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2016 Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

A vision statement is an overall declaration of what a community desires to be in the long-term. The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, along with the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and various City Staff, created this vision statement and a set of supporting guiding principles to provide overall direction to help guide City policy and decision-making and shape the community's future over many years. The vision for Lancaster's future is based on success in four inter-related areas:

- It is built on our existing natural, cultural, and historic community assets
- It creates Lancaster as a destination community
- The community's educational excellence supports its people and businesses
- The diverse choices in Lancaster appeal to people of all ages and businesses in a variety of industries

Guiding Principles

PRINCIPLE 1: Lancaster's quality of life attracts people of all ages.

PRINCIPLE 2: Natural and historic assets are the foundation for distinctive neighborhoods and business areas.

PRINCIPLE 3: The City's continued investments in Lancaster's existing neighborhoods offer desirable choices for current and future residents.

PRINCIPLE 4: New residential developments expand the range of neighborhood choices so Lancaster appeals to people throughout all stages of life.

PRINCIPLE 5: Lancaster's economic base is strong because it includes businesses in diverse and growing industries.

PRINCIPLE 6: The enhanced Medical District is a key reason Lancaster is the wellness center of southern Dallas County.

PRINCIPLE 7: Development and investment decisions support Lancaster's fiscal sustainability over time.

PRINCIPLE 8: Lancaster has great mobility choices – walking and biking routes to destinations within the community, public transportation connections to the DFW region, and street networks that link Lancaster residents to jobs and Lancaster businesses to their employees and customers.

PRINCIPLE 9: Lancaster residents of all ages can find the resources for success here in this community (resources for education, training, healthy living, job search, etc.).

PRINCIPLE 10: The Comprehensive Plan is the foundation for unified action to get things done. The City will lead a partnership including the ISD, the Chamber of Commerce and other groups that will work together to carry out this plan.

Policies by Strategic Category

The Vision Statement and 10 Guiding Principles provide the overall policy direction for this Comprehensive Plan. More specific guidance is provided by a set of strategies that focus on eight important substantive categories. These eight categories are:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Open Space/ Recreation
- Community Character and Design
- Historic Preservation
- Public Facilities

Principles that address particular aspects of these categories are cited below, as well as in the eight strategy chapters that follow. The strategies provide detail and direction for the implementation plan, which is the pathway to achieving the community's vision for the future of Lancaster, (see also Chapter 10, Implementation).

Land Use

(See also Chapter 3, Land Use)

- POLICY 1:** Keep existing neighborhoods vital by retaining their residential character.
- POLICY 2:** Include non-residential uses that support neighborhoods - like local shopping - next to residential uses.
- POLICY 3:** Do not support encroachment of incompatible uses into neighborhoods.
- POLICY 4:** Add new neighborhoods so people have more housing choices.
- POLICY 5:** Identifies locations for businesses that add jobs.
- POLICY 6:** Provides for diverse businesses so Lancaster's economy is more stable and resilient.
- POLICY 7:** Provides trails and open spaces to enhance Lancaster's existing parks system.
- POLICY 8:** Emphasizes investment in existing City facilities and investments.
- POLICY 9:** Creates gateways at entrances to the City so visitors know when they are in Lancaster.

Transportation

(See also Chapter 4, Transportation)

- POLICY 1:** Provide a full range of mobility choices:
- Anticipate and benefit from potential commuter rail
 - Plan development that is "Transit-Ready" around Lancaster's desired rail stations
 - Minimize impacts of potential high-speed rail
- POLICY 2:** Take advantage of Lancaster's location within regional mobility systems (highways, public transportation, freight, air, etc.).
- POLICY 3:** Use transportation improvements to strengthen key destinations within Lancaster.

Infrastructure

(See also Chapter 5, Infrastructure)

- POLICY 1:** Invest first in infrastructure that supports the preferred scenario.
- POLICY 2:** Consider long-term operational costs when setting priorities among new capital projects.
- POLICY 3:** Seek funding from other entities whenever possible.
- POLICY 4:** Work with Lancaster ISD, Cedar Valley College, University of North Texas at Dallas, and other educational institutions that ensure that the “learning infrastructure” is in place.

Economic Development

(See also Chapter 6, Economic Development)

- POLICY 1:** Emphasize new business attraction that has high employment and tax value per acre.
- POLICY 2:** Attract companies that provide ‘value added’ to the companies and industries that are already here.
- POLICY 3:** Build a strong, diverse economic base.
- POLICY 4:** Support local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Open Space/ Recreation

(See also Chapter 7, Open Space/ Recreation)

- POLICY 1:** Continue the strong system of parks and recreational facilities for residents of all ages.
- POLICY 2:** Expand the trail system so all residents can use it for travel, exercise, and enjoyment.
- POLICY 3:** Consider additional recreational investments that appeal to seniors and young professionals.
- POLICY 4:** Incorporate natural assets in the open space system.

Community Character & Design

(See also Chapter 8, Community Character & Design)

- POLICY 1:** Use community character to create a destination so people choose Lancaster as a place to live, work, play and visit.
- POLICY 2:** Insist on quality design in new development.
- POLICY 3:** Use design themes to identify key areas and districts.
- POLICY 4:** Community design should be part of Lancaster’s marketing strategy.

Historic Preservation

(See also Chapter 9, Historic Preservation)

- POLICY 1:** Celebrate Lancaster's history by retaining and explaining its historic assets.
- POLICY 2:** Use historic assets as the basis for special districts, gateways, and focal points.
- POLICY 3:** Make downtown historic 'on the outside' but cutting edge 'on the inside.'

Public Facilities

(See also Chapter 10, Public Facilities)

- POLICY 1:** Make the maintenance of existing public facilities the top priority for future investment.
- POLICY 2:** Use future facilities to anchor or support special districts.
- POLICY 3:** Engage the community in discussions about future facility needs and desires.