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 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.
- **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.

Downtown

Downtown continues to contain the largest concentration of commercial space in the County with 9.7 million square feet of occupied space in 2009. This represents nearly 24 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, and governmental uses. It is home to numerous public facilities — including the Nebraska State Capitol, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's main campus, and the County-City Building — 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 theaters. 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.

Downtown continues to contain the largest concentration of commercial space in the County with 9.7 million square feet of occupied space in 2009.

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 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, 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 over 78% 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.

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).

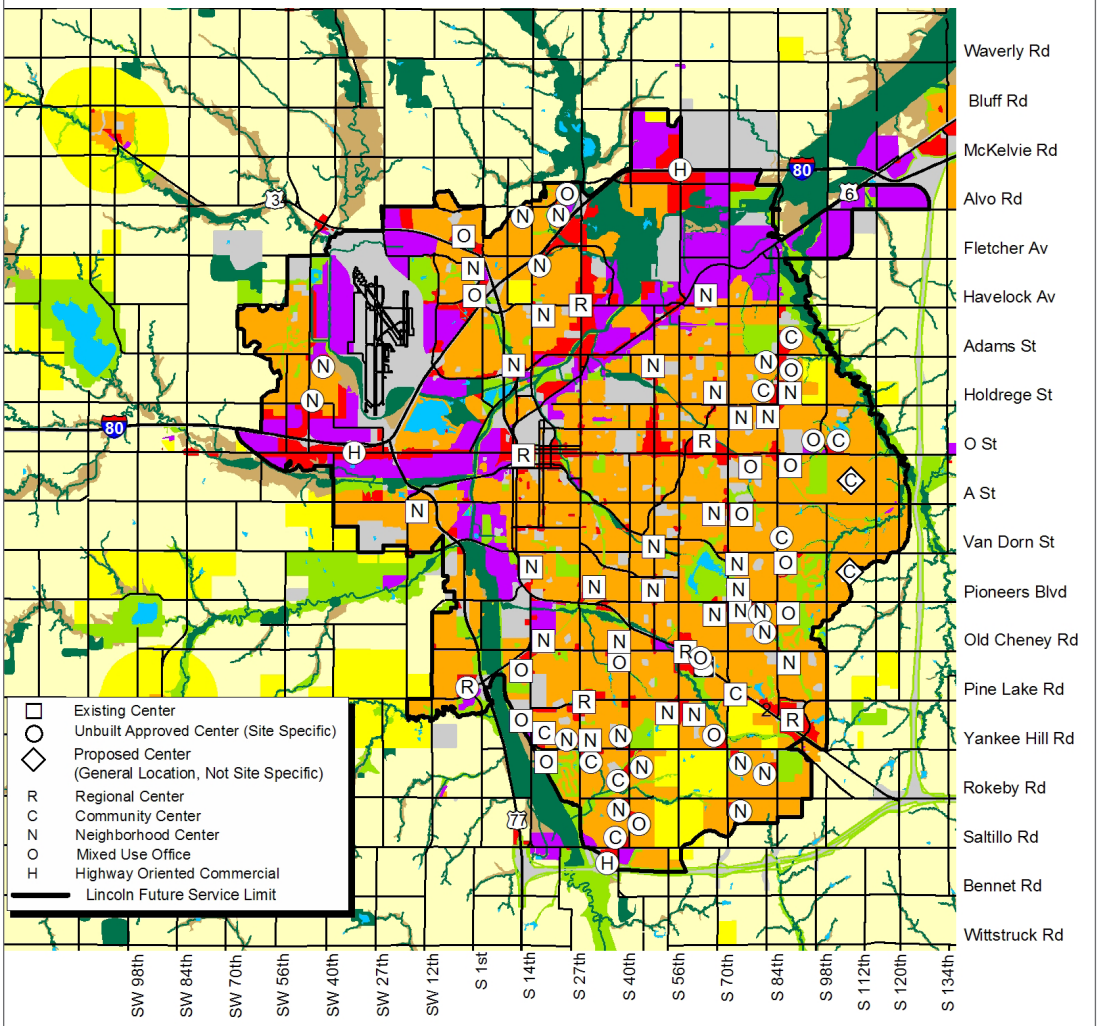
  - Where urban services and infrastructure are available or planned for in the near term.
  - In sites supported by adequate road capacity — commercial development should be linked to the implementation of the transportation plan.
  - In areas compatible with existing or planned residential uses.
  - 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



Map 5.1: Existing and Proposed Commercial Centers

and residential may be acceptable due to the existing conditions.

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.
- 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 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.

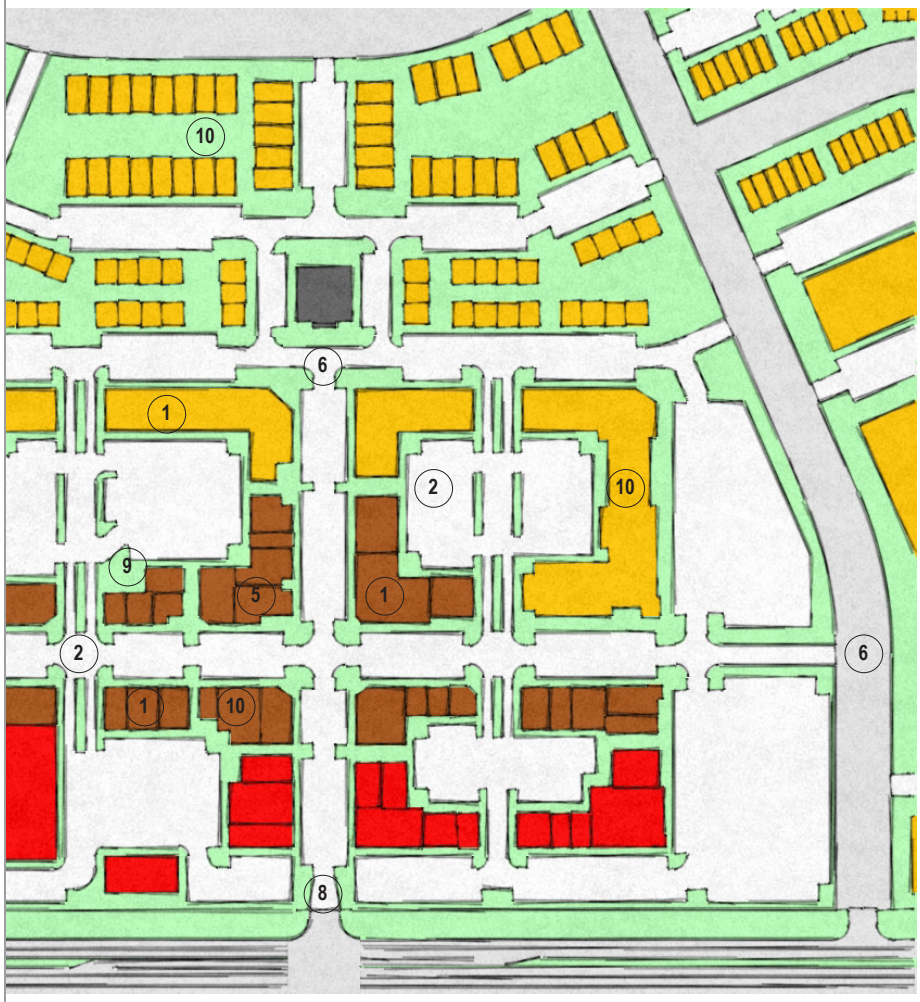
Principles and strategies for commercial development associated with other chapters:

- 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 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)



7. Encourage commercial development at ½ mile between major intersections
8. Provide for transit opportunities in the center design
9. Provide public amenities such as recreational facilities, plazas, squares and other types of facilities or meeting areas open to public
10. Provide for a variety of housing opportunities within and adjacent to the Commercial Center

- 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
- Arterial Streets

Note: The image is conceptual and does not depict a specific Lincoln neighborhood.

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 Westfield Shoppingtown Gateway or SouthPointe Pavilions.

Since several Regional Centers are still under development 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 during the annual review process.

Neighborhood Centers should generally not develop at corners of intersections of two arterial streets due to limited pedestrian accessibility and impact on the intersection – locations 1/4 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.

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

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, motel/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 1,900 acres of vacant commercially-zoned land in the existing city. That translates to over 10 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 13 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

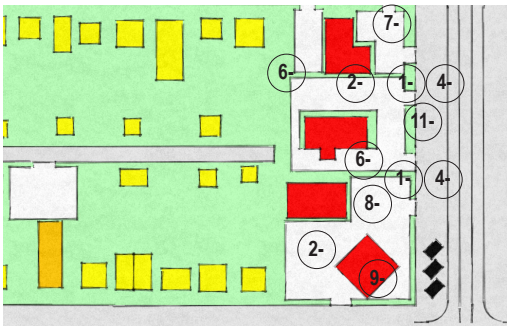
A "+" sign behind the number means the example illustrates the strategy; a "-" sign means the example does not.

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

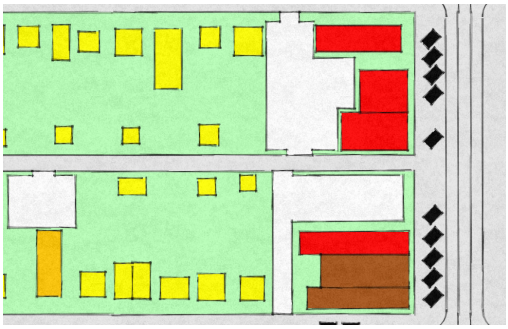
Very Poor

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



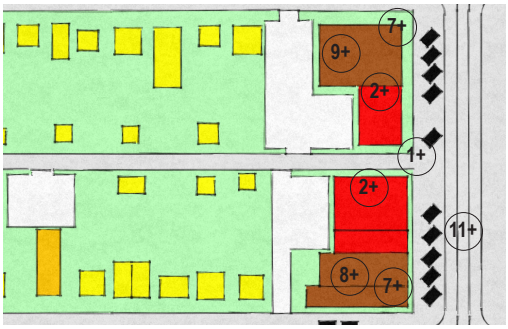
Poor

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



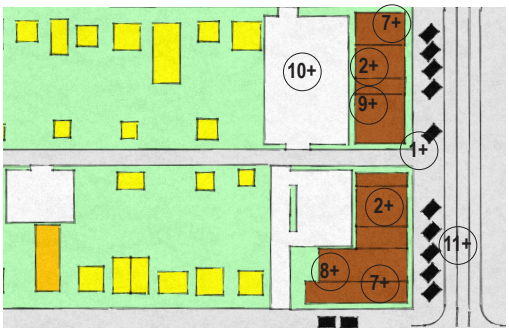
Existing

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 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.

Currently, there are approximately 1,900 acres of vacant commercially-zoned land in the existing city.

- 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. Each planned industrial district should

be established only after further consideration of site characteristics, buffering and appropriate zoning.

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.

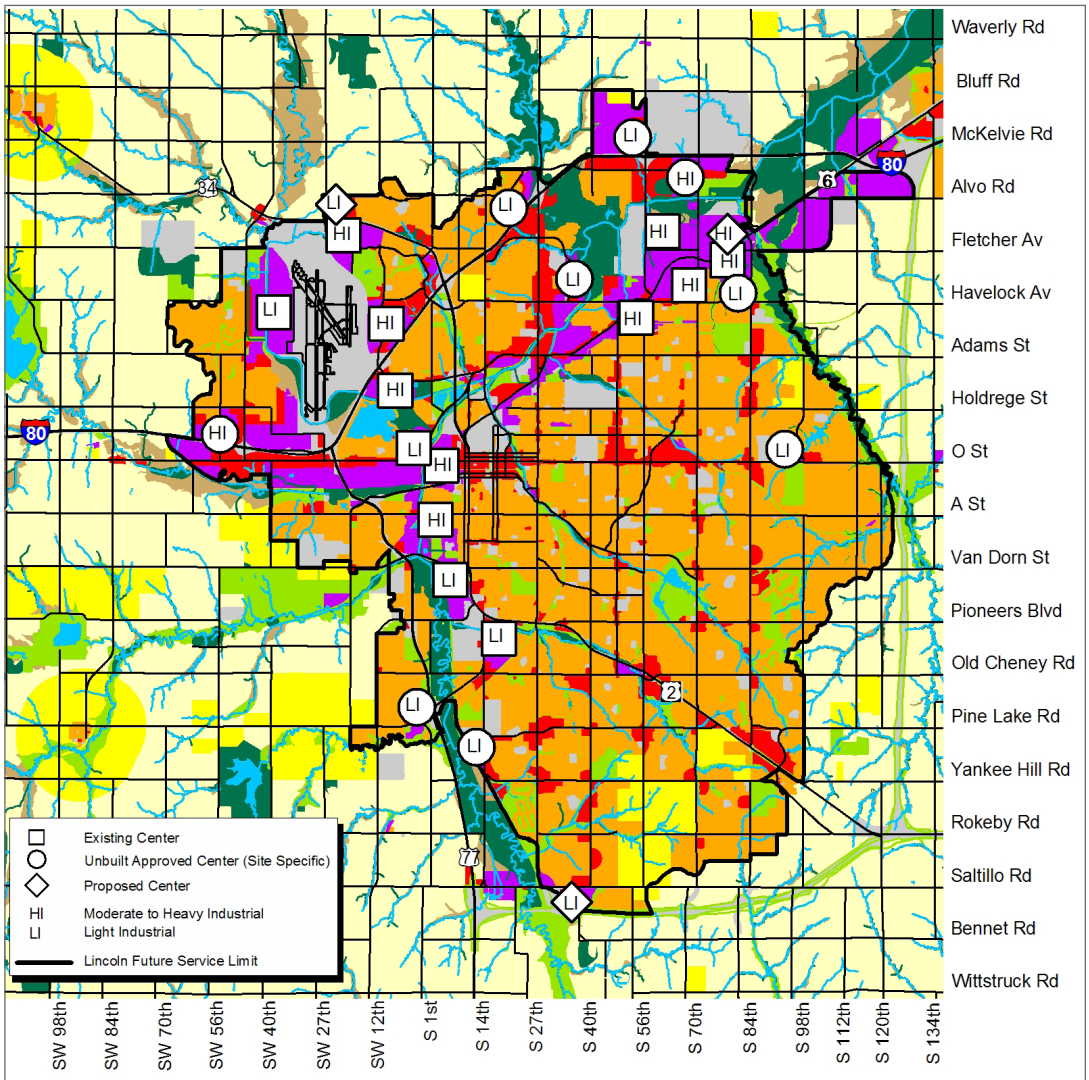
Criteria

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

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.



Map 5.2: Existing and Proposed Industrial Centers

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.