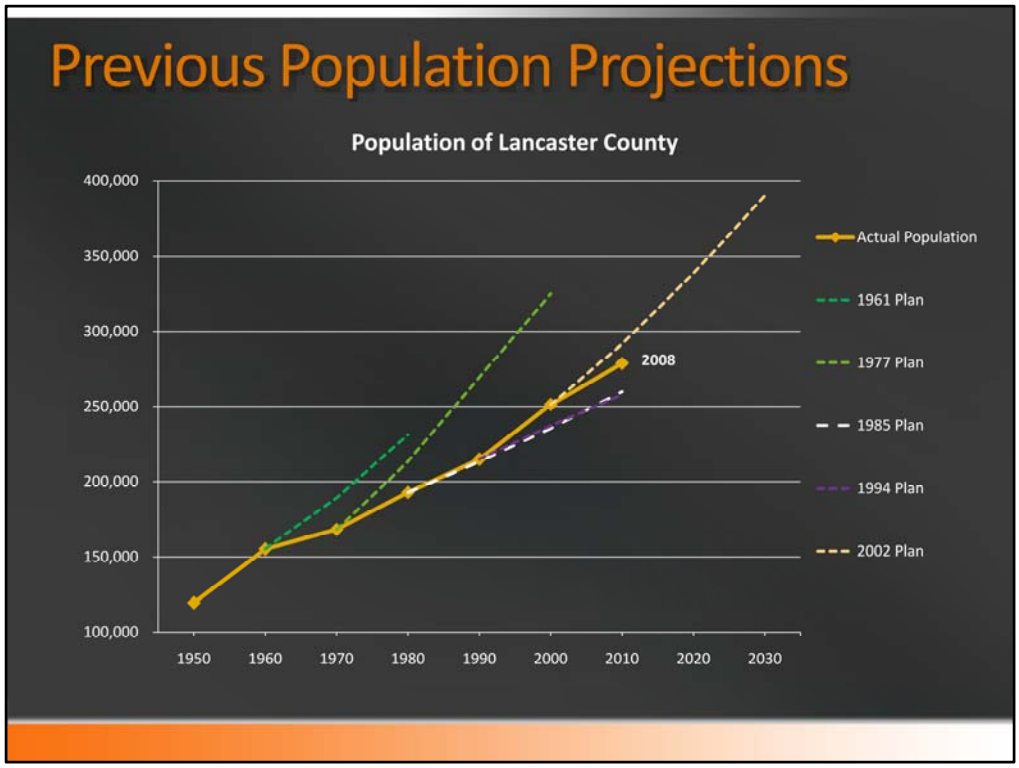
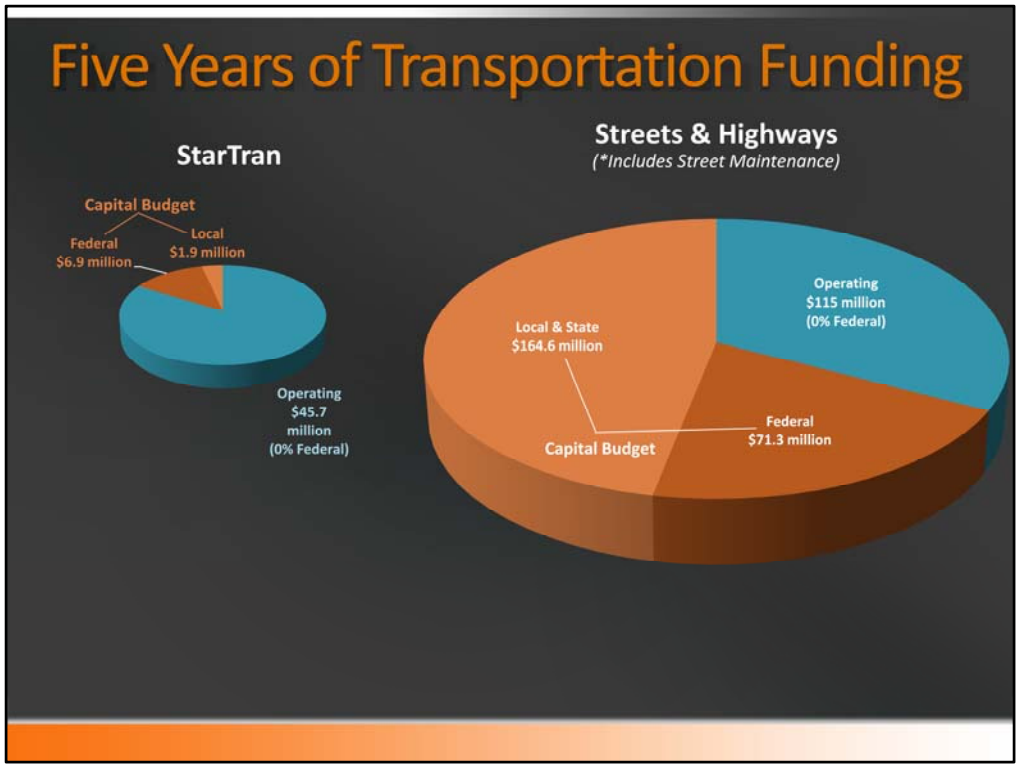
The Planning Department and Planning Commission are initiating a new effort to update the City-County Comprehensive Plan. This slideshow indicates some of the key issues that we expect to research, evaluate and bring to the community for discussion during this process.

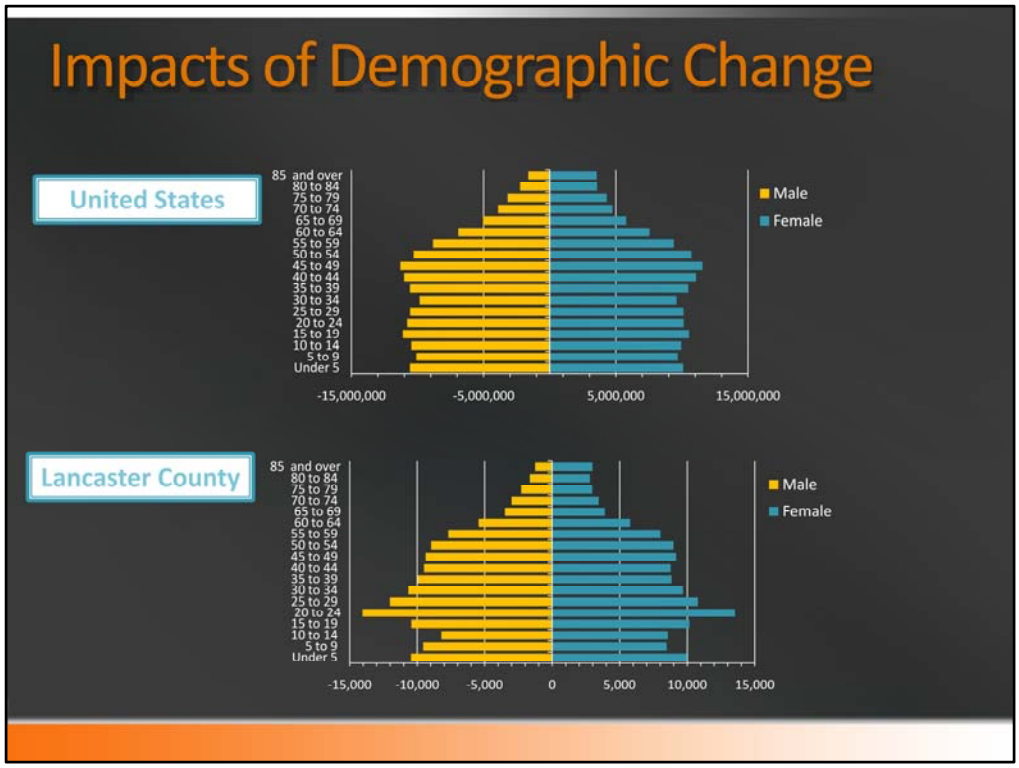


About every five years, the City and County revisit the question of where, when and how we are going to accommodate another 100,000 or more residents expected in Lincoln and Lancaster County over the next 25 or 30 years. That question includes consideration of where people will live, work, shop and recreate; how they will conveniently get from one place to another; and what other types of public services they will need. The continuing process allows us to make adjustments in response to changes in population growth, economic change, and financial capacity.

A long range plan is needed for:
Predictability: for our "internal" customers (elected and appointed boards and commissions, and other City and County departments), as well as our "external" customers (developers, builders, homebuyers, businesses, institutions). Some degree of predictability is needed in order to make better decisions and investments.
Coordination of facilities/services: a plan provides the mechanism for cooperation and coordination to build public and private facilities and extend services.
Regulatory compliance: the Plan is required by state statute for a community to enact zoning regulations; and…

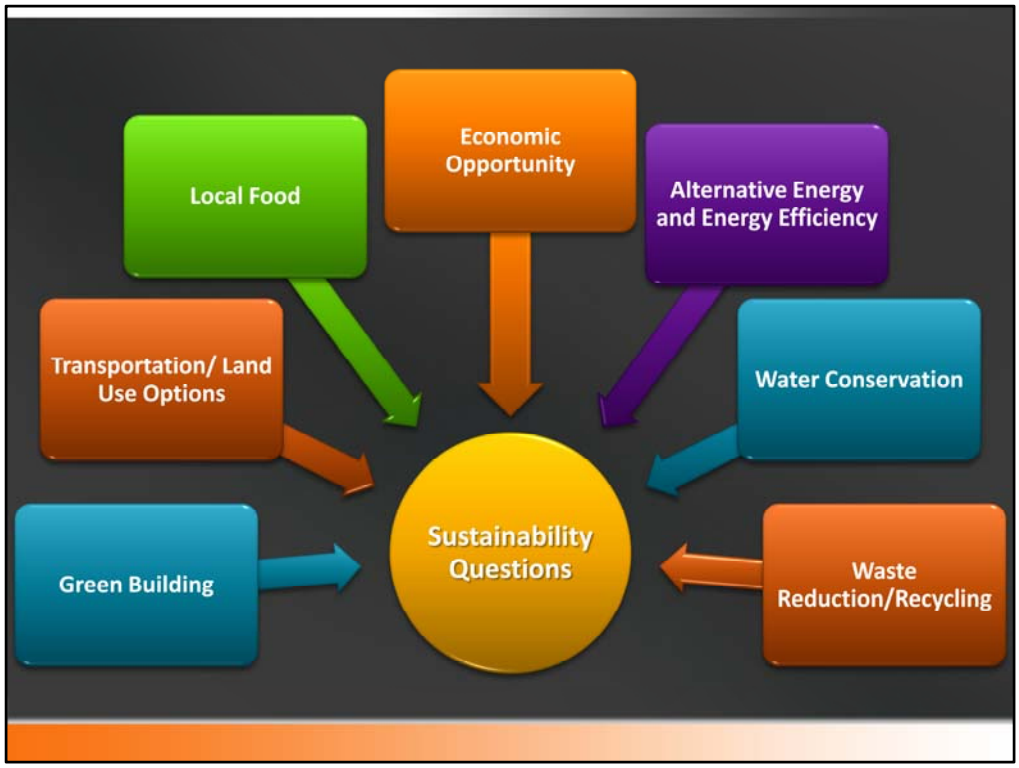


…Federal transportation funding: the transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan is required to be adopted and updated by the federal Department of Transportation as a condition of receiving grants for transportation projects. The City and County receive millions of dollars each year to help improve roads and bridges and operate the local bus system.

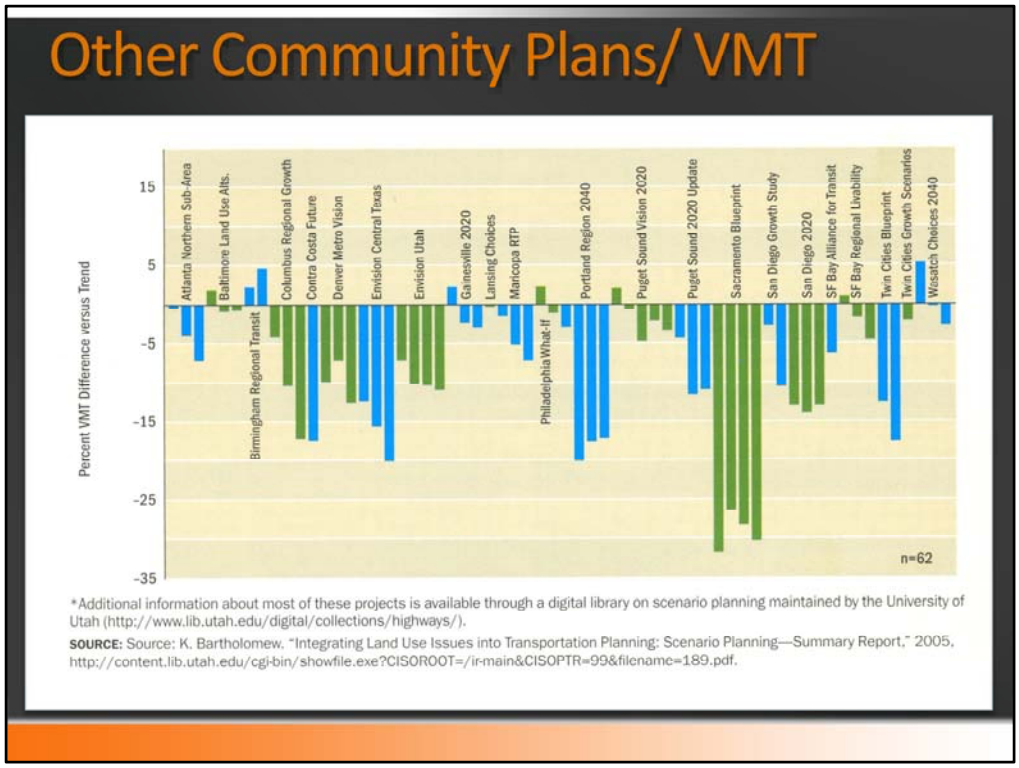


As part of this update, we will be evaluating the impacts of demographic change on our growth projections. The large element of the population known as the Baby Boomers will be leaving middle age for retirement, and likely demanding new kinds of housing and services. A smaller complement of Generation X will be taking their place, while a larger number of Generation Y will be growing up and forming new households. While local births will continue to provide a steady source of growth, the numbers of new residents we have seen in previous years from rural Nebraska and from other countries may well decline.

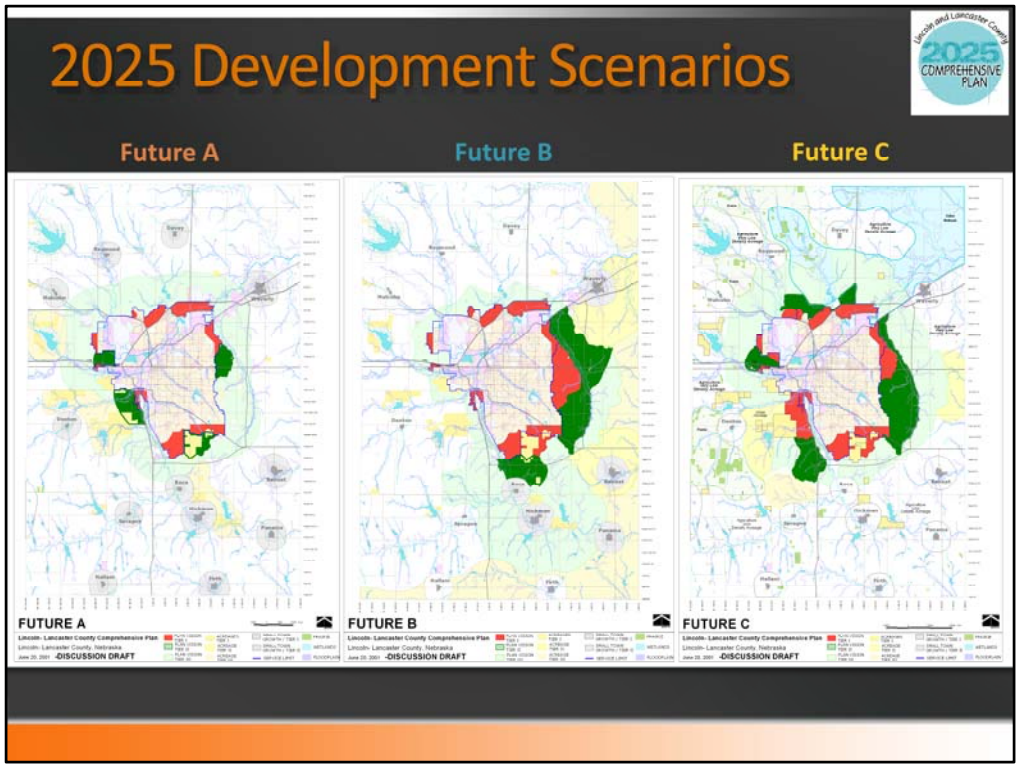
New technology will continue to change the way we live, mostly in ways that are difficult to predict. But we can expect that advances in digital information and communications will result in more home-based work and more virtual meetings, both reducing demands on the transportation system. Transportation technology is likely to change as well, with traffic control systems on the roads and in vehicles continuing to reduce incidents and smooth traffic flows. There is also the potential for new, smaller vehicles for some trips that may require much less space on the roads and in parking areas.



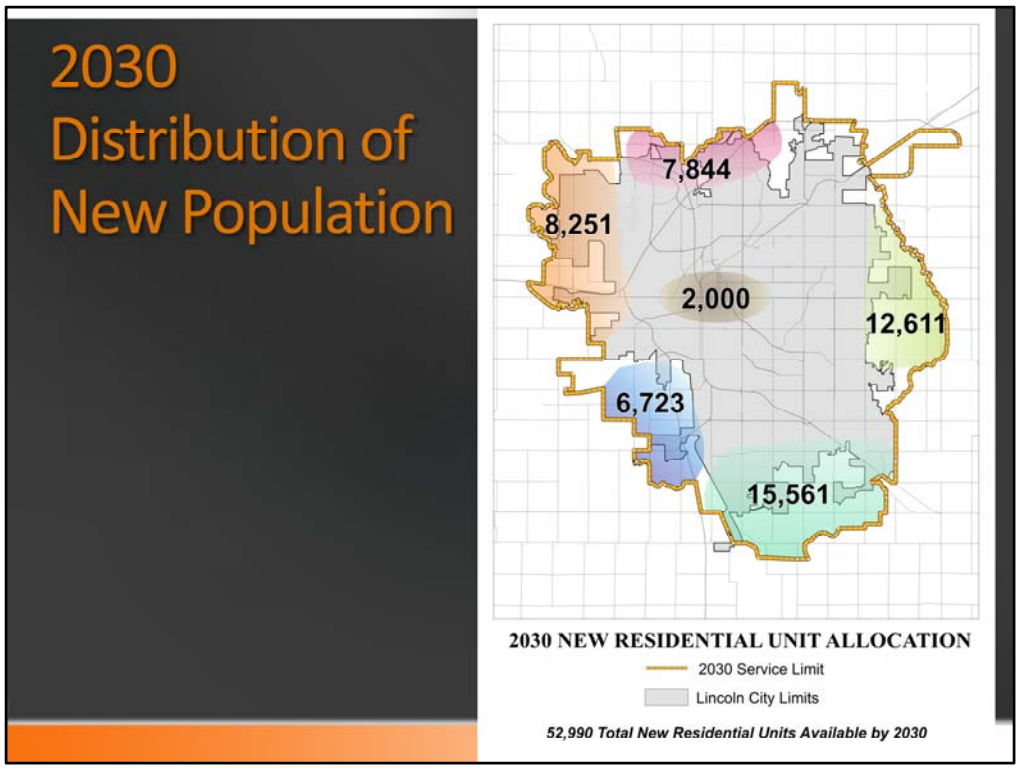
In many ways, both the current Comprehensive Plan and prior editions reflected the ethic of resource conservation and elements of "sustainability." The new variable today is the scientific consensus that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions due to human activities are contributing to global warming, resulting in the need to consider ways to reduce consumption of traditional energy sources. The Comprehensive Plan process will consider all the potential elements of sustainability, but will continue to focus on how these elements might affect future land use and transportation.



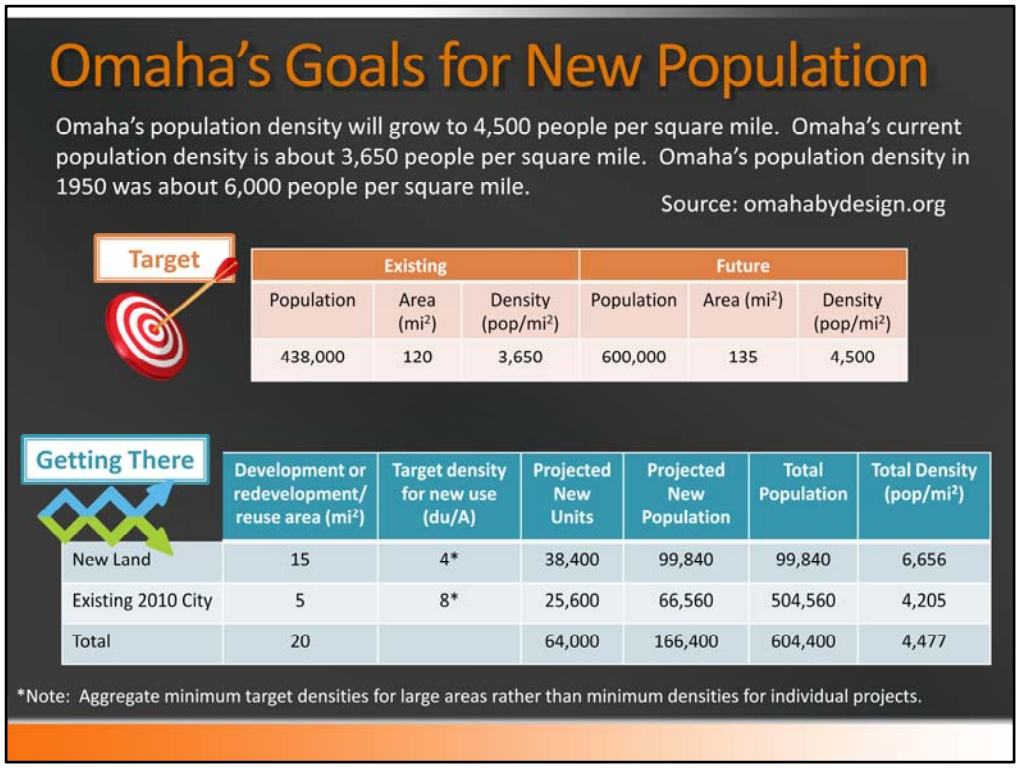
Around the country, metropolitan areas are being mandated or strongly encouraged to consider the impacts of growth on climate change. Transportation systems are responsible for about one-third of greenhouse gas emissions, and so these communities are looking at how average vehicle miles traveled can be reduced while accommodating growth. This translates into the consideration of alternative development scenarios – alternative patterns of land use and transportation.



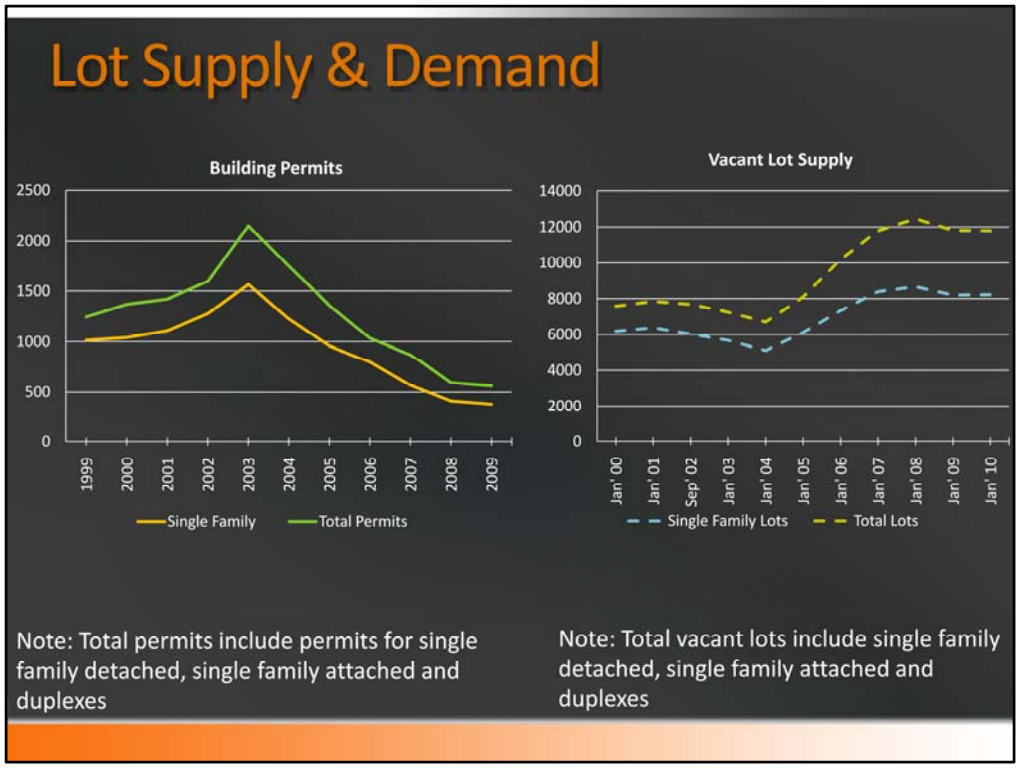
The Planning Department and Planning Commission have considered alternative development scenarios in previous updates of the Comprehensive Plan, and so that can be expected again as part of this new effort. This slide shows three alternate development scenarios considered as part of the development of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Future A shows a "compact growth" scenario, channeling near-term growth into the existing City and within the adopted Future Service Limit. Future B shows a "unidirectional growth" plan, with the dominant near-term urban growth toward the east in the Stevens Creek watershed. Future C demonstrates a "multi-directional growth" scenario, with near-term growth occurring in several directions around the City.



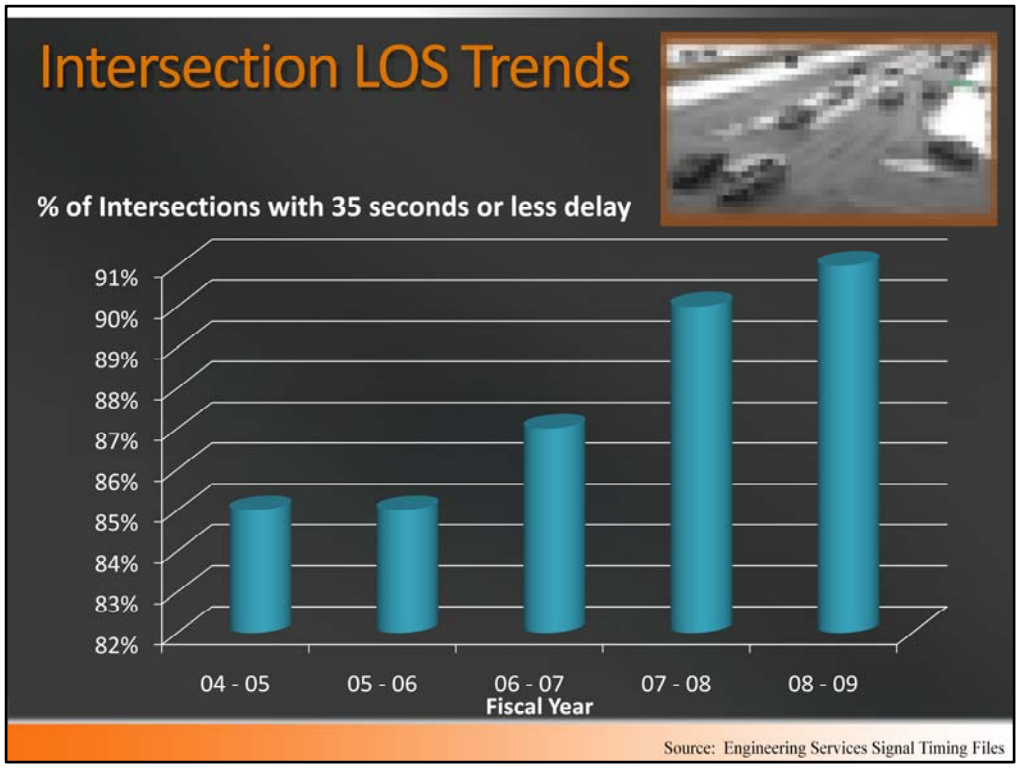
The update process will begin with a review of the current adopted plan for the City and County. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan projected that the bulk (96%) of new housing units required to meet the needs of an expanded population would be accommodated on over 50 square miles of unimproved land at the edges of the City. The remainder of new housing units (4%) was projected to occur through infill and redevelopment in the City's downtown and Antelope Valley.



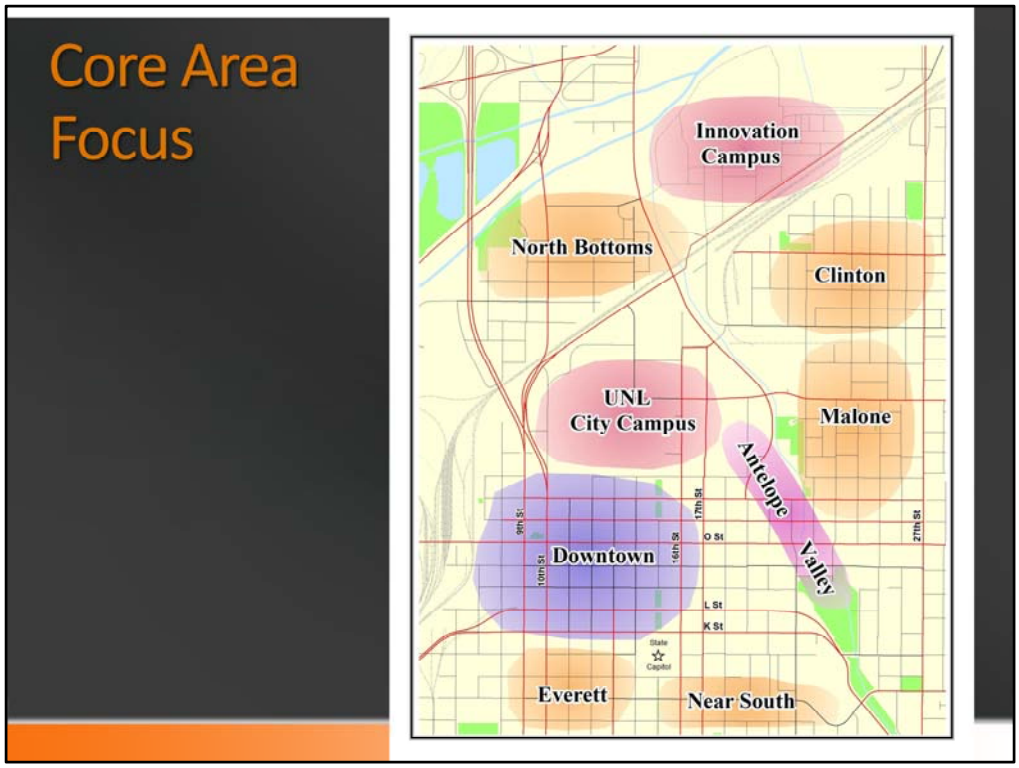
In contrast, the City of Omaha and its private partner, Omaha By Design, are considering a very different scenario for that City's future growth as part of their plan update. This scenario projects a much larger percentage (40%) of Omaha's growth to be accommodated through infill and redevelopment, while a smaller percentage of growth (60%) in a smaller area (15 square miles) is projected to occur at the edges. The advantages of this scenario are a reduction in vehicle miles traveled, a reduction in infrastructure costs outside the city limits, and an increase in density inside the city limits which can support more public and private services.



The 2040 Plan update will also need to take into consideration the very different trends we have seen in recent years in the local housing industry. The supply of vacant lots that are platted or committed through annexation agreements at the edge of the City for new single family and duplex units in Lincoln has doubled over the past 6 years, at the same time that the number of new housing starts has dropped by 75 percent. Assuming the slow recovery of the industry that is being predicted at both the national and local levels, the existing supply could easily serve the needs of the community for the rest of this new decade.



During the past five years, significant improvements have been made by the Lincoln Public Works department in overall traffic flow within the City. The percentage of City intersections during the afternoon peak traffic hour that are operating with some congestion (where average vehicle delay is more than 35 seconds) has been reduced from about 14 percent to 9 percent. But as we look forward to a growing City with limited financial resources, it may become more difficult to maintain this standard. During the Plan update, this standard should be considered together with the level of service for other modes of travel – walking and bicycling and public transit.



Five years have passed since the adoption of the Master Plan for Lincoln's downtown, and the Master Plan calls for a review at this time. This review is planned to be incorporated as part of the larger update of the Comprehensive Plan. In doing so, consideration will be given to the downtown in the context of its surrounding core area neighborhoods and special districts.

The bulk of the technical and citizen-oriented activities required to develop and adopt the new Plan will fall on staff in the Planning Department and other City-County departments as available. Activities need to be scheduled around the federally-imposed deadline of December 2011 for adoption of the long range transportation element. Details on tasks to be accomplished and the structure for citizen involvement still are being developed. However, this work-in-progress timeline provides a framework for the process.