depend on a review of all of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Please consult other sources for exact locations of environmental resources such as wetlands, native prairie and floodplain. Not all of these resources are displayed on this figure.

The incorporated town plans are displayed on this figure. In many circumstances the land use categories in the town plans were different from the categories used in the Lincoln/Lancaster County Plan, so some adjustments were made for the purposes of this display. These communities and their specific adopted plans should be consulted as the source for decisions within



Map 1.1: Lancaster County Future Land Use Plan

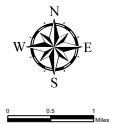


2040 LINCOLN AREA FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Agricultural | Commercial | Green Space |
| Residential - Urban Density | Industrial | Environmental Resources |
| Residential - Low Density | Public & Semi-Public | Lakes & Streams |
| Potential Large Employer Opportunity Areas | Agricultural Stream Corridor | Future Service Limit |

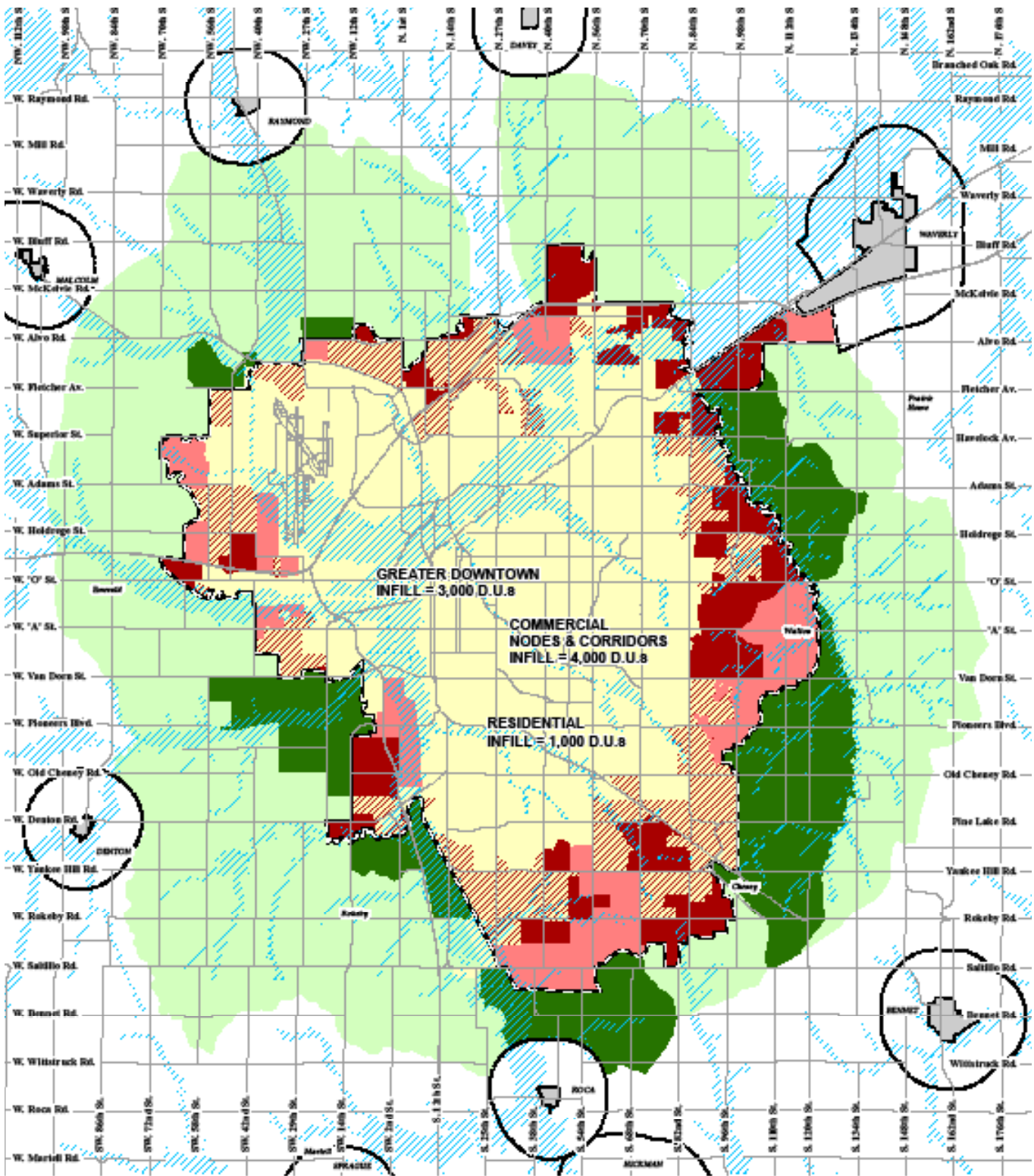
The location of each land use designation is generalized. The appropriateness of a particular zoning district for a particular piece of property will depend on a review of all of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Please consult other sources for exact locations of environmental resources such as wetlands, native prairie and floodplain. Not all of these resources are displayed on this figure.

The incorporated town plans are displayed on this figure. In many circumstances the land use categories in the town plans were different from the categories used in the Lincoln Lancaster County Plan, so some adjustments were made for the purposes of this display. These communities and their specific adopted plans should be consulted as the source for decisions within their various jurisdictions.



Map 1.2: Lincoln Area Future Land Use Plan





2040 PRIORITY GROWTH AREAS

- Existing Lincoln City Limits and Approval Preliminary Plans (2016)
- Floodplain and Flood Prone Areas
- 2040 Future Service Limit
- Tier I, Priority A (Developing)
- Tier I, Priority B (2025)
- Tier I, Priority C (2040)
- Tier II (2030)
- Tier III



Map 1.3: Growth Tiers with Priority Areas

LPLAN 2040 ELEMENTS

LPlan 2040 for Lincoln and Lancaster County evaluates many different planning factors. These factors have been divided into chapters, summarized in the remainder of this chapter.

THE COMMUNITY

Introduces the reader to the community of Lincoln and Lancaster County: its history, place in the larger region, people, employment, and general urban and rural form. This chapter includes discussions on changing demographics, their possible effect on future development and the need for regional planning within the greater southeast Nebraska area.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Includes an outline of the guiding principles for environmental resources, a discussion of environmental resource features and a long range planning and implementation approach with associated strategies, entitled “The Greenprint Challenge.”

PLACEMAKING

Describes principles and strategies intended to preserve and enhance the community’s unique character—its sense of place—through preservation of cultural and historic resources and focused attention to the quality of public and private development through urban design.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Lays out the Plan’s strategy for economic development and additional commercial and industrial activities. Different types of commercial and industrial centers are described in this chapter.

MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT

Develops the strategy for mixed use redevelopment that strives for compatibility with surroundings while accomplishing various principles of the Plan.

Mixed use redevelopment focuses primarily on the Greater Downtown area and nodes and corridors identified elsewhere in the city for redevelopment.

NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

Discusses the desired pattern of development in existing and developing neighborhoods and rural areas and describes strategies for meeting future housing demand.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Reviews the projected status of community facilities such as libraries, fire services, law enforcement, health care, schools and public buildings and proposes a series of principles and strategies to meet the community’s future health, safety and educational needs.

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

Describes principles and strategies for acquiring and managing parks, recreation and activity centers, open space, greenways, and other recreational facilities in the community.

TRANSPORTATION

Examines multiple modes of travel and lays out the transportation vision to 2040 based on future land uses. This chapter is related to and consistent with the Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO’s) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, or LRTP.

ENERGY & UTILITIES

Examines energy and individual utilities including water, wastewater, watershed management, solid waste, electric services, information technology, and natural gas service.



PLAN REALIZATION



Explores the means for bringing about the Vision described throughout this Plan and ways to ensure that the community continues to view the Vision and the Plan as remaining current and pertinent.

2 THE COMMUNITY

This chapter introduces the reader to the community of Lincoln and Lancaster County: their history, place in the larger region, people, employment and general urban and rural form.



HISTORY

The City of Lincoln and Lancaster County lie within the Platte River Valley in southeastern Nebraska. A little more than 50 miles west of the Missouri River, the county's natural features are characterized by uplands, stream terraces, and bottom lands. The region was historically covered by native tallgrass prairie that served as home to buffalo, antelope, grassland birds, and many other smaller species of plants and animals.

The county's 846 square miles are situated mostly within the Salt Valley Basin. Native Americans and early settlers were attracted to the area by the natural forming salt flats. One of the region's earliest European settlers was Captain W.T. Donovan of the Crescent Salt Company. He named the settlement Lancaster after his home in Pennsylvania. "Lancaster" was later used to name both the county and the county seat in 1859.

When Nebraska became a State in 1867, one of the first tasks for the new government was to establish a capital city. A three member Capital Commission selected the hamlet of Lancaster as the new Nebraska capital on August 14, 1867. In a last minute effort to move the capital to

In this Chapter

History	2.1
The Region	2.2
The People	2.3
Employment.....	2.6
Community Form	2.6
2040 and Beyond	2.9

a location north of the Platte River, a State Senator from Omaha substituted the name “Lincoln” for “Capital City” in the final legislation. His hope

Native Americans and early settlers were attracted to the area by the natural forming salt flats.

was that by naming the new city after President Abraham Lincoln, post-Civil War bitterness might dissuade some Senators from voting for the site. The gambit failed and the name stuck.

THE REGION

The City of Lincoln today serves as both the capital for the State of Nebraska and the seat of government for Lancaster County. The County’s 306,468 residents comprise the second largest metropolitan area in the State. The Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area includes Lancaster and Seward counties and 323,578 people. The broad

southeastern Nebraska region is home to over one million people, including the greater Omaha urban area to the east.

Southeastern Nebraska is experiencing a growing sense of social, cultural, and economic interdependence. The Interstate 80 corridor in particular offers a major link between the State’s two largest urban areas and the region as a whole. Strengthening ties between the two cities and the surrounding rural communities is integral to the region’s future success in providing employment, recreational, and other opportunities. The Nebraska Department of Economic Development established the Nebraska Innovation Zone Commission (NIZC), to advocate and recommend programs that encourage regional cooperation and foster community sustainability and economic development initiatives along the I-80 Corridor. The commission included 19 representatives from cities and counties, Natural Resource Districts (including Lincoln and Lancaster County) and educational institutions in the region. The commission began meeting in 2005 and finalized the [Phase I Study NIZC Regional Comprehensive Plan](#) in 2008 and the [NIZC Model Design Standards](#) in 2009. The NIZC plan does not envision wall-to-wall urbanization of the I-80 corridor between Lincoln and Omaha; instead it emphasizes the reinforcement of existing urban areas and preservation of the rural landscape character. The Phase I Study included a regional inventory, the identification of opportunities, principles to guide the region, and recommended development patterns. The Model Design Standards were developed based upon the principles identified in Phase I. They were intended as best management practices in the form of model standards that local governments could use to promote quality design, preserve natural features, and promote economic development along the I-80 corridor.

The Model Design Standards represented just one of a series of “next steps” envisioned by the Phase I study. As recognized by the NIZC, the achievement of the goals of the NIZC plan will require thoughtful

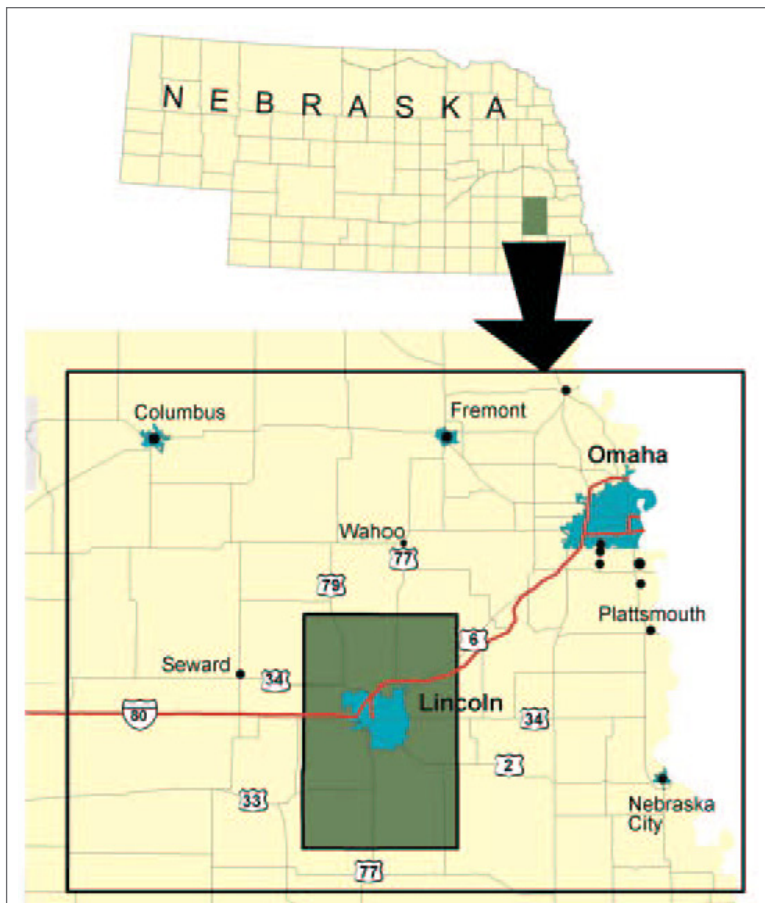


Figure 2.1: Lancaster County's Location in Nebraska

coordination. The NIZC plan is a good first step in this process. Planning and growth issues will need to be approached with care and respect individual jurisdictions. The communities involved need to reach a common understanding of the value to be placed on the region's natural, cultural, economic, and historic resources. Time will be needed to faithfully craft a long-term vision for regional planning and development along this corridor.

The City of Lincoln and Lancaster County are committed to further examining regional planning issues for southeastern Nebraska. Much public dialogue about the future of the region is needed if core planning issues and potential solutions are to be fully explored.

THE PEOPLE

LPlan 2040 embraces a growing, changing community. The Plan energetically recognizes the long term growth potential of the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County, and opportunities presented by the fundamental demographic changes in the community.

From a humble settlement with little more than 150 people in 1860, the County's population has prospered through good times and bad. The most recent decade witnessed a continuation of this pattern as the County gained over 35,000 new residents — from 250,291 in 2000 to 285,407 in 2010. This annualized growth rate of 1.3 percent during the 2000's was a slower pace than the 1990s, but still faster than the average decade of the past 100 years.

Lancaster County's population is assumed to reach over 412,000 persons by the year 2040 — that's almost 106,000 more people than the County's year 2015 population base of 306,468 persons. Using the same growth rate, the County's population is projected to reach 523,000 people by 2060, or almost 217,000 more people than reside here today. This growth is based on an assumed rate of 1.2 percent per year over the 24 year period, an assumption which is supported by three

independent researchers. Within this expanding population base, changes are also envisioned to occur in the community's demographic mix.

Although no specific projections have been made, it is assumed that the city and county's future population will mirror several recent local and national trends.

For example, within the planning period

the community will witness further growth among existing racial and ethnic minority groups. Lincoln and Lancaster County have historically been home to a relatively small minority population. From less than 25,000 people in 2000, the number of minority residents in the County surged to almost 45,000 persons in the year 2010 Census. This increase was witnessed across all segments of the minority community — with notable growth occurring among Black/African Americans, Asians, "Other" racial groups, and persons of Hispanic origin. Immigration over the past two decades has also increased the number of eastern European and middle-eastern persons, groups that are more difficult to track because they are classified by

the Census Bureau as white, non-Hispanic. Increases within the minority community — both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the area's overall population — are anticipated to continue into the future. This trend is embraced by the LPlan 2040

Vision and is to be considered as the Plan's policies and programs are implemented.



The Krull house was built in the 1860s in Lancaster County between Roca and Sprague.

From less than 25,000 people in 2000, the number of minority residents in the County surged to almost 45,000 persons in the year 2010 Census.

Lincoln's ethnic diversity is evident in several commercial districts in Lincoln. Most of these commercial areas are small and serve the immediate neighborhood, providing a comfortable, familiar setting for new residents. North 27th Street is an example of a larger commercial district with many North African, Asian, Arabic and Hispanic businesses such as restaurants, clothing stores, groceries, auto sales and repair, and many other goods and services. The entire community benefits from the wide variety of cultural experiences provided by these centers.

A second demographic trend of significance is the continuing growth in the area's senior population. The number of people in Lancaster County aged



65 and older is projected to increase by about 40,000 to reach about 75,000 in 2040. This represents a projected annual growth rate of 3.1 percent, the highest among all

age sectors. Issues relating to an aging population will increase in importance as more and more individuals reach the age of 65 and above. Housing preferences, discussed later in this section, may open a new market for high quality smaller homes, condos, accessory dwelling units and apartments. Communities such as Madison, Wisconsin, have also found a niche for older adults in their cultural and educational communities, with many seniors choosing to spend time experiencing the arts and expanding their knowledge through partnerships with the local colleges and university. Premium health care will continue to be a major attractor for this age group. New assisted living and nursing facilities will likely be needed as Baby Boomers move into their later years. Limited mobility may mean increased need for transit and other transportation alternatives. These issues and others

are discussed in the [Living and Working in 2040](#) report developed in 2010.

URBAN, RURAL, AND VILLAGE GROWTH

Since the 1960s, the City of Lincoln has made up about 90% of the County population, with the remaining population being divided between other towns in the County and the rural and unincorporated areas. This 10% of the County population has seen a shift over the years from about 2% in the incorporated towns and 8% on acreages and farms, to a current split of about 3% in towns and 7% in the unincorporated area. This plan assumes the shift will continue and that 4% of people will live in incorporate villages and cities by 2040, with the remaining 6% on acreages, farms and in the unincorporated villages in the County.

POPULATION DENSITY

Since about 1970, Lincoln's population density has remained relatively consistent at around 3,000 persons per square mile. Certainly within the urban fabric there are variations from this norm. Areas of residential concentration near the Downtown and many of Lincoln's older neighborhoods have levels of density greater than this average. Conversely, there are locations on the urban fringe with newer neighborhoods having population densities below this level.

Several factors may contribute to overall density that is greater than what is currently seen in the city. Demographic shifts may result in a change in future population densities. While many single families with children will likely desire suburban development similar to what is seen today, there are indications that other segments of the population may have different housing needs. The large increase in households with a head of household over the age of 65 may create a demand for smaller dwellings with smaller yards, multi-family units such as apartments, condos and townhouses, or assisted living facilities. The segment of the population born

in the late 1970s and onward, often referred to as Generation Y or Millennials also express a desire for a more urban setting that includes access to transit, proximity to amenities such as shopping and dining, and smaller dwellings that don't require a great deal of time spent on maintenance. Studies of these major population groups indicate future housing markets might call for more compact growth than what is seen in Lincoln today.

An additional trend that has been observed and is anticipated to continue is a decrease in average household size. Since the 1940s household size in Lancaster County has been steadily falling, from over 3 persons per household in the 1940s, '50s and '60s to 2.40 in 2010. Projections indicate this trend will continue over the next 24 years, although household sizes will fall at a much more moderate pace to 2.35 in the year 2040. The decrease in household size will mainly be due to an increase in single person households and may also indicate an inclination toward smaller houses and more multi-family housing.

A third trend which may have an impact, although probably smaller than the others already mentioned, is the increasingly diverse racial and ethnic mix experienced in the community. It is unclear what effect an increasing racial and ethnic diversity will have on the housing patterns of the community, but there may be new markets for housing products not currently familiar. Immigrants from all over the world may bring a desire for community form that more closely resembles their former homeland.

In addition, increased socioeconomic challenges may cause a desire for more affordable housing with greater access to alternative transportation and services closer at hand. One result of the Great Recession is a shift in home mortgage and bank lending practices, higher levels of unemployment, and diminished access to credit. Each of these factors may contribute to shifts in housing demand.

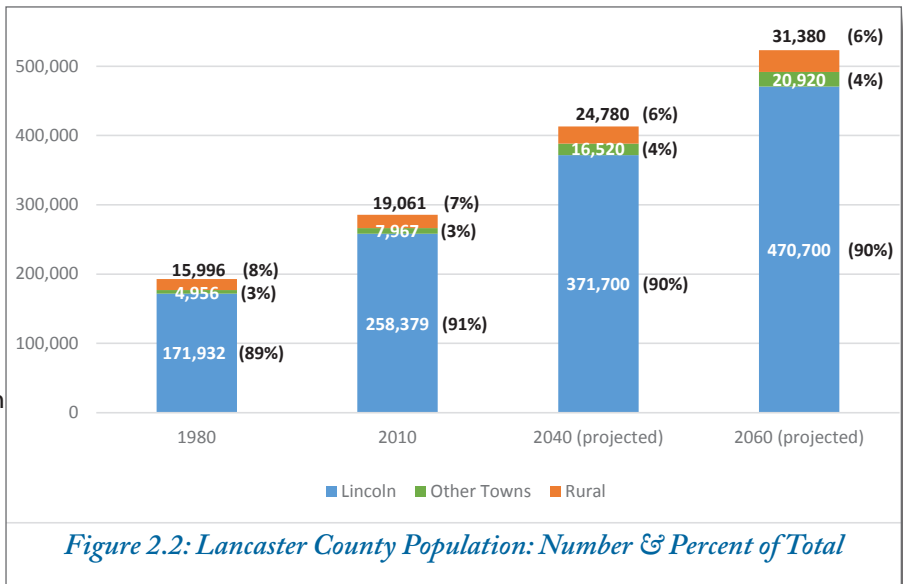


Figure 2.2: Lancaster County Population: Number & Percent of Total

Due to the changes suggested by these trends, LPlan 2040 assumes an increase in the amount of infill and redevelopment, as well as the proportion of dwellings that will be multi-family (apartments, townhouses, condominiums, etc...) Twenty percent of future dwelling units are expected to be built within the existing built environment, as opposed to four percent as shown in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Of the total new dwelling units, 40% are expected to be multi-family and 60% single family (including duplexes and townhomes).

The City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska have undertaken several major efforts in the West Haymarket, Antelope Valley and Innovation Campus areas over the past decade that include and encourage the development of residential infill and redevelopment projects. An increase in redevelopment of underperforming or failing commercial areas is also encouraged in the Plan. These areas present opportunities for mixed use redevelopment to include retail, office, service and residential uses located near transit, trails and major arterials. A smaller amount of infill is anticipated in the neighborhoods on vacant lots and through accessory dwelling units. For further discussion,

Twenty percent of future dwelling units are expected to be built within the existing built environment.

see the [Neighborhoods & Housing](#) and [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapters.

EMPLOYMENT

The quality of a community's future rests firmly with its ability to maintain and expand its economic foundation. In 2014, 210,834 people were employed in Lancaster County according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. About 35,213 of these were self employed and/or employing other people.

Lancaster County has added more than 15,000 jobs since 2004 at an average rate of 0.74 percent per year. In 2015, Lincoln had one of the lowest unemployment rates among metropolitan cities in the U.S.

Employment is divided into four major sectors: Business and Commerce, Government, Industrial, and Agricultural. The Business and Commerce sector has shown the most robust growth over the past decade, followed by the stable Government and Industrial sectors. Agriculture is still a major factor in Lancaster County's economy with about 90 percent of the land area of the county being used for agricultural production. Niche farms have seen strong growth over the past decade and are expected to continue to grow as more local food is demanded by the growing population. For detailed information on past economic trends, please refer to the [Annual Community Indicators Report](#).

The total employment in Lancaster County is projected to increase by 107,002 jobs to reach a total of 317,836 jobs in 2040. This reflects an average annual rate of growth of 1.59 percent. This rate of growth is higher than the current 1.38

percent per year. The projected rate of growth of employment is higher than the projected rate of growth of population due to individuals holding more than one job and the Lincoln metropolitan area attracting workers who live in other counties.

The Industrial sector is projected to increase by about 1.22 percent per year. In this sector, employment in construction, manufacturing and trade is expected to increase at more than 1 percent annually.

Industries	Jobs		Percent of Total		Growth Rate
	2014	2040	2014	2040	2040
Industrial	64,145	87,832	30.4%	27.6%	1.22%
Commerce	110,737	181,855	52.5%	57.2%	1.93%
Government	34,184	48,148	16.2%	15.1%	1.33%

Table 2.1: Lancaster County Jobs by Industry

The Government sector employment is projected to grow at 1.33 percent annually, similar to the projected population growth rate. This sector's share of the total employment will decrease from about 16 percent in 2014 to 15 percent in 2040.

The Business and Commerce sector is projected to be the fastest growing sector with an annual increase of 1.93 percent. This sector's share of total employment increases from about 53 percent in 2014 to 57 percent in 2040. Administrative and waste services, health care, social assistance, real estate, professional and technical services and management of companies all show a growth rate of more than 2 percent annually.

Further details on employment projections are available in the [Living and Working in 2040](#) report.

COMMUNITY FORM

There is currently a very well defined community form in Lancaster County. The main land use in Lancaster County is agricultural. Of the approximately 846 square miles in the County, the Lincoln city limits cover only 95 square miles or just over 11 percent of the land, despite having



90 percent of the County population. The urban area has expanded in a contiguous pattern with well defined edges between Lincoln and agricultural uses. The “leap-frog” development which is a common and dominating force in other metropolitan areas is absent here, and most urban development takes place in Lincoln or in the incorporated towns.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY FORM

The following guiding principles for the development of the rural and urban environment are further expanded upon within the various sections of the plan.

THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Acknowledge the fundamental “Right to Farm.” Preserve areas throughout the county for agricultural production by designating areas for rural residential development — thus limiting potential conflicts between farms and acreages.
- Ensure that acreage and rural development preserve and protect environmentally sensitive areas, and maximize the preservation of our nonrenewable resources, such as land and fossil fuels.
- Preserve areas for the future growth of incorporated towns in the county, including areas outside of the current one mile zoning jurisdiction of certain towns.
- Support new commercial, residential, and industrial development within the incorporated towns in the county.
- Provide for about four percent of the total population in the County in other incorporated towns, and six percent on acreages, farms, and unincorporated villages.
-

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

- Lincoln’s future urban growth should generally occur in multiple directions around the existing city. Lincoln will continue to have managed and contiguous growth, including strengthening our Downtown core. Lincoln’s sense of community has been based on incremental, compact growth built on the foundations of established neighborhoods. Future growth will continue this traditional pattern and be linked to both the level of demand in the market and to the orderly extension of public improvements and services. Lincoln will continue to contain approximately 90 percent of the County’s population.
- The community’s present infrastructure investment should be maximized by planning for well-designed and appropriately-placed residential and commercial development in areas with available capacity. This can be accomplished in many ways including encouraging appropriate new development on unused land in existing neighborhoods, redevelopment of underperforming commercial areas into mixed use redevelopment areas that include residential, retail, office and entertainment uses, and encouraging a greater amount of commercial space per acre and more dwelling units per acre in new neighborhoods.
- Develop sustainable practices such as those for building and site design to maximize the preservation of our nonrenewable resources, including land and fossil fuels.
- Near and long term growth areas for the City of Lincoln should be preserved in order to facilitate future urban development. Acreages



will be directed to areas outside of the future urban growth areas, or designed to easily accommodate future "build-through" of urban services and densification, in order to minimize conflicts between urban and acreage uses and so that the City may provide urban services as efficiently as possible.

- Preservation and renewal of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes is encouraged. Development and redevelopment should respect historical patterns, precedents, and boundaries in towns, cities and existing neighborhoods.

- Natural and environmentally sensitive areas should be preserved within and between neighborhoods. Conservation areas and open lands should be used to define and connect different neighborhoods. The natural topography and features of the land should be preserved by new development to maintain the natural drainageways and minimize land disturbance.
- Mixed use redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and well-designed and appropriately-placed infill development, including residential, commercial and retail uses, are encouraged. These uses may develop along transit routes, at major nodes, and



Figure 2.3: Community Form Diagram

near employment centers to provide residential opportunities for persons who do not want to or cannot drive an automobile. The accompanying image displays how these multiple development principles can be integrated. It includes principles such as:

1. Mix of residential, office, retail and service uses
2. Floodplain preserved as open space, ballfields, trails, conservation areas
3. Natural and environmentally sensitive areas preserved, such as existing wetlands preserved & integrated into the development
4. Connected green space; encourage linear connected green spaces as much as possible
5. Transit stops integrated into commercial center, near arterial and near area of greater population
6. Mix of housing types — single family, townhomes, apartments, special needs housing — all within one area
7. Pedestrian orientation with parking at rear, multiple pedestrian routes, and buildings and uses close to each other
8. Transition of uses; less intense office uses near residential areas
9. Multiple vehicular connections between residential neighborhood and commercial center and multiple access points in and out of area
10. Public uses (such as elementary schools) serve as centers of neighborhood

2040 AND BEYOND

While couples will continue to marry, families will continue to grow and thrive, and newcomers will continue to seek opportunities, the population is expected to have a high percentage of elderly in the 20 years beyond 2040. During the same period that our school system is expected to serve twice

the children that it does today, the two largest present-day generations will be older than the traditional retirement age. People will be living longer. Baby Boomers will be centenarians and Generation Y will be reaching their 70's and 80's by 2060. Largely due to the advancing age of these two key generations, we will likely see a continued increase in single person households, and increased pressure for special needs housing and a specialized service industry to cater to their needs in the 2040-2060 time frame.

Much of the housing stock that exists today will continue to serve future needs, and the preservation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of this housing stock should be a primary focus, but new options should be facilitated to meet the expected needs driven by the changing demographics of a county with over a half million people. A full range of housing options should be available for rental or ownership: single-family homes in new and older neighborhoods, single-family homes on small lots, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, townhomes, rowhouses, live/work units, apartments, condominiums, special needs housing, mixed use buildings, and downtown mid-rises. Within the existing city, vacant lots should be pursued for infill and existing apartment complexes encouraged to add more dwelling units if their sites allow. Greater Downtown should attract thousands of new residents, while "greyfields" — older commercial and industrial areas reaching obsolescence — should be converted to residential and mixed use.

More compact, dense development clusters allow for savings in public infrastructure cost and improved accessibility to jobs, goods and services. Denser mixed use nodes and corridors, designed for walkability and coupled with improved transit service, can improve the livability of the surrounding community as well.

The projections in this Plan for inward growth may prove to be conservative, if appropriate supports are set in place and successful models are demonstrated early in the planning period.

Transit enhancements can both lead and follow redevelopment projects, forming a virtuous circle that can accelerate investments in both areas.

Transit enhancements will begin with increased level of service such as shorter wait times or longer service hours in key corridors. Identifying specific routes for express service is another likely strategy. As development intensifies along major corridors, such as O Street, perhaps in the next 24 years and perhaps later, bus rapid transit that interconnects with other routes could be introduced.



Figure 2.4: Present Day Photo, Looking West along P Street at about 68th Street



Figure 2.5: An architect's depiction of the Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors Concept, Looking West along P Street at about 68th Street

3 ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

This chapter includes an outline of the guiding principles for environmental resources, a discussion of environmental resource features and a long range planning and implementation approach with associated strategies, entitled “The Greenprint Challenge.”



INTRODUCTION

Lancaster County is characterized by flat and rolling plains, sloping toward the east from a high elevation of 1,520 feet in the southwest, to its lowest point of 1,080 feet where Salt Creek exits the northeastern portion of the county. The Salt Creek basin defines most of the County’s topography, with portions of the Middle Big Blue (southwest), Big Nemaha (southeast) and Little Nemaha (east) basins also entering the County borders.

Surface water flows in over 400 miles of warm water streams over the gentle slope, contributing to numerous ponds and lakes, including 16 major lakes between 20 and 1,800 acres each, most built in the 1960s by the Army Corps of Engineers. These lakes provide recreation and habitat to the people and animals of Lancaster County. Surface water is susceptible to pollution in the form of sedimentation and contamination from runoff. Fertilizers and sediment are the most common water quality problems in the County’s streams and lakes. Agriculture, construction, and urban runoff are the primary sources of pollution. The [Watershed Management](#) division of Public Works and Utilities and the [Lower Platte South Natural Resource District \(NRD\)](#) partner to design management plans

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LPlan 2040 Vision for Environmental Stewardship

“LPlan 2040 commits Lincoln and Lancaster County to sustainable growth through preservation of unique and sensitive habitats, and the encouragement of creative integration of natural systems into developments.”

LPlan 2040 Vision & Plan

that address both the quantity and quality of surface water.

Wildlife includes white-tailed deer, a wide variety of song birds, ground birds, and small mammals, migrating and resident water fowl, and a variety of fish species. Large mammals include predators such as fox, coyote, and bobcats. Many species such as raccoon, squirrel, and opossum are

commonly seen in both urban and rural areas. Lancaster County is also home to several State and Federal threatened and endangered species which are discussed later in this chapter. Recent decreases in some pollinator species, drawing national attention, are also a priority for research and habitat restoration.

Ground water seeps into the ground and collects, is stored, and moves slowly through layers of soil.

Groundwater is almost exclusively the source of drinking water in Lancaster County. Generally groundwater quality and quantity is higher in the southern portions of the County. Residential, agricultural, and industrial users outside the urbanized area obtain about 25% of the water used in the Dakota aquifer beneath Lancaster County. High salinity in the northern part of the county makes groundwater more difficult to acquire. Groundwater contamination includes infiltration of agricultural chemicals into supplies. Small areas of contamination, mostly in the urban area, have also been identified. The Lower Platte South NRD, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and other public and private non-profit entities work together in programs to cap abandoned wells, protect wellhead areas, and educate the public on proper use and disposal of potential contaminants.

The soils of Lancaster County are intimately tied to groundwater. Soils are widely varied in the County with the most common being the Sharpsburg, Wymore, Pawnee, Judson, and Kennebec soil series. Generally, soils north of Lincoln show higher infiltration rates, are able to hold more water, and are more likely to be saline. Soils to the south have slower infiltration rates and higher run-off potential.

Soil erosion is a primary concern as agricultural production forms a major economic base for Lincoln and Lancaster County. Thirty-one percent of soils in the non-urbanized areas of Lancaster County are classified as Prime Farmland and are located primarily along streams and bottomland.

Air quality in Lancaster County has historically been high. Lancaster County benefits from prevailing westerly winds and an extensive rural landscape between Lincoln and Denver, CO. The level of air pollution as measured against standards set by the US Environmental Protection Agency is low. The [Lincoln – Lancaster County Health Department](#) conducts regular air quality monitoring activities

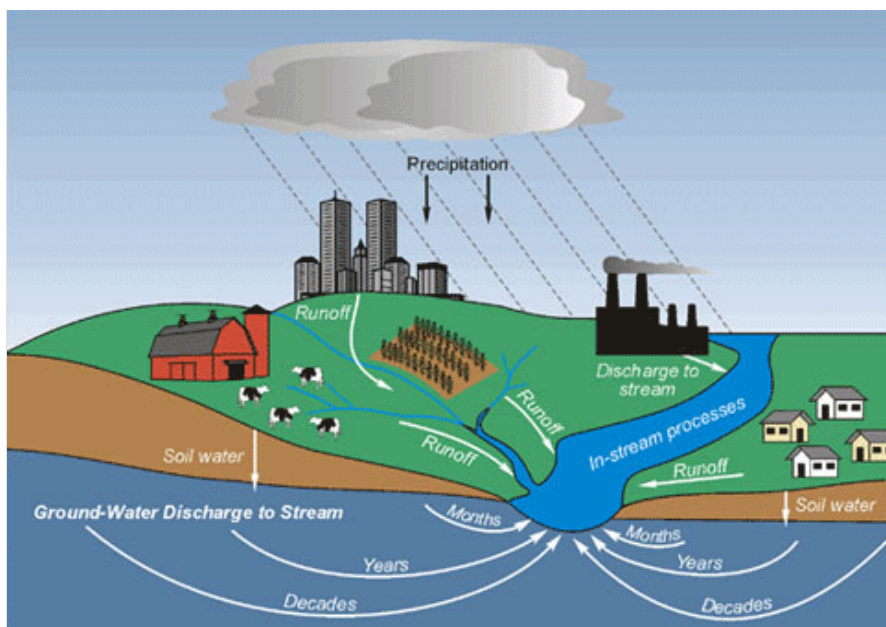


Figure 3.1: Model of the Water Cycle

and provides up to date information on their website.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

MAINTAIN THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF THE COUNTY'S URBAN AND RURAL ENVIRONMENTS

- Lancaster County boasts a diverse set of environmental resources and landscape types that should be respected and maintained.
- Lancaster County is home to a distinctive association of threatened and endangered species of plants and animals that represents a highly valued environmental legacy.
- Environmental resources reside within a broad range of settings that should be considered as policy and development decisions are made.

BE BROADLY INCLUSIVE

- The impact of the actions taken by the community extend beyond the borders of Lancaster County, and oftentimes influence the natural resource features of adjacent counties, states, nations, and the world.
- Urban and rural areas should receive equal priority in the planning process as the natural resource features are found throughout Lancaster County.
- Public-private alliances and partnerships should be built upon, with an emphasis on the natural resource features rather than the patterns of ownership or land use on which the features exist.
- The community should capitalize upon both the environmental and economic benefits that the natural resource features provide.
- Well managed environmental resources generate and reinforce business opportunities.

FOCUS ATTENTION ON UNIQUE LANDSCAPES

- Signature landscapes provide visual images of the community's natural and cultural history and serve as a reminder of the ecosystem that forms the community's urban and rural economic base.
- Signature landscapes will require thoughtful management if their long term viability is to be ensured.

SEEK EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS TO BE PRESERVED

- While planning for future growth is integral to LPlan 2040, it is equally important that environmental resource features be accorded similar attention. The community should invest planning resources into the early identification of those areas that are most valued as part of the [Greenprint Challenge](#). This principle supports the notion of "getting ahead of the game" by knowing what resources are most valued, where they are located, and what actions should be made within the broader planning process to secure their future for the community.

OBTAIN REASONABLY CONSTRAINED REGULATIONS

- Maintaining a balance between the natural and human built environment is always a delicate one. Planning policy and regulatory approaches employed in achieving the Plan's Vision and Greenprint Challenge should strive to be effective, tempered, pragmatic, circumscribed, and respectful of private property rights.

Well managed environmental resources generate and reinforce business opportunities.



PROVIDE BIOLOGICAL INTERCONNECTION

- Plants and animals do not exist in isolation. They interact with each other and reside within an integrated habitat. Implementation of LPlan 2040 needs to respect biological connections that exist today and provide responsive means for maintaining those associations.

PROMOTE DIVERSITY OF VEGETATION

- Plants are a basic environmental building block. They provide habitat and food for animals, as well as aid in sustaining other vegetation that holds the soil and protects water quality. Maintaining a diverse range of plants ultimately supports a healthier environment for all plants and animals.

MAKE "GREEN SPACE" AN INTEGRAL PART OF ALL ENVIRONMENTS



- "Green space" can come in a wide variety of forms. The policies of LPlan 2040 should strive to incorporate such uses in the full range of urban and rural landscapes.

PREVENT THE CREATION OF A "WALL-TO-WALL CITY" THROUGH THE USE OF GREEN SPACE PARTITIONS

- As cities and villages expand, establishing corridors and districts of green should be part of the growth process. This often requires the advance delineation of these areas and the means for securing their ongoing protection and maintenance.

ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE INCENTIVES FOR NATURAL RESOURCE FEATURE PRESERVATION

- Securing the long term permanence of green space is a basic dilemma in natural resources planning. The use of "green space development incentives" (e.g., setting aside non-buildable areas, creating green space preserves, density bonuses) should be a primary consideration in implementing this Plan.

THE GREENPRINT CHALLENGE: OVERVIEW

In 2001 the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County Planning Department, in close cooperation with the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department and the Lower Platte South Natural Resource District, initiated the development of a "Greenprint" for Lancaster County: a vision and detailed model for how natural and cultural features can be effectively maintained and can exist harmoniously with economic vitality and community growth. Through extensive participation by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty and staff from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the [Greenprint Challenge](#) was formed.

The purpose of the Greenprint Challenge is to assure the long term health and integrity of the ecosystem upon which Lancaster County is superimposed, and to capture the community-wide quality of life and economic benefits that can be derived from the area's environmental resource features. The "Challenge" reflects a demanding character associated with pursuing a truly broad community vision requiring marshaling of public and private forces based upon the prospects of long-term results.

Proper land use planning and plan implementation can aid in maintaining a healthy natural environment. While ultimately focusing on three "Core Resource Imperatives" — Saline and Freshwater Wetlands; Native Prairies; and Riparian,



Floodplains and Stream Corridors — the Greenprint Challenge offers a basis within which crucial planning decisions concerning the wide range of environmental resource features can be effectively pursued. The Greenprint Challenge Composite Map highlights these Core Resource Imperatives together with Threatened and Endangered ("T & E") species.

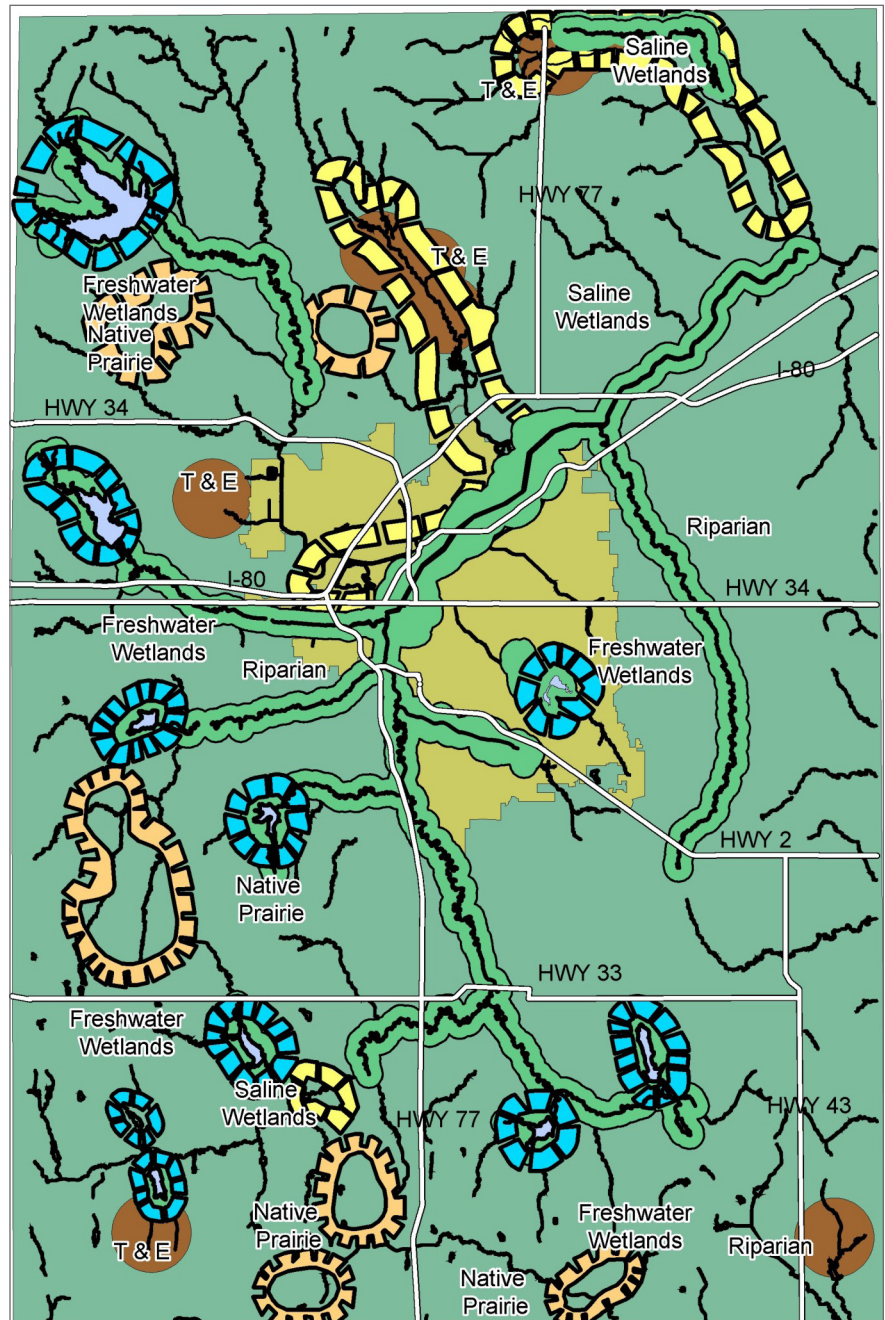
- Conduct outreach efforts bringing together private land owners, environmental interests, and the development community to seek a common understanding and approach regarding natural resource features and the vision described in this Plan.
- Identify and foster partnerships to maintain and operate parks, recreation programs and natural areas in the county. This structure may involve

GREENPRINT CHALLENGE IMPLEMENTATION

The Greenprint Challenge Report, August, 2001, includes several implementation concepts to guide the completion of the natural resource feature strategies listed above. Many of these implementation concepts have been followed in the development of this and previous plans. Some are still yet to be accomplished. As future plans are developed, the Greenprint Challenge will continue to act as a guidepost in the process.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR THE GREENPRINT CHALLENGE

- Integrate the natural resource feature concepts into future planning activities such as zoning and subdivision review, watershed master planning, subarea planning, transportation and utility planning, and floodplain management studies.
- Pursue a variety of funding and financing options on a continuing basis. These may include establishment of a land trust to enable donations of land, capital improvements programming providing for further acquisition of park property and natural areas, and grant funding from such sources as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, various floodplain and water quality funding programs, and the Nebraska Environmental Trust.



Map 3.1: Greenprint Challenge Composite Map



existing agencies, reflecting a modification in current responsibilities and authorities. The entity should have clear responsibility to act both inside and outside the City of Lincoln and its extra-territorial limits.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE FEATURES AND STRATEGIES

As an LPlan 2040 land use category, “environmental resources” represent an important part of today’s urban and rural landscapes. Such features need to be valued and sustained as part of the overall planning process if they are to remain as vital parts of the natural heritage left for succeeding generations. These features help to define the County’s unique sense of place — geographically, culturally, and temporally. The Plan fully recognizes the harmony and connections that exist within and among these features.

Thirteen separate environmental resource features are recognized in the Plan. The Greenprint Challenge map displays generalized locations within the county in which these resources categories may be found. For a more detailed map, the [Natural Resources Geographic Information System \(NRGIS\)](#) map can be accessed, and categories can be toggled off and on to view their location. A brief description of each of the Plan’s environmental resource features and specific strategies for protecting these features is provided below.

NATIVE PRAIRIE

This feature refers to the tallgrass prairie areas that are dominated by big bluestem, little bluestem,

indiangrass, and sideoats grama grass species.

Numerous wildflowers and forbs are also found in these prairies, including golden rod, purple coneflower, purple prairie clover, and black-eyed susan. Though historically



they were the region’s prevailing natural condition, native prairies are an increasingly rare feature on the Nebraska landscape. This resource thrives in conditions of disturbance caused by fires and grazing. Management strategies that mimic natural disturbance are important for diverse, healthy prairie. Lancaster County is fortunate to have about 8,640 acres of native prairie remaining, mainly in the west central portion of the county, although they are scattered throughout the county in patches of land that must remain whole if their integrity as a natural resource feature is to continue. Nine Mile Prairie, Pioneers Park and Spring Creek Prairie are three of the larger massings of native grasslands in the county.

STRATEGIES FOR NATIVE PRAIRIE

- Develop planning guidelines, management techniques and supporting policies for preserving native prairies and grassland.
- Coordinate prescribed burn plans among public agencies.
- Acquire buffer areas around prairies and other natural areas for management and resource protection.
- Investigate means for encouraging native prairie restoration by private entities.
- Utilize the University of Nebraska Center for Grassland Studies in assessing alternatives for grassland preservation and restoration.
- Resurvey and update the County’s prairie and grassland inventory for inclusion in the Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems (NRGIS).

FRESHWATER WETLANDS

This feature refers to areas that have hydric (i.e., water-bearing) soils, are frequently if not regularly moist, and are home to water tolerant plants. These types of wetlands are distinguished from “saline wetlands” by the lack of salt in the water that keep them wet. Freshwater wetlands are more prevalent

in the county than are saline wetlands; however, they provide important water quality and habitat functions. The use of many freshwater and saline wetlands are regulated under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act.

STRATEGIES FOR FRESHWATER WETLANDS

- Pursue stormwater management practices that consider both water quality and quantity approaches near freshwater wetlands. Buffer areas should be encouraged at their perimeters to decrease the effects of adjacent future uses.

SALINE WETLANDS

This feature refers to those locations in the county where wetlands having a high salt content can be found. These wetlands played a large part in the founding of Lancaster County, as settlers were attracted by the salt deposits. Saline wetlands have four distinguishing characteristics: a type of soil usually associated with damp or soggy areas; the presence of water during most of the year; a high occurrence of saline (otherwise known as salt); and plants that are adapted to wet, salty soils. Eastern Nebraska saline wetlands are rare, with perhaps 1,400 acres remaining in the county. They tend to be found along Little Salt Creek and Rock Creek to the north and northeast of Lincoln. They provide habitat to a number of threatened and endangered species of plants and animals — the Salt Creek tiger beetle and the saltwort plant in particular.

The [Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership](#) (SWCP) was established in 2002. The partners include the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Lower Platte South Natural Resources District, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the Nature Conservancy.

The [Implementation Plan for the Conservation of Nebraska's Eastern Saline Wetlands](#) was completed in 2003. This plan seeks a partnership approach to address the conservation of saline wetlands and the needs of the community. The goal is “No net loss of

saline wetlands and their associated functions with a long-term gain in sustaining wetland functions through the restoration of hydrology, prescribed wetland management, and watershed protection.”

In 2015, the Upper Little Salt Creek Saline Wetlands Plan was completed. Goals and objectives of the plan are to: identify a planning area

boundary and identify land management, rehabilitation and conservation goals for the planning area; collect field and spatial data to evaluate existing conditions and prioritize projects; evaluate

techniques used in saline wetland rehabilitation; and assist Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership with future decision making for the planning area.



STRATEGIES FOR SALINE WETLANDS

- Continue the efforts of the Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership to execute the Implementation Plan for the Conservation of Nebraska's Eastern Saline Wetlands.
- Provide appropriate incentives — in addition to regulatory mechanisms such as the Federal Section 404 process — to encourage landowners to preserve saline and freshwater wetlands. Incentives to be used or considered further include:
 - Special density credits or bonuses within a Community Unit Plan for wetland conservation.
 - Transfer of development rights.
 - Utilize these areas for wetland bank mitigation.
 - Technical assistance for wetland preservation and enhancement.
 - Conservation easements with tax incentives.



- Fee simple purchase of land for preservation.
- Research and seek implementation of procedures for managing lands containing and near to saline wetlands. It would be desirable for this research to be conducted at the watershed level to provide a broad perspective of how area-wide development will interact with this natural resource. A special treatment buffer along the perimeter of saline wetlands could reduce the impact of increased runoff, sedimentation, and other pollutants. Such buffers could also serve to provide support for the preservation of habitat areas for the county's threatened and endangered species.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES



This feature refers to those plant and animal species whose continued existence have been identified by Federal and/or State officials as being threatened or endangered. In

Lancaster County these include the Salt Creek tiger beetle (State and Federal Endangered), Western Prairie Fringed Orchid (State and Federal Threatened), Saltwort or Western Glasswort (State Endangered), Red Knot (Federal Threatened), Whooping Crane (State and Federal Endangered), and the Northern Long-Eared Bat (State and Federal Threatened). Other vulnerable species having habitat or that have historically been found in Lancaster County include the Bald Eagle (State and Federal Threatened), River Otter (State Threatened), Small White Lady's Finger Orchid (State Threatened), Topeka Shiner (State and Federal Endangered), Massasauga Rattle Snake (State Threatened) and American Burying Beetle (State and Federal Endangered).

A final rule designating critical habitat for the Salt Creek tiger beetle was made in 2014, and a recovery plan was completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

STRATEGIES FOR THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

- Research continues into the conservation of Nebraska's eastern saline wetlands, which will enhance Salt Creek tiger beetle habitat. This will continue to include authorizing or soliciting funding for hydrology or hydrogeology research of the habitat area, determining basin-wide impacts of land use and human activities on the wetlands, characterizing the tiger beetle's biology and habitat, and assessing the economic impacts of potential management efforts.
- Continue cooperation between public and private entities to protect habitat for threatened and endangered species. Current efforts include those of the Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Nature Conservancy, Nebraska Audubon, and others.
- Landowners with saline wetlands and within the 500-foot buffer zones should be offered assistance concerning programs to preserve and protect wetlands and transition lands occurring on private property.
- Continue to investigate incentives allowing land owners to pursue voluntary purchases, conservation easements, transfer of development right (TDR) or other similar preservation options.
- Continue to explore grant opportunities for saline wetland preservation and enhancement.
- Continue the public education effort to raise awareness of the Salt Creek tiger beetle and its unique habitat.

BASINS AND STREAMS

This feature refers to the region's watersheds and the waterways they produce. These areas are demarcated by ridge lines that define the top of each basin. The majority of the county falls within the Salt Creek Basin with its numerous tributaries to Salt Creek forming smaller watersheds or sub-basins. A portion of the county in the extreme southeast also drains to the Nemaha River Basin. The Watershed Management section of the [Energy & Utilities](#) chapter further describes the Salt Creek and associated sub-basins and the management plans being created for them.

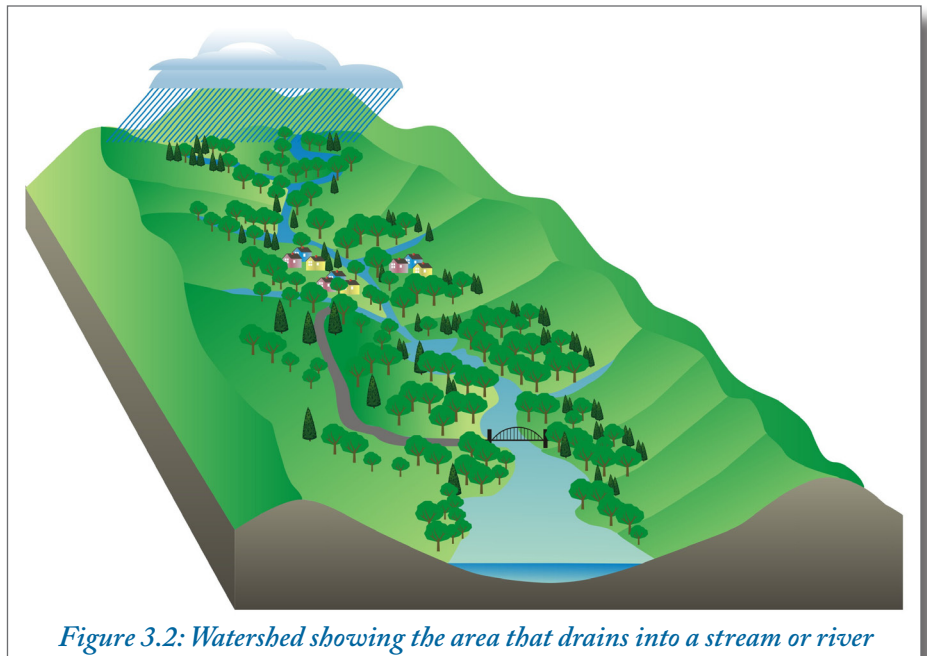


Figure 3.2: Watershed showing the area that drains into a stream or river

FLOODPLAINS

This feature refers to land that is susceptible to flooding or that has flood prone soils. Approximately 13.8% of Lancaster County is covered by floodplains. Floodplains provide multiple benefits to both the natural (flood storage, habitat, water quality) and built (recreation, public health and safety, economic) environments. The overriding policy for the floodplain is a "No Adverse Impact" policy for the City and County, which means that the community has a goal of insuring that the action of one property owner does not adversely impact the flooding risk for other properties.

Further discussion of floodplain and stormwater management considerations and strategies can be found in the Watershed Management section of the [Energy & Utilities](#) chapter.

STRATEGIES FOR FLOODPLAINS

- Designate areas for future urban development outside of the floodplain and floodway.
- Preserve and enhance vegetative buffers along stream corridors and other natural functions of the floodplain.

- Implement a [Rain to Recreation](#) watershed approach to reduce flood damages, protect water quality and natural areas, while providing for recreational and educational opportunities so as to realize multiple benefits.

Approximately 13.8% of Lancaster County is covered by floodplains.

RIPARIAN AREAS

This feature refers to spaces immediately adjacent to water courses on each side of a stream. They are most often located in the floodplain. They frequently contain a large amount of woody vegetation. Riparian areas can serve as linear connections between natural and built areas, as well as boundaries and edges to a variety of adjacent land uses. They offer numerous benefits including flood storage, stormwater conveyance, wildlife habitat, recreation, visual appeal, and shaded areas.



STRATEGIES FOR RIPARIAN AREAS

- Buffer areas should be sought along stream corridors with significant natural values worthy of continued preservation, and/or to decrease impacts from adjacent future land uses; considerations may include natural areas protection and/or stormwater management.

PARKS, TRAIL CORRIDORS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL AREAS

While LPlan 2040 recognizes parks, trails, and recreational areas as a separate, distinctive land use category, they are an important part of the



overall county's natural resource base. They include a diverse collection of sites and facilities owned, managed, and maintained by public entities and accessible to the general community. They accommodate a variety

of recreational uses including passive and active recreation, hunting, fishing, and boating. Further discussion of specific greenways and corridors follows in this chapter. The County Trails map can be viewed in the [Transportation](#) chapter of this plan. For continued discussion on other parks and recreation facilities, please see the [Parks, Recreation & Open Space](#) chapter.

STRATEGIES FOR PARKS, TRAIL CORRIDORS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL AREAS

- Pursue the active coordination of all future trail network extensions and enhancements. The urban network of trails should connect employment centers, shopping areas, schools, and residential neighborhoods. Trails should be an integral part of the community's green spaces and corridors. (See [Transportation](#) chapter)

- Seek establishment of trail easements or comparable options along selected county roads. (See [Transportation](#) chapter of the Plan.)
- Monitor rail lines which may be abandoned in the future for acquisition as trails as part of an overall open space and recreation system for the county.
- Seek opportunities to incorporate scenic views, corridors and natural areas into parks, trails, and other recreational facilities.

URBAN FOREST

This feature refers to the trees and other woody plants that have been planted or grow naturally within the communities in Lancaster County. Though many may not consider the urban forest to be part of the natural environment, it represents a significant community investment — exemplified in Lincoln being a "Tree City" — with its elimination or neglect having substantially detrimental consequences. The urban forest is more thoroughly discussed in the [Parks, Recreation & Open Space](#) chapter.

STRATEGIES FOR THE URBAN FOREST

- Further the continued development of the urban forest through design standards and other current planning mechanisms.

WOODLANDS

This feature refers to the County's natural wooded areas, especially those exhibiting bur oak/hickory associations. Woodlands in this context exclude the numerous stands of trees dominated by elm species, red cedar, mulberry, etc. This feature is also distinct from the riparian areas discussed earlier in this chapter.

STRATEGIES FOR WOODLANDS

- Preserve existing tree masses as much as possible by integrating them into future development plans.
- Promote development of new wooded areas.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

This feature refers to land — about 90.3 percent of the county — utilized for growing crops, raising livestock, or producing other agricultural products. Though agricultural activity is identified as a separate land use category in LPlan 2040, agricultural land does constitute a distinctive natural resource feature as well. These lands are an integral element in the natural landscape providing habitat as well as being a basic element of the County's historic signature landscape. More information about agricultural areas can be found in the [Neighborhoods & Housing](#) chapter of this Plan.

STRATEGIES FOR AGRICULTURAL LANDS

- Preserve agricultural land within the Tier I and Tier II areas, both to reduce conflicts in the future growth of Lincoln and to ensure available land for the production of food products that are important to the health and economic vitality of the community.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

This feature refers to places that are significant because of their unique character, because significant activities or events occurred at those sites, or because persons who have had a significant impact on culture are associated with the sites. Cultural and historic landscapes are also considered in the [Placemaking](#) chapter, because they individually and collectively add value to the community's sense of place and hold an important place in affirming memorable images of the County's heritage. Further discussion of cultural and historic resources can be found in the [Placemaking](#) chapter.

STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

- Document or promote historic, cultural and archeological sites throughout the City and County.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

This feature refers to important or unique natural resources, places, structures, and landmarks. The views of these features can be from nearby or afar. Vistas refer to areas that afford significant views. Views and vistas, such as those to the State Capitol, provide key points of reference and help create the County's signature landscape. The Capitol View Corridors are also more thoroughly described in the [Placemaking](#) chapter.



STRATEGIES FOR VIEWS AND VISTAS

- Investigate the availability for preservation of several locations in the County that offer distinguished views and vistas. These could be acquired through fee simple title or easements. Many of these locations may be appropriate for public ownership as future parks or open space. Efforts should be made to acquire these parcels should they become available.

LOCAL FOOD

A topic that has become increasingly important since the Greenprint Challenge was developed is that of local foods. The local food movement was born of a desire to provide a secure source of nutritious food that has a reduced impact on the environment and increased benefit to the health of consumers. Many urban areas have few sources of fresh produce, meats and dairy products; and many consumers must rely upon convenience foods and fast food restaurants. Food that is transported



over great distances, sometimes from other continents, consumes a great deal of energy in that transport and produces a corresponding amount of greenhouse gases.

Production of food closer to the urban center, if not within it, reduces the distance food must be transported, increases the freshness of food available, supports the local agricultural economy, and provides nutritious food to those who might not otherwise be able to obtain it.

Local food may be produced in the rural area of the county, or counties nearby; or it may also be



produced within the urban area itself. In any case, the preservation of land for food production both nearby and within the City is integral to local food opportunities. Prime

farmland within the County should be preserved for its agricultural value as well as potential for food production. Within the City, community gardens, bee keeping, chicken coops, farmer's markets and local cooperative markets are all important links in the local food chain.

Building a strong local food network takes the cooperation of both public and private sectors. Organizations such as Community Crops, Nebraska Food Cooperative and the University of Nebraska Extension Service have been at the forefront in the provision of local food program support.

STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL FOOD

- Continue to promote the preservation of prime farmland in the rural areas of the county.
- Continue to promote public-private partnerships that build stronger food networks and promote urban agriculture.
- Promote more community gardens.

- Allow community gardens in all zoning districts at appropriate locations and with appropriate standards.
- Encourage backyard gardens, edible landscaping and urban orchards.
- Provide the opportunity for community garden space on public land such as in public parks and rights-of-way.
- Encourage increased points of sale of local foods.

GREENWAYS AND OPEN SPACES

Open space and greenway linkages form systems of land preserved in an undeveloped state, often due to unique natural attributes such as floodplains and associated riparian areas, saline and freshwater wetlands, and native prairies. The local and regional commuter and recreational trail system is often integrated with greenway linkages.

The geography of Lancaster County presents unique opportunities for creating open space and greenway linkages that can connect neighborhoods as well as rural and urban areas, while creating buffers that provide relief from a wall-to-wall city as well as habitat for wildlife. The Salt Valley drainage basin which dominates the County and wraps around the City of Lincoln, is fed by numerous tributaries that radiate out into the surrounding rolling hills. The effect is that of a large loop primarily made up of Salt Creek and Stevens Creek, with tributary tendrils both uniting and separating areas of urban, residential and agricultural development.

This loop comprises the Salt Valley Greenway, which is envisioned to be accomplished through conservation easements and fee simple acquisition of selected sites with unique environmental features or recreational opportunities. This can include parks and open space, trails, both active and resource-based recreation, riparian and stream corridors, floodplains, threatened and endangered

species habitat, saline and freshwater wetlands, agricultural land, signature landscapes, wildlife corridors, lakes and streams, abandoned rail lines, and transportation corridors. The Greenway may be as narrow as a few hundred feet in some places to as wide as a mile around state recreation areas.

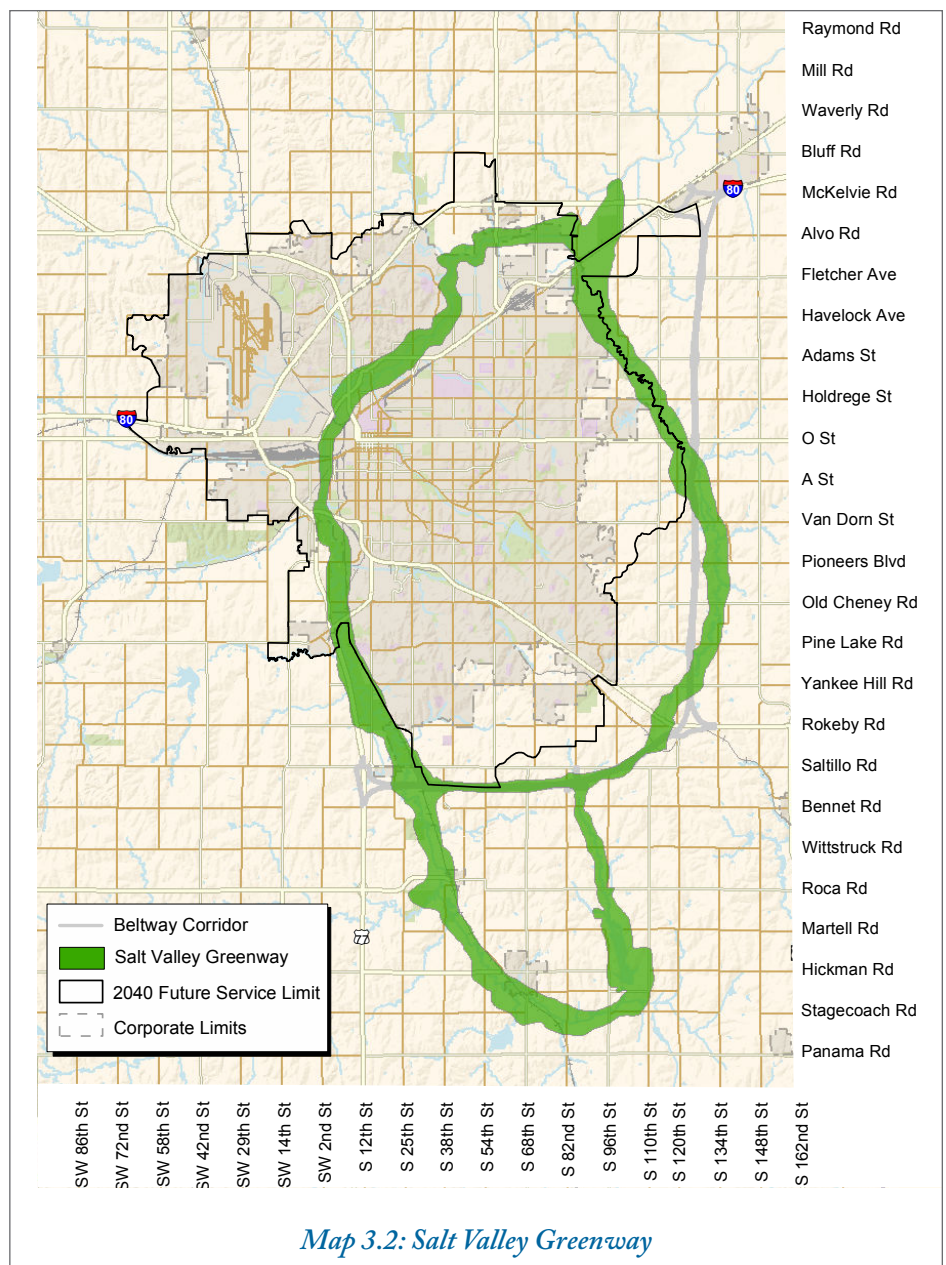
The Salt Valley Greenway includes the previously identified “Crescent Green” linear greenway along Salt Creek beginning on the north and then proceeding along Salt Creek on the west, including Wilderness Park. It follows the Salt Creek floodplain south of Wilderness Park, connecting with the community of Roca and continuing south to the city of Hickman. From Hickman, the corridor proceeds east to Wagon Train Lake tributary and follows the linear open space along the planned South Beltway east before turning north along the Stevens Creek floodplain. At the north end, the Greenway connects back in with Salt Creek including saline wetlands, Salt Creek tiger beetle habitat and the Crescent Green Corridor on the north, forming a continuous open space system.

The Salt Valley Greenway is important for recreation, transportation, environmental resource preservation, education, and economic development among other benefits. The opportunity to tie together multiple environmental and recreational resources would create a facility that is unique in the region and could be a platform for multiple community events attracting visitors from all over the region.

The Salt Valley Greenway would provide connectivity with current and future green corridors that extend out from Lincoln such as the MoPac Trail corridor, Murdock Trail corridor, Antelope Valley, Dietrich Bikeway,

and Billy Wolff Trail Corridor. It would provide a destination for additional trails as Lincoln continues to grow. The Greenway would also provide access to green corridors that then would extend out into the county to State Recreation Areas (SRA) and natural resource areas and beyond including the following:

- Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch corridor to Conestoga SRA and Spring Creek Prairie.
- Cardwell Branch corridor to Yankee Hill SRA.
- Middle Creek corridor to Pawnee SRA.
- Salt Creek corridor to Killdeer and Bluestem SRA.



- Oak Creek corridor to Branched Oak Lake.
- Salt Creek corridor east and up the Little Salt Creek and Rock Creek corridor.

The Salt Valley Greenway would provide connectivity with the Homestead Trail that goes to Beatrice and south to Kansas. It would connect with additional rail lines that are acquired for trails in the future.

STRATEGIES: GENERAL

- Use the Salt Valley Greenway concept to embody LPlan 2040's Vision and environmental resource guiding principles.
- Develop a strategic plan for acquiring and conserving lands within the Salt Valley Greenway corridor through cooperative efforts of public agencies, private organizations, and individuals.

- Prepare and distribute information to community residents regarding the functions and value of the Salt Valley Greenway, and of the plans for its creation.
- Identify and pursue funding sources for the acquisition of significant properties forming the Greenway.
- Coordinate the planning of the Salt Valley Greenway with county-wide trails planning and any other relevant on-going planning activities.

- Encourage the development of a public-private partnership that will concentrate efforts on further planning,

funding, land acquisition, and development of the Salt Valley Greenway. This should be viewed as a local natural resource as well as a major economic development program.

- Continue to use conservation easements to protect greenway areas where it may be desirable to allow compatible land uses such as row crop farming or pasturing.
- Use of fee simple title may be more appropriate for areas that are best maintained in a natural state due to particularly sensitive features such as rare or sensitive areas, or that have value for resource-based recreation like hiking, interpretive activities, and wildlife viewing.
- Continue to develop a County-wide open space plan.
- Encourage the retention of linear connections of green spaces wherever possible. Efforts should be made to preserve small stream corridors throughout future developments.
- Pursue greenways connecting urban and rural areas. Such corridors should follow stream courses and connect valuable natural resource areas.
- Ensure that as greenways and open space corridors are identified and created, provisions are made for possible future access points across these areas. This may include, but not be limited to, access for new road alignments, road widenings, utilities, and other similar services.

STRATEGIES: PRAIRIE CORRIDOR ON HAINES BRANCH

- Continue the Pioneers Park trail network along Haines Branch to connect with Conestoga Lake and then continue south by the Village of Denton and on to Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. These connections would form a corridor encompassing over 2,000 acres of native prairie and two premier prairie education centers – Pioneers Park Nature Center and Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center.

Crescent Green

The concept of a linear greenway along Salt Creek as it runs through the Lincoln urban area has been in the City's Comprehensive Plan since 1961. The name "Crescent Green" was first used in 1964 as part of an architectural design class. A plan formally describing a "Crescent Green Park" was prepared by the firm of Clark & Enersen in 1977. This plan called for a park to be created along Salt Creek from Wilderness Park north to the city's former landfill near North 56th and Fletcher .

STRATEGIES: STEVENS CREEK BASIN LINK

- Seek the early acquisition (or the application of other management techniques) of land along Stevens Creek and within the Stevens Creek Basin for future greenways, open space and park uses. Examine possible park and open space potential around Walton where the MoPac and future Stevens Creek Trails will connect.
- Use the [Stevens Creek Watershed Master Plan](#) as a guide for identification of areas of opportunity.

STRATEGIES: CRESCENT GREEN LINK

- Continue development of the “Crescent Green” concept to provide a continuous greenway and open space corridor around the west and northern part of Lincoln.

STRATEGIES: SOUTH AND EAST BELTWAY LINKS

- Explore alternatives for creating a greenway corridor along the South and East Beltways. This work would occur as the more detailed planning of those facilities takes place. The activities could range from park-like areas existing today along Interstate 180 and Highway 2 in Lincoln, to more riparian settings as are found in Wilderness Park and the Crescent Green areas. The corridor could connect with historic and cultural assets, regional and community parks, lakes, and other recreational areas. It could also provide potential habitat and corridors for animal movement.

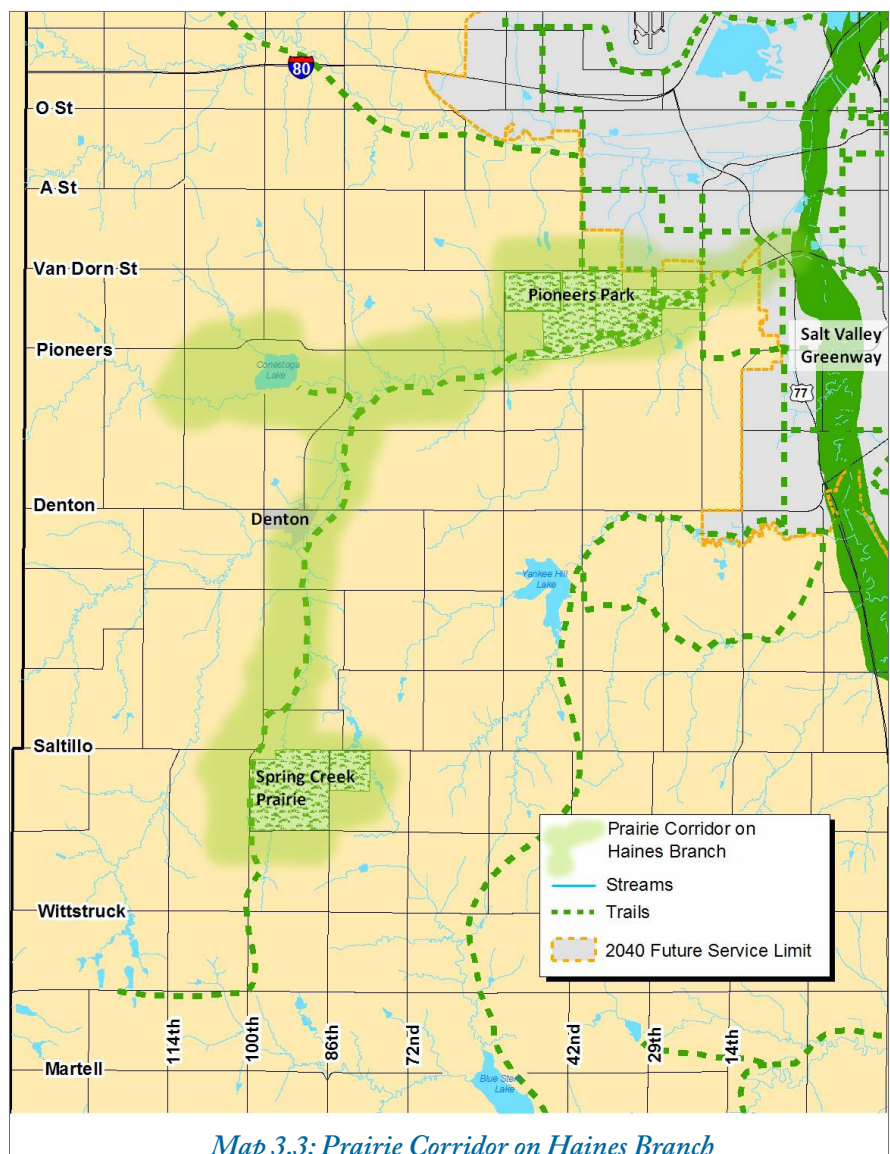
STRATEGIES: I-80 CORRIDOR (N. 27TH TO WAVERLY)

- Continue the advancement of the greenway corridor along Interstate 80, between North 27th Street and the

City of Waverly. This corridor already includes a number of wetland areas (both saline and fresh water) that are under public ownership – City of Lincoln and the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District in particular. The corridor contains the Warner Wetlands and the City’s wetlands mitigation bank. The area is a major entryway into the City of Lincoln and provides associated trail and open space opportunities.

STRATEGIES: SALT CREEK SOUTH/ WILDERNESS PARK LINK

- Pursue the acquisition of additional greenway south from Saltillo Road along Salt Creek. This future greenway should generally follow the



Map 3.3: Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch



100-year floodplain along Salt Creek, and incorporate the right-of-way of the abandoned Union Pacific rail line. This area could eventually connect a network of trails that would extend into northern Kansas. This extension may be accomplished through a combination of land



purchases, conservation easements, donations, and other options.

- Work with other incorporated communities within the county — notably Roca and Hickman – to coordinate the

Greenway's extension.

STRATEGIES: LITTLE SALT CREEK AND ROCK CREEK SALINE WETLANDS

- Continue the efforts along these stream corridors to conserve and enhance Nebraska's most limited and endangered wetland type, which provides habitat for a variety of native plant and animal species, including two endangered species. Link these important natural resource corridors to the Salt Valley Greenway via future county trails.

UNIQUE FEATURES

Inventory and pursue the preservation of unique features to provide special educational and interpretive opportunities. These include quarries and areas of geological significance, remnants of historic trails, unique bluffs near Bennet, the sandstone prairies, a small waterfall south of Denton, and historic pits and grasslands around Hickman and Roca.

4 PLACEMAKING

This chapter describes principles and strategies intended to preserve and enhance the community’s unique character — its sense of place — through preservation of cultural and historic resources and focused attention to the quality of public and private development.



INTRODUCTION

The people of Lincoln and Lancaster County have transformed a rolling prairie into a fertile agricultural landscape, with significant tracts of native prairie and a dozen villages, towns, and small cities, surrounding a highly livable urban place. The jewel in this fine setting is the Nebraska State Capitol, one of America’s great buildings, which was designed and constructed to be seen and enjoyed from throughout the city and county. Together, the urban and the rural landscapes produce a distinctive place, offering a sense of identity to visitors and especially to residents. It is worthwhile to plan for, protect, and strengthen this character as the community grows and matures. All parts of LPlan 2040 contribute to the attainment of this vision, but urban design and one of its components, historic preservation, relate most directly to guarding and enhancing the community’s physical image.

Urban design is the concept and practice of studying people’s experience of their physical environment—both visual and functional—then consciously striving to improve that experience. It is essential both to preserve and enhance key existing elements and to create improvements that mesh with and strengthen a distinctive and enjoyable place. When

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successful, urban design and historic preservation make a community more enjoyable for residents, more attractive to visitors, and more competitive

A unique urban design asset of Lincoln and Lancaster County, providing orientation and identity throughout the community, is our remarkable State Capitol. The 400-foot tower was planned and built as the key historic, architectural, and geographic landmark of the city and surrounding countryside.

in drawing new businesses and retaining existing ones. A truly sustainable community recognizes and builds on its heritage by fostering good urban design, creating a sense of place and uniqueness that supports a strong economy, values environmental assets, and promotes social engagement and interaction. Successful urban design requires cooperation of public and private sectors.

THE SETTING

Enhancing a community's environment begins with understanding it. Before all else, Lancaster County was and is the land—rolling prairie, crisscrossed by streams, enriched by wetlands, green in the spring and summer, golden, tan, and russet in the fall and winter. We and our ancestors have largely transformed this prairie land through agriculture and city-building, but the seasonal cycle still strongly shapes us. Past policies and practices discouraging urban sprawl, maintaining a clear edge between urban and rural land uses,



and preserving natural features and prime agricultural land have done much to establish the distinctive and attractive built environment of our community.

THE CITY

Upon the prairie, the original designers and developers of Lincoln laid out a grid of streets, alleys, and blocks, from A Street on the south to U

Street on the north, and from 1st Street on the west to 17th Street on the east. The gently rolling terrain accommodated this grid, creating a framework for a city which was readily comprehensible and expandable. The suburban towns founded east of the city in the 1880s and '90s aligned their grids with Lincoln, facilitating their integration into Lincoln a few decades later. Much of the Original Plat remains evident, giving form to the center of the city through such major features as the Capitol location, the core of University of Nebraska-Lincoln's downtown campus, the County/City Building location, three sites used by Lincoln Public Schools, and Cooper Park. Especially wide rights-of-way provide vistas to the Capitol and campus. Throughout Downtown and the Haymarket, the range of possibilities within the ample, "ordinary" 100-foot rights-of-way is demonstrated by the loading docks, sidewalk cafes, public art, landscaping, and Farmers Market, along with vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation.

Most of Lincoln's early expansion simply extended the grid. By the early 20th century, the best developments were more varied in their response to the topography, developing curving streets and boulevards while maintaining ample, comprehensible connections to the grid of arterial streets.

THE CAPITOL

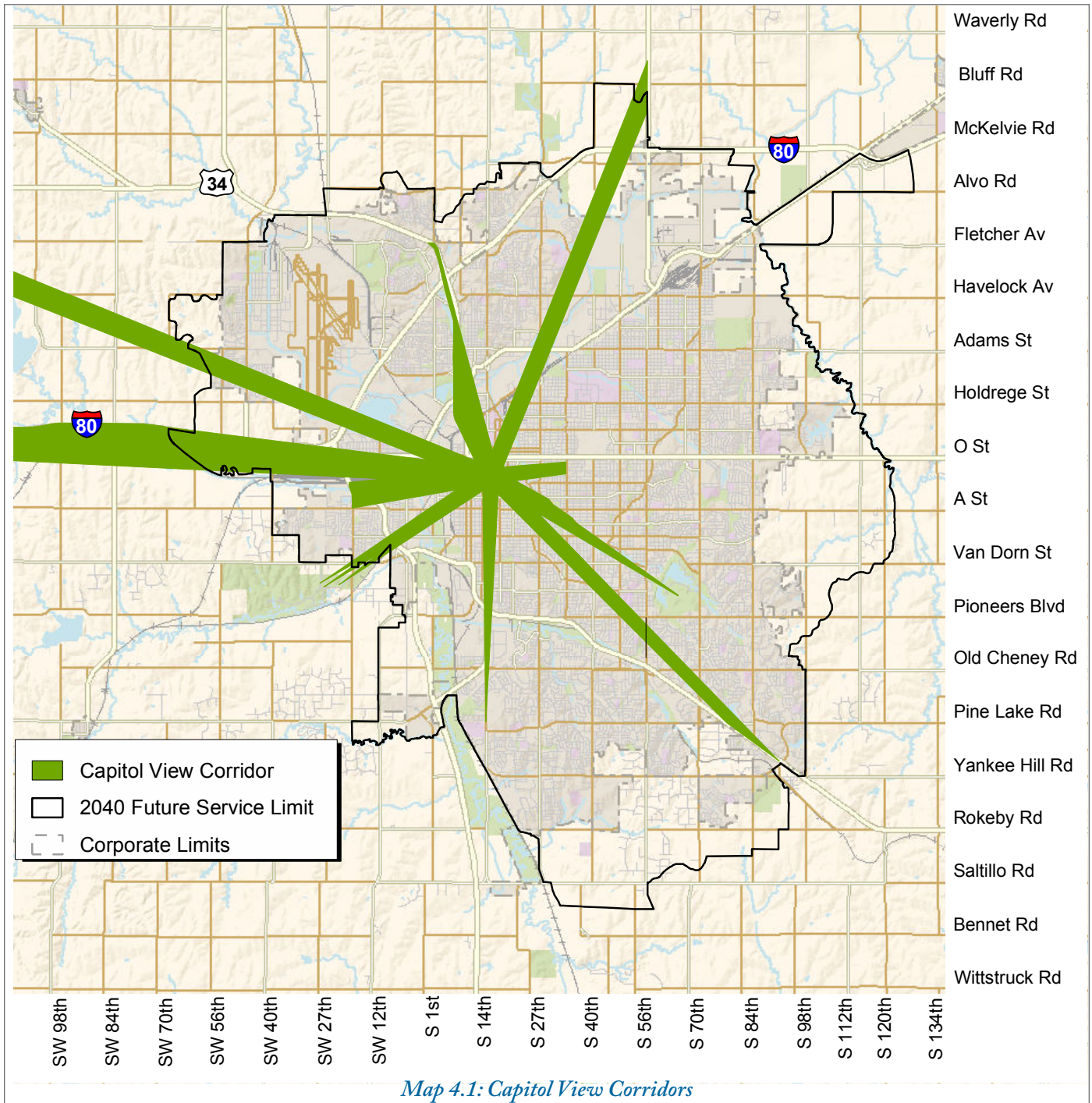
A unique urban design asset of Lincoln and Lancaster County, providing orientation and identity throughout the community, is our remarkable State Capitol. The 400-foot tower was planned and built as the key historic, architectural, and geographic landmark of the city and surrounding countryside. From distant vistas along Interstate 80 to intimate glimpses from core neighborhoods, views of the Capitol enrich and unify this place. Many of the best elements of Lincoln's built environment are based on Capitol views—the Malls, the tree-framed vistas from Pioneers Park, and the homeowners' park in Woodshire Historic District. Protecting key vistas that provide important public views to the

Capitol, along with identification and enhancement of new view corridors as the community grows, are important urban design strategies of this plan.

CORRIDORS

Other important resources for providing community identity and orientation are entryway corridors, parks, trails, and open spaces. Key entryways

provide indelible “first impressions” of a community. The community’s strong network of trails offers recreation and transportation alternatives, knitting together established and new neighborhoods. Parks provide neighborhood centers and community gathering places, and along with public street trees are major components of our urban forest, providing shade, beauty, and habitat.



Map 4.1: Capitol View Corridors

CURRENT PRACTICES

The public and private sectors, often working in direct partnership, are both essential to an attractive, livable, competitive built environment. Lincoln's Original Plat of 1867, designed by state officials, established a framework for a successful city. Attractive public and private buildings, city purchases and private donations of park land and of public art, street trees and private gardens, all contribute to urban character.



Many of the principles of this section already are expressed in the community's practices. The [Historic Preservation Commission](#) and the [Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission](#)

advocate for and protect key resources of our heritage, in cooperation with property owners, the community's design professionals, and other interested citizens.

The Historic Preservation Commission works with neighborhood groups, preservation advocates, property owners, and the State Historical Society to discover, protect, and share the community's



heritage. The zoning code provides protection for designated historic property and incentives for creative uses that maintain the vitality of historic places. The Commission has a key role in providing on-going guidance in the revitalization of areas such

as Haymarket, residential historic districts, and Havelock Avenue.

The Capitol Environs Commission is a unique board combining membership appointed by the City and by the State, empowered to protect and to advocate for improvements to the setting of

the beautiful Nebraska State Capitol. All public and private property within the Capitol Environs District receives the Commission's design oversight, along with key view corridors to the Capitol which enhance the whole community.

The [Urban Design Committee](#) (UDC) provides advisory services to city government on the design of city-owned buildings and other public projects, major public/private developments, and any private projects constructed on city right-of-way or other city property. The Committee's intent is to make sure that new public facilities are exemplary – that they provide functional and aesthetically pleasing facilities for the public, and model good design for the private sector. The benefits of this guidance would be strengthened by including all public projects under UDC review, just as the Environs Commission reviews projects of all local and state governmental units. The Committee also works to publicize and reward good design, private as well as public, through an annual awards program.

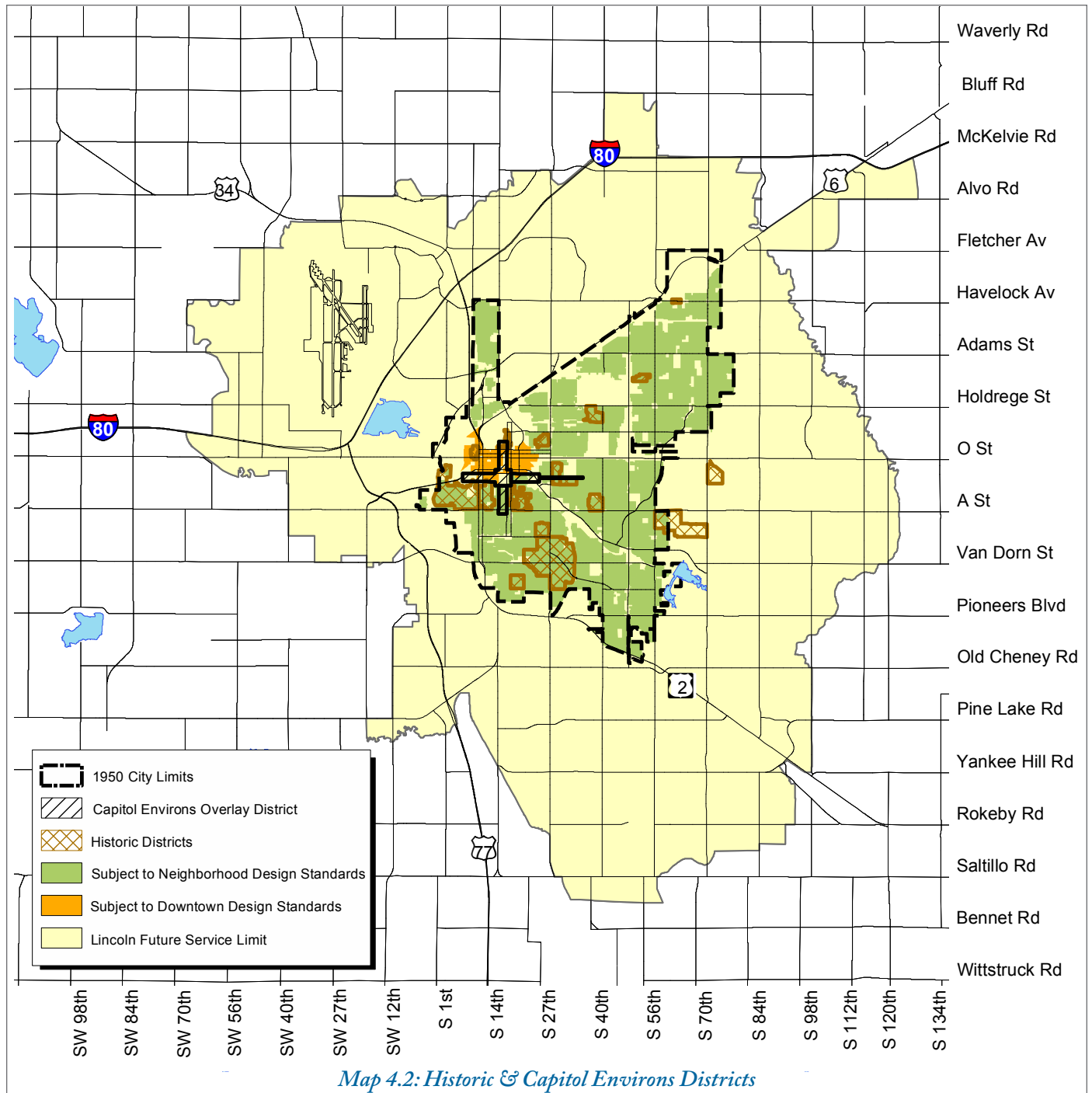
Certain high-impact projects may involve historic properties and public property or public assistance, and the expertise and advice of more than one design board may be valuable. At the discretion of the City, joint meetings may occasionally be scheduled so that the boards, the project, and ultimately the community may benefit by a thorough yet efficient discussion.

All three of these design boards assist in the process of siting wireless communication antennae and towers within their various jurisdictions. The community values efficient and effective telecommunications while also desiring to minimize adverse impacts of this rapidly evolving infrastructure on our rural and urban environments. Capitol view corridors, historic landmarks and districts, environmentally sensitive areas, and predominantly residential neighborhoods are not preferred locations. Unobtrusive locations on public property; co-locations on existing towers, buildings, and structures; and commercial and industrial areas with minimal impact on residences are preferred.

The City has adopted zoning provisions to state the community's preferences. Combined with guidance from the design review boards, community residents and the telecommunications industry can be well-served.

The community has also expressed its interest in good urban design through the [Neighborhood Design Standards](#) for infill development in older

residential neighborhoods and the Lincoln [Downtown Design Standards](#) for the community's center. However, the appearance of other commercial areas and new residential areas is guided by few public design standards, although private design covenants in some areas are far more stringent than any public requirements. Good urban design includes an attractive streetscape, pedestrian access and comfort, and orientation of



buildings, yards, and parking to create a pleasant transition between public and private space.

When developments ignore these elements, our community is weakened. The "Neighborhoods & Housing" chapter describes the community's expectations for new residential development.

The emphasis in LPlan 2040 on mixed-use redevelopment in established commercial centers and corridors necessitates adoption of clear design standards and a predictable process to protect existing and new investors—commercial and residential—in those areas. The "Mixed Use Redevelopment" chapter discusses how mixed use

redevelopment, including residences, can meet important community needs as Lincoln grows and ages.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The 400-foot State Capitol is the key historic, architectural, and geographic landmark of the city and surrounding countryside. Views to the Capitol are highly valued by the people of Lancaster County and the State of Nebraska and should be protected and enjoyed for generations. The community's opportunity to benefit from the Capitol is further enhanced by improvements to its immediate setting, especially to the axial malls which extend from

the Capitol in the cardinal directions, such as Centennial Mall.

- Public buildings and structures should be well built, durable, and highly functional. Most should be designed to blend attractively within the context of surrounding development. Major civic

structures should serve as focal points in the community and should be of superior, even iconic, design. All public projects should be worthy to serve as guides for future development or redevelopment.

- Implementation of the Salt Valley Greenway, described in the [Environmental Resources](#) chapter, offers a long-term opportunity to enhance all of Lancaster County and to strengthen the essential juncture of rural and urban land uses.
- Major entryways to Lincoln including Interstate 80 and its exits (especially I-180), Highways 77 and 34 from the north, Cornhusker Highway from the east and from the Airport on the west, O Street from the east and west, Homestead Expressway/Highway 77/Rosa Parks Way from the southwest and west, and Highway 2 from the southeast, should be studied, protected, and enhanced to create and express community pride.
- Public art is an important means by which the community can strengthen a sense of place and promote a positive image.
- Public property, especially publicly owned historic property, is a community trust and should be maintained, preserved, and utilized in an exemplary fashion. Most historic property is and should be privately owned and maintained.
- The community's distinctive character and desirable quality of life for current residents and for future generations should be supported by exercising stewardship of historic resources throughout the county, while maximizing benefits of past investments in public infrastructure and private property. The Plan encourages the continued use and maintenance of historic resources, including properties not formally designated as landmarks.
- Design standards should be developed, monitored, and revised as necessary to express and protect community values without

Design standards should be developed, monitored, and revised as necessary to express and protect community values without imposing burdensome delays or restrictions on creativity.

imposing burdensome delays or restrictions on creativity. Well-crafted standards should add predictability and clarity to the development process, rather than imposing a design solution. Design standards for landscape elements should be developed, updated periodically and monitored and enforced with attention to long-term sustainability, or the benefit of this investment can quickly be lost.

- Historic areas and quality new development share underlying aspects of good design—durable materials, thoughtful attention to maintaining or creating a desirable overall setting, accessibility by multiple modes and all people, well-designed and effective signs that communicate without dominating, and sustainable, maintainable landscaping.

STRATEGIES

URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS

- Continue to identify and maintain high-value Capitol View Corridors and protect those views through regulations and guidelines, including vistas that gain in prominence as the community grows. Structures that may interfere with these public corridors should be reviewed by the Capitol Environs Commission and a recommendation made within the context of their overall effect upon the view.
- Establish clear urban design standards and an efficient, expeditious review process for development and redevelopment of mixed use commercial/residential areas, especially focusing on the interface with residential neighborhoods, attractive streetscapes, and safe and comfortable movement of people — whatever their mode of travel.
- Prepare and periodically update subarea plans for the redevelopment of mixed use corridors and nodes to facilitate predictable, expeditious, well-designed improvements and investments.

Monitor and update the [Downtown Master Plan](#) periodically, as the adopted guide to redevelopment of the community’s center, as identified in the [Vision & Plan](#) chapter.

- Extend the contributions of Urban Design Committee to advise on building projects of Lancaster County and other local government agencies as appropriate.

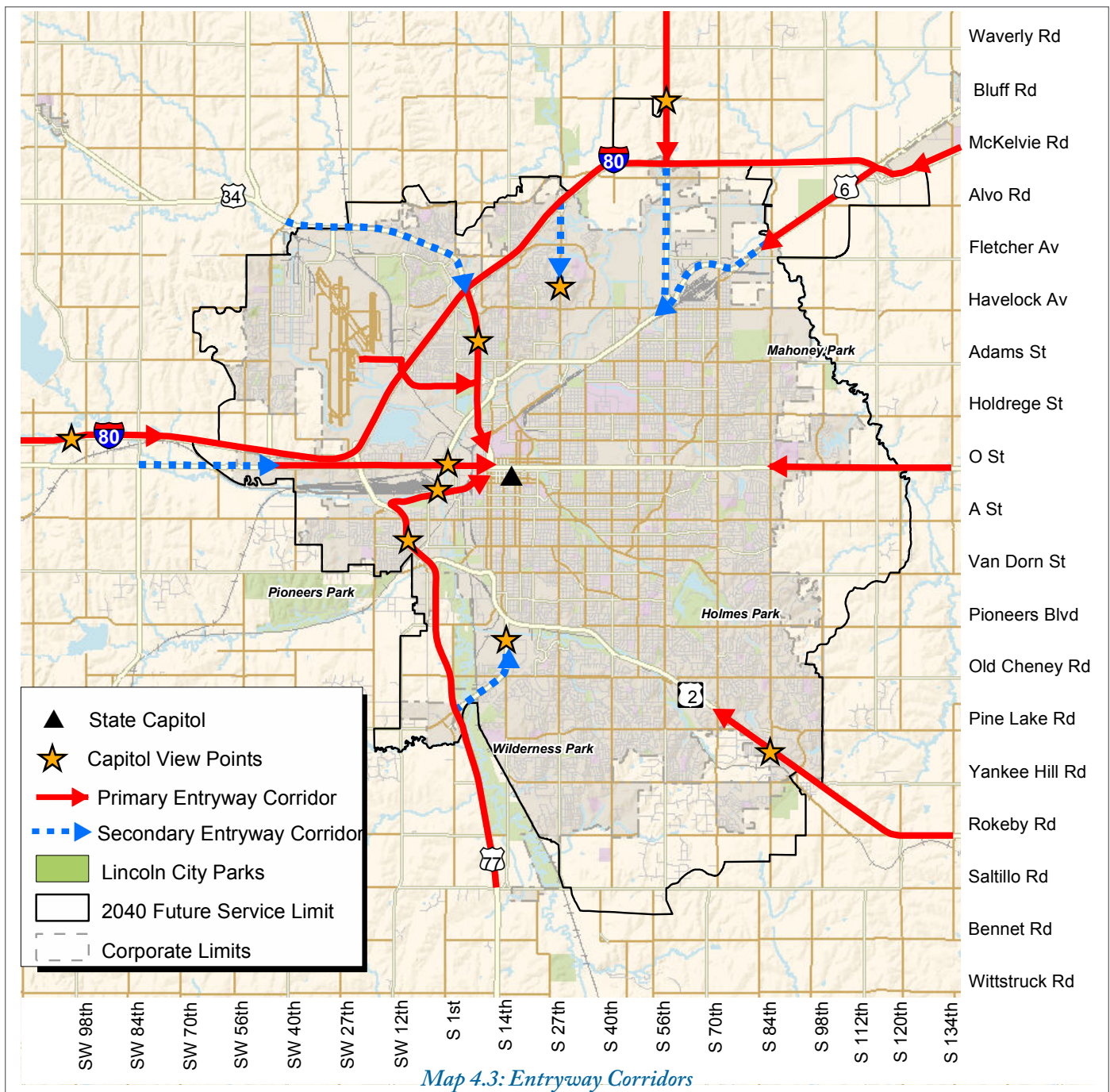
ENTRY CORRIDORS AND PUBLIC ART

- Study key entryways to Lincoln and adopt zoning tools and incentives to protect and enhance “first impressions” of the community, including a thoughtful, distinctive, and attractive system of “wayfinding” signs to key community attractions.
- Continue and update a wayfinding system of related, attractive signs guiding and orienting motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians throughout the community.
- Preserve and enhance the character of key entry points and corridors into the City of Lincoln through enhanced landscaping and public art in rights-of-way, and respectful development of adjacent properties.



Figure 4.1: Downtown Wayfinding Guide Sign

- The corridors along I-180 from Interstate 80 to the entry into Downtown, and from Lincoln Municipal Airport along Cornhusker Highway to the interchange with I-180 should be a special focus for public/private partnerships to identify special themes and appropriate sites for public art.
- Support implementation of the [Public Arts Master Plan](#) for the City of Lincoln which



- identifies art projects and policies that enhance the cultural fabric of the City.
- Strengthen design standards for commercial and mixed-use development along major travel corridors, to reflect a positive visual image that engenders community pride and identity.
- The inclusion of public art should be considered during the conceptualization and design of any major public project.
- Seek the early integration of the talents of artists with architects, landscape architects and engineers on public improvements.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Expand the community's historic preservation program to include Lancaster County through interlocal agreements between Lancaster County, the City of Lincoln, and other incorporated communities. Widen the scope of the mission and membership of the Historic Preservation Commission to include all of Lancaster County.
- Lincoln and Lancaster County should work in partnership with state and federal historic preservation programs, but local landmark protections are usually the most effective and appropriate.
- Continuously monitor and improve local programs and regulations, especially working to balance conflicting regulations that may offer alternatives to achieve life-safety goals while protecting threatened historic resources.
- City and county governmental policies should provide for the protection and enhancement of historic resources.
- Continue to inventory, research, evaluate, and celebrate the full range of historic resources including standing structures, distinctive neighborhoods and regions, landscapes, and buried cultural materials throughout Lancaster County, collaborating with individuals, associations, and institutions.
- Designate landmarks and districts through the local preservation ordinance and the National Register of Historic Places.
- Seek incentives and regulatory support to maintain, rehabilitate, and minimize energy utilization of existing buildings in order to make it more feasible to rehabilitate and continue to use older buildings.
- Implement a public policy of the careful stewardship of significant, publicly owned historic resources, including a full and open examination of alternatives when major alterations or demolition are considered.

Consider designation of such resources under the preservation ordinance to demonstrate leadership and standardize review of proposed changes.

- Continue the educational outreach effort of the historic preservation program through tours, publications, on-line information, and presentations, in order to share the results of historic preservation and research with the broadest audience of residents and visitors.
- Monitor local preservation efforts and local, state, and federal incentive programs to improve and apply the most effective tools for preserving, maintaining, and utilizing historic resources as fully utilized components of the community.
- Include a procedure in the preservation ordinance for temporary protection of significant historic resources threatened with demolition, to allow time to explore and implement alternatives.
- Support and participate in neighborhood, community, and statewide groups interested in historic preservation.
- Encourage protection and discourage destruction of buried cultural resources either by vandals, looters, or insensitive construction.



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5 BUSINESS & ECONOMY

LPlan 2040 envisions a healthy expansion in the region's economic foundation during the planning period. This chapter lays out the Plan's strategy for economic development and additional commercial and industrial activities.



INTRODUCTION

Lancaster County is a growing county with a relatively stable economy. Continued economic growth in Lincoln and Lancaster County is expected over the plan period. In order to ensure that growth and employment occur in an organized fashion that meets the vision of LPlan 2040, principles and strategies are laid out to guide policies and future development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Focus primarily on retention and expansion of existing businesses; attracting new businesses should also be encouraged.
- Enhance Downtown's role as the heart of the City. A strong downtown is important to the economic future of the community. Lincoln's Downtown is unique in the community as the home of State government, the State Capitol Building, and the flagship campus of the University of Nebraska. Together with Antelope Valley, Haymarket and the surrounding neighborhoods, it forms a vital core for the City.

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- Promote and foster appropriate, balanced, and focused future economic growth that maintains the quality of life of the community.
- Seek to efficiently utilize investments in existing and future public infrastructure to advance economic development opportunities.
- Provide flexibility to the marketplace in siting future commercial and industrial locations.
- Strive for predictability for neighborhoods and developers.
- Encourage and provide incentives for mixed uses in future developments.
- Encourage commercial areas and limited industrial areas to make available opportunities for individuals and/or organizations to raise and market local food.
- Encourage preservation or restoration of natural resources within or adjacent to commercial or industrial development.
- Encourage commercial centers to encompass a broad range of land uses with the integration of compatible land use types.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Lancaster County benefits from many quality of life factors that attract both employers and employees. Lancaster County's educational systems are among the best in the country and provide a skilled



workforce. Lincoln's neighborhoods provide a good stock of quality, affordable housing of many sizes and types. The presence of State government and the [University of Nebraska](#)

[Lincoln](#) (UNL) campuses are attractive to employers and employees. Lancaster County provides a wide range of art, entertainment, and recreation opportunities. Public and private investment in

Lincoln is evident in the Downtown, Antelope Valley, Innovation Campus, and West Haymarket projects. All of these assets should be emphasized to encourage economic development. Lincoln's workforce, the presence of the University, and the strength of the agricultural economy make it particularly attractive for development of several specialized industries.

- **Biotechnology.** UNL has a strong biotechnology research program. Expansion and retention of start-ups and existing companies, particularly those that build on University research should be a focus.
- **Value Added Agriculture.** Food research at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (UNL) is vital to attracting and retaining these industries in the Lincoln area. This category could include renewable energy development, such as ethanol plants, though these plants are primarily locating outside Lancaster County.
- **Specialty Electronics.** Expanding or using the Foreign Trade Zone in the [Airpark](#) area holds promise for this type of use and should be examined with the Airport Authority.
- **Technology.** The technology-based and information section is a fast-growing and highly-visible industry that is putting Lincoln on the map as part of the "Silicon Prairie". Startup companies as well as long-standing technology firms are luring in new workers from out of state and competing for recent graduates from UNL. Raikes School is an asset.
- **Technical Customer Support.** Interest in this category is returning after years of customer support jobs being sent overseas.
- **Insurance and Financial Services.** The success with job expansion of several local insurance companies points out the attractiveness of Lincoln. The State of Nebraska statutes and taxation policies provide a competitive advantage for insurance companies, as

witnessed by several out-of-state companies also having located in Nebraska.

- **Entrepreneurship.** Lincoln has benefitted from entrepreneurs starting new businesses which have grown rapidly, adding many jobs to the economy. More should be done to encourage entrepreneurs, to utilize technology from UNL in the marketplace, and to promote entrepreneur education at UNL, [Southeast Community College](#) and other educational institutions.
- **Health Care.** Lincoln's health care providers serve a larger region than just the city. This is an industry that is growing nationally and is expected to grow locally as well, especially as the population ages. Expansions of existing locations are expected and a wide variety of new facilities will likely come forward over time.

STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Offer incentives for "primary" employers – that is for companies where the majority of their business and sales come from outside Lancaster County. The City should develop a policy on the use of incentives, such as Tax Increment Financing, for primary employers.
- Apply design standards as a tool for economic development. They provide assurances for surrounding property owners as well as prospective developers.
- Continue to coordinate the City's Economic Development efforts with the [Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development](#) (LPED) and UNL.
- Utilize [Lincoln Electric System](#) technology infrastructure as an economic development tool.
- Continue the work of the City and LPED to maintain an inventory of potential economic development sites and their current status in terms of planning and infrastructure.
- Continue to support UNL's efforts to obtain grants for research and support the expansion

of the mixed use concept of [Innovation Campus](#). The success of the University's research and development is important to the future of the city.

- Complete "Fiber to Home Project" to deliver ultra-fast broadband service to whole community.

DOWNTOWN

Downtown continues to contain the largest concentration of commercial space in the County with 9.3 million square feet of occupied space in 2016. This represents nearly 25 percent of the total occupied space in the County. Downtown also continues to be the largest single concentration of office space and government services. UNL's main campus also adds significantly to the number of employees in Downtown.

Among existing Regional Centers, Downtown

Lincoln stands as a unique community resource.

Downtown is the County's most intensive center of activity, offering a broad mix of retail, office, industrial, residential, entertainment and governmental uses.

It is home to numerous

public facilities — including the Nebraska State Capitol, State Offices, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's main campus, and the County-City Office Campus — as well as private endeavors— including financing, insurance, and other business services. Downtown Lincoln has historically served as the community's dominant center of entertainment. A key element to this role has been the long standing and successful "theater policy." This policy has allowed Downtown to retain an appreciable share of the area's movie screens. It is intended that this policy will continue as part of LPlan 2040. Downtown is also an important node for mixed use redevelopment that is more fully described in the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter. Much of this

Downtown continues to contain the largest concentration of commercial space in the County with 9.3 million square feet of occupied space in 2016.

mixed use activity has strengthened Downtown as the center of the community.

STRATEGIES FOR DOWNTOWN

- The City should preserve and enhance Downtown's role as:
 - The major office and service employment center
 - The center of all levels of government
 - The principal cultural, entertainment, and tourism center
 - The center for hotels and conventions
 - The financial center
 - The hub of higher education
 - A regional retail center geared toward employees, area residents, visitors, and UNL students and staff
 - A major focus for new residential reuse, infill, and redevelopment
- Retain the City's government center in Downtown and wherever possible locate local, state, and federal offices Downtown when expansions and relocations are considered



or new facilities are located.

- Maintain and reinforce Lincoln's successful [Theater Policy](#); encourage new entertainment attractions to locate in the Downtown.
- Support compatible and pedestrian-oriented development and implementation of the [Antelope Valley](#) project, [South Haymarket Neighborhood Plan](#) Telegraph District and West Haymarket redevelopment, making use of the [Lincoln Downtown Design Standards](#).

- Maintain the urban environment, including a mix of land uses and residential types.
- Encourage higher density development with parking areas at the rear of buildings or on upper floors of multi-use parking structures.

LANCASTER COUNTY, OUTSIDE OF LINCOLN

The majority of new development takes place in the urban area of Lincoln. However, it is important to strengthen existing commercial areas and support new development within the incorporated communities of Lancaster County. Commercial development in towns also provides opportunities for businesses that support rural residents within the county.

Farms are an important part of the history and economy of the region. While agriculture is no longer the primary occupation or major source of income in the County as a whole, agricultural production is still important to the community. It provides opportunities for produce to be sold at the local level and for large scale operations with sales worldwide. Farmers, while working year round, often support their families with accessory home occupations.

Agriculture is the dominant land use in Lancaster County, accounting for roughly 3/4 of all land. While this land is largely considered "undeveloped," it is still an important economic factor in the county's future. Agriculture's impact on the local economy goes beyond the sale at the end of production. Farms of all sizes make purchases of goods and services in the city and county throughout the year, which contribute to the local tax base and sustain growth for other businesses in the agriculture industry.

Development within the incorporated towns and their one mile zoning jurisdiction will be determined by the communities themselves. However, LPlan 2040 supports these communities

and their efforts to maintain and improve their commercial and industrial base.

Uses near the interchange of Highway 2 and Highway 43 (the Bennet exit) should be limited to commercial immediately surrounding the interchange that generally supports the agricultural community and those traveling through the area. The remainder of the designated area should be reserved for a potential large industrial employer which may desire to locate in a rural area with limited services and would be compatible with the surrounding rural residential area.

STRATEGIES FOR LANCASTER COUNTY, OUTSIDE OF LINCOLN

- Locate all new commercial and industrial development within Lincoln or the incorporated communities.
- Continue the County's support for road improvements that accommodate commercial and other development within the towns.
- Continue to encourage and permit accessory home businesses, and locate businesses within the commercial areas of incorporated towns as they expand beyond the definition of home occupation.
- Continue efforts to preserve the viability of the county's agriculture industry through zoning, easements, and other means.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The City and County have experienced significant increases in commercial and industrial development over the last several decades. Numerous new shopping centers, office complexes, and industrial facilities have been built – representing valuable economic resources for the community.

Lincoln remains the County's dominant home to both the commercial and industrial sectors of the local economy. Virtually all of the recent growth in

commercial space – that is, retail, office, and service uses – has occurred within the city limits of Lincoln. Most manufacturing expansion has also taken place in Lincoln with a few industries locating in the City of Waverly. This clustering of commercial and industrial activity in the City of Lincoln has been completed in accordance with the goals of previous comprehensive plans.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

- It is the policy that Commercial and Industrial Centers in Lancaster County be located:
 - Within the City of Lincoln or incorporated villages.
 - Outside of saline wetlands, signature habitat areas, native prairie and floodplain areas (except for areas of existing commercial and industrial zoning).
 - Where urban services and infrastructure are available or planned for in the near term.
 - In sites supported by adequate road capacity — commercial development should be linked to the implementation of the transportation plan.
 - In areas compatible with existing or planned residential uses.
 - In existing underdeveloped or redeveloping commercial and industrial areas in order to remove blighted conditions and to more efficiently utilize existing infrastructure.
 - In areas accessible by various modes of transportation (i.e. automobile, bicycle, transit, and pedestrian).



- So that they enhance entryways or public way corridors, when developing adjacent to these corridors.
- In a manner that supports the creation and maintenance of green space as indicated in the environmental resources section of this Plan.
- Encourage public-private partnerships, strategic alliances, and collaborative efforts as a means to accomplish future economic objectives.
- Explore additional opportunities for streamlining the permitting process.

COMMERCIAL CENTERS

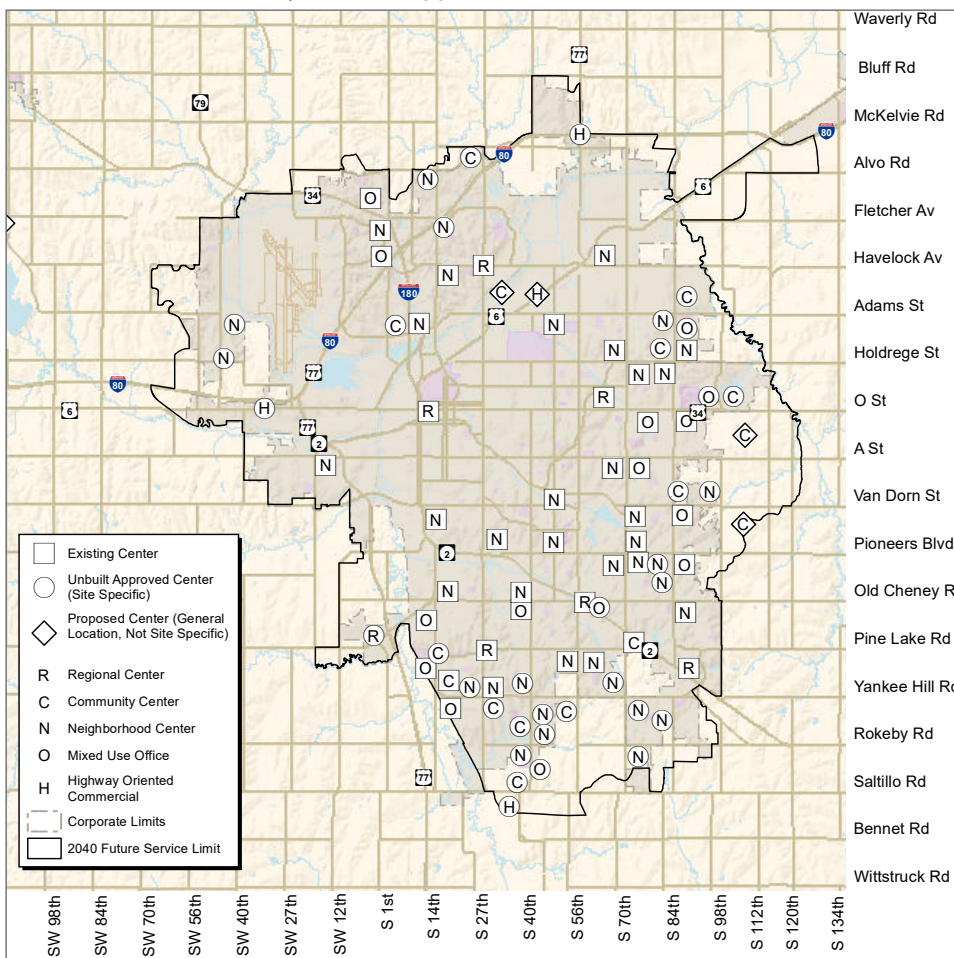
Based on the projected population growth rates, the Plan identifies the potential for 58.6 million square feet of occupied retail, office, and service uses by 2040. A substantial portion of this future commercial capacity will be accommodated on sites already zoned or approved for commercial

development or that have been identified in the Plan for future commercial land use.

“Commercial Centers” are defined as areas containing a mix of retail, office, service, and residential uses, with some light manufacturing and warehousing in selected circumstances. Other land uses such as child care centers, assisted living facilities, and recreational facilities should be integrated within the development. They can include shopping centers or districts (such as neighborhood centers, large scale retail malls, strip centers, and traditional store-front retail settings), residential mixed use centers, office parks, business parks, stand-alone corporate office campuses, research and technology parks, and Downtown Lincoln. Commercial Centers are distinguished from Industrial Centers by their dominance of commercial uses over industrial uses, and in the types of industrial uses located in them — that is, the uses are less intrusive in terms of lighting, noise, odors, truck and vehicular traffic, and

pollutants. Where properly sited, light manufacturing uses may be a part of larger Commercial Centers, except for Neighborhood Centers.

The Commercial Centers concept gives recognition to the evolving role of commercial and industrial uses in the life of cities. Commercial Centers encompass a broad range of land uses and are intended to encourage the mixing and integration of compatible land use types. Residential mixed use is encouraged in some commercial areas; especially for Regional, Community, Neighborhood, and Mixed Use Office Centers. Transitional uses (such as offices or commercial uses) should develop between Moderate to Heavy Industrial Centers and residential uses. In redeveloping areas, smaller setbacks between commercial and residential may



Map 5.1: Existing and Proposed Commercial Centers

be acceptable due to the existing conditions if adequate screening is provided.

The renovation, reuse, and redevelopment of existing commercial centers is encouraged and is further described in the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter, which outlines many strategies that are also appropriate for new mixed use commercial centers.

Design standards for Commercial Centers should be reviewed (see [Placemaking](#) chapter).

Strategies for Commercial Centers

- Disperse Commercial Centers throughout the community to support convenience of access and to lessen impacts on infrastructure.
- Locate Commercial Centers where they will have access to arterial streets with adequate capacity and be supported by transit, trails, sidewalks, and local streets.
- Discourage “four corner commercial development.”
- Encourage multiple street connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods to allow convenient access for neighboring residences and pedestrians without the use of arterial streets, but exercise care in designing the street network to minimize undesirable traffic impacts.
- Include higher density residential uses within and/or adjacent to all Commercial Centers except for Highway Oriented Commercial Areas.
- Discourage single use centers. Office parks should include supporting retail and residential components, while shopping centers should include supporting office and residential uses.
- Develop smaller stores next to larger anchor stores in centers to encourage small businesses and to provide a variety of goods and services for customers utilizing the centers.
- Incorporate or enhance green space and other public spaces, where possible.
- Design streets and public spaces to enhance pedestrian activity and support multiple modes of transportation.
- Create a pedestrian-oriented environment in the physical arrangement of buildings and parking.
- Develop Commercial Centers as compact clusters or mixed use nodes with appropriate site design features to accommodate shared parking and ease of pedestrian movement, to minimize impacts on adjacent areas, and encourage a unique character.
- Discourage auto-oriented strip commercial development; Commercial Centers should not be developed in a linear strip along a roadway or be completely auto-oriented.
- Design new Commercial Centers in a manner that facilitates future development and intensification of land uses on the site.
- Elevate building design for centers.
- Redevelop existing commercial strips for residential mixed use and/or transit oriented development where appropriate.
- Design buildings and land uses at the edge of the center to be compatible with adjacent residential land uses. Examples of compatible land uses include apartments, mixed use residential buildings, offices, assisted living facilities, or child care centers. Buildings should be compatible in terms of height, building materials and setback. Small compatible commercial buildings at the edge could include retail or service uses. Buildings with more intrusive uses should have greater setbacks, screening requirements and be built of more compatible materials.



Figure 5.1: Detailed Strategies for Future Commercial Centers (pages 5.8 and 5.9)

1. Mix of office, retail, service, and residential uses
2. Pedestrian orientation, parking at rear, multiple pedestrian routes, buildings and uses close to each other
3. More intense commercial uses (gas stations, grocery store, car wash, fast food, etc.) nearer to arterial streets
4. Develop smaller stores next to larger anchor stores in centers to encourage small businesses and to provide a variety of goods and services for customers utilizing the centers.
5. Transition of uses; less intense office uses and residential mixed use buildings near residential areas
6. Multiple vehicular connections, bicycle and pedestrian, between residential neighborhood and Commercial Centers



- Locate the most intensive commercial uses, such as restaurants, car washes, grocery stores, gas stations/convenience stores and drive through facilities nearer to the major street or roadway and furthest from the residential area (unless contained within a mixed use center). Lighting, dumpsters, loading docks and other service areas should be screened from residences.

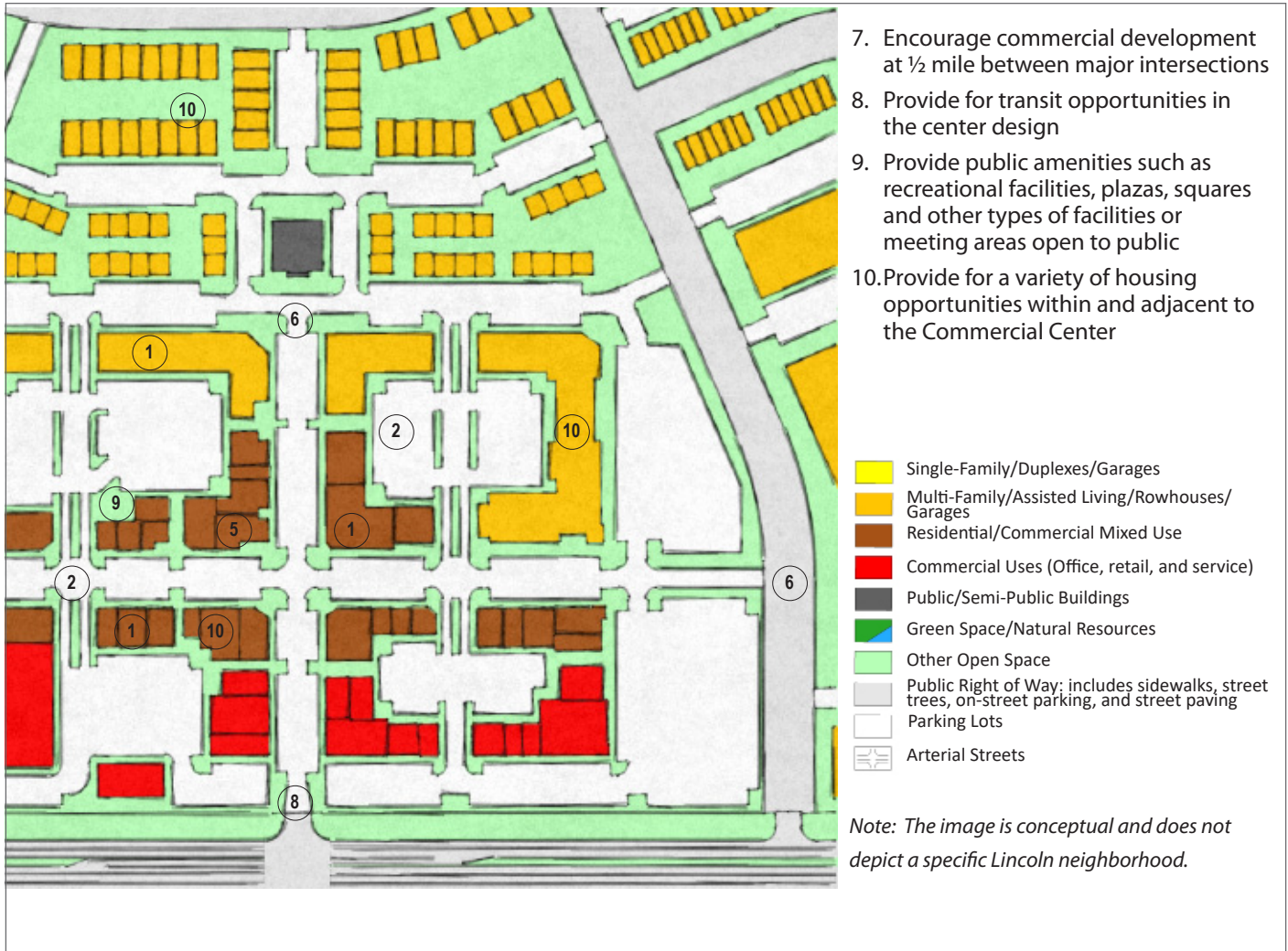
Principles and strategies for commercial development associated with other chapters:

- Greater Downtown (see [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter)
- Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors (see [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter).

The accompanying image displays how these strategies might work together in future or redeveloped Commercial Centers.

For the purpose of LPlan 2040, Commercial Centers have been divided into separate categories, depending on the type of center. The differences reflect the differing impacts that the centers have on adjacent land uses and the public infrastructure. The categories of Commercial Centers are:

1. Regional Centers (R)
2. Community Centers (C)
3. Neighborhood Centers (N)
4. Mixed Use Office Centers (O)
5. Highway Oriented Commercial (H)



The following section describes the general characteristics of each center, the location criteria to be used in siting such centers, potential future locations, and compatibility guidelines for determining their applicability to a given location. Smaller commercial areas less than five acres in size need not be identified specifically in the Plan, but should still develop in accordance with the principles of the Plan.

Regional Centers (R)

Center Size

Regional Centers typically contain one million or more square feet of developed building space.

Description

Regional Centers generally include a unique blend of commercial and other compatible land uses.

Within this type of center, one may find retail shopping, restaurants, entertainment complexes, cultural and artistic institutions, offices, personal and business service facilities, public institutions and governmental functions, and the center should include residential uses. The

scale of such centers can offer a sense of place with a unique character or cohesive theme. Regional Centers may be considered a "Mixed Use Redevelopment Node" if they generally conform to the strategies listed in the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter.

Regional Centers typically contain one million or more square feet of developed building space.

Many Regional Centers are large scale retailing centers that include a mall with several department store anchors and numerous small shops, as well as adjacent commercial development with stand-alone restaurants and stores, such as Gateway Mall or SouthPointe Pavilions.

Since several Regional Centers are still under development and significant redevelopment with

increased intensity and will take years to develop due to their size and scope, it is anticipated that they will serve the community's demand for Regional Centers well into the planning period.



Market Area

The market area of Regional Centers may cover the entire planning area and even counties within several hours drive of the center.

Center Spacing

Regional Centers should be located approximately four to six miles apart, depending upon their size, scale, function, and area population.

Location Criteria

Regional Centers should be geographically well dispersed throughout the Lincoln urban area, based on the center spacing guidelines noted above. The locations of existing Regional Centers, several of which are still under development, are shown on the Existing and Proposed Commercial Centers map. These existing centers are sufficient for the needs of the community through 2040 and no new additional Regional Centers are planned for at this time. Should any new Regional Centers be proposed during the planning period they should be sited on the map so that the potential impact on existing centers may be considered as part of the development review process. The community

will not require market studies to determine the economic impact on existing development. (Market studies will still be required for movie theaters.)

Community Centers (C)

Center Size

Community Centers may vary in size from approximately 250,000 to 600,000 square feet of commercial space. Typically, new Community Centers will range from 300,000 to 400,000 square feet, with those meeting the incentive criteria having up to 600,000 square feet.

Description

Community Centers are intended to be smaller in scale and intensity of uses than Regional Centers and serve a more targeted market and geographic area. Community Centers tend to be dominated by retail and service activities, although they can also serve as campuses for corporate office facilities and should include a mix of residential uses. When properly located, some light manufacturing or assembly when accessory to an office function may be appropriate.

One or two department stores or "big box" retail operations may serve as anchors (a single store over 50,000 sq. ft.) to the Community Center with numerous smaller general merchandise stores located between anchors or on surrounding site pads. Community Centers may be considered a "Mixed Use Redevelopment Node" if they generally conform to the strategies listed in the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter.

Market Area

Community Centers can have a community-wide appeal but primarily serve a geographic subarea within Lincoln and surrounding areas within the County. Depending on the mix of stores and other shopping opportunities in the area, existing Community Centers can have a market area that is quite extensive, even rivaling some Regional Centers.

Center Spacing

Community Centers should be located approximately 1 to 1 ½ miles apart, depending upon their size, scale, function, and area population. When located at intersections, they should also not be located across an arterial street from a Neighborhood Center or another Community Center.

Location Criteria

Community Centers should be geographically well dispersed throughout the Lincoln urban area, based upon the center spacing guidelines noted above. The general location of future Community Centers should be indicated in advance on the Existing and Proposed Commercial Centers map. These locations are not intended to be site specific but rather to suggest a general area within which a Community Center might be developed. This allows the potential impact on existing centers to be considered during the development review process, when an exact location would be determined and noted on the map. The community will not require market studies to determine the economic impact on existing development.

Siting Process

The locations of the Community Centers shown in the plan are generalized. It is anticipated that the center will develop somewhere within a ½ mile of the location shown in the Plan. As part of major development proposals that include proposed Community Centers, the exact location of the Community Center for that area should be determined and a Comprehensive Plan Amendment forwarded for consideration.

Floor Area Incentive

New Community Centers will typically range from 300,000 to 400,000 square feet, and should have a minimum of 10% of their total floor area in office use. However, centers that follow most, if not all, of the incentive criteria listed at the end of this section may be appropriate to develop with up

to 200,000 sq. ft. of additional space (as long as at least 20% of the total space in the center is in office space) for a total of 600,000 square feet. A desirable example would be for the total space in a center to be divided into a mix such as 120,000 square feet in office space (minimum 20%), 360,000 square feet of anchors (maximum 60%) and 120,000 square feet in smaller stores.

Community Centers may vary in size from approximately 250,000 to 600,000 square feet of commercial space.

Neighborhood Centers (N)

Center Size

Neighborhood Centers typically range in size from 50,000 to 150,000 square feet of commercial space, with those meeting the incentive criteria having up to 225,000 square feet. Existing centers may vary in size from 50,000 to 225,000 square feet.

Description

Neighborhood centers provide services and retail goods oriented to the neighborhood level, with significant pedestrian orientation and access. A typical center will have numerous smaller shops and offices and may include one or two anchor stores. Residential mixed use is encouraged. In general, an anchor store should occupy about a third to half of the total space.

In centers meeting the incentive criteria, anchor store(s) may be larger, however the goals of Neighborhood Centers are to be diverse and not simply one store. Examples include Lenox Village at S. 70th Street and Pioneers Boulevard, and Coddington Park Center at West A Street and Coddington Avenue. These smaller centers will not include manufacturing uses. Neighborhood Centers may be considered a “Mixed Use Redevelopment Node” if they generally



conform to the strategies listed in the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter.

During the planning period, several additional neighborhood centers will be needed. These centers are not identified on the future land use plan and will instead be located as part of plans for future neighborhoods based on the commercial guidelines.

Market Area

These centers typically serve the neighborhood level. It is anticipated that there will be no more than two neighborhood centers per one square mile of urban use. For areas of less than one square mile, the number of the centers will be reduced.

Center Spacing

Neighborhood Centers should be located approximately ½ mile apart, depending upon their size, scale, function and the population of the surrounding area. When located at intersections, they should also not be located across an arterial street from a Community Center or another Neighborhood Center.

Criteria

Future Neighborhood Centers are not sited in advance, but are identified once approved or built and are added to the land use plan.

Neighborhood Centers should generally not develop at corners of intersections of two arterial streets due to limited pedestrian accessibility and

Neighborhood Centers typically range in size from 50,000 to 150,000 square feet of commercial space.

impact on the intersection – locations ¼ to ½ mile from major intersections are encouraged, particularly if there is to be more than one Commercial Center within a square mile of urban residential use. There may be circumstances due to topography or other factors where centers at the intersection may be the only alternative.

When a square mile of urban use contains a Community or Regional Center, then only one neighborhood center should be sited within that square mile.

Siting Process

The exact location and land use composition of the Center should be determined as part of development proposals.

Floor Area Incentive

New Neighborhood Centers will typically range from 50,000 to 150,000 square feet of floor area per square mile of urban use. For centers meeting the incentive criteria, a 50% floor area bonus of up to 25,000 square feet of retail space and 50,000 square feet of office space could be added to the 150,000 square feet total, for a center total of 225,000 square feet.

Mixed Use Office Centers (O)

Center Size

Centers will develop typically with 250,000 square feet or more. Existing centers may be as small as 150,000 square feet. New centers should have retail space to serve office tenants, which may also serve adjacent neighborhoods. In general, centers should have 10-25% of their space in retail uses.

Description

Mixed Use Office Centers are intended to provide a high quality office environment with some supportive retail, service, and residential uses. Centers are designed to encourage office uses to locate together, rather than to be dispersed on single sites, in order to maximize transportation access and to have enough mass to support retail and services within the center. Office uses benefit from the mix, and employees are more satisfied with the work environment when residential and retail uses are within walking distance. A good example of a Mixed Use Office Center is Fallbrook, which has 560,000 square feet of office uses around a 120,000-square foot “neighborhood” type retail

center – which is 18% of the total space. Existing office parks may have little or no retail space, but are encouraged to add retail, service, and residential space as they continue to develop or redevelop. Mixed Use Office Centers may be considered a “Mixed Use Redevelopment Node” if they generally conform to the strategies listed in the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter.

Center Spacing

Mixed Use Office Centers should be generally dispersed throughout the community. They may be across the street from a Neighborhood or Community Center. (Office uses across from a Regional Center should be integrated into the Regional Center). These centers may include: 1) Light Industrial Centers in I-3 Employment Center zoning which are developing with predominately office type uses; 2) up to 25% retail space and up to 150,000 square feet; and 3) single retail users less than 50,000 square feet.

Location Criteria

The locations of existing, and general locations of future, Mixed Use Office Centers are shown on the Existing and Proposed Commercial Centers map. Additional locations can be designated in the Comprehensive Plan as part of the development review process.

Highway Oriented Commercial Areas (H)

Center Size

These commercial areas will range in size considerably depending on market potential and land availability.

Description

Highway Oriented Commercial Areas are primarily oriented to the highway traveler and highway oriented distribution, warehouse and light manufacturing companies. They may include a variety of retail and service uses, including big box retail stores that have a regional draw or serve

“community” center needs, restaurants, motels/hotels, gas stations, truck stops.

Since they are along entryways into the community, they should have landscaping and design standards. The Highway Oriented Commercial Areas identified in the Plan are not surrounded by large residential areas, so they are not typical locations for large discount and grocery stores or other types of anchors that serve local markets.

However, these stores may be able to attract additional support from the population in rural areas and smaller towns in the region, along with the possibility of large specialty or destination stores such as sporting goods and furniture stores, which have the ability to attract consumers from one hundred miles and beyond.



Location Criteria

The locations of existing, and general locations of future, Highway Oriented Commercial Areas are shown on the Existing and Proposed Commercial Centers map. Additional locations can be designated in the Comprehensive Plan as part of the development review process.

Incentive Criteria

Community and Neighborhood Centers meeting the criteria below are eligible to increase their floor area, as described in those sections.

- The center is located in a neighborhood with greater residential density than is typical for a suburban area, and the center itself contains higher density residential uses (density above 15 dwelling units per acre) integrated within the development.



- Provides a significant mix of uses, including office, service, retail, residential, and open space — far more than typical single use centers.
- Includes multi-story buildings, including residential uses above stores and throughout the site.
- Integrates some light industrial or manufacturing uses within Community Centers.
- Provides public amenities such as recreational facilities, significant open space, plazas, public squares, and other types of public/community facilities or meeting areas.
- The center is supported by a street network with significant traffic capacity in the future, rather than on streets that already have significant commercial development.
- Provides for a significant pedestrian orientation in the layout, including the physical arrangement of buildings and parking, with buildings oriented to pedestrians.
- Provides a “town center” orientation in the overall center plan to create a quality mixed use environment (e.g. by having design elements such as a “main street” environment with a row of on-street parking on both sides, slower traffic speeds, and the majority of parking at the rear with buildings, sidewalks, benches and other amenities oriented to pedestrians).
- Traffic, pedestrian circulation and utilities are planned to facilitate a future intensification of the center, if parking needs and requirements are reduced and traffic capacity allows for additional space in the center in the long term.
- Location is ¼ to ½ mile from major intersections in order to facilitate traffic movements.
- Provides for transit opportunities in the center design.

COMMERCIAL INFILL

A variety of commercial land uses seek infill and redevelopment locations. There are numerous opportunities throughout the community. Currently, there are approximately 1,114 acres of vacant commercially-zoned land in the existing city. That translates to over 22 million potential square feet based on current floor area ratios by zoning district. (Floor Area Ratio is the total square feet of a building divided by the square feet of the parcel it occupies.) This figure excludes the inventory of over 10 million square feet of approved commercial space in use permits and planned unit developments that has not yet been constructed. The Plan envisions a portion of the vacant commercially-zoned land will be utilized by 2040 since it has access to urban services today.

Strategies for Commercial Infill













- Discourage auto-oriented strip commercial development and seek opportunities for residential mixed use redevelopment and/or transit oriented development of existing commercial strips.
- Develop infill commercial areas to be compatible with the character of the area.
- Maintain and encourage businesses that conveniently serve nearby residents, while ensuring compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.
- Avoid encroachment into existing neighborhoods during expansion of existing commercial and industrial uses, and take steps to ensure expansions are in scale with the adjacent neighborhood, are properly screened, fulfill a demonstrated need and are beneficial to health and safety.
- Ensure the priority in older areas is on retaining areas for residential development. Prior to approving the removal of housing in order to provide for additional parking to support existing centers, alternatives such as reduced

The accompanying conceptual images illustrate examples of how a variety of strategies might work together for commercial infill:

Figure 5.2: Detailed Strategies for Commercial Infill

A "+" sign behind the number means the example illustrates the strategy; a "-" sign means the example does not.

1. Maintain existing vehicular access, relocate drives as needed, share access where possible, and discourage additional vehicular access to an arterial street
2. Encourage a higher Floor Area Ratio for commercial redevelopment
3. Face existing residential uses with new residential uses rather than the backs of buildings unless existing residential faces the opposite direction such as along an alley
4. Align commercial driveways with existing streets where possible
5. Discourage commercial driveways that interrupt the blockface of a residential street, especially when residences face the street
6. Encourage shared driveways and interconnected parking lots where possible
7. Orient buildings to the street, especially corners
8. Maintain or adaptively reuse existing structures (especially historical structures) where possible
9. Encourage a vertical mix of residential and commercial use types
10. Encourage shared parking between land uses with different peak demand periods
11. Maintain or enhance on-street parking resources, especially in established/historic commercial districts

-  Single-Family/Duplexes/Rowhouses/Garages
-  Multi-Family/Assisted Living
-  Residential/Commercial Mixed Use
-  Commercial Uses (office, retail, and service)
-  Industrial Uses
-  Public/Semi-Public Buildings
-  Green Space/Natural Resources
-  Other Open Space
-  Public Right of Way: includes sidewalks, public alleys, street trees, on-street parking, and street paving
-  Parking Lots/Driveways
-  On-Street Parking Examples
-  Arterial Streets



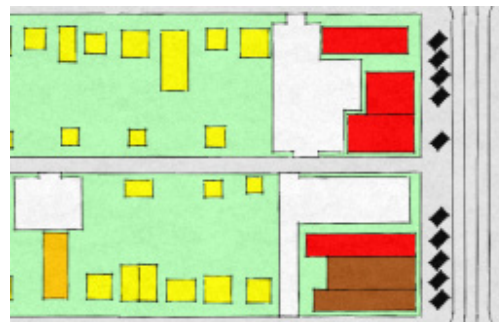
Very Poor

Redevelopment fails to meet or undermines several Business and Economy Chapter principles and/or strategies.



Poor

Redevelopment does not result in broad change that strives to meet Business and Economy Chapter principles and/or strategies.



Existing

Existing site prior to infill or redevelopment.



Better

Redevelopment accomplishes or incorporates only a few Business and Economy Chapter principles and/or strategies.



Preferred

Redevelopment accomplishes or incorporates numerous Business and Economy Chapter principles and/or strategies.

Note: The Commercial Infill Images are conceptual and do not depict specific Lincoln commercial areas, but have been developed from examples from several commercial areas throughout the city and elsewhere. The intent of the images is to provide examples of situations in existing commercial areas that illustrate a range of development outcomes.



parking requirements, shared parking, additional on-street parking, or the removal of other commercial structures should be explored.

- Encourage efforts to find new uses for abandoned, under-utilized or “brownfield” sites that are contaminated, through redevelopment and environmental mitigation.
- Maintain and encourage ethnically diverse commercial establishments that are convenient to existing neighborhoods.
- Develop and maintain an ongoing citywide

Currently, there are approximately 1,114 acres of vacant commercially-zoned land in the existing city.

floor area and land-use space survey and analysis for office, service and retail commercial uses to monitor growth and measure vacancy rates and to provide baseline information for decision making.

- Identify and maintain an inventory of vacant and undeveloped commercially-zoned land within the existing city, and make the inventory publicly available.
- Develop design standards for varying types of Commercial Centers and corridors, taking into consideration the context of the site and surroundings.

INDUSTRIAL CENTERS

Industrial employment is considered an employment sector with moderate growth potential for the city and county. Using the



population projections discussed earlier, LPlan 2040 foresees the demand for nearly 1,400 acres of additional industrial property over the planning period. Locations for future

industries should be sought on land outside of the 100 year floodplain. The City’s policy is to site Industrial Centers in the land use plan in advance

in order to ensure public safety and adequate infrastructure. (See Existing and Proposed Industrial Centers map on the following page.) The Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department should be involved in all siting of new industrial centers to ensure the public’s health and safety.

Moderate to Heavy Industrial Centers (HI)

Size

Moderate to Heavy Industrial Centers should be over 80 acres in size, with planned industrial centers of over 200 acres preferred.

Description

Moderate to Heavy Industrial Centers are primarily for manufacturing, processing and assembly uses such as Veyance, Archer Daniels Midland, and Kawasaki. In the past, large industrial users were often located in isolation from each other; preferably industries should locate together in planned industrial centers. Many industrial centers also include some warehouse, storage and contractor yard uses with a minor amount of supporting commercial use — but they should be and usually are over 75% industrial use.

Spacing

Moderate to Heavy Industrial uses are encouraged to locate near each other in planned industrial centers. Planned industrial centers should generally be distributed throughout the community.

Criteria

New industrial centers should be distant from existing or planned residential areas. Industrial uses should be located in close proximity to each other. Transitional uses (such as offices or commercial uses) should develop between Moderate to Heavy Industrial Centers and residential uses. In redeveloping areas, lesser setbacks may be acceptable due to the existing conditions, as long as industrial zoning does not get closer to existing residences and adequate screening is

provided. Each planned industrial district should be established only after further consideration of site characteristics, buffering and appropriate zoning.

as long as existing industrial zoning does not get closer to existing residences.

Light Industrial Centers (LI)

Size

Light Industrial Centers should be a minimum of 50 acres in size, with larger planned centers preferred.

Description

Light Industrial Centers are primarily for lighter manufacturing uses with some additional office and retail uses located within the center, such as the Chamber Industrial Park at S. 14th Street & Old Cheney Road.

Spacing

Light Industrial Centers should generally be distributed throughout the community. Particularly, new Light Industrial Centers should be located in new growth areas of the city.

Criteria

Light Industrial Centers can be located more closely to residential uses than Moderate to Heavy Industrial Centers, though residential uses should be buffered through landscaping, large setbacks and transitional uses, such as office or open space. In redeveloping areas, smaller setbacks may be acceptable due to the existing conditions,

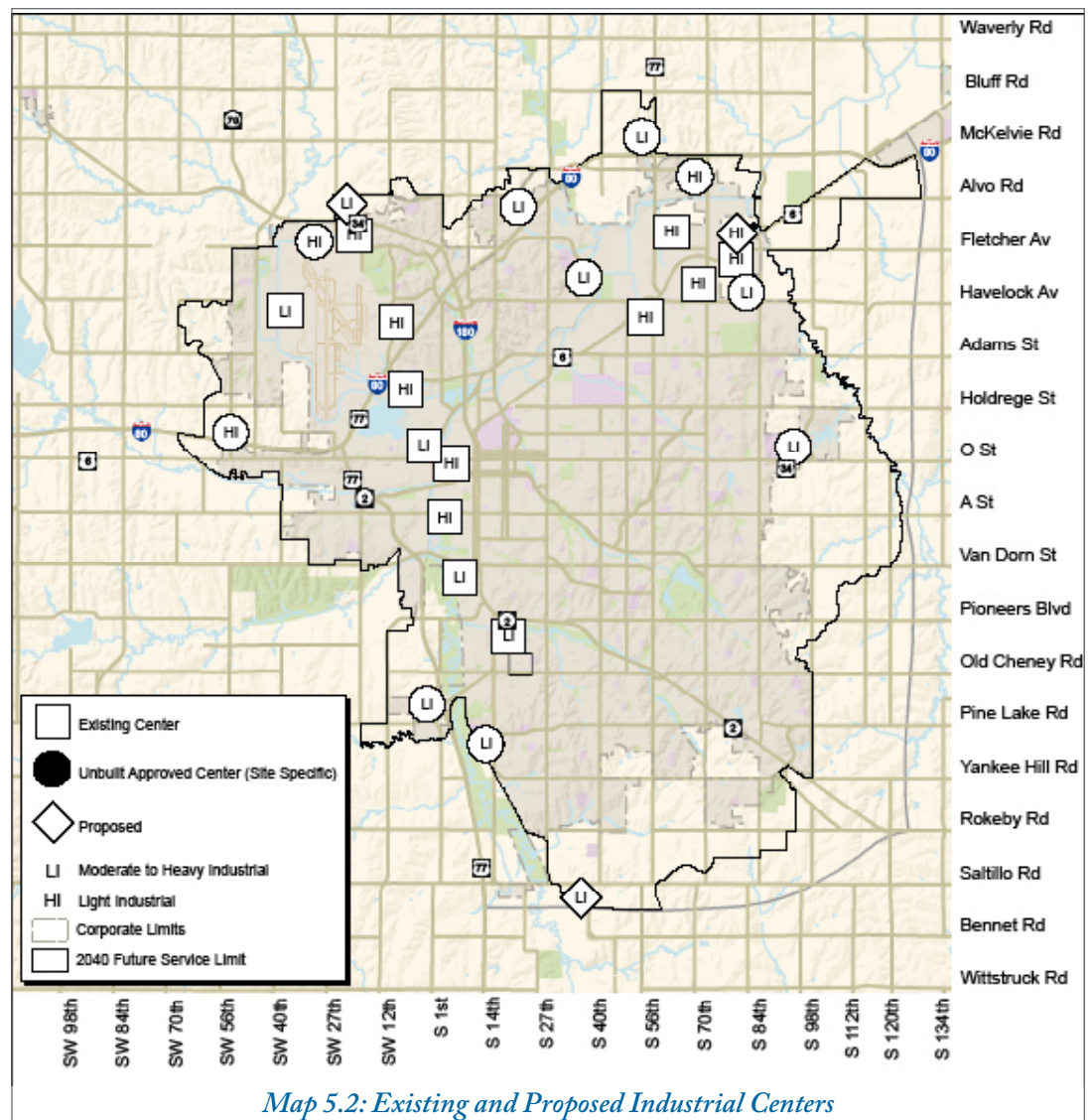
Hazardous Materials

There are considerations for industrial uses in regard to the potential impact on adjacent property. In

2005, a Joint Committee of the Board of Health and Planning Commission began to meet regularly to discuss issues of common interest; including industrial land uses that use and store hazardous materials. The

Joint Committee developed reports called [Use and Storage of Hazardous Materials](#) and [Pipelines Carrying Hazardous Materials](#).

LPlan 2040 foresees the demand for nearly 1,400 acres of additional industrial property over the planning period.



Public Health & Safety Measures

Industrial zoning districts should be primarily for industrial uses.

Risk Reduction: In areas where industrial and residential uses are already close, efforts should focus on changes in the quantity and type of hazardous materials used and on increasing the distance between where hazardous materials are stored and residential districts.

Notification: Persons living in close proximity to businesses with hazardous materials should be notified of the hazards.

Emergency Planning: Businesses and government agencies should continue to work together on developing and updating Emergency Management Plans for dealing with accidents and emergencies.

Joint Planning: Joint planning and health efforts should continue between the Board of Health and Planning Commission. The specific objectives and recommendations already developed should be further reviewed and implemented.

POTENTIAL LARGE EMPLOYER OPPORTUNITY AREAS

The Plan designates some sites outside the 2040 Future Service Limit as “Large Employer Opportunity Areas,” which are displayed on [Map 1.2: Lincoln Area Future Land Use Plan](#). The purpose



of these sites is to provide a “second tier” of potential sites for large “primary” employers to consider, if for some reason potential sites within the Future Service Limit are unsuitable. These second tier sites currently have limited

infrastructure; however, some employers may find them desirable due to their large size, highway and/or rail accessibility, and remoteness from

residential areas. All economic development efforts should focus on land within the future service limit, which are the most viable sites; however, these Opportunity Areas can potentially provide a secondary option if needed for a large primary employer.

Initially, not all of the Opportunity Areas are viable locations, since many are remote from the city limits and infrastructure. A selected site would develop only if annexed by the City after a careful evaluation of infrastructure costs and implications.

6 MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT

This chapter lays out the strategy for mixed use redevelopment that strives for compatibility with surroundings while accomplishing various principles of the Plan.



INTRODUCTION

LPlan 2040 projects a significant shift in demographics during the planning period, which is expected to create a demand for some smaller dwellings, smaller lots and more walkable neighborhoods that have retail and services integrated to serve residents. The mixed use redevelopment concept for LPlan 2040 focuses on the existing and expected large supplies of undeveloped or under-utilized commercial land with city services already in place.

Based on the projected demographic trends, fiscal constraints for expanding infrastructure, and numerous opportunities for future redevelopment of commercial areas, the Plan identifies the potential for 8,000 new dwelling units to be located within the existing built-out portion of the City by 2040. The primary focus for new dwelling units is the “Greater Downtown” which includes Downtown proper, Antelope Valley, the Haymarket, South Haymarket, Telegraph District and Innovation Campus. These areas should accommodate roughly 3,000 new dwelling units by 2040. An additional 1,000 dwelling units are slated for existing residentially-zoned land throughout the existing city, primarily on vacant lots (see [Neighborhoods & Housing](#) chapter). The remaining 4,000

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Redevelopment primarily occurs where land is developed with buildings that are cleared from the site, buildings that are converted to a different use, or a combination of the two. Infill primarily occurs where land is not presently developed with buildings.

dwelling units are anticipated to be located primarily in Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors including existing commercial centers and along major transportation corridors.

Increasing residential densities by adding new dwelling units to existing commercial areas in the form of mixed use centers also strengthens the buying power of adjacent neighborhoods

by adding more “rooftops.” Strengthened buying power may be able to improve the quality and quantity of localized private businesses and services.

The community should plan for sufficient and

Mixed Use Redevelopment should target underdeveloped or redeveloping commercial and industrial areas.

varied choices for the location of special needs housing.

Special needs housing should be encouraged to locate along arterials and within mixed use commercial centers where it could serve as a transitional use

to less intensive residential development and could benefit from closer proximity of services, transit and retail goods within walking distance. Special needs housing should be distributed throughout the community and is not considered a part of the 8,000 dwelling units of infill.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Mixed Use Redevelopment should:
 - Target existing underdeveloped or redeveloping commercial and industrial areas in order to remove blighted conditions and more efficiently utilize existing infrastructure.
 - Occur on sites supported by adequate road and utility capacity.
- Be located and designed in a manner compatible with existing or planned land uses.
- Enhance entryways when developing adjacent to these corridors.
- Preserve existing affordable housing and promote the creation of new affordable housing throughout the community.
- Provide a diversity of housing types and choices throughout each neighborhood for an increasingly diverse population.
- Encourage substantial connectivity and convenient access to neighborhood services (stores, schools, parks) from nearby residential areas.
- Create housing opportunities for residents with special needs throughout the city that are compatible with and integrated into residential neighborhoods.
- Incorporate and enhance street networks with multiple modes of transportation in order to maximize access and mobility options.
- Promote activities of daily living within walking distance, and provide sidewalks on both sides of all streets, or in alternative locations as allowed through design standards or review process.
- Help to create neighborhoods that include homes, stores, workplaces, schools, and places to recreate.
- Encourage residential mixed use for identified corridors and redeveloping Regional, Community, Neighborhood, and Mixed Use Office Centers identified as nodes.
- Develop with substantial connectivity between developing or existing neighborhoods and developing or redeveloping commercial centers.

- Be encouraged to make available opportunities for individuals and/or organizations to raise and market local food.
- Encourage preservation or restoration of natural resources within or adjacent to mixed use redevelopment areas.
- Encourage public/private partnerships with housing entities such as Lincoln Housing Authority, Nebraska Housing Resource, and NeighborWorks.

MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The Mixed Use Redevelopment Approach presented below seeks to fulfill three objectives:

1. To provide flexibility to the marketplace in siting future mixed use redevelopment locations;
2. To offer existing neighborhoods, present and future residents, developers, other businesses, and infrastructure providers a level of predictability as to where such mixed use redevelopment concentrations might be located; and
3. To encourage and provide incentives for residential mixed use in redeveloping commercial and industrial areas.

Balancing these three objectives in a meaningful way will require diligence, mutual understanding, and an ongoing planning dialogue.

The Mixed Use Redevelopment Approach is divided into two major components:

1. Greater Downtown
2. Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors

Components and strategies for redevelopment associated with other chapters include:

1. Commercial Infill (see [Business & Economy](#) chapter)

2. Existing Neighborhoods (see [Neighborhoods & Housing](#) chapter)

GREATER DOWNTOWN

A major focus for new residential reuse, infill, and redevelopment is in the Greater Downtown area. Over 1,100 dwelling units were permitted from 2010 to 2015. The Plan envisions an additional 3,000 dwelling units in this core area by 2040. This area is the main hub of employment, entertainment, and higher education. Over the years, there have been significant public and private investments in new building construction, renovations, and infrastructure. In order to capitalize on these collective investments, further development in the Greater Downtown should be realized.

The Plan envisions an additional 3,000 dwelling units in this core area by 2040.

Strategies for Greater Downtown

- Support development and implementation of the [Downtown Master Plan](#), [South Haymarket Neighborhood Plan](#) and the [Antelope Valley Redevelopment Plan](#).
- Ensure that new development is compatible with the existing Downtown and is pedestrian-oriented.
- Maintain the urban environment, including a mix of land uses with a major focus on residential uses.
- Encourage higher density development with parking areas at the rear of buildings, below grade, or on upper floors of multi-use parking structures.

MIXED USE REDEVELOPMENT NODES AND CORRIDORS

“Down-zonings” in established neighborhoods to help preserve a mix of single family homes and apartments have occurred in several areas over the past decade. In acknowledgement of this trend and community desire, the City’s primary strategy for residential infill and redevelopment outside

of the Greater Downtown is to encourage the redevelopment and reuse of sites and buildings in commercial areas in order to create new mixed use centers that are compatible and complementary to adjacent neighborhoods. Nodes and corridors are mixed use and transit oriented. Residential development is strongly encouraged. This strategy is meant to absorb dwelling unit redevelopment demand from existing residential neighborhoods while enhancing areas with blighted conditions.

Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors supplement the “Commercial” land use designation on the Future Land Use Map and the Commercial Centers map. (Nodes are Commercial Centers that are five acres or larger that are encouraged to be redeveloped into walkable residential mixed use centers.) Nodes may be classified as Regional, Community, Neighborhood, or Mixed Use Office Centers, and can be thought of as “villages within the city” with a broad range of

land use types including civic, residential, special needs housing, retail, office, and service. Corridors are located along major transportation corridors such as arterials. Corridors often link Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and/or other Commercial Centers. Residential mixed use redevelopment should be encouraged in these areas, and transportation enhancements may be targeted to support such redevelopment.

Nodes encompass generalized locations of commercial and industrial land uses with access to arterial streets, public transportation, and proximity to community facilities such as parks and schools. As the foundation of a great new neighborhood, nodes should provide services and retail goods oriented to the residents in and adjacent to the development, with significant pedestrian orientation and access. The adaptive reuse of historic or other existing structures into mixed uses is encouraged. The size, scope, and

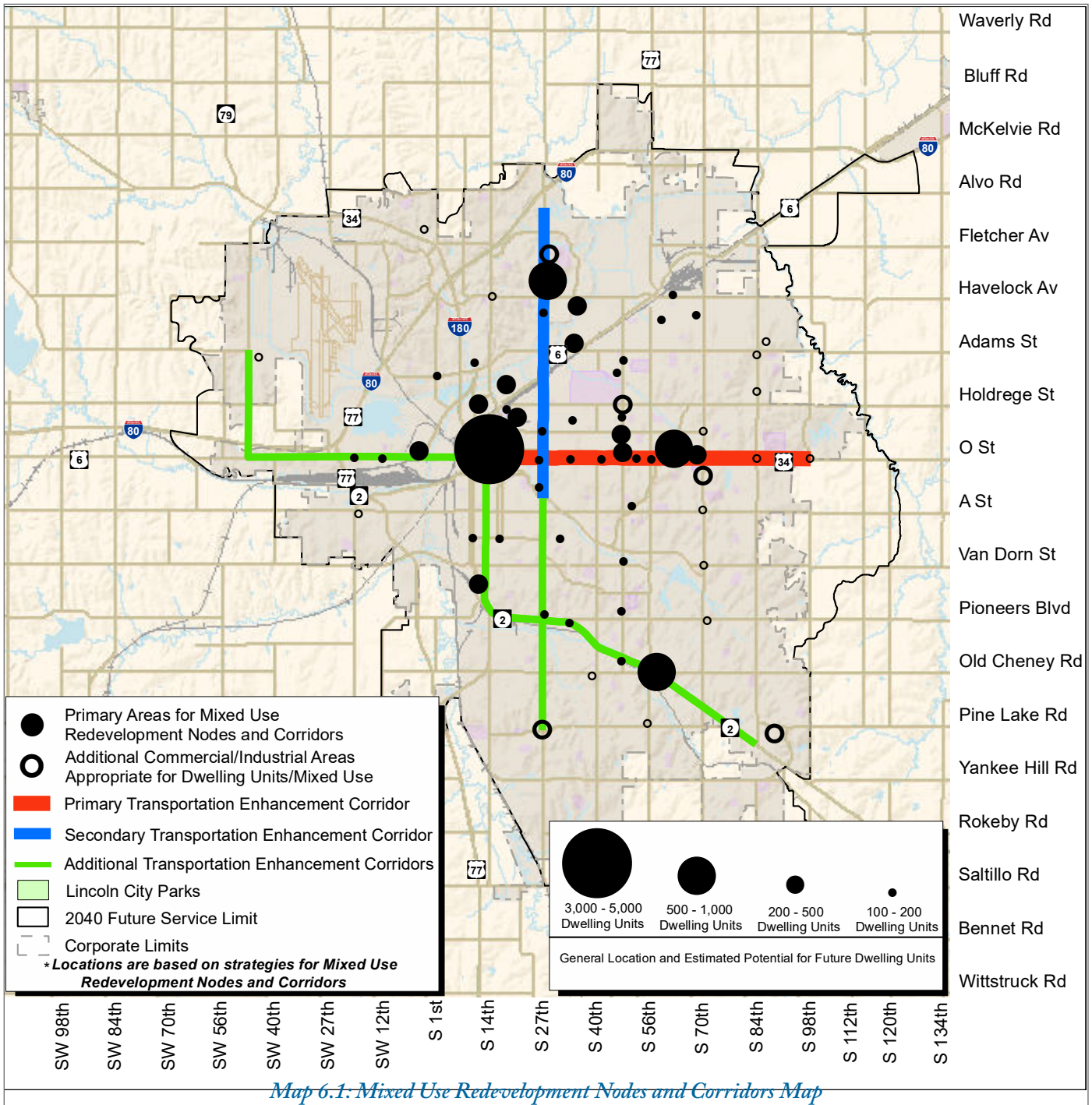


Figure 6.1: An architect's depiction of the Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors Concept, Looking West along P Street at about 68th Street

spacing of a node will depend on the Commercial Center designation. Nodes should be located on arterials and should have access to public transit. They should provide adequate facilities for multi-modal transportation including a complete sidewalk network, transit stops, automobile parking and circulation, and storage of bicycles. This concept is designed and intended to be mutually beneficial for existing adjacent neighborhoods and

the new mixed use neighborhood created by the redeveloped center. Newer commercial centers that are not yet fully developed are encouraged to utilize this concept as a guide for amending their approved plans to develop as mixed use centers.

Corridors represent priorities for future public transportation enhancements (such as increases in level of service), areas to encourage mixed



use redevelopment of commercial strips, and connections for Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and/or commercial centers. Corridors are typically a half block to a block wide along arterial streets in commercially or industrially-zoned areas.



Since they are often located on major arterials between commercial centers, they experience a lot of traffic and usually have transit. Corridors present opportunities for small-scale reuse or redevelopment

projects and should include a mix of land use types, especially residential. The adaptive reuse of historic or other existing structures into mixed uses is encouraged. Due to the linear nature of Corridors, existing residential neighborhoods are often next door or across the alley from the commercial strip or industrial remnant. This close relationship makes the adoption of design standards very important in proceeding with this strategy.

Design standards should be developed for Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors. As of 2016, urban design standards generally only cover residential areas inside the 1950 City limits and the Downtown. Most commercial areas of the city are not under any design review and sometimes create rough edges and poor entryways to neighborhoods. Establishing design standards for Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors should result in better design within commercial centers and soften the transition to surrounding neighborhoods.

Strategies for Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors

- Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors should strive to locate:
 - In areas where there is a predominance of commercial or industrial zoning and/or

development, focusing on non-residential areas as opposed to existing neighborhoods.

- In proximity to planned or existing neighborhoods and community services, to facilitate access to existing community services or to address a deficiency by providing services such as grocery stores, childcare centers, and restaurants.
- Where there is existing or potential for good access to transit, to enhance the public transit system by making it accessible to residents and to facilitate the development of neighborhood multimodal hubs where residents can drive, bike, or walk to a transit stop, go to work, and then shop for their daily needs before they return home.
- On at least one arterial street to help provide for traffic and utility capacity and access to transit.
- In areas appropriate for residential mixed use redevelopment, outside of areas identified as Industrial Centers and Highway Oriented Commercial Areas in LPlan 2040 to avoid conflicts with health and safety.
- In areas that minimize floodplain and other environmental impacts. Areas within the floodplain that already have buildings and fill are appropriate for redevelopment; projects that receive public assistance should meet a higher standard to preserve flood storage. This criterion encourages redevelopment while protecting sensitive environmental areas.
- Strive for commercial Floor Area Ratios of at least 0.5 within buildable areas designated for commercial development inside the project boundary (including public and semi-public buildings). This strategy encourages significant returns on public investment by developing high-quality properties with sustained value, long-term viable businesses to generate sales

tax, and efficient use of land and infrastructure resources.

- Strive for residential densities of at least seven dwelling units per gross acre within buildable areas inside the project boundary. This strategy encourages significant returns on public investment by developing high-quality properties with sustained value, supports new

businesses in the mixed use center, makes public transportation more viable, and uses land and infrastructure more efficiently.

- Develop design standards specific to Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors.

Floor Area Ratio is the total square feet of a building divided by the square feet of the parcel it occupies.

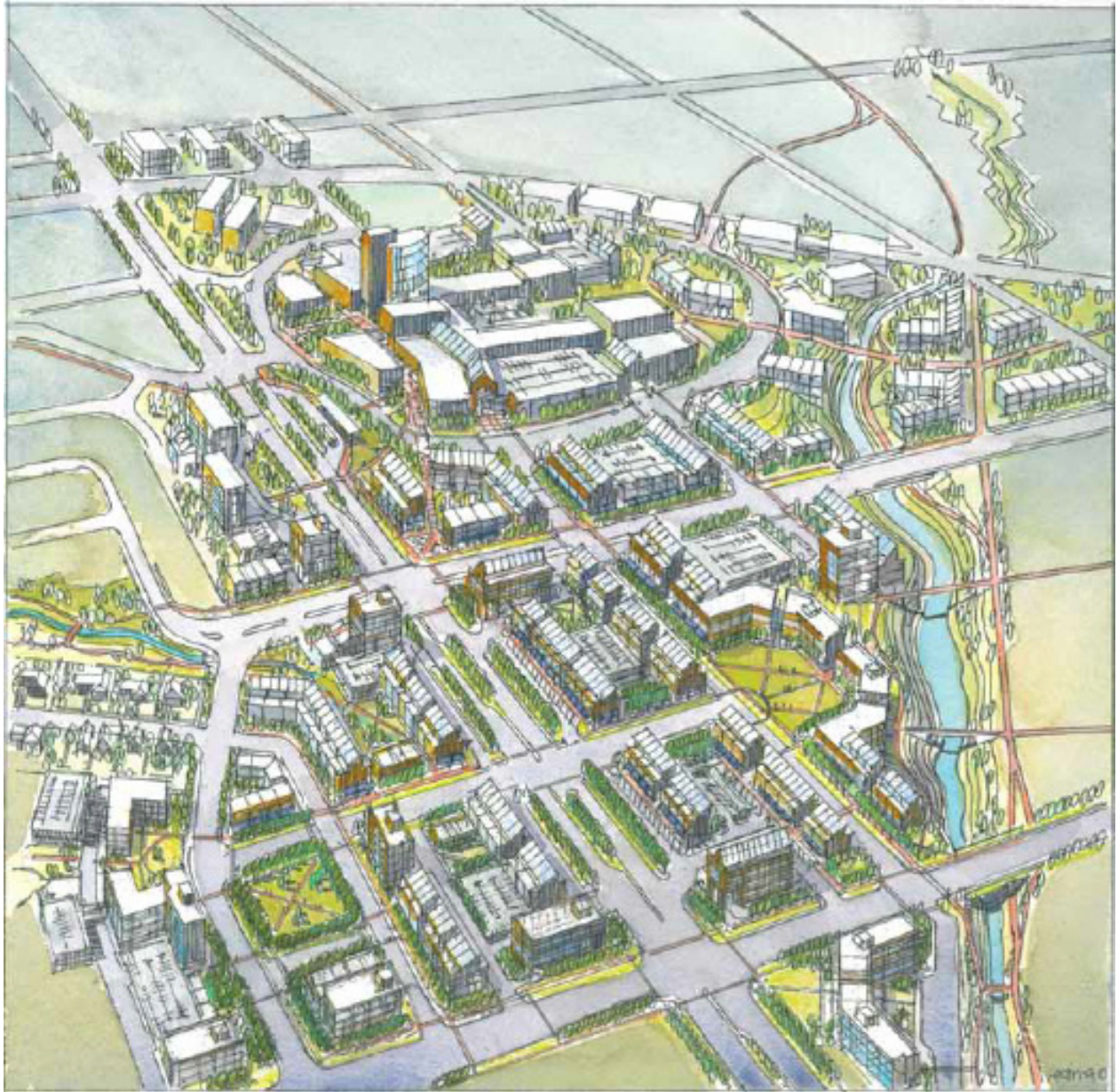














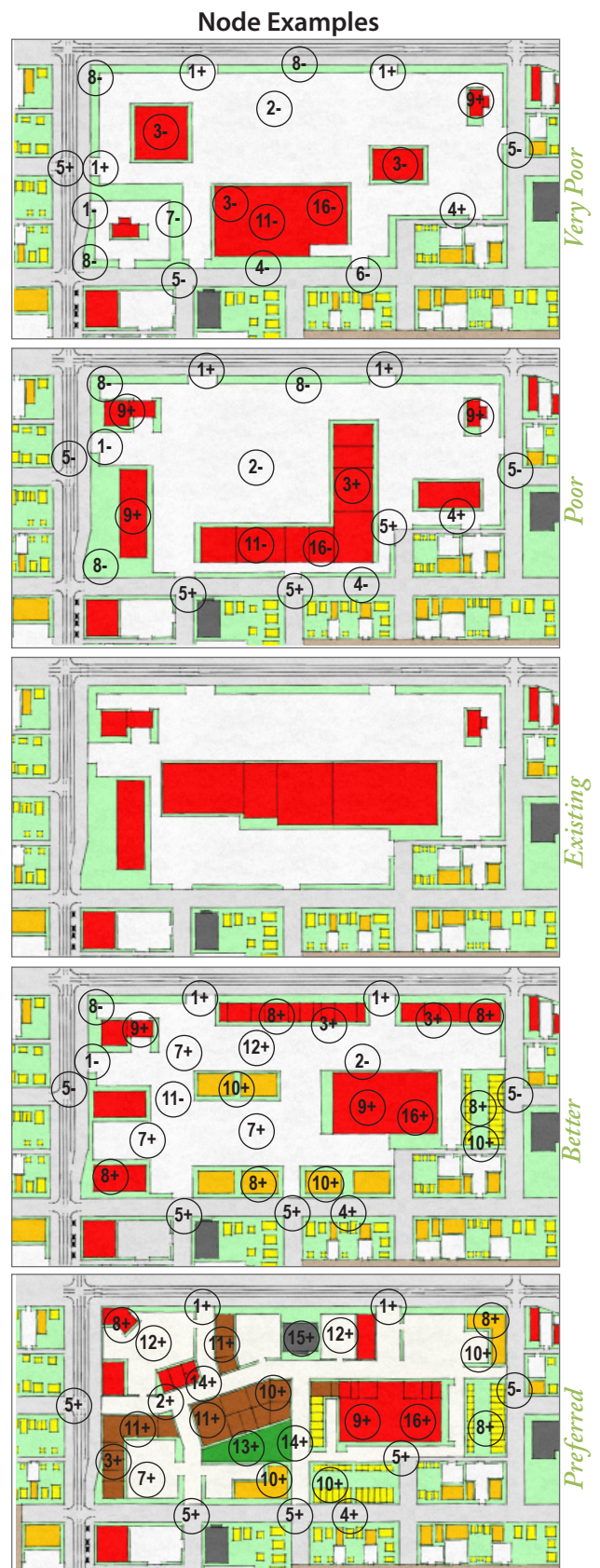
Figure 6.2: An architect's depiction of the Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors Concept for the Gateway/East Park area (looking northwest from 70th and O Streets)

*Figure 6.3: Detailed Strategies for Mixed Use Redevelopment
Nodes and Corridors (pages 6.8 and 6.9)*

A "+" sign next to the number means the example illustrates the strategy; a "-" sign means the example does not.

1. Maintain existing vehicular access, relocate drives as needed, share access where possible, and discourage additional vehicular access to an arterial street.
2. Encourage a higher Floor Area Ratio for commercial redevelopment.
3. Encourage a wide variety of commercial tenants.
4. Face existing residential uses with new residential uses rather than the backs of buildings, unless existing residential faces the opposite direction such as along an alley.
5. Align commercial driveways with existing streets where possible.
6. Discourage commercial driveways that interrupt the blockface of a residential street, especially when residences face the street.
7. Encourage shared driveways and interconnected parking lots where possible.
8. Orient buildings to the street, especially corners
9. Maintain or adaptively reuse existing structures (especially historic structures) where possible.
10. Incorporate a variety of residential use types such as rowhouses, apartment buildings, apartments in mixed use buildings, live-work units, and special needs housing. These buildings could also serve as a transition to the existing neighborhood.
11. Encourage a vertical mix of residential and commercial use types.
12. Encourage shared parking between land uses with different peak demand periods.
13. Create public/semi-public green or open spaces such as parks, plazas, or community gardens.
14. Establish or re-establish an internal public or private street network within the node that has substantial connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods.
15. Encourage public/semi-public uses.
16. Encourage supermarkets or specialty grocery stores to locate within nodes.

-  Single-Family/Duplexes/Rowhouses/Garages
-  Multi-Family/Assisted Living
-  Residential/Commercial Mixed Use
-  Commercial Uses
-  Industrial Uses
-  Public/Semi-Public Buildings
-  Green Space/Natural Resources
-  Other Open Space
-  Public Right of Way: includes sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking, and street paving
-  Parking Lots
-  On-Street Parking Examples
-  Arterial Streets



Note: General ratings for drawings on page 6.9.

Commercial Corridor Examples

Industrial Corridor Examples

Note: General ratings for drawings on pages 6.8 and 6.9.

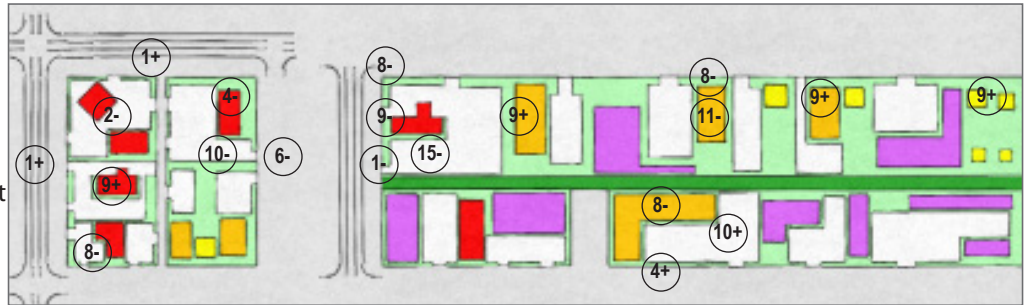
Very Poor

Redevelopment fails to meet or undermines several Mixed Use Redevelopment principles and/or strategies.



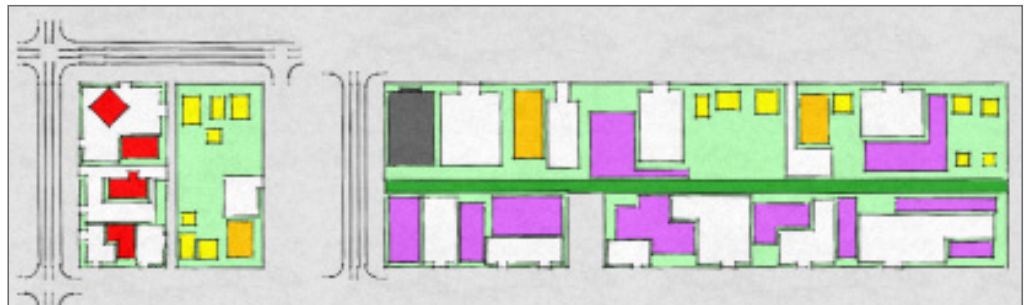
Poor

Redevelopment does not result in broad change that strives to meet Mixed Use Redevelopment principles and/or strategies.



Existing

Existing site prior to infill or redevelopment.



Better

Redevelopment accomplishes or incorporates a few Mixed Use Redevelopment principles and/or strategies.



Preferred

Redevelopment accomplishes or incorporates numerous Mixed Use Redevelopment principles and/or strategies.



Note: The images are conceptual and do not depict a specific Lincoln neighborhood, but have been developed as examples from several nodes and corridors throughout the city and elsewhere. The intent of the images is to provide examples of situations in existing nodes and corridors that illustrate a range of development outcomes.

- Revise pertinent codes and regulations in order to remove impediments to achieving mixed-use residential and commercial development.

STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING REDEVELOPMENT

Facilitating infill and redevelopment in the existing city requires both a nuanced understanding of the challenges associated with redevelopment projects and a well-thought out set of strategies to overcome



them. Commonly cited challenges to infill and redevelopment include land cost and assembly, access to financing, zoning requirements, and consensus building among project stakeholders, including neighbors. The Comprehensive Plan

seeks to address these concerns and encourage successful infill and redevelopment through the following strategies:

- Raise public awareness of and support for infill and redevelopment.
 - Develop subarea plans for specific areas that set a framework for development, including advance blight studies, redevelopment plans, identification of infrastructure needs and public/private roles.
 - Establish stronger design standards for redevelopment projects to provide assurance that they will blend into the context of, or enhance, the surrounding neighborhood and avoid conflicting visions among developers, neighbors, and city officials.
 - Formally assign responsibility for implementing the Mixed Use Redevelopment strategies in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan to the Urban Development Department.
- Establish a new Mayor's Advisory Committee to oversee progress and provide support for infill and redevelopment projects.
- Raise awareness among local developers and learn from other communities. Invite local and out-of-town developers to share their experiences and identify the necessary ingredients for successful redevelopment with city officials, local developers, lenders, architects, and neighborhood groups.
- Work with state and local government to extend financial incentives to designated locations within the built environment.
 - Revise policies to extend Tax Increment Financing (TIF) eligibility to additional defined areas.
 - Examine opportunities to simplify the state redevelopment law, such as revising the requirement for a finding of "blight and substandard" conditions.
 - Offer property tax abatement as an alternative to TIF (the City's current financial incentive) because it does not require studies, contracts, or negotiations and can be used on smaller projects. This would require a constitutional amendment to the previously approved provision which applies only to historic properties.
 - Examine new tax policies such as a "land value tax" that taxes the land and not the improvements, to discourage holding unimproved property and encourage development at higher densities; this would require a constitutional amendment.
- Develop incentives to reduce the cost and risk of infill and redevelopment.
 - Encourage the establishment of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or incorporated nonprofit organization that could raise equity for projects, purchase land, offer services, and engage in other activities

that promote and support community development.

- Consider reducing building and zoning fees for infill and redevelopment projects.
- Examine the potential for extending impact fee exclusions beyond Downtown/Antelope Valley to other designated redevelopment areas.
- Reduce the time it takes to move city-assisted projects through the City review process.
- Encourage land assembly for redevelopment that is sensitive to the existing built environment.
 - Implement a strategic land banking program to purchase and hold land for future development to reduce developer risk associated with land assembly and enhance development potential.
 - Maintain a current and accurate inventory of vacant property.
- Revise the Zoning Ordinance to provide more flexibility, particularly in commercial districts.
 - Provide a mechanism for adjustments in older zoning districts to lot area, height, setbacks, and parking standards, similar to the provisions already available for newer districts.
 - Provide for accessory dwelling units that meet appropriate standards as a conditional use in residential zoning districts.
 - Where compatible mixes of uses, appropriate site layout, and quality design standards still can be upheld, reduce the minimum size for Planned Unit Developments to promote mixed use redevelopment on smaller parcels in identified Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors.
- Support and enhance existing infrastructure and amenities.
- Consider opportunities for centralized, shared public parking lots and structures beyond the downtown area.
- Attract infill and redevelopment with complementary public improvements such as plazas and enhanced streetscapes.
- Provide convenient transit service and pedestrian/bicycle connections and facilities.

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7 NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

This chapter discusses the desired pattern of development in newer and older neighborhoods and rural areas and strategies for meeting future housing demand.



INTRODUCTION

One of the essential elements of the community and LPlan 2040 is housing. Ensuring safe, adequate, and affordable housing is an important function in maintaining the vitality of neighborhoods and the city as a whole. The key to both developing and existing urban neighborhoods is land use diversity. For existing neighborhoods, the diversity is often already in place, but efforts must focus on maintaining this balance and variety. The diversity of architecture, housing types and sizes are central to what makes existing neighborhoods great places to live. New construction should continue the architectural variety, but in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of existing neighborhoods.

The community continues its commitment to strong, diverse neighborhoods. Neighborhoods remain one of Lincoln's great strengths and their conservation is fundamental to this plan. The health of Lincoln's varied neighborhoods and districts depends on implementing appropriate and individualized policies.

In existing neighborhoods, preservation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of existing housing should continue to be the focus. Infill and

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redevelopment needs to respect the street pattern, block sizes, and development standards of the area, such as parking at the rear and porches, windows, and doors on the front street side. Diversity of land uses, including commercial and special needs housing, is important provided the use fits within the character of the block and neighborhood.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Encourage public investment in neighborhood infrastructure and services such as parks, pools, libraries, and neighborhood business districts.
- Continue policies such as landmark districts and down-zonings that maintain a mix of single-family and multi-family housing and support home ownership and the preservation and enhancement of historic properties.
- Promote sustainability and resource conservation by preserving and improving housing in existing neighborhoods.
- Distribute and preserve affordable housing throughout the community to be near job opportunities and to provide housing choices within existing and developing neighborhoods.
- Make available a safe residential dwelling for all citizens.
- Provide a wide variety of housing types and choices for an increasingly diverse and aging population.
- Provide flexibility to the marketplace in siting future residential development locations.
- Strive for predictability for neighborhoods and developers for residential development and redevelopment.
- Encourage acreages to develop in appropriate areas and preserve farmland.
- Preserve areas designated for multi-family and special needs housing in approved plans to support a distributed choice in affordable housing.

- Provide safe and decent affordable and special needs housing for low- and moderate-income households.

HOUSING TRENDS

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the number of housing units in Lancaster County rose from 104,217 units in 2000 to 122,746 units in 2014 – an increase in the housing stock of 18,529 units. The increase in housing units predominantly occurred in the City of Lincoln. Lincoln had 112,122 housing units in 2014 or 91.3 percent of the housing units in Lancaster County. This ratio is consistent with data from 2000 when about 91.3 percent of the housing units (95,199 units) in Lancaster County were in Lincoln. During the planning period, there will continue to be a need to accommodate Special Needs Housing, which generally includes, but is not limited to: low income, elderly housing, assisted living facilities, group homes, domestic shelters, and children’s homes.

In 2014, housing occupancy for Lancaster County stood at 94.9 percent, with a vacancy rate of 5.1 percent. This rate is slightly lower than the 95.2 occupancy rate in 2000 and 95.4 occupancy rate in 1990.

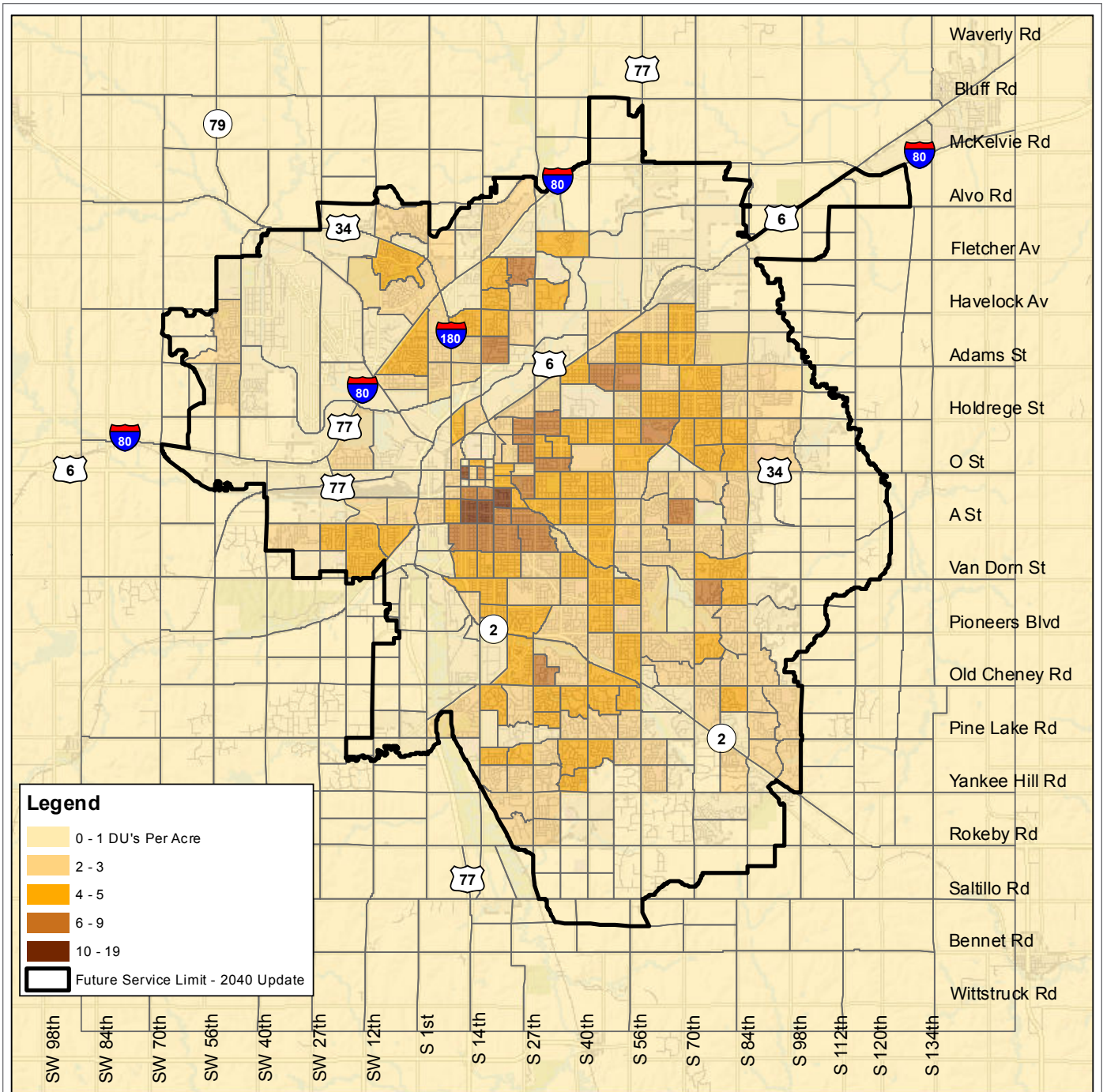
The map on the following page shows the number of dwelling units per gross acre within traffic zones as of January 1, 2016. Traffic zones vary in size from as small as four blocks in the Downtown area, up to one-half of a square mile in suburban areas, and as large as several square miles in the County. The total area in each traffic zone includes all land uses, such as commercial, industrial and rights-of-way for roads in addition to residential areas. Thus, this measure is considered the “gross” density per acre. (In contrast, “net” density describes the total number of dwelling units divided by the number of residential acres, excluding all other uses.)

The density in the urban area currently ranges from 1 to 3 dwelling units per gross acre in developing neighborhoods to as much as 19 per gross acre in neighborhoods nearest to Downtown. Existing

neighborhoods generally have a greater density than developing areas. Many developing areas have low densities at this time because they are not fully developed.

Preserving our existing housing stock is one of the best ways to provide for affordable housing in our community. Over the last few years the City has been working on improvements to housing code

enforcement. These efforts include an increase in fines for violations of property maintenance code and adoption of the “international” property maintenance code which is more comprehensive and stricter than the previous code. The Building and Safety Department has begun to institute more “performance-based” inspections of multifamily rental units. Performance-based inspections allow



Map 7.1: Density by Traffic Zone

a property owner who has a good inspection to have inspections every two years, while property owners with poor inspections are inspected every six months. These are big steps to improving quality affordable housing, but there may be other strategies that should be explored.

The efficiency of our existing housing stock could also be improved by allowing accessory dwelling units (ADU). ADUs allow for multiple generations of a family to live on the same property, provide smaller, more affordable units as part of an existing neighborhood fabric, and more efficiently and cost effectively utilize existing infrastructure and resources.

STRATEGIES FOR NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

- Discourage residential development in areas of environmental resources such as endangered species, saline wetlands, native prairies, and in floodplain corridors.



species, saline wetlands, native prairies, and in floodplain corridors.

- Encourage preservation or restoration of natural resources within or adjacent to development.
- Provide adequate spacing from pipelines and areas where hazardous chemicals could be used and stored; notify property owners and residents along the pipeline about hazards and emergency actions.
- Encourage substantial connectivity and convenient access to neighborhood services (stores, schools, parks) from residential areas.
- Create housing opportunities for residents with special needs throughout the city that are integrated into and compatible with residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage mixed use commercial centers to incorporate special needs housing where they could serve as a transitional use to less intensive residential development and benefit from walkable access to the commercial area and transit.
- Incorporate interconnected networks of streets, transit, trails, and sidewalks with multiple connections within and between neighborhoods and commercial centers to maximize access and mobility to provide alternatives to and reduce dependence upon the automobile.
- Provide sidewalks on both sides of all streets, or in alternative locations as allowed through design standards or review process.
- Develop and utilize a measurement tool to evaluate proposed projects and assess existing and proposed neighborhoods in terms of how well they achieve the Plan's goals for design and sustainability.
- Encourage public/private partnerships with housing entities such as [Lincoln Housing Authority](#), [Affordable Housing Initiatives](#), [Habitat for Humanity](#), and [NeighborWorks Lincoln](#).
- Design and locate special needs housing to enhance the surrounding neighborhood.
- Make available opportunities for individuals and/or organizations to raise local food.
- Provide for more education of the public about affordable housing and code enforcement.
- Pursue more proactive code enforcement for maintenance of existing buildings.
- Provide for accessory dwelling units with proper design standards.
- Principles and strategies for neighborhoods and housing associated with other chapters:
 1. Commercial Development (see the [Business & Economy](#) chapter).
 2. Greater Downtown (see the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter).

3. Mixed Use Redevelopment Nodes and Corridors (see the [Mixed Use Redevelopment](#) chapter).

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is an additional, self-contained housing unit that is secondary to the main residence. ADUs are sometimes referred to as “Granny Flats” or “Mother-In-Law Units” since many ADUs were initially constructed to provide for family members.

ADUs can take many forms. In some cases, an ADU can be attached as an addition to the house or as a second story over a garage. The garage itself may be converted to an ADU or, in rare cases, the ADU may occupy a basement if codes can be met. An ADU can even be a section of the main house that has been separated from the main living space. Additionally, an ADU can be a stand-alone unit like a small house or cottage. Alleys provide excellent opportunities for ADU development with an access that is separate from the main house. Lincoln already hosts a handful of grandfathered ADUs and five “guest houses” approved on the sites of designated historic homes.

An ADU is different from a duplex in two main ways. First, the two units that make up a duplex are usually relatively equal in size and one unit does not usually dominate the other on the lot, whereas an ADU is typically limited in size. Second, both units in a duplex may be rented. For ADUs in some communities, the owner must reside either in the ADU or in the main house. ADUs should be considered on both existing and developing neighborhoods as an additional choice of housing.

STRATEGIES FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

- Examine opportunities to revise the zoning code to legalize new ADUs where appropriate and adopt design standards to facilitate the harmonious implementation of this housing choice.

- Develop a system for tracking, monitoring, or certifying ADU’s to ensure they remain in compliance with the adopted codes and standards.

DEVELOPING NEIGHBORHOODS

A neighborhood is more than housing – great neighborhoods combine all the elements of parks, education, commercial areas, environmental resources, and housing together in one place. Thus, principles from multiple other chapters and the strategies for neighborhoods and housing in the preceding section also apply here.

Developing neighborhoods should have a variety of housing types and sizes, plus commercial and employment opportunities.

Developing a pedestrian orientation of buildings and street networks that provides substantial connectivity is also a priority for developing areas.

There are notable differences between some types of housing and traditional multiple-family residential developments. Typically, special needs housing such as assisted living facilities will have fewer occupants per unit and will generate less traffic than housing built for the general marketplace. Thus, a location that is deemed appropriate for special needs housing may not be deemed appropriate for other types of higher-density housing such as apartments or town homes.

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING NEIGHBORHOODS

- Provide for an adequate supply of affordable land and timely infrastructure improvements.



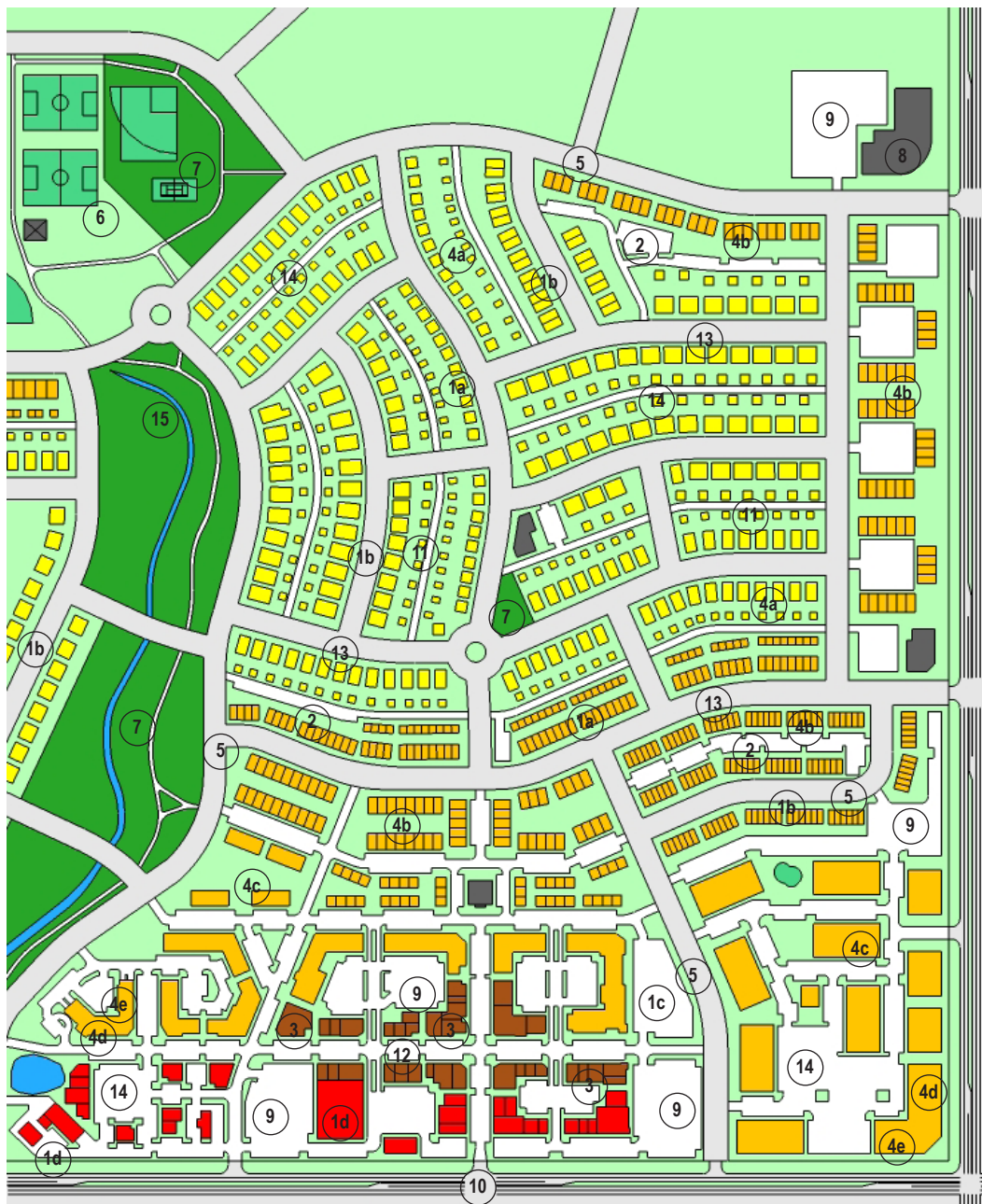
The image on these pages is an example of how these strategies might be applied in a developing neighborhood:

*Figure 7.1:
Detailed Strategies
for Developing
Neighborhoods (pages
7.6 and 7.7)*

1. Encourage a mix of compatible land uses in neighborhoods:
 - a. Similar uses on the same block face.
 - b. Similar housing types face each other: single-family faces single-family, change to different use at rear of lot.
 - c. Commercial parking lots should not intrude into residential areas where residential uses predominate the block face.
 - d. More intense commercial uses (gas stations, big box stores, car wash, fast food, etc.) may not be compatible due to impact on nearby housing.



2. Encourage pedestrian orientation with parking at rear of residential and neighborhood commercial uses.
3. Residential mixed use included in commercial center.
4. Encourage a mix of housing types all within one area:
 - a. Single-family and duplex.
 - b. Attached single-family and row house units.
 - c. Apartments.
 - d. Special needs housing.
 - e. Encourage apartments and special needs housing near commercial areas and along arterials.



5. Sidewalks on both sides of all streets.
6. Encourage shared facilities (city parks and school sites) .
7. Maintain parks and open space within walking distance of all residences.
8. Encourage public and semi-public uses (elementary schools, churches) as centers of neighborhood.
9. Encourage shared parking wherever possible.
10. Integrate transit stops into commercial center, near arterial.
11. Develop with shorter block lengths for connectivity.
12. Encourage shopping and employment uses to be within the neighborhoods and within walking distance to most residences.
13. Utilize streets for parking.
14. Encourage alley access and shared driveways to reduce interruptions to pedestrians, to preserve on street parking capacity, and to reduce automobile conflict points.
15. Support the preservation or restoration of natural resources.

- Single-Family/Duplexes/Garages
- Multi-Family/Assisted Living/Rowhouses/Garages
- Residential/Commercial Mixed Use
- Commercial Uses (office, retail, and service)
- Public/Semi-Public Buildings
- Green Space/Natural Resources
- Other Open Space
- Public Right of Way: includes sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking, and street paving
- Parking Lots/Driveways/Private Alleys
- Arterial Streets

Note: This image is conceptual and does not depict a specific Lincoln neighborhood, but has been developed from examples from several neighborhoods throughout the city and elsewhere. The intent of the image is to provide examples of situations in newer neighborhoods that illustrate a range of development outcomes.

- Structure incentives to encourage higher densities to make greater use of the community’s infrastructure.
- Encourage new development to achieve densities greater than five dwelling units per gross acre.
- Develop new design standards that encourage density, optimize infrastructure costs, and help lower the overall cost of property development.
- Implement procedures to provide notice to potential buyers about the location of pipelines and hazardous chemical use and storage, and to encourage adequate spacing be provided from pipelines and areas where hazardous chemicals could be used and stored.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

For existing neighborhoods, housing diversity is often already in place, but efforts must focus on maintaining this balance and variety. The diversity of architecture, housing types and sizes are central to what makes existing neighborhoods great places to live. New construction should continue the



architectural variety, but in a manner that is sensitive to the existing neighborhoods.

[Neighborhood Design Standards](#) for areas within Lincoln’s 1950 corporate limits were adopted in 2004.

Areas annexed after

that are not currently covered by Neighborhood Design Standards.

Preserving existing housing and promoting homeownership should remain the focus in established neighborhoods, with modest opportunities for infill and redevelopment. “Down-zonings” in established neighborhoods to help preserve a mix of single family homes and

apartments have occurred in several areas over the past decade. In acknowledgement of this trend and community desire, the City’s primary strategy for residential infill and redevelopment outside of the Greater Downtown is to encourage the redevelopment and reuse of sites and buildings in commercial areas in order to create new mixed use centers that are compatible and complementary to adjacent neighborhoods. 1,000 well-designed and appropriately-placed dwelling units are projected for neighborhoods in the existing city — a one percent increase to the existing housing stock—on vacant lots, expansions of existing apartment complexes with undeveloped land, and through accessory dwelling units. Residential redevelopment in existing neighborhoods tends to occur naturally without public intervention over a long period of time, as individual properties become obsolete or are acquired piecemeal by private or nonprofit developers.

VACANT LAND

Currently, there are roughly 333 acres of vacant residentially-zoned land in the existing built-out portion of the City. Some of the land is in the floodplain and lots scattered throughout the City. The Plan envisions a portion of this land will be utilized by 2040 since it has access to urban services today.

STRATEGIES FOR VACANT LAND

- Identify and maintain an inventory of vacant residentially-zoned land within the existing city; make the inventory available to the public, housing agencies, and developers searching for infill sites.
- Minimize impacts on flood storage when vacant land in the floodplain is developed.

REDEVELOPMENT IN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

Infill and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods typically occur through an incremental and

organic process over long periods of time. This process is chiefly led by the private and nonprofit development sector. Good design and appropriate placement are key to successful redevelopment. Widely varying techniques are utilized to achieve redevelopment in existing neighborhoods such as the following examples:

1. De-conversion of multi-family back to single-family homes (resulting in a net decrease in density);
2. Replacement of a single-family home with a new single-family home (resulting in no net change in density);
3. Tearing down more than one structure and building a new multi-family building or a group of other housing types (resulting in a net increase in density); or
4. Existing multi-family complexes identifying open areas to develop additional buildings on the existing property (resulting in a net increase in density).

STRATEGIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT IN EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

- Promote the preservation, maintenance and renovation of existing housing and neighborhoods throughout the city, with special emphasis on low and moderate income neighborhoods.
- Maintain and enhance infrastructure and services in existing neighborhoods.
- Encourage well-designed and appropriately placed density, including within existing apartment complexes and special needs housing where there is land available for additional buildings or expansions.
- Recognize that broad economic diversity within existing neighborhoods encourages reinvestment and improves quality of life for all residents while acknowledging the need for affordable housing.

- Preserve, protect and promote the character and unique features of urban neighborhoods, including their historical and architectural elements.

- Promote the continued use of single-family dwellings and all types of buildings, to maintain the character of neighborhoods and to preserve portions















- of our past. Building code requirements for the rehabilitation of existing buildings should protect the safety of building occupants, while recognizing the need for flexibility that comes with rehabilitating existing buildings.

- Implement the housing and neighborhood strategies as embodied in the City of Lincoln Consolidated and Annual Action Plans and subsequent housing and neighborhood plans. These plans provide the core for affordable housing and neighborhood preservation actions for public and private agencies.
- Retain existing predominately single-family blocks in some existing neighborhoods, in order to maintain the mix of housing types.

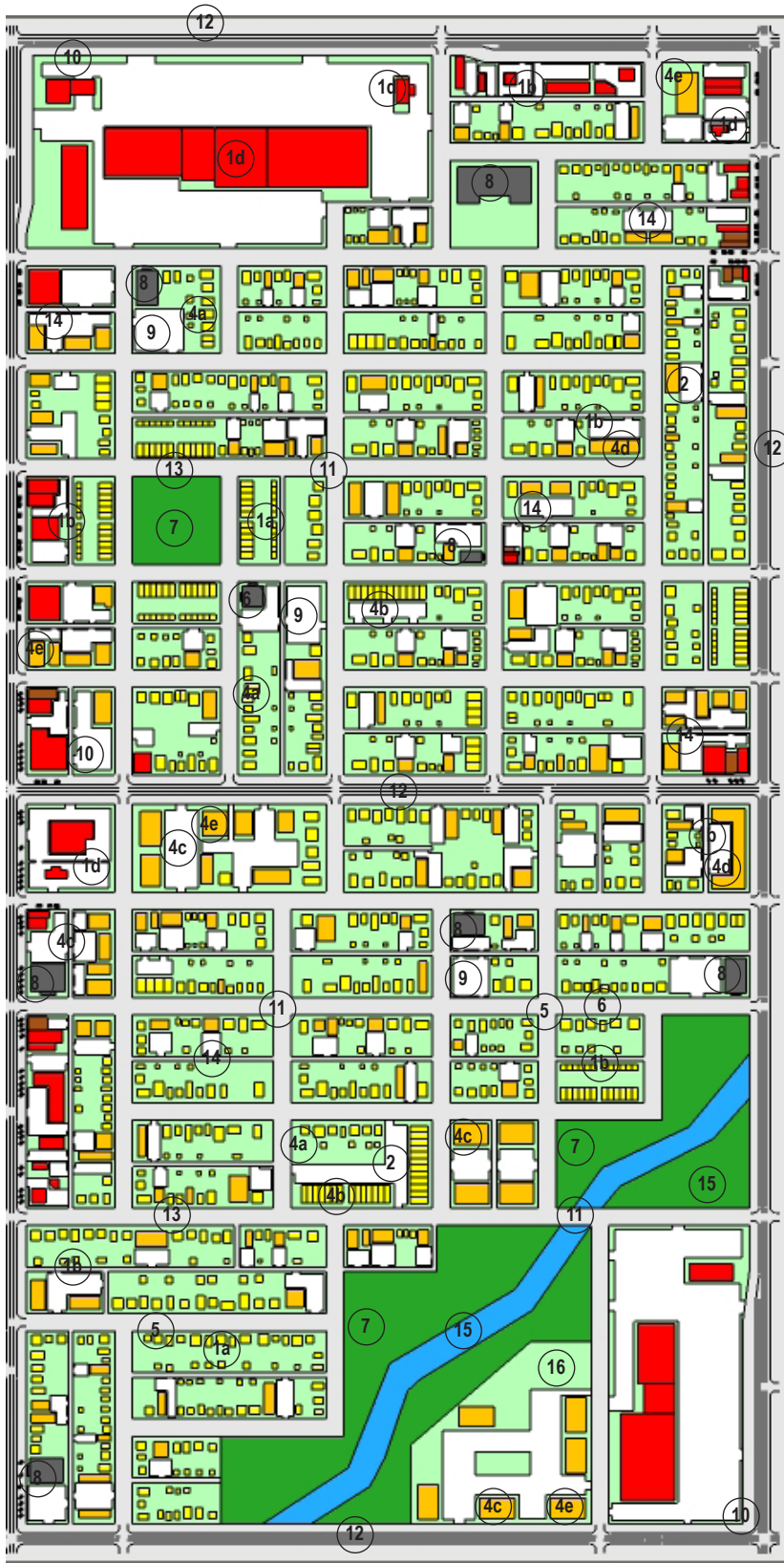
The image on the following pages is an example of how these strategies might work together in an existing neighborhood:

Figure 7.2 Detailed Strategies for Existing Neighborhoods (pages 7.10 and 7.11)

1. Encourage a mix of compatible land uses in neighborhoods:
 - a. Similar uses on the same block face.
 - b. Similar housing types face each other: single family faces single family, change to different use at rear of lot.
 - c. Commercial parking lots should not intrude into residential areas where residential uses predominate a block face.
 - d. More intense commercial uses (gas stations, big box stores, car wash, fast food, etc.) may not be compatible due to impact on nearby housing.
2. Encourage pedestrian orientation with parking at rear of residential and neighborhood commercial uses.
3. Redevelopment and infill should strive for compatibility with the character of the neighborhood and adjacent uses (i.e., parking at rear, similar setback, height and land use).
4. Encourage a mix of housing types all within one area:
 - a. Single-family and duplex.
 - b. Attached single-family and rowhouse units.
 - c. Apartments.
 - d. Special needs housing.
 - e. Encourage apartments and special needs housing near commercial areas and along arterials.
5. Encourage retention of single-family uses where appropriate in order to maintain mix of housing.

-  Single-Family/Duplexes/Rowhouses/Garages
-  Multi-Family/Assisted Living
-  Residential/Commercial Mixed Use
-  Commercial Uses (office, retail, and service)
-  Industrial Uses
-  Public/Semi-Public Buildings
-  Green Space/Natural Resources
-  Other Open Space
-  Public Right of Way: includes sidewalks, public alleys, street trees, on-street parking, and street paving
-  Parking Lots/Driveways
-  On-Street Parking Examples
-  Arterial Streets





6. Encourage historic preservation and the rehabilitation and maintenance of buildings.
7. Maintain small parks and open space within walking distance of all residences.
8. Support retention of public and semi-public uses (elementary schools, churches) as centers of neighborhoods.
9. Encourage shared parking whenever possible — permit minor incursions of accessory parking for public/semi-public uses into neighborhoods if properly screened.
10. Integrate transit stops into commercial center, near arterial.
11. Maintain existing pattern of streets for connectivity.
12. Maintain arterial streets that are compatible with the existing neighborhood character with two through lanes and a center turn lane where applicable.
13. Utilize streets for commercial and residential parking.
14. Encourage alley access and shared driveways to parking areas in order to reduce interruptions to pedestrian traffic, to preserve on street parking capacity, and to reduce automobile conflict points.
15. Support the preservation and restoration of natural resources.
16. Encourage additional density of apartment complexes and special needs housing on open adjacent land areas.

Note: This image is conceptual and does not depict a specific Lincoln neighborhood, but has been developed from examples from several neighborhoods throughout the city and elsewhere. The intent of the image is to provide examples of situations in older neighborhoods that illustrate a range of development outcomes.

RURAL AREAS

LPlan 2040 supports the preservation of land in the bulk of the County for agricultural and natural resource purposes. However, it recognizes that some parts of the County are in transition



from predominantly agricultural uses to a mix that includes more residential uses. Balancing the demand for rural living and the practical challenge of integrating acreages with traditional land uses will continue.

New acreage development is not encouraged in the [Map 1.3: Growth Tiers with Priority Areas](#) for Lincoln's three-mile extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ), except for areas already platted, zoned, or designated for low density residential development. Development in these tiers should only be permitted under the "build-through" model that has been established, and without use of Sanitary Improvement Districts (SIDs). For areas outside of the Lincoln three mile jurisdiction but inside a future Lincoln growth tier, the County should consider applying "build-through" standards, on a case-by-case basis, when a proposed development is in a location that is more likely than others to have city services extended in the foreseeable future. The build-through model includes provisions that are intended to facilitate a later transition to urban densities when city services are extended, including:

- A preliminary plan lot layout that accommodates first phase subdivisions on a portion of the land area with rural water and sewer systems, and shows how future urban infrastructure will be built through the land to permit further subdivision and annexation when appropriate.

The build-through model includes provisions that are intended to facilitate a later transition to urban densities when city services are extended.

- A development agreement that runs with the land and acknowledges that the acreage development is not entitled to extra buffering protection and that waives the right to protest the creation of lawful assessment districts for sewer, water and paving in the future.

All proposals for acreages, whether designated on the future land use map for low density residential or not, should be evaluated based on factors such as paved roads, adequate water quality and quantity, soil conditions for on-site wastewater management, availability of emergency services, agricultural productivity, land parcelization, the pattern of existing acreages, and plans for future urban development. Applications for acreage designation on the future land use map or rezoning to [AGR](#), if planned for on-site wells, should be accompanied by information on water quality and quantity. If information becomes available that land already designated in the Plan for acreages is not suitable for acreage development, that designation should be reconsidered. Areas not designated for acreages should remain agriculturally zoned and retain the current overall density of 32 dwellings per square mile (1 dwelling unit per 20 acres). However, consideration should be given to new ways that smaller lots within the County jurisdiction can be subdivided and sold, while still maintaining that overall density and maintaining good access management along the County's section line roads.

Grouping acreages together in specific areas will limit the areas of potential conflict between farms and acreages. It also may enable services to be provided more efficiently, by reducing the amount of paved routes, reducing the number and distance of school bus routes, and taking advantage of more effective rural water district service. Clustering lots in one portion of a development site, while preserving both farmland and environmental resources on the remainder, should continue to be encouraged in agriculturally-zoned areas. A considerable supply of acreage lots has been platted in recent years in this manner. The County

also should continue to pursue state enabling legislation to enable clustering lots by “transfer of development rights” between non-contiguous parcels of land. It is important to note that the value of this tool, by which property owners “buy” and transfer rights to develop additional lots, will be negated if the owners simply are “given” those additional lots through rezoning.

Private nonprofit land trusts are operating successfully to preserve farmland in other rural areas experiencing pressure for development. They accept donations, and in some cases have funds to pay in part for land to be conserved, including land that is cropped or pastured as well as land that is held for its natural value such as prairie, wetland, or woodland. The donations of these easements qualify as charitable deductions to federal income tax. Some other states protecting farming close to cities also have adopted tax credit programs to help encourage the donation of agricultural easements. City and county officials should encourage the expansion of an existing private trust or formation of a new one to encourage more of these donations.

Many families are not well-informed of all the implications of rural living before they make that lifestyle choice. This includes an understanding of the state’s [Right to Farm](#) law, which protects farmers from nuisance claims when conducting normal agricultural practices, and an understanding of the difference between urban and rural public services (e.g. road maintenance, emergency medical, fire protection, and police). Objective information on the pros and cons of rural living should be provided to the public through continuing education efforts by the County’s extension service, handouts available to county departments and local realtors, and potentially, documents filed of record with new platted lots for disclosure to prospective buyers.

STRATEGIES FOR RURAL AREAS

- Continue to use GIS data and other sources, along with adopted county zoning criteria, to help determine which lands are most suitable for acreage development.

- Require applicants seeking plan designation or rezoning for acreages to provide information on water quality and quantity if planning to use on-site wells.
- Pursue state legislation to enable the County to establish a transfer of development rights program that helps encourage acreage development in more suitable locations while protecting environmental resources and prime farmland, while also respecting property rights by compensating owners who agree to the transfers.
- Encourage an existing private land trust or a new one to pursue the donation of agricultural easements on prime farmland in the county.
- Expand education for prospective home buyers on the implications of rural living.



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