

RESIDENTIAL

This section discusses the desired pattern of development in new neighborhoods, established neighborhoods and rural neighborhoods and strategies for meeting future housing demand.



OVERALL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ✧ Affordable housing should be distributed throughout the region to be near job opportunities and to provide housing choices within every neighborhood. Preserve existing affordable housing and promote the creation of new affordable housing throughout the community.
- ✧ One of Lincoln's most valuable community assets is the supply of good, safe, and decent single family homes that are available at very affordable costs when compared to many other communities across the country. Preservation of these homes for use by future generations will protect residential neighborhoods and allow for many households to attain the dream of home ownership.
- ✧ A safe residential dwelling should be available for each citizen: the efficiency apartment and the country estate, the small single family "starter" home and the large downtown apartment suite, the most affordable and the most expensive dwelling unit, completely independent living and living within the care of others. Provision of the broadest range of housing options throughout the community improves the quality of life in the whole community.
- ✧ Diversity of housing choices directly depends upon achieving affordable housing. Housing affordability is not merely important for the community, it is imperative. Lack of affordable housing directly impacts citizens' assets and opportunities, which in turn shape the community's assets and opportunities. Failure to achieve housing affordability reduces the quality of life for income groups disproportionately, creates widespread hardships and stress, and retards the City's collective abilities to address community problems and objectives.
- ✧ Encourage the development, maintenance, and preservation of safe and decent affordable and special needs housing for ownership and rental by low- and moderate-income households; remove barriers to fair housing and home ownership; and strengthen our policy and institutions to support affordable housing throughout the City as identified in the goals and objectives found in the FY 2005 - 2009 City of Lincoln Strategic Plan for HUD Entitlement Programs.
- ✧ New residential development is generally discouraged in areas of environmental resources such as endangered species, saline wetlands, native prairies and in floodplain corridors. It is also strongly encouraged that adequate spacing be provided from pipelines and areas where hazardous chemicals could be used and stored. Property owners and residents along the pipeline should be notified about hazards and emergency actions.
- ✧ Provide different housing types and choices, including affordable housing, throughout each neighborhood for an increasingly diverse population.

- ✧ Encourage convenient access to neighborhood services (stores, schools, parks) from residential areas.
- ✧ Create housing opportunities for residents with special needs throughout the city that are compatible with residential neighborhoods.
- ✧ Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks should maximize access and mobility to provide alternatives and reduce dependence upon the automobile. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of all streets, or in alternative locations as allowed through design standards or review process.
- ✧ Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance. Neighborhoods should include homes, stores, workplaces, schools and places to recreate.
- ✧ Interconnected networks of streets, trails and sidewalks should be designed to encourage walking and bicycling and provide multiple connections within and between neighborhoods.

Special Needs -- generally include, but are not limited to the following uses: elderly housing, assisted living centers, group homes, domestic shelters and single room occupancy housing.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR NEW NEIGHBORHOODS

- ✧ The guiding principles for new neighborhoods are a combination of principles found in this section in addition to the principles for all other sections within the plan, such as Business and Commerce and Mobility and Transportation. A neighborhood is more than housing – great neighborhoods combine all the elements of parks, education, commercial areas, the environment and housing together in one place.
- ✧ The image is an example of how the principles might work together in a neighborhood, including the following principles:
 1. Encourage a mix of housing types, single family, townhomes, apartments, elderly housing all within one area;
 2. Similar housing types face each other: single family faces single family, change to different use at rear of lot;
 3. Parks and open space within walking distance of all residences;
 4. Multi-family and elderly housing nearest to commercial area;
 5. Pedestrian orientation; shorter block lengths, sidewalks on both sides of all roads;
 6. Public uses (elementary schools, churches) as centers of neighborhood – shared facilities (city parks & school sites);
 7. Encourage shopping and employment uses to be at within the neighborhoods and within walking distance to most residences (which may also serve as locations for transit stops.)

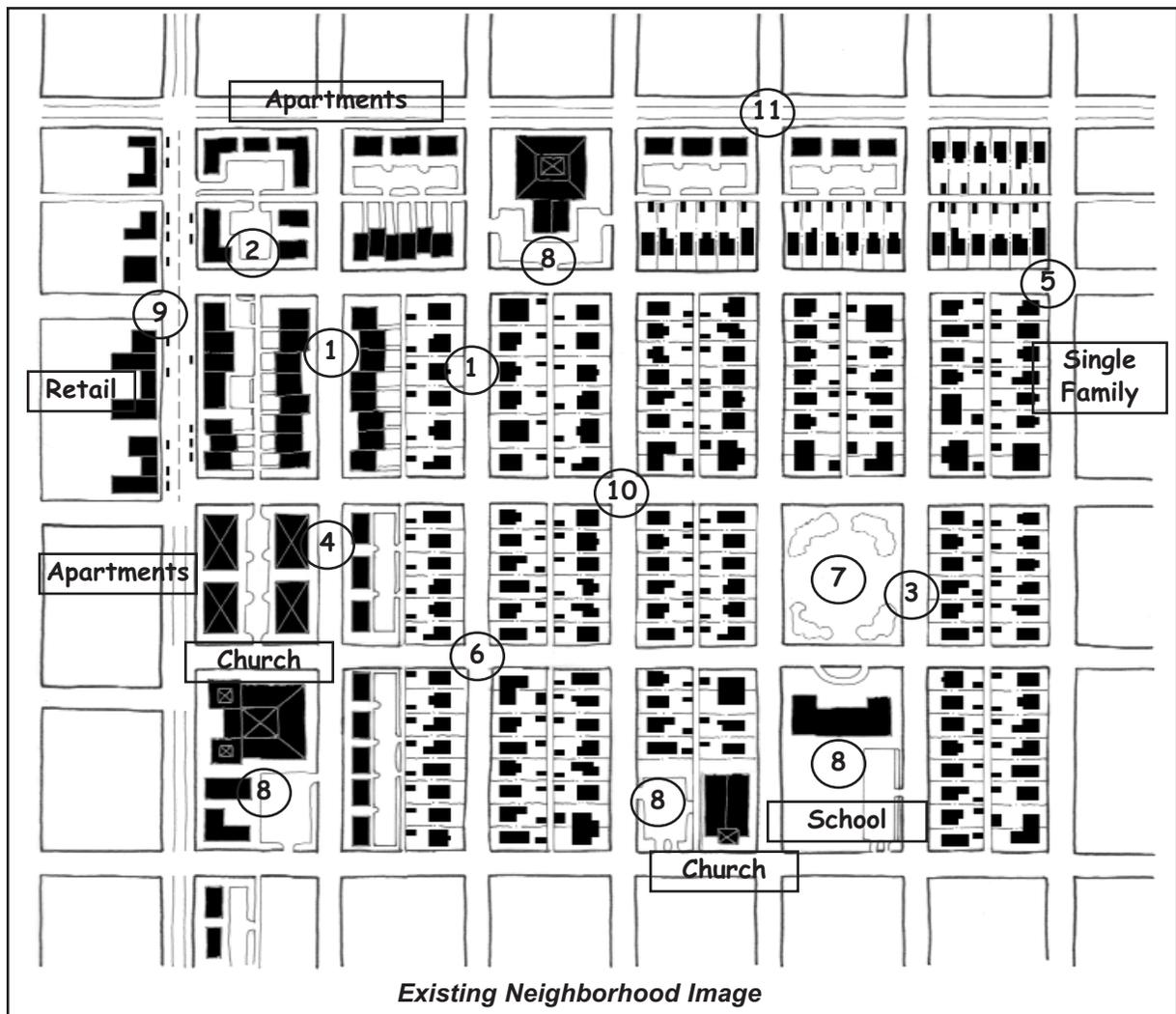


New Neighborhood Image

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR 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. While acknowledging the need for affordable housing, recognize that broad economic diversity within existing neighborhoods encourages reinvestment and improves quality of life for all residents.
- ✧ Preserve, protect, and promote city and county historic resources. Preserve, protect and promote the character and unique features of rural and urban neighborhoods, including their historical and architectural elements.
- ✧ Promote the continued use of single-family dwellings and all types of buildings, to preserve 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.

- ✧ Preserve the mix of housing types in older neighborhoods.
- ✧ The image is an example of how these principles might work together in an existing neighborhood, including the following principles:
 1. Encourage a mix of compatible land uses in neighborhoods, but similar uses on the same block face. Similar housing types face each other: single family faces single family, change to different use at rear of lot. Commercial parking lots should not intrude into residential areas where residential uses predominate a block face. More intense commercial uses (gas stations, big box stores, car wash, fast food, etc.) may not be compatible due to impact on nearby housing. Expansion in existing centers should not encroach, or expand to encroach, on existing neighborhoods, and commercial areas must be screened from residential areas.
 2. Encourage pedestrian orientation with parking at rear of residential and neighborhood commercial uses.
 3. Require new development to be compatible with character of neighborhood and adjacent uses (i.e., parking at rear, similar setback, height and land use).
 4. Encourage a mix of housing types, including single family, duplex, attached single family units, apartments, and elderly housing all within one area. Encourage multi-family near commercial areas.
 5. Encourage retention of single family uses in order to maintain mix of housing.
 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 uses (elementary schools, churches) as centers of neighborhoods – encourage shared parking whenever possible — permit minor incursions of accessory parking for public/semi-public uses into neighborhoods if properly screened.
 9. Transit stops integrated into commercial center, near arterial.
 10. Maintain existing pattern of streets.
 11. Maintain arterial streets that are compatible with the existing neighborhood character with two through lanes and a center turn lane.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR RURAL AREAS

- ✧ The Comprehensive Plan supports the preservation of land in the bulk of the county for agricultural and natural resource purposes. But it recognizes that some part of the County are in transition from predominantly agricultural uses to a mix which includes more residential uses. Balancing the strong consumer demand for country style living and the practical challenge of integrating acreages with traditional land uses will continue. Land in the county should be managed so that the historic segment of six percent of the county's population can continue to choose an acreage lifestyle, while minimizing conflicts between land uses. Rural development policies should be written plainly and followed consistently, to provide landowners and developers with clear expectations about their development options.
- ✧ Future challenges may arise when a growing city or town needs to annex rural acreage areas, such as; acreage infrastructure systems that are not compatible with urban standards, the potential change in the lifestyle of rural acreage owners, financial implications of higher property taxes, and impact on acreage parents and children when the annexation leads to a change in school districts.

✧ Residential, commercial and industrial growth should be directed to the incorporated municipalities of the county, and the areas beyond city and town boundaries in their extra-territorial jurisdiction should be preserved for future urban growth by designating them for agricultural use. However, each town should determine if and how much acreage development should be permitted within their jurisdiction. Some towns have established plans to permit acreages within some or all of their jurisdiction, and these are reflected on the future land use map for the county.

✧ New acreage development generally is not encouraged in the Urban Growth Tiers for Lincoln's three-mile extra territorial jurisdiction, 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). This 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.
- ◆ a development agreement that runs with the land and acknowledges that the acreage development is not entitled to extra buffering protection and waives the right to protest the creation of lawful assessment districts for sewer, water and paving in the future.

✧ All proposals for acreages on land not already designated on the future land use map for acreages should be evaluated based on factors such as water quality and quantity, soil conditions, roads, availability of emergency services, agricultural productivity, land parcelization, 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 as part of the annual review.

✧ 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)

✧ 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 agricultural-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. This would enable rural area developers to purchase the rights to develop more home sites on more suitable land from owners of less suitable land who wish to preserve their land for farming and open space. This transfer of rights could occur within short distances or from one portion of the county to another, such as from the northeast to the southeast part of the county, where rural water districts are established, more roads are paved, and towns are closer by. It is important, however, 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 in other rural areas seeing pressure for development to preserve farmland. 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 as prairie or wetland or forest. The donation of these easements qualify as charitable deductions to federal income tax. Other states which are very interested in protecting farming close in 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.
- ✧ City and county officials should continue to look at ways to contain public costs and coordinate public resource allocation, especially in the area of road construction. A variety of management techniques could be used, including the shared engineering and funding of road projects that aid urban expansion.
- ✧ Many families are not well-informed of all the implications of country 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, a comparison of public services (e.g.road maintenance, emergency medical, fire protection, and police) in urban versus rural areas. Objective information on the pros and cons of "country living" should be provided to the public through continuing educational efforts by the County's extension service, handouts available to county departments and local realtors, and possibly, documents filed of record with new platted lots for disclosure to prospective buyers.

STRATEGIES FOR NEW & EXISTING URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS

The key to both new and existing urban neighborhoods is diversity. For new neighborhoods, it is having a greater mix of housing types and land uses. New neighborhoods should have a variety of housing types and sizes, plus commercial and employment opportunities. Developing a pedestrian orientation of buildings and streets is also a priority for new areas.

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 older neighborhoods great places to live. New construction should continue the architectural variety, but in a manner that is sympathetic with the existing neighborhoods. Infill development also needs to respect the street pattern, block sizes and development standards of the area, such as having parking at the rear and front porches, windows and doors on the front street side. The diversity of land uses,

including commercial and congregate living facilities are important to the diversity of any area, provided they fit within the character of the block and neighborhood.

- ◆ Single family homes, in particular, add opportunities for owner-occupants in older neighborhoods and should be preserved. The rich stock of existing, smaller homes found throughout established areas, provides an essential opportunity for many first-time home buyers.
- ◆ Plan for sufficient and varied choices for the location of elderly housing. Encourage elderly housing to locate in areas designated for mixed-uses where the elderly housing would serve as a transitional use to less intensive residential development.
- ◆ There are notable differences between elderly housing and traditional multiple-family residential developments. Typically, elderly housing 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 elderly housing may not be deemed appropriate for other types of higher-density housing such as multiple-family or town homes.
- ◆ Evaluate the provisions for accessory dwelling units in residential areas.
- ◆ Revise standards to ensure that residential and commercial development more efficiently provide night time lighting, minimizing glare and without intruding on adjacent uses or casting significant lighting skyward.
- ◆ Encourage public/private partnerships with housing entities including Lincoln Housing Authority, Nebraska Housing Resource, and Neighborworks.
- ◆ The congregate living facility codes and regulations were recently updated in order to continue to provide housing opportunities for residents with special needs throughout the city that are compatible with residential neighborhoods. Congregate facilities should be designed and located to enhance the surrounding neighborhood. Reasonable spacing, design, and operational requirements were established for all congregate facilities to preserve the neighborhood character while providing for those with special needs.
- ◆ Support policies that encourage affordable housing in all areas. Look at options such as incentives to encourage housing or a program to allow density to be transferable between properties.

STRATEGIES FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- ◆ Structure incentives to encourage more efficient residential and commercial development to make greater utilization of the community's infrastructure. Incentives may include financial, process and/or regulatory conditions.
- ◆ Revise pertinent codes and regulations in order to remove impediments to achieving mixed-use residential and commercial development.
- ◆ Develop standards for residential, commercial and industrial development along entryway corridors into Lincoln.
- ◆ Develop new design standards that encourage density, optimize infrastructure costs, and help lower the overall cost of property development.
- ◆ Provide for an adequate supply of affordable land, and timely infrastructure improvements.
- ◆ Revise the regulations or procedures to provide notice to potential buyers about the location of pipelines and hazardous chemical use & storage as well strongly encourage adequate spacing be provided from pipelines and areas where hazardous chemicals could be used and stored.

STRATEGIES FOR EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ In existing neighborhoods, retain existing predominately single family blocks in order to maintain the mix of housing types. The current mix within each neighborhood provides ample housing choices. Because existing neighborhoods have significantly greater populations and residential densities than other areas of the community, intensification will be detrimental to the neighborhoods and exceed infrastructure capacities. Codes, zoning and regulations that encourage changes in the current balance of housing types, should be revised to retain the existing character of the neighborhoods and to encourage maintenance of established older neighborhoods, not their extensive conversion to more intensive uses.
- ◆ Encourage a variety of housing types in the Downtown and Antelope Valley area.
- ◆ Develop and promote building codes and regulations with incentives for the rehabilitation of existing buildings in

order to make it easier to restore and reuse older buildings. Encourage deconversion of single family structures in multi-family use to single family use.

- ◆ Modify design standards and code requirements that impede affordable housing development, while remaining consistent with the character of the existing neighborhood.
- ◆ Structure incentives to preserve the existing housing stock.

STRATEGIES FOR RURAL AREAS

- ◆ Continue to reflect adopted town plans on the future land use map for the county.
- ◆ 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, if planning to use on-site wells, to provide information on water quality and quantity.
- ◆ Consider all proposals for new acreage developments in undesignated areas at one time, annually, as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ Pursue state legislation to enable the County to establish a transfer of development rights program that helps encourage acreage development in more suitable locations.
- ◆ 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 country living.

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