

## Proposal No. 15 Delete Comprehensive Plan Population Assumptions

Location	Proposal
	Amend the 2030 Lincoln/ Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan to  1) Delete the population assumptions on page 25
<b>Recommendation:</b> Retain the existing language	

### Description

Peter Katt representing the Lincoln Independent Business Association objected to the inclusion of population assumptions on page 25.

### Comprehensive Plan Implications

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan, under the heading “**Summary of Comprehensive Plan Assumptions**” on page 25 states:

*“These assumptions represent the agreement of the Comprehensive Plan Committee which assisted in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The following assumptions guide the planning process for Lincoln and Lancaster County:*

1. *A City and County population growth rate of 1.5 percent per year was used for the 25 and 50 year planning periods. This adds approximately 140,000 persons to the County over the next twenty five years and nearly 300,000 over the next fifty years. The assumed County population distribution would remain 90 percent in the City of Lincoln, 3 percent in other incorporated towns and villages, 6 percent on rural acreages, and 1 percent on farms. This would add approximately 52,100 dwelling units in the Lincoln urban area to support the additional population of 126,000 persons within the 25 year planning period.*
  
2. *For transportation modeling purposes, an urban residential density factor of 3 dwelling units per acre was assumed for a majority of the designated future growth areas.”*

In order to plan for the orderly growth of Lincoln and Lancaster County some assumptions must be made regarding the need for future facilities and land uses. The increase in population has a direct correlation to the need for facilities and infrastructure. Because it is impossible to know for certain what the future population will be and how it will be distributed throughout the county, some assumptions need to be made.

One of the factors used in formulating the assumption of population change is historic census information. Over the past four decades from 1960 to 2000, the annualized percentage change from one decade to the next has been 1.52%, 1.41%, 1.11%, and 1.63% respectively. An assumed annual rate of change in population of 1.5% is reasonable.

In the 1960's the population of Lancaster County began shifting toward the city, as was happening in much of the nation. In the 1960 census, approximately 83% of the county's population was found in Lincoln, but by 1970 that number had risen to 89%, a level which held steady in 1980 and rose just slightly to 90% in the 1990 and 2000 census.

The population in incorporated villages and cities other than Lincoln in the 1960's and 1970's comprised about 2% of the county's population, and rose to about 3% in the 1980's and 1990's. The 2000 census shows about 2.6% of the county's population in small towns.

Over the past four decades the percentage of the population that resides on farms has fallen from 4% in 1960 to 1% in 2000. The remaining population that lies outside the corporate limits of Lincoln or any other town, and is not considered a farm, changed from 6% in 1960 to about 6.2% in 2000.

While the Comprehensive Plan uses the historical figures to create assumptions of future trends, a part of the ongoing work of the Plan is the monitoring of census data through the Benchmark Indicators Report. When trends are detected in this annual report, those trends are used to review the Comprehensive Plan assumptions during the revision and updating process for future Plans.

The Comprehensive Plan in several places encourages growth in Lincoln and the incorporated cities and villages of Lancaster County, including the Vision Statements on page 5 and 7. The Plan also provides for low density residential uses and addresses appropriate locations for acreage subdivisions.

### Conclusion

The Plan encourages the direction of development to the incorporated cities and village of Lancaster County in order to make the most of infrastructure, benefit existing businesses and residents in these places, and preserve the valuable open space and farmland of Lancaster County. These are all core values expressed in the Comprehensive Plan Vision. The population assumptions on page 25 should be retained.