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.

In this Chapter

Introduction 1.1
Vision Statements 1.2
Implementation of the Vision 1.6
Land Use Plan 1.7
Timing: Future Growth Tier Map 1.7
LPlan 2040 Elements 1.11

Vision Statements

Lincoln and Lancaster County: One Community

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.

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.

*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 and other highly productive 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

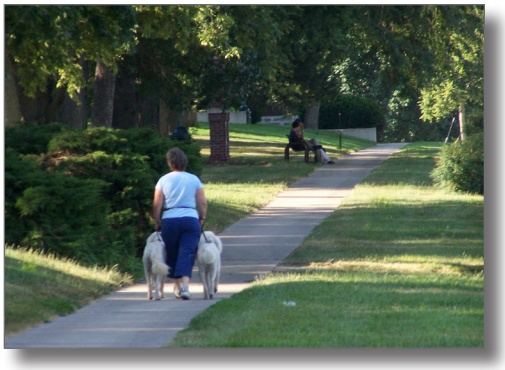
Downtown Lincoln is the heart of our community, a unique common ground for all Lincoln and Lancaster County residents. It is also emerging as an attractive place to live, becoming an increasingly vibrant mixed use neighborhood. At the same time, Downtown Lincoln belongs to all residents of Nebraska because "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.

Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

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. 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.
- 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 30 years. However, it is also wise to envision our community beyond this point. Lincoln and Lancaster County will continue to grow over the next 50 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 global warming 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.

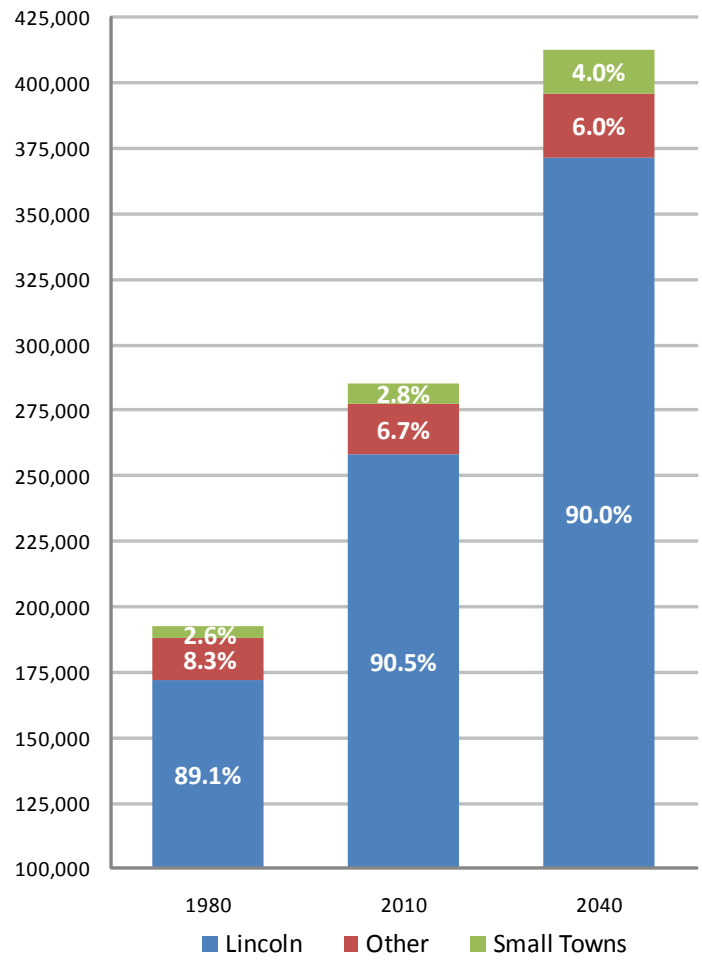


Figure 1.1: Population as a Percentage of Total Population

Implementation of the Vision

Summary of Comprehensive Plan Assumptions

These assumptions represent the agreement of the LPlan 2040 Advisory Committee 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 30 and 50 year planning periods. This adds approximately 126,000 persons to the current County population of 285,000 over the next thirty years and about 226,000 over the next fifty 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 52,100 dwelling units will need to be added in Lancaster County to support the additional population of 126,000 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 16% 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.

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," 34 square miles where urban services and inclusion in the city limits are anticipated within the 30 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 30 year time horizon to 50 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.

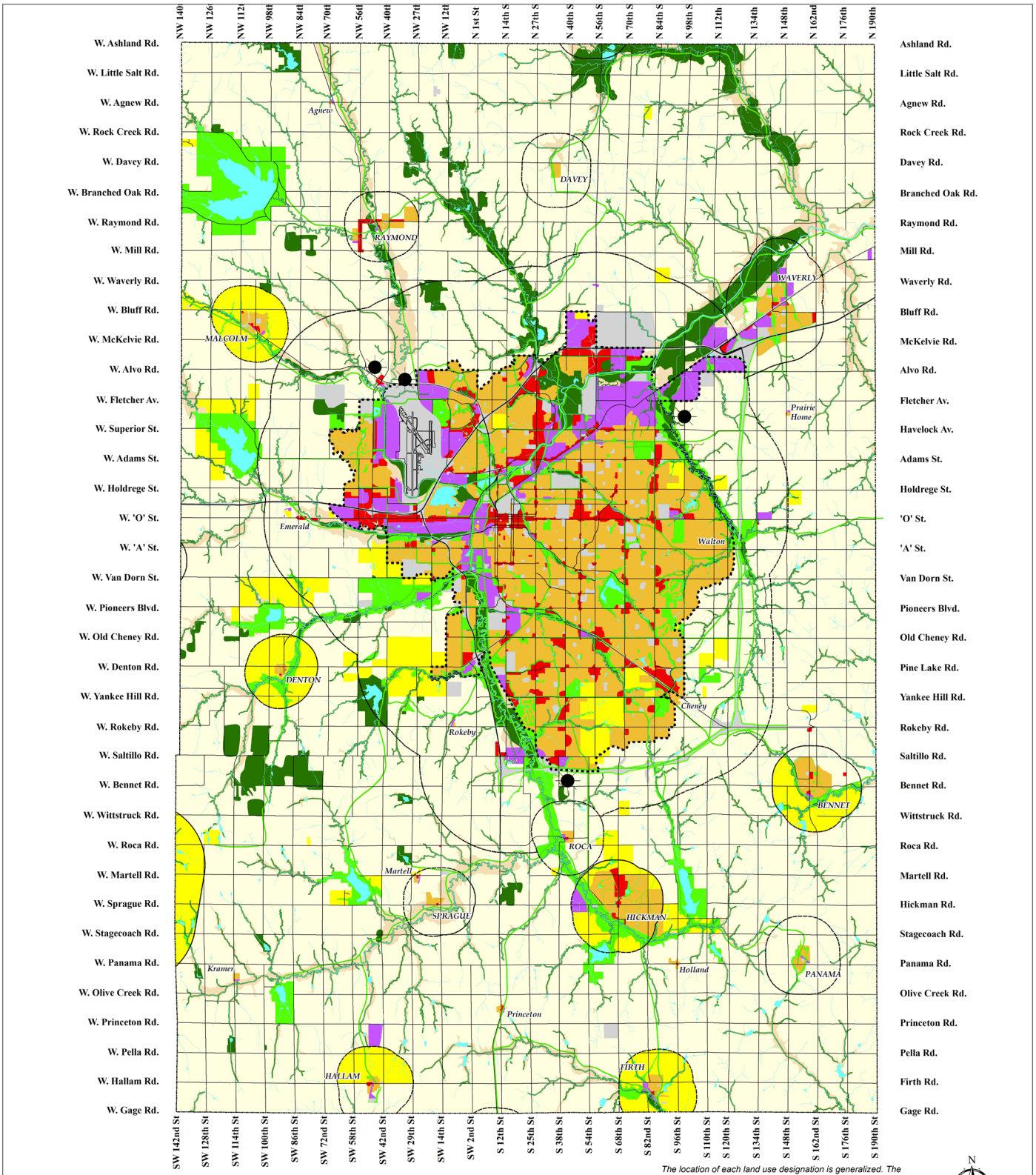
Tier III provides an approximately 131 square mile area for Lincoln's longer term growth potential – perhaps 50 years and beyond. Little active planning of utilities or service delivery is likely to occur in the near term in Tier III; however, it should also remain in its present use in order to be available for future urban development.

Subarea Planning Process

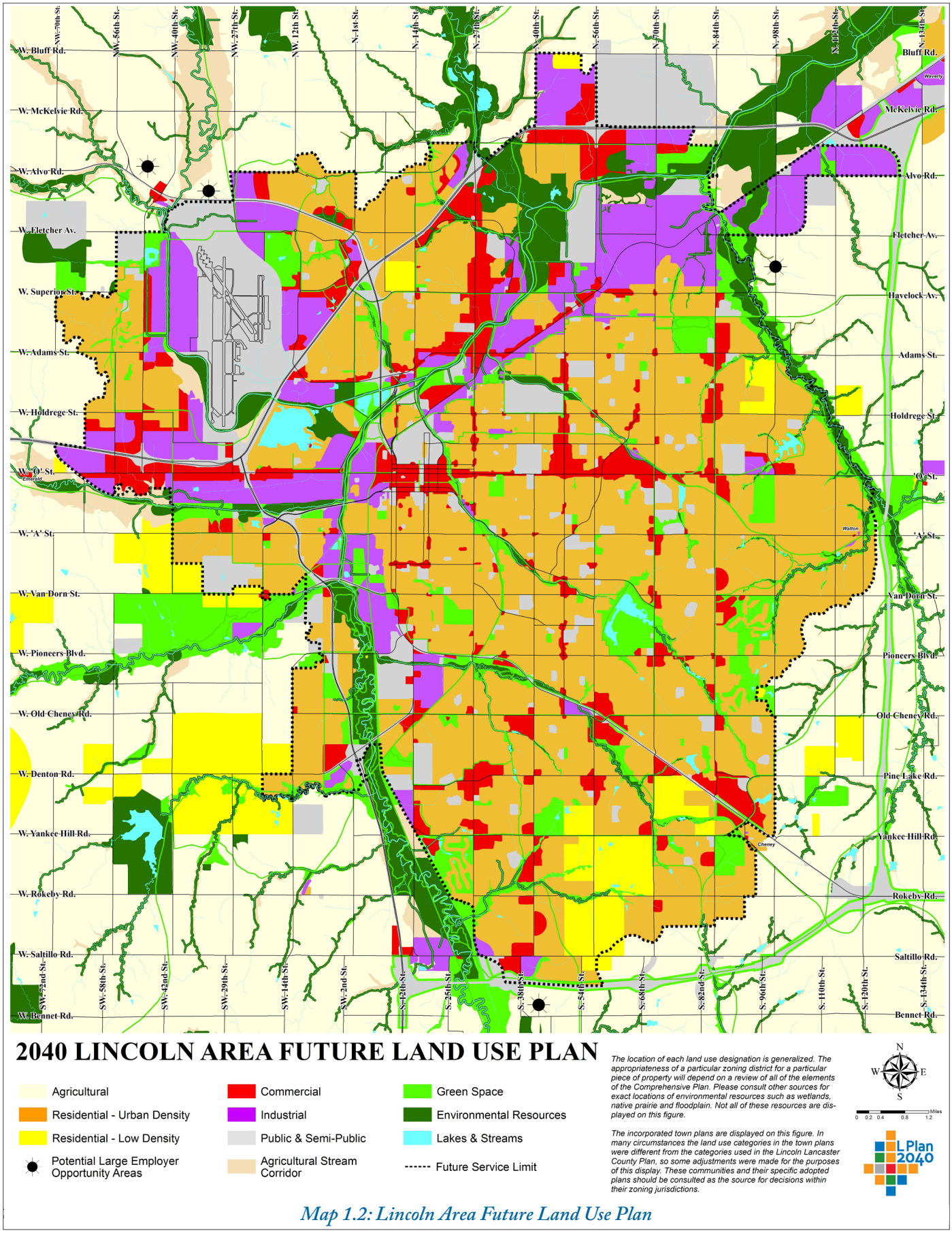
Subarea planning for neighborhoods or other small geographic areas can address issues at a more refined scale than can be included in LPlan 2040. Subarea plans may then become incorporated into LPlan 2040 through a formal adoption process. Subarea plans can serve as an official guide for elected decision 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 planning for neighborhoods or other small geographic areas can address issues at a more refined scale than can be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

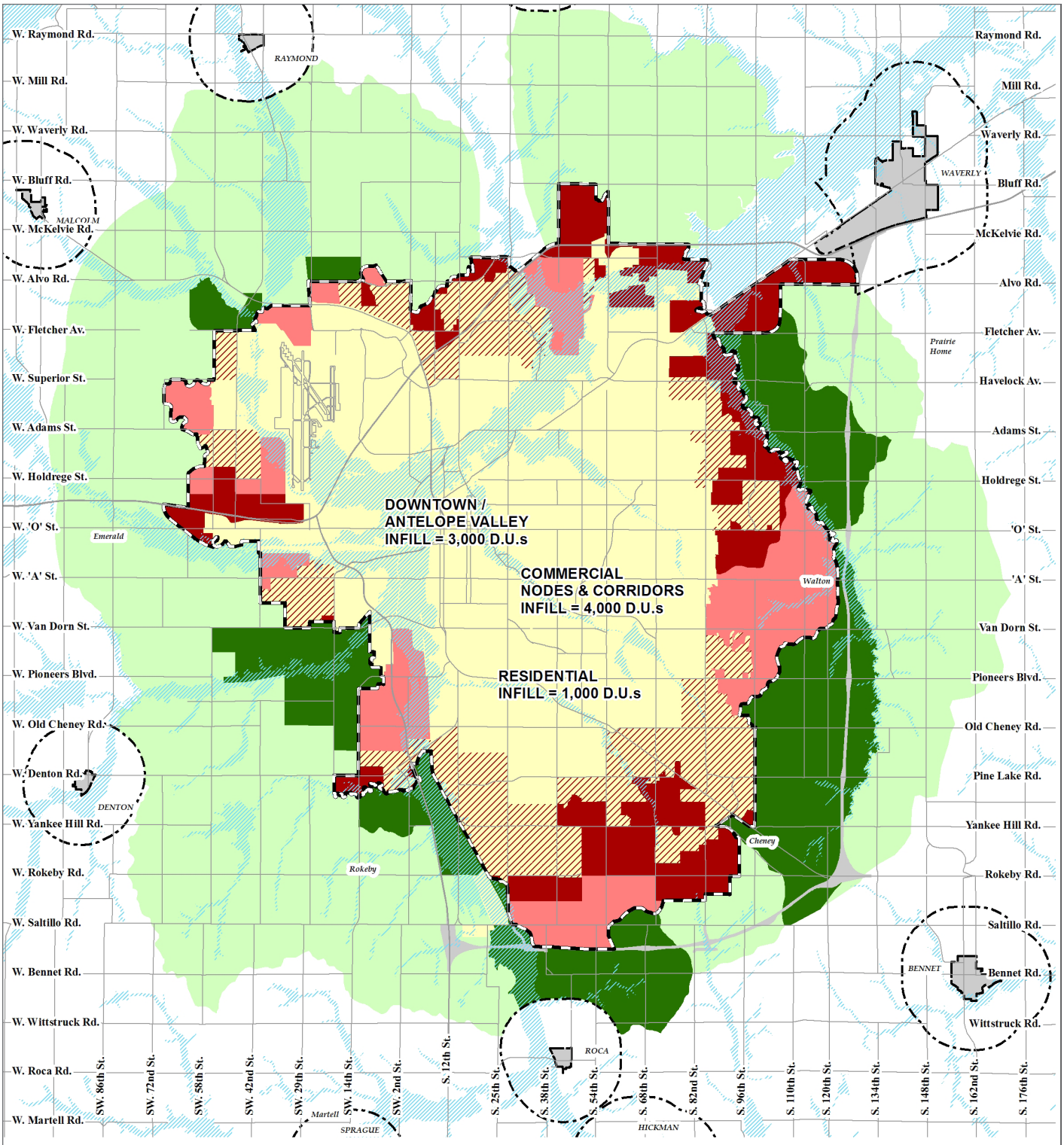
Subarea plans adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan are discussed in the *"Plan Realization"* chapter.



Map 1.1: Lancaster County Future Land Use Plan



Map 1.2: Lincoln Area Future Land Use Plan



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

Serves as the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for Lincoln and Lancaster County, together with the LRTP Technical Report in Appendix A. This chapter examines multiple modes of travel and lays out the transportation vision to 2040 based on future land uses.

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.