

# 8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES

*This chapter reviews the projected status of community facilities during the planning period, including libraries, fire services, law enforcement, health care, schools, and public buildings.*



## INTRODUCTION

The availability and service levels of community facilities affect the quality of life in the City and County, and as the community grows, it should be prepared to adapt to change. This chapter addresses a series of principles and strategies to be pursued in meeting the community's future health, safety and educational needs. It takes into consideration an increasing population, changing demographics and evolving technology in planning high quality and efficient delivery of services. It also continues to emphasize the importance of collaboration and shared resources among agencies to realize the greatest benefit to the community.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### OVERALL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Promote a functional balance between community facilities and growth.
- Encourage adequate facilities and services which provide diverse educational, cultural, and social opportunities.

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- Promote adequate facilities and services to assure the health, safety and welfare of all citizens.
- Promote cooperation and coordination among both the public and private sectors in the development and maintenance of community facilities.

## LIBRARIES

- Libraries are important centers of activity and education, and should grow along with the community while keeping their center in downtown.
- Balanced and accessible service should be provided to all.
- Location and layout of new facilities should attract and serve the maximum population within a reasonable distance.
- Changes in technology should be considered while planning for the physical layout of libraries and for the addition of services to those traditionally supplied by the libraries.



## FIRE AND RESCUE

- Provide timely and effective emergency response services.
- As the community grows fire and rescue services must be able to respond to changing needs in order to provide public safety services.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

- As the community grows, law enforcement must be able to respond to changing needs in order to provide public safety services.
- Continue to promote the cooperation exhibited by the city, county, University of Nebraska

police and State Patrol in furthering the efficient delivery of public safety services to the community.

## HEALTH CARE

- Develop Lincoln as a major network of quality regional health care services at reasonable costs.
- Encourage health care service facilities to meet the demand of the community's growing and aging population base.
- Medical services, including physical and mental health care services, should be integrated and accessible within the community.
- Many of the existing medical facilities are located near existing residential neighborhoods and are expected to remain the vital core of health care services in the county and region.

## EDUCATION

- Encourage cooperative planning and site development between the City and public and private educational institutions.
- Continue to coordinate development proposals with all the school districts in the County.
- Lincoln Public Schools is the only public school district within the City of Lincoln, and the Lincoln Public School boundary will continue to expand as the city limits of Lincoln expand.
- Elementary and middle schools should be sized and located to enable children to walk or bicycle to them. Child care centers should be located within neighborhoods and near schools and parks when possible.

## OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

- Public buildings and structures should be well built, functional, energy efficient and designed to blend attractively within the context of surrounding development or to serve as a guide for future development or redevelopment.

- Future public buildings should be designed, built, and maintained to ensure good indoor air quality to help protect the public's health.

## LINCOLN CITY LIBRARIES

Library services, similar to many other public services, must be provided regardless of how the community grows. Lincoln City Libraries currently operates the following nine facilities: the headquarters library in Downtown — Bennett Martin Public Library; four quadrant branch libraries — Victor E. Anderson, Charles H. Gere, Loren Corey Eiseley and Bess Dodson Walt; three neighborhood libraries — Bethany, Dan A. Williams and South; and the bookmobile.

Lincoln City Libraries has a branch library in each quadrant of its operational service area. The intent is to provide balanced and accessible library service to the entire community. Through contractual arrangement, residents living outside Lincoln, but within Lancaster County, have access to all services of Lincoln City Libraries.

Downtown is the heart of our community, and strong community facilities are essential to maintaining downtown vitality. The Downtown Master Plan has identified the importance of maintaining the location of the main library in downtown.

In addition to Lincoln City Libraries, there are private and other publicly supported libraries in the community. These libraries are associated with colleges and universities, and access is determined by each institution's governing body.

### STRATEGIES

- Continue through contractual arrangement to provide residents living outside Lincoln, but within Lancaster County, access to all services of Lincoln City Libraries.
- Future renovation and/or relocation plans of the main library must consider sites that maintain or augment access, including pedestrian and mass transit accessibility, and continue the main library's role as a core community facility in downtown.
- While planning for new libraries or renovating and reusing existing facilities, Lincoln City Libraries should consider neighborhood and Downtown development, transportation corridors, public school patterns, and agencies and services that complement the public library system.
- With changing demographics of the community and changes in technology, the libraries should explore the possibility of providing additional services to the traditional role such as:
  - Self-service kiosks in heavily-trafficked places to provide an alternative to a full service facility.
  - Provide for more services such as for community gatherings and meetings.




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# FIRE AND RESCUE

## LINCOLN FIRE AND RESCUE

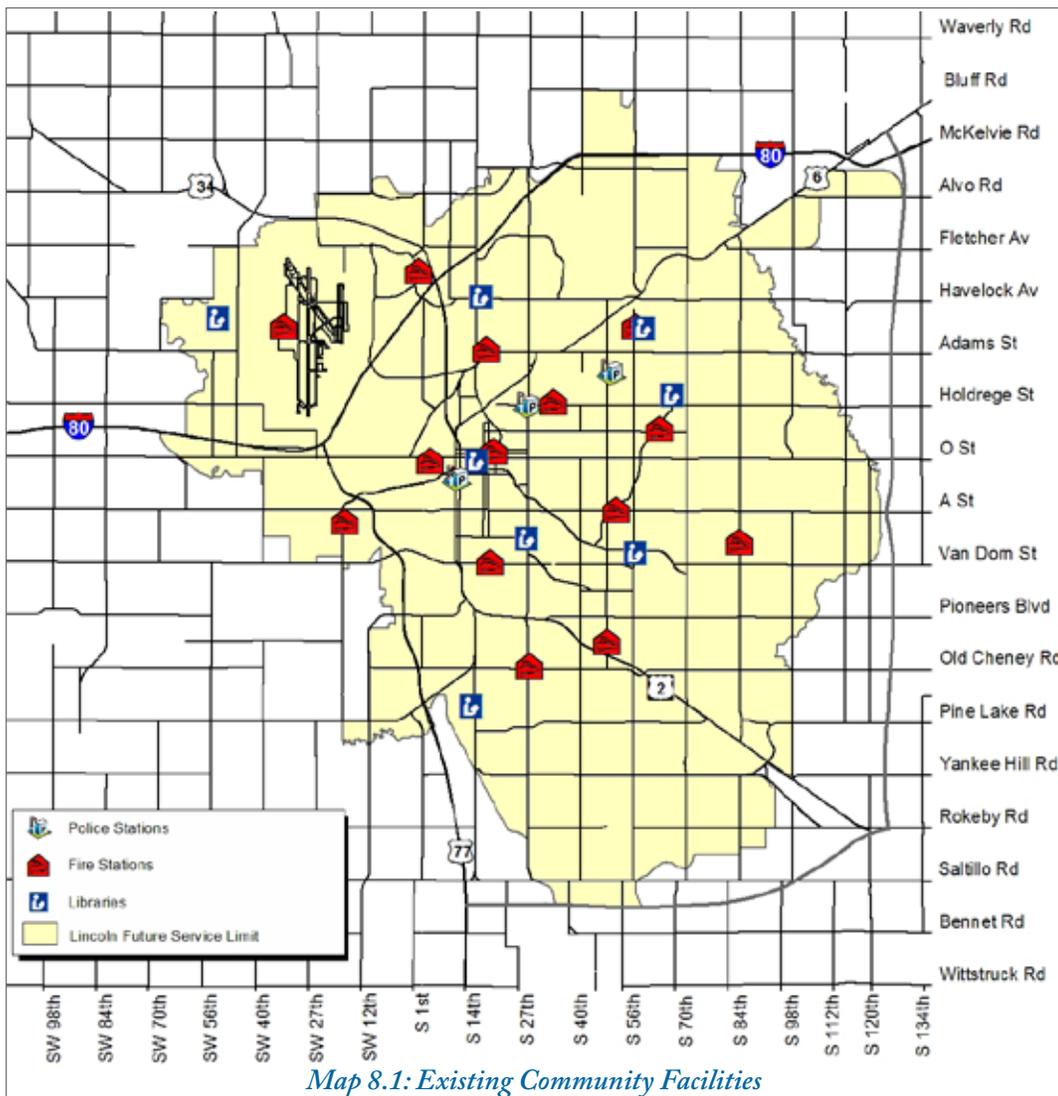
Lincoln Fire and Rescue anticipates the relocation of fire stations, reconstruction of existing fire stations, and the need for additional fire stations to service the City's projected expansion during the 30 year planning period. These new stations would house a variety of Fire and Rescue apparatus and Emergency Medical units. In general, the new facilities would be placed in areas to the north, east, southeast, south, and southwest of the City's growth areas. No specific locations for new fire stations have been identified. Lincoln Fire and Rescue routinely monitors response times, population growth, city growth, and call volumes

in evaluating possible relocation and building new fire facilities. Changing development patterns financial concerns, service expectations, availability of resources, environmental issues, traffic flow, or other conditions will warrant changes to provide effective emergency response. The utmost priority of Lincoln Fire and Rescue is the ability to provide the highest level of emergency service within the shortest period of time.

The Lincoln Fire Department currently operates from 14 stations located throughout the City. These stations are geographically located in the community to be able to meet the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA-1770) Standards concerning response times. However, Lincoln Fire and Rescue has repeatedly stated that maintaining

desirable response times is becoming increasingly difficult in areas that have experienced urban growth further and further away from existing fire stations. The Fire Department is expected to review the strategic deployment of stations, including relocating existing stations as well as planning new ones, in order to improve response times and anticipate further growth. Mutual aid requests for Lincoln Fire Department service are common for incidents outside Lincoln.

The Lincoln Fire Department's equipment system is designed for use with a public water supply capable of generating 1,500 gallons of water per minute at a residual pressure of 50 pounds per square inch.



Map 8.1: Existing Community Facilities

The Lincoln Fire Department provides emergency ambulance transport services in the City of Lincoln. Inter-facility hospital-to-hospital non-emergency services are provided by the private sector.

## RURAL FIRE DISTRICTS

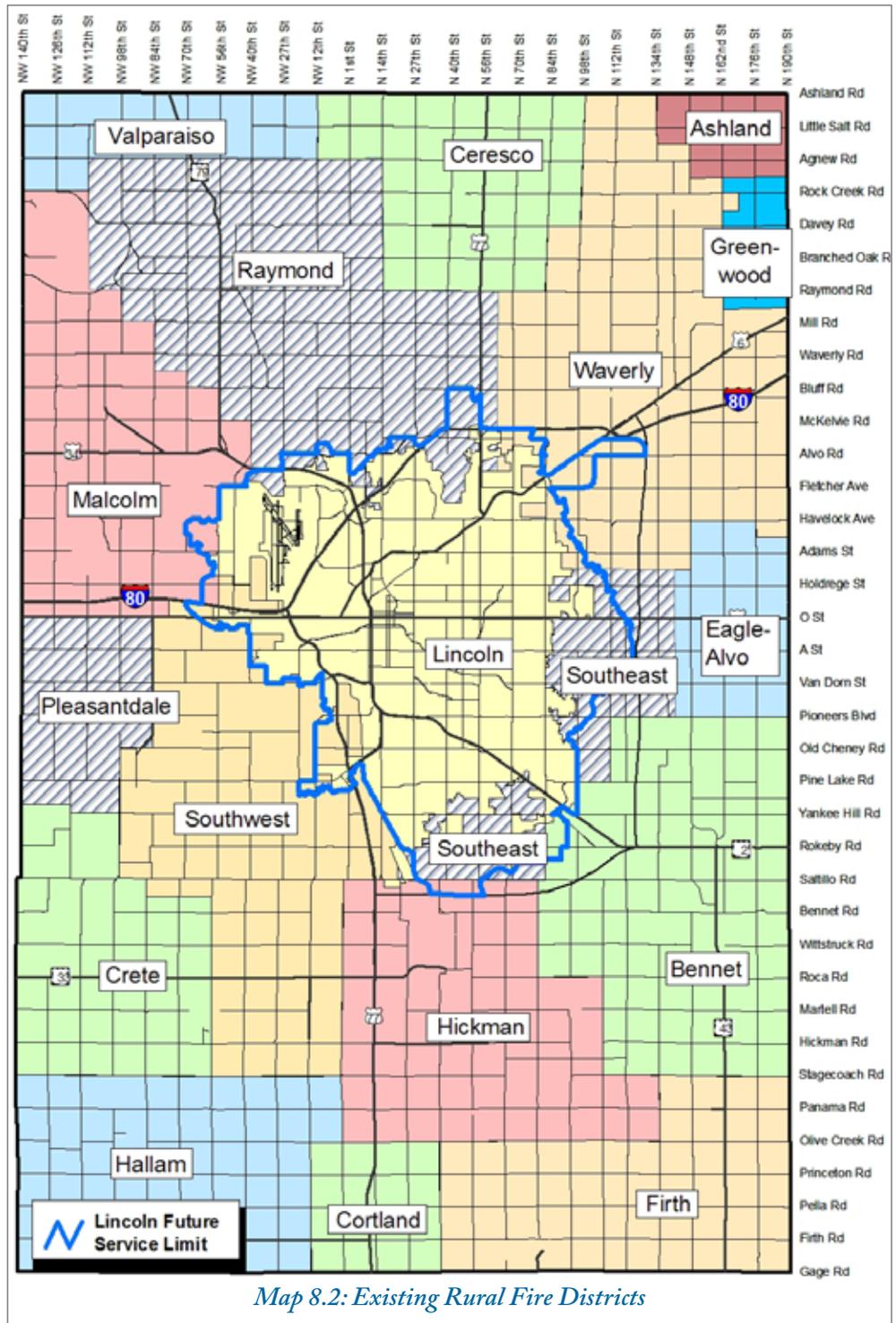
The 17 rural volunteer fire departments will continue to see increasing challenges. All rural fire district personnel are volunteers. Rural fire districts can provide fire protection, rescue, and emergency ambulance transport. Fire departments are distributed throughout most of the towns and villages, while some are located in the unincorporated areas of the county. Mutual aid requests between fire districts are common for incidents outside Lincoln. Each rural fire district has unique challenges, including response times and water availability.

A growing population in the small towns, villages, and rural areas, as well as increased traffic, will continue to create demands for fire and emergency services. The physical growth of the City of Lincoln will cause changes to the character of some areas and to the tax base of many districts.

## STRATEGIES

- Continue to routinely monitor the response time of all existing stations.
- Lincoln Fire Department should continue to identify needed fire facilities that will allow them to meet or exceed the National Fire Protection Association standards with a response time of

6.20 minutes for fire suppression, 6 minutes for medical calls, 90% of the time, and to meet the City Ordinance standard of 8 minutes or less for ambulance response, 90% of the time.



Map 8.2: Existing Rural Fire Districts

- Explore the possibility of relocating fire stations to meet the community's needs of changing development patterns.
- An expansion of the requirements to meet the evolving fire needs in the rural areas, such as fire ponds and dry hydrants, should be investigated.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Lincoln Police Department and Lancaster



County Sheriff's Office are anticipated to remain as the sole providers of law enforcement services to the City and County during the planning period. The Sheriff's Office will continue to provide contract law

enforcement support to the various incorporated towns of the county. The overall increase in population in the City and County will increase the demand for police and sheriff services in the urban, small town, and rural areas.

The Hall of Justice and Law Enforcement Center accommodates both the operations of the Lincoln Police Department and the Lancaster County Sheriff within a single facility. This facility is an example of the cooperation exhibited by the City and County in furthering the efficient delivery of governmental services to the community.

In addition to the Lincoln Police Department, the City of Lincoln also has police presence by the University of Nebraska Police on the UNL campus as well as the State Patrol. The Capitol Security Division of the State Patrol Division monitors 48 buildings and eight parking facilities in the greater Lincoln area.

## STRATEGIES

- The Lincoln Police Department will experience a need for additional full service assembly

stations and other facilities located within the community. The Capital Improvement Program will be used to plan and finance projects needed to meet this growing need.

- Planning has taken place for the building of a new jail facility on a site which should allow the County to accommodate an increase in future inmate numbers.
- An increase in population and dwelling units may lead to a more crime and building code violations, which are part of police activities; more neighborhood watch initiatives with police involvement are anticipated.
- Continue the cooperation among the City of Lincoln Police Department, County Sheriff's Office, UNL Police and State Patrol in providing services that make the community safe.

## HEALTH CARE

Hospitals represent one of the highest and most important community service land uses. Lincoln has a growing number of medical campuses such as Bryan LGH East and West, St. Elizabeth's Regional Medical Center, Madonna Rehabilitation hospital, Veterans Medical Center, Lincoln Surgical Hospital and the Nebraska Heart Institute. Minor emergency medical services are also provided at several private facilities dispersed throughout the community. A number of private non-profit organizations provide targeted health services to residents throughout Lincoln and Lancaster County.

Multiple public and private service sites around Lincoln serve mental health needs of persons in Lancaster County. Continued population increases in Lancaster County and southeast Nebraska have meant increased demand for mental health services.

The Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department also provides a wide range of health related services to the residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County.

New medical office buildings have been constructed in many areas of the city. This trend is

likely to continue into the immediate future as the demand for health care services increases as a result of the community's growing and aging population.

## STRATEGIES

- Provide for accessible physical and mental health care services in appropriate areas in and around residential neighborhoods.
- Any hospital expansion will need to take into consideration the impact on adjacent neighborhoods.
- Hospitals should plan on using parking garages and multi-story construction in order to maximize use of the land.
- Plan for further construction on medical campuses.

## EDUCATION

### LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Lincoln Public School (LPS) district provides kindergarten through 12th grade education to almost 35,000 students within the City of Lincoln and surrounding area. The district operates 37 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, six high schools, and seven other alternative and special focus program sites. In addition to schools, LPS facilities include administrative, food service, maintenance, sports facilities and transportation centers.

The past decade has seen a change in the students enrolled at LPS. In 2000, about 14% of students were racially diverse; in 2010 this rose to 28%, with students representing 50 different countries. Economic changes are also affecting the school system. In 2000, 28% of students received free or reduced price lunches. That figure has risen to 40% over the past ten years. Over those ten years LPS has seen an increase from 31,000 to 35,000 students overall.

Lincoln Public Schools has made a substantial investment in renovating and improving existing

schools throughout the Lincoln area. A \$250 million school bond issue passed in 2006 allowed construction of six new schools and renovation of schools in every Lincoln neighborhood. During the planning period, LPS anticipates the addition of one high school in the Stevens Creek area east of Lincoln; three middle schools, one each in Stevens Creek, southeast Lincoln and the Arnold Heights area; and six elementary schools in the east and southeast areas of the future service limit.

Lincoln Public Schools and the City of Lincoln actively coordinate planning activities. Projected growth of residential development is crucial information used to identify future school sites. As LPlan 2040 was developed, LPS was consulted and informed at each step. This relationship is ongoing and expected to continue into the future. The Student Housing Task Force Report and the LPS Master Plan are adopted as approved components of the Comprehensive Plan and can be viewed on the LPS website at [lps.org](http://lps.org).

One relationship between city government and LPS that has particular potential for improving future efficiencies is the relationship between LPS and the Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department. In some locations, such as Lefler Middle School and Piedmont Park, Humann Elementary and Cripple Creek Park, and Fredstrom Elementary and Highlands Park, park and school facilities are already located on adjoining properties.

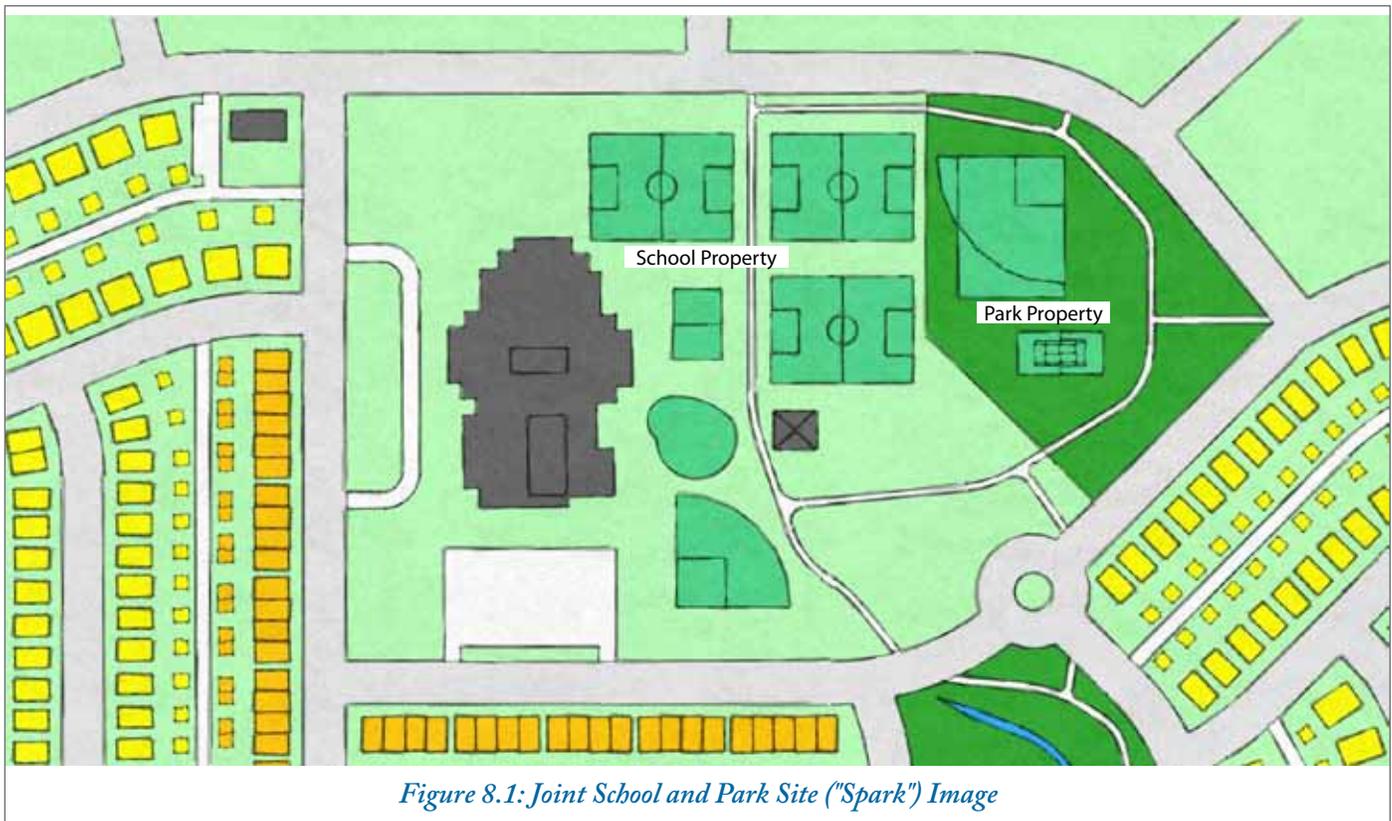
There are opportunities to reduce costs for both parks and schools by sharing playgrounds and playfields and even using picnic shelters as outdoor classrooms. This relationship has not yet been formalized but shows great potential benefit for both organizations. The image displays how the

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**In 2000, about 14% of students were racially diverse; in 2010 this rose to 28%, with students representing 50 different countries.**

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*Figure 8.1: Joint School and Park Site ("Spark") Image*

joint school and park site ("spark") principles might work together in future neighborhoods.

## RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

There are nine public rural school districts serving residents of Lancaster County. Several school facilities are located outside of Lancaster County. All of the remaining public school facilities are located within incorporated and unincorporated communities, except for the Norris Public School and Raymond Central Public School (Junior and Senior High).

Several school districts, most notably Waverly School district, will be impacted by expansion of the Lincoln city limits. The City, LPS and each school district impacted will need to coordinate efforts in the future.

Rural school districts also need to plan to accommodate areas designated for acreage residential development. Acreage residential areas provide additional tax revenue, but also create the need for more financial resources in order to provide

additional transportation services and educational facilities. Grouping acreage residential areas in pre-designated locations allows rural school districts to plan for adequate transportation and educational services in advance of development.

## PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

There are currently 18 private and parochial elementary schools in Lincoln, serving almost 7,000 students. In addition, there are four private and parochial high schools: Lincoln Christian, Lincoln Lutheran, Parkview Christian, and Pius X.

Additional private and parochial schools are anticipated during the planning period. The Catholic Diocese has several sites for potential future schools, including a potential future high school site. The City should work with private entities to coordinate development and infrastructure plans around new school sites.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TRADE SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

Lincoln is home to a community college and several technical and trade schools providing a comprehensive array of higher education and vocational opportunities. These public and private facilities are dispersed throughout the community.

Lincoln has multiple institutions of higher learning, with campuses located throughout the city. These include the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL campuses: Downtown and East), Nebraska Wesleyan University, Union College, Kaplan University and Southeast Community College. There are a number of satellite campuses of surrounding colleges and universities located in Lincoln. These campuses provide a range of academic programs from Doane College (Crete), Bellevue University (Bellevue), and the College of Saint Mary (Omaha).

These colleges and universities are actively involved with surrounding neighborhoods and business districts. UNL has been a major partner in the Antelope Valley Project, the West Haymarket Arena development, and is beginning the Innovation Campus project on the former State Fair Park site. Wesleyan University was part of the North 48th Street/University Place project approved in 2004. Union College took a lead role in efforts to increase mobility and improve streetscapes in the South 48<sup>th</sup> Street College View neighborhood in 2007. These institutions and others should be actively engaged in future planning efforts.

### STRATEGIES

- Promote the development, design, and use of public and private facilities to assure cooperative planning and maximum utilization, when appropriate. Schools are vital to the preservation of existing neighborhoods and every effort should be made to enhance and retain 'neighborhood schools.'

- Support the necessary expansion of education facilities while remaining sensitive to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Provide universities, colleges, and the community with a means by which university research findings can move easily into the commercial world for economic development.
- Coordinate school site selection with subarea plans, community open space, and trails system development. Develop new schools on sites where they serve as the heart of the neighborhood.
- Plan for joint school/park facilities with all new schools and renovation projects when feasible.
- Coordinate plans for Southeast Community College with future land development immediately to the east to ensure that new development is compatible and provides employment and housing opportunities for students.
- Coordinate neighborhood revitalization and transportation plans for the surrounding areas with Nebraska Wesleyan University, Union College and Kaplan University.

## OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

As general purpose governments, the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County own, operate and manage numerous buildings, structures, and facilities.

During the time period covered by this Plan, there will likely be a need to construct, renovate, or abandon certain public buildings and facilities not already discussed in this document. At such time as these events may occur, care should be taken by public officials making decisions that the vision of this Plan is recognized



and respected. This may apply to the siting of a new facility, the abandonment of an existing one, the way renovations are undertaken, the manner of financing used to complete the work, the arrangements made for the facility's operation, the process followed in making the decision, and the timing of the action.

Of particular note to local government operations is the Lincoln-Lancaster County Public Building Commission. The Public Building Commission is responsible for facilities jointly used by City and County agencies, such as the County-City Building. This entity was established in 1991 to oversee any buildings, structures, or facilities used jointly by the City and County for a public purpose.

The new Municipal Service Center is an example of consolidating City services to find efficiencies. The Center will house the Engineering Services division of Public Works and Utilities and is expected to become the campus for Public Works, Street Maintenance, the 911 Center, and potentially to accommodate maintenance operations of other departments.

Lincoln and Lancaster County is a community made up of public-private partnerships that make our community stronger. Such public-private partnerships include but are not limited to YMCAs, the Lincoln Children's Museum and the Lincoln Children's Zoo.

## STRATEGIES

- The location of public buildings should support the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The City's government center must remain Downtown. All efforts should be made to locate local, state, and federal offices Downtown when expansions and relocations are considered.
- Lincoln and Lancaster County should seek to integrate concepts that result in more energy-efficient, lower-cost, less environmentally damaging, and more occupant-friendly facilities.

