

# *“The Lex-Plan 2013”*

## *INTRODUCTION*



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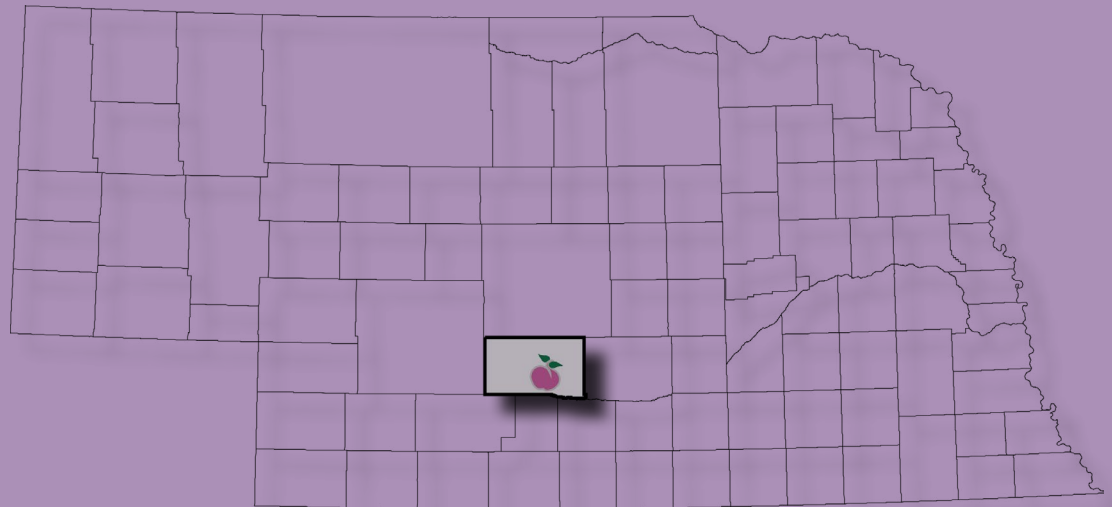
## INTRODUCTION TO LEXINGTON

- Location
- Geography
- Climate
- Topography and Soils
- History

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

- The Purpose
- The Process
- The Components

## GOVERNMENTAL and JURISDICTIONAL ORGANIZATION



### Introduction

Lexington, one of the more diverse communities in the State of Nebraska, has shown a pattern of growth, and was Nebraska’s sixth fastest growing city in the 2000 Census. While growth is necessary and a sign of prosperity for a city, it is also a challenge to manage that growth.

Cities that take the time to plan for and manage growth typically see a longer growth period and maintain their status as a desirable place to live.

With the development of this new Comprehensive Plan, referred to as “The Lex-Plan 2013,” the City of Lexington continues to enhance their status as one of the best cities to live and work in Nebraska.

## Location

Lexington is located in south central Nebraska on Interstate 80 about 40 miles west of Kearney, Nebraska, situated next to the Platte River. Residents have easy access to some of the Nebraska's best outdoor recreation, such as Johnson Lake about 10 miles south.

Lexington is the county seat of Dawson County and is located in the south central part of the county. The community is connected with the major transportation corridors of the region, including U.S. Highways 283 and 30 and Nebraska State Highway 21. The Interchange of 283 and I-80 provides a direct link to major trading centers in the Midwest and points beyond. Omaha is located 222 miles to the northeast and Denver is 313 miles southwest of Lexington.

## Geography

Lexington is located at 40°46'46"N 99°44'38"W 40.77944°N 99.74389°W (40.779434, -99.743854).

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 4.51 square miles (11.69 km<sup>2</sup>), of which, 4.5 square miles (11.65 km<sup>2</sup>) of it is land and 0.01 square miles (0.03 km<sup>2</sup>) is water.

## Climate

The temperature for Lexington and Dawson County is varied, ranging from an average low of 12.2 degrees during the month of January to an average high of 88 during the month of July. The average annual precipitation is 22 inches. The average snowfall in a year is 19 inches. The number of days with any measurable precipitation is 58 days and there is an average of 227 sunny days in Lexington.



Source: Nebraska Department of Roads, 2007

| INTRODUCTION |

Lexington

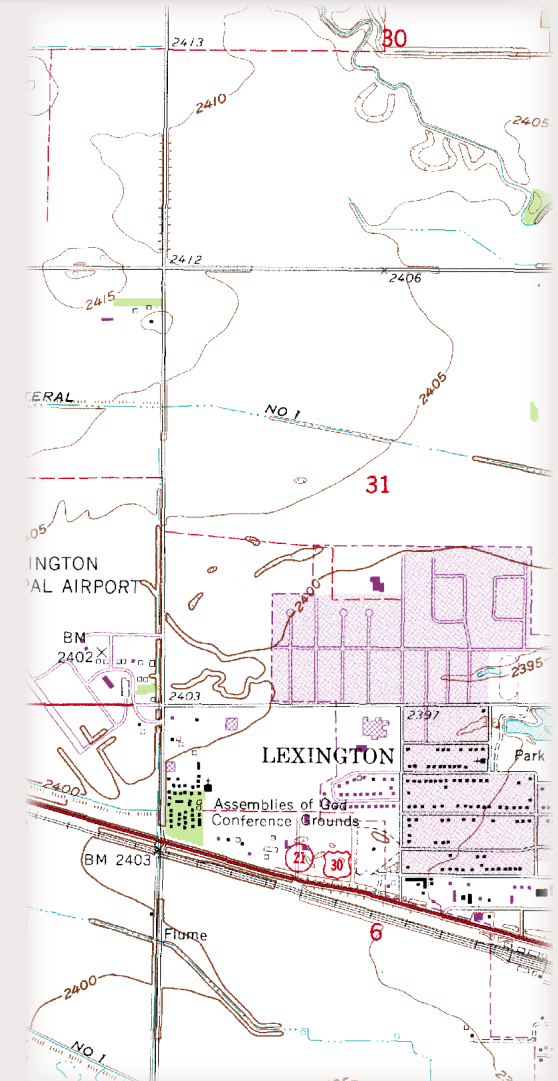
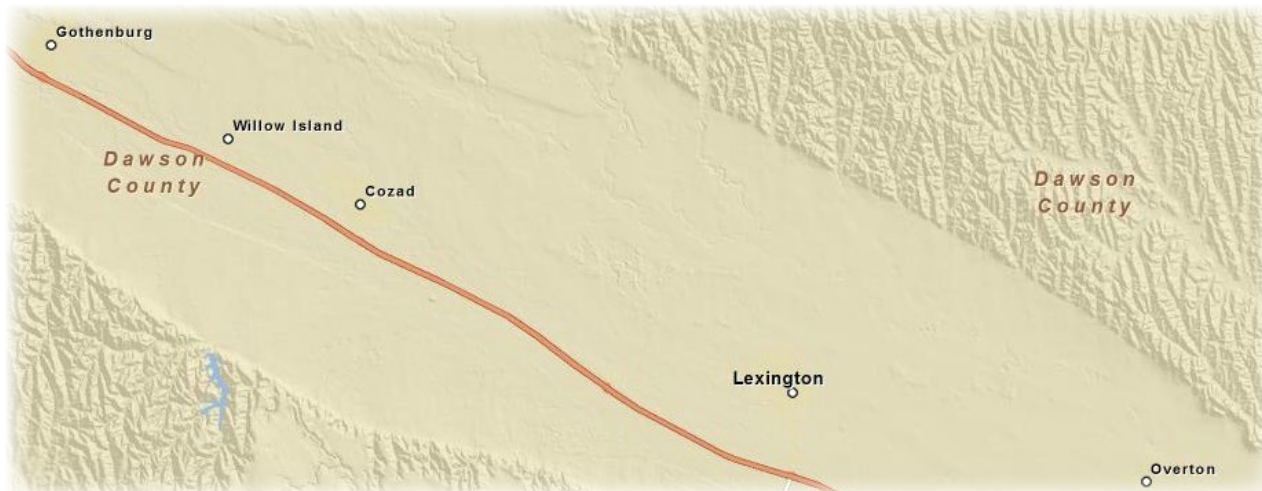


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## Topography and Soils

The terrain in the current corporate limits is mostly flat, lying in close proximity to the Platte River with the city’s average elevation of 2,404 feet. The land to the north becomes level to gently rolling outside the corporate limits. Throughout Dawson County the terrain is quite diverse, ranging from level to hilly.

The soils in and around the area of Lexington are classified into four soil groups. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, has identified the four soil groups, or associations, as Coxad-Hord Association, Gosper-Cozad-Silver Creek Association, Lex-Lawet-Gibbon Association, and the Gothenburg-Platte Association. Nearly the entire area within the Lexington city limits, as well as the central third of the two-mile planning jurisdiction, is included in the Gosper-Cozad-Silver Creek Association in which soils are described as “deep, nearly level, somewhat poorly drained to well drained, silty and loamy soils on stream terraces.”



Sources: GIS Workshop and the City of Lexington website; Geological Survey for Department of Interior, Revised 1983



## History

The location of Lexington is directly related to the Platte River where original settlers were attracted to and found potable water and strategic transportation corridors. The Union Pacific Railroad arrived in the area in 1866, but it was not until 1871 that Dawson County was formed.

Called Plum Creek by the original settlers, Lexington has a colorful and lively history. Lexington began as an early frontier trading post in 1860 when the Daniel Freeman family settled along the Oregon Trail near the Platte River. The trading post was prosperous, but not without problems.

The Plum Creek Massacre took place August 7, 1864, in the bluffs near town. These bluffs were regarded as one of the most dangerous areas on the way west. The Freemans were forced to flee to Fort Kearny and the trading post was destroyed. Fort Plum Creek was established near the ruins of the trading post later that same year. A cemetery is all that remains near the historic site today.

It is estimated that during those early years, more than half a million Americans followed the nearby Oregon Trail until the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad. When the tracks had been laid, the Freemans moved north of the river and named the town Plum Creek, which was incorporated in 1874 and designated the county seat of Dawson County. With the railroad

established, many new settlers arrived in the area -- including railroad workers and homesteaders who came to farm the free land. Many large ranches were established along the Platte River and thousands of cattle roamed the free range.

A population boom between 1880 and 1885 increased by more than a thousand people. Some of the residents decided that a new name might help shake the town's rough-and-tumble reputation, and enhance community development. The town's name was changed to Lexington in 1889. It's not clear why, but it may be partly in commemoration of the Battle of Lexington during the Revolutionary War. The Union Pacific Railroad, the arrival of a group of settlers known as the Pennsylvania Colony, and construction of a bridge across the Platte River, stimulated more growth and made Lexington the center of activity in the area.



**PLUM CREEK**  
DAWSON CO.  
Scale 600 feet 1 inch

Source: 1885 Atlas of Nebraska

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