

# “The Lex-Plan 2013”

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## Introduction

Implementation refers to the objectives, policies and actions that have been identified to carry out “*The Lex-Plan 2013*.” This portion of the comprehensive plan includes actions designed to improve the long-range planning process, strengthen links between the plan and capital improvement budgeting, establish a process reporting system to monitor the progress of “*The Lex-Plan 2013*,” and a schedule for updating and amending the plan in the future.

Successful comprehensive plans are ones that are implemented. While the role of the Planning Commission is to ensure the orderly growth of the community by adherence to the Comprehensive Plan, it is up to the citizenry to champion the projects envisioned to implement the plan. Developing a plan is relatively easy compared to the implementation of it. What happens with the plan, how it is used in day-to-day decision-making, and the extent to which it is followed over time will all influence its overall success. “*The Lex-Plan 2013*” is a living, breathing document; it is not the end of a planning process but the beginning of a coordinated effort to direct growth and development in ways that are important to the citizens of Lexington.

Rarely will a single tool or category of tools be sufficient to achieve the goals in a comprehensive plan. Most policies, and most of the preferred mix of land uses shown on the future land use map, require the use of several tools from different categories in order to be realized, obtained, and sustained. The City of Lexington must develop its own set of implementation tools and strategies, recognizing that each has unique strengths and weaknesses.

### Implementation Tools

The City of Lexington has a number of tools at its disposal to shape development patterns, protect natural resources and human infrastructure, and protect the quality of life for its residents. Implementation strategies can be separated into several distinct tool categories and programs, each with its distinct characteristics that make it suitable for specific goals and circumstances.

Support Programs

Public Education

Managing Public Processes and Resources

Special Studies and Plans

### Support Programs

Four programs will play a vital role in the success of “*The Lex-Plan 2013*.” These programs are:

**Capital Improvements Financing**--an annual predictable investment plan that uses a one to six-year planning horizon to schedule and fund projects integral to the plan's implementation.

**Zoning Regulations**--updated land use districts and regulations, including design guidelines, can allow the city to provide direction for future growth.

**Subdivision Regulations**--establish criteria for erosion control and runoff and dividing land into building areas, parks, trails, utility easements, and streets. Implementing the Transportation Plan is a primary function of subdivision regulations.

**Plan Maintenance**--an annual and five-year review program will allow the city flexibility in responding to growth and a continuous program of maintaining the plan's viability.

### Public Education

In addition to the identified programs, broad public support and involvement is necessary in the development and use of any implementation policy or program. If adequate support is to be developed, a program educating residents is necessary. People who understand the needs and ways of meeting those needs of the community must take the initiative to stimulate the interest and the understanding required to ensure action is taken. The City Council or Planning Commission of Lexington should strive to implement an annual public participation process through education of land use issues. The city should continue to use its website and make the comprehensive plan and development regulations available online. Ongoing education and promotion will be an important factor in sustaining interest and motivation from community members.

Some of the objectives of the comprehensive plan cannot be achieved unless the actions of two or more public agencies or private organizations can be coordinated. Frequently, constraints prevent organizations from working with one another (i.e. financial resources, legal authority, restriction of joint uses of facilities, etc). Efforts should be made to bridge this gap with open communication, cooperation and the realization that the issue at hand could benefit the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents in Lexington.

### Managing Public Processes and Resources

Public investments also include the time and effort that go into management decisions for infrastructure, public services, public lands, and public processes. Such investment or decisions can include:

- Coordinating capital improvements planning throughout all departments to meet the comprehensive plan goals and remain consistent with plan policies.
- Investments and improvements in water, wastewater, and transportation infrastructure made by the city.
- The acquisition, sale, or exchange of land for the purpose of preservation or development.
- Decisions on expenditures for public resources such as streets, parks, and trails, property management and the provision of public services.

### Special Studies and Plans

Additional studies and plans can be helpful to further explore and define a vision of a certain area, corridor, or development site. Conducting studies and making decisions area by area can enhance the Comprehensive Plan. Some examples of additional planning efforts that can further develop ideas expressed in “*The Lex-Plan 2013*” include:

Housing Master Plan

Facilities Management Plan

Site Development Plan for city property

[IMPLEMENTATION] Comprehensive Plan - Lexington, Nebraska

## Land Use Suitability

How will “*The Lex-Plan 2013*” be implemented?

The major assumption of this Comprehensive Plan is:

**“Specific development criteria will be adopted to help guide builders, investors, and community leaders in making good decisions concerning the future of Lexington.”**

These criteria will be specific statements that:

Describe the relationship between/among land uses.

Establish criteria or design standards that new development must meet.

Minimize land use conflicts between neighboring land owners.

Create consistent characteristics within each land use district.

## Land Use Transitions

New development should provide, if needed, screening, buffers, or additional setback requirements when located next to existing uses. Screening or buffers may be plant material, low earthen berms, solid fences, or any combination of the above. Boundaries between different land uses are done along streets, alleys, or natural features (streams, railroads, etc.) whenever possible.

## Neighborhood Entrances

First impressions of the community are made at the entrances. These impressions are critical to a community's overall image. New development should have larger setbacks and higher landscaping standards when located at any of the present or future entrances to the neighborhood. This in turn with appropriate sign regulations along the major transportation corridors into and from the city will promote a better community image and improve the quality of life in the City of Lexington. Neighborhood and community entrance policies, guidelines and locations are identified in the Envision Section and the established Character Areas of the Urban Design development examples.

## Achieving Lexington's Future Plan

In order to solve community problems or concerns, successful city comprehensive plans have the key ingredients of consensus, ideas, hard work, and the application of each of these. This section of the plan contains the inspiration of the many city officials, school district, chamber, economic development organization, and concerned citizens who have participated in the planning process. Nevertheless, the ultimate success of "*The Lex-Plan 2013*" remains in the dedication offered by each and every resident.

There are numerous goals and objectives in this plan and it is recommended to review the relevant goals and objectives during the city planning and budget sessions. However, it is also recommended that the city select elements of the plan for immediate action; the goals of highest priority which will ultimately lead to the success of other goals and objectives. It will be critical to earmark the specific funds to be used and the individuals primarily responsible for implementing the goals, objectives and policies in Lexington.

## *“The Lex-Plan 2013”*

### Community Growth

New development should, to the greatest extent possible, be contiguous to existing development or services. This would allow for the logical and cost effective extension of streets and utility services. The city may authorize non-contiguous development if:

The developer pays for the “gap” costs of extending services from the existing connections to the proposed development.

The extension would open up needed or desirable areas of the community for additional growth.

Issues related to adjacent/transitional agriculture are properly addressed.

The Future Land Use Plan is one of the statutory requirements of a Comprehensive Development Plan, as stated in the Nebraska State Statutes. The Land Use Plan, along with the Transportation Plan, provides the necessary tools to direct future development in and around Lexington. The city’s Land Use Plan is based on existing conditions and projected conditions for the community.

The need for residential uses will be driven by the future population, the ratio of owner-occupied to renter-occupied housing units, and the projected number of future dwelling units needed. New residential development can drive the need for additional commercial development, additional streets, public and park facilities, and industrial development. Therefore, decisions regarding future residential development will have a direct impact on other uses throughout the entire community. Conversely, commercial and industrial development in a community will lead to further economic development and the need for more residential units. Although Lexington continues to grow in population which is contributing to some commercial growth, it has the possibility of industrial and business park developments along major transportation corridors including the proposed truck-by pass in the southeast quadrant of the community will lead to additional opportunities and population growth.