

A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster



Task Force Reports

***Department of Housing and Community Development
City of Lancaster, Pennsylvania
June, 1993***

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Foreword

We are pleased to present the Citizens' Task Force Reports for the *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster*. The Reports reflect citizen views regarding the direction the City of Lancaster should take during the next 20 years in order to address the community's issues and to assure that Lancaster remains a successful City. The Reports represent the intense effort of 54 concerned citizens who openly expressed their opinions and who worked to achieve consensus regarding the policies and strategies that should be included in the *New Comprehensive Plan*. The recommendations included in these Reports set the stage for the final components of the *New Comprehensive Plan*: the Policy Plan, the Housing Plan, and the Action Plan. The recommendations also send a clear message to decision-makers in the Lancaster community concerning citizens' priorities for future funding, regulatory and programmatic decisions.

In June 1991 the City of Lancaster formally embarked on a two and one-half year effort to develop a *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster*. The underlying theme of the entire planning process has been

citizen participation. While consultants and guest speakers have participated in aspects of Plan development, the citizens of Lancaster have been the primary authors of key elements of the Plan.

The combined Task Force Reports presented here are the second major step in an ongoing process. The first step was the year-long phase of developing the "citizens' agenda," which was based on the results of numerous interviews and neighborhood meetings. The long-range goals that emerged from the first year of broad-based citizen input have served as the basis for this second phase.

When appointing the members of the Economic Environment, Human Environment, and Built Environment Task Forces in September 1992, Mayor Janice Stork charged them with the responsibility of developing policies and strategies to address the goals. Citizen Task Forces were established in order to involve teams of citizens in the more detailed aspects of comprehensive planning. Both education of a group of interested citizens and building citizen support for the Plan were desired end results of the Task Force proceedings.

Each of the Task Force Reports is an independent document that reflects the thoughts of one group of citizens. These Reports have been combined in this final Report to emphasize the role of citizens and to enable readers to compare more easily the similarities, interrelationships, and differences among recommendations generated by separate groups of citizens working independently of one another and addressing distinct goals.

They also have been combined in order to emphasize the "comprehensiveness" of the Plan being created—a Plan that addresses all aspects of the community and the roles and responsibilities of all players in the community, i.e., City and County government, School District of Lancaster, United Way, business community, nonprofit agencies and institutions, community groups, and private citizens. The combined Reports will have value not only for City government but also for all other agencies and organizations involved in planning efforts. The Task Force Reports and the Policy, Housing and Action Plans to follow will outline a community agenda based on the priorities of Lancaster's citizens.

I: Economic Environment Task Force Report

Report of the Economic Environment Task Force

Economic Environment Task Force

Charles Simms, Chair

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A Message from Charles Simms

Chair of the Economic Environment Task Force

May, 1993

Dear Fellow Lancasterian:

I agreed to serve as the Chair for the Economic Environment Task Force because I am anxious to reverse the trend of businesses migrating to the County. Additionally, as an African-American, I see many African-Americans choosing not to return to Lancaster after completing college. In order to encourage these individuals to return to Lancaster, we must have the opportunities available for them.

As the Task Force began discussing the topics involved in the economic environment, it became clear that each subject could take months to analyze and create recommendations. However, that was not the purpose and the goal of the process. The goal was to create a consensus of opinion from a representational group of people. One of the primary intentions when developing the membership was to include citizens, bankers, and small business owners as well as those involved in economic development.

The Economic Environment Task Force was truly a diversified group. Many different viewpoints were expressed and the members were willing to communicate their opinions. I consider the process to be a success due to the fact that the Task Force was able to come to a consensus on a variety of issues.

Our report will hopefully reflect the strong commitment to the retention of existing businesses in the City of Lancaster. Additionally, because the majority of jobs in America are provided by small business, the Task Force recognizes the importance of small business and the need to increase access to capital. The Task Force also agreed on the need to adequately prepare non-college bound students to enter the workforce.

As I think about the possible outcomes of this report, I would hope to see more businesses reach a level of obligation to react to the economic needs here in the City. I believe the business community must take more of a leadership role. The City should set the tone for all of us to accept responsibility rather than assigning fault.

Following the Task Force phase, the City will develop and adopt an Action Plan listing the steps needed to carry out the recommendations in this report. The Action Plan will include different suggestions for new legislation, policy changes and other activities needed to carry out the Economic Environment Task Force's recommendations.

Sincerely,

Charles Simms, Chair
Economic Environment Task Force

The Economic Environment Task Force Report

New technologies and the spread of business and industries into suburban areas have brought change to Lancaster's economy. The City is impacted by global changes in the marketplace. As cited in the Columbia University Report *Issues for Lancaster: A Preface to the Comprehensive Plan*:

Lancaster must...recognize that national and international economic competition have left the City's economy vulnerable. The

City must adapt to a new and more demanding environment.

In addition, there is a growing disparity between the educational level and the vocational training of workers and the needs of employers. The Economic Environment Task Force has discussed these and other concerns to comprehensively address the issues facing the economy of the City of Lancaster.

The Task Force is made up of individuals with differing occupations and viewpoints. They

include small business owners, representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, the School District of Lancaster, utilities, banks, and citizens concerned about jobs and education.

Purpose and Role of Task Force

The first order of business was to review the role and purpose of the Task Force. The group then identified a list of key topics to review. The meetings were centered around specific topics concerning economic develop-



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Mission Statement

Our mission as the Economic Environment Task Force is to establish general directions and designate priorities for the City to follow in ensuring the future economic vitality of Lancaster. Our mandate is to prepare an economic development strategy that will benefit Lancaster citizens of all racial and ethnic groups; promote business ownership, giving balance to both sectoral and scale issues; increase the supply of quality jobs; and provide an environment in which all people have an opportunity for personal development and self-fulfillment. By drawing on the findings of the many studies and reports prepared in recent years, we will seek ways in which the public and private sectors can work together toward these ambitious goals in order to maximize leveraging, linkages, partnerships and accessing of financial resources.

ment. The topics include: strengths and weaknesses of the City, the role of Downtown, small and minority businesses, financing, access to capital, entrepreneurial training, employment training and education.

Force agreed on the definition/mission statement shown on this page.

A Quality Job

We recognize that there is a very important distinction be-

A quality job is one that will allow an individual to adequately provide for his or her family and provide an opportunity for personal development and self-fulfillment.

Guest speakers were invited to inform the Task Force members about specific topics.

Early in the process, the group felt strongly that a definition or mission statement was needed as a basis for their discussion and recommendations. After much consideration, the Task

tween any job and a job that will allow an individual to adequately provide for his or her family and provide an opportunity for personal development and self-fulfillment. The latter is what is referred to as "a quality job."

Task Force Interrelationships

The number of interrelationships that exist among the three Task Forces became apparent early in the process. The Human Environment Task Force and the Economic Environment Task Force both believe that the role of education and "life-long learning" is of critical importance. The Built Environment Task Force and the Economic Environment Task Force agree on the importance of infrastructure (roads, sewers, water, utility lines). The issue of interrelationships was also stressed in the Columbia Report, "Clearly, the Comprehensive Plan must address the complex connections between the social conditions in the City and the underlying economic circumstances."

Recommendations

We reached a consensus on the items presented in the recommendations section. There were some issues discussed that did not reach a full consensus. For example, there was some disagreement on the use and extent of use of tax incentives to retain and attract businesses. It was generally agreed that special, targeted tax abatement or incentives should be carefully considered on a case by case basis.

Coordination

The Task Force believes that the importance of coordination among economic development "players" is an important recommendation. Often, many of the participants in economic development tackle a specific problem and overlook the broad pic-

ture. One of the primary recommendations is to establish some form of an advisory board to oversee the many economic development activities.

Small Business

The role of small businesses in the City is an important issue as the majority of jobs created in the United States are in small businesses. The Task Force discussed the importance and difficulty of financing and access to capital for small business owners. Entrepreneurial training was also viewed as an important issue.

As a separate but related issue, the Task Force discussed the importance of increasing the number of minority businesses.

Confidence in the City

Issues of attitude, image and confidence in the City of Lancaster were major issues that arose in our discussions. We regard a positive attitude about the future of Lancaster to be one of the most important elements for a successful City. Often negative misperceptions in regard to crime, quality of education, parking, etc. discourage people from coming into the City.

To foster a positive attitude, the Task Force recommends instituting a major marketing campaign to emphasize the many positive features of the City. Lancaster's diversity, available labor force, and existing infrastructure are among the positives which should be stressed. This marketing approach is anticipated to have many spin-off effects beyond economic development, including the housing market, cultural attractions, major events, and tourism.

Downtown

The role of Downtown presented another important area of discussion. The Task Force members agree that the Downtown should be the social, cultural and economic hub of the County. The Downtown has evolved over time from a retail center to a commercial/cultural center.

Economic Environment Task Force Goals

1. To assure that people of all ethnic and racial backgrounds participate in the planning and decision-making process;
2. To promote economic development, business ownership, and employment opportunities;
2. To assure the provision of quality jobs for City residents; and
4. To increase intergovernmental, interagency, and private sector collaboration in achieving the community's goals.

The Task Force recognizes that efforts should be made to promote the Downtown as a commercial and cultural hub. Efforts should also be made to encourage tourism. Three million people came to Lancaster County in 1992, but only 67,000 came to the Downtown Visitors Center in the City.

Lancaster's role as the ethnic hub of the County should be reflected in its retail and commercial sector. The provision of products and services targeted to minorities should be expanded in the Downtown and throughout the City.

Job Training and Education

Another topic of vital concern to the Economic Environment Task Force was the importance of job training and education. The Task Force was concerned with the global changes occurring in the marketplace and the need for not only the City but also the County, State and Nation to respond to these changes in order to compete. It is no longer enough to have a strong back and a will to work. Often specialized training is necessary.

Discussing non-college bound students, the book *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*, by the National Center

on Education and the Economy, states:

More than 70% of the jobs in America will not require a college education by the year 2000. These jobs are the backbone of the

economy, and the productivity of workers in these jobs will make or break our economic future.

If we cannot prepare and properly train our workforce to adapt to the global changes



Economic Development Strengths and Weakness of the City of Lancaster

Strengths

- Available labor force
- Strong work ethic
- Existing infrastructure
- Relatively low cost of property
- Coordination of economic development activities
- Enterprise Zone
- Central hub of County
- Historic quality of City
- Downtown foot traffic
- High number of entrepreneurs
- Relatively low start-up costs for businesses

Weaknesses

- Little vacant and appropriately zoned land
- Many older, multi-story buildings
- Lack of convenient, accessible, free parking
- Environmental problems
- Lack of economic information
- Perception of a lack of security
- Bonded street program
- Negative perception of the City
- City has not utilized government programs in the past (e.g., UDAG).
- Failure to include utilities in planning
- Shortage of skilled workers
- Lack of cooperation between organizations promoting Downtown

The Task Force strongly encourages those who live in, work in, and care about the City to use Lancaster's strengths as a tool for economic development.

Developed by the Economic
Environment Task Force

occurring, the City will find it difficult to retain and attract new businesses. In addition it will make it more difficult for individuals to get a quality job. Many Task Force members are not convinced that the existing educational system adequately prepares students to be highly skilled, highly motivated workers. One reason non-college bound students have little motivation to study hard is that

they see no connection between how well they do in school and the kind of job they get after school. The Task Force agreed access to professional and technical training for non-college educated residents was of critical importance.

Other Players

Although the Task Force process clarifies the role the City must play in economic develop-

ment, the important stake that other groups have in this issue has become apparent. The Task Force hopes to see an atmosphere of participation, collaboration and partnership. The School District of Lancaster, for example, must be a major player in the field of economic development, along with private businesses, government officials, and residents.

Lancaster City Department of Economic Development

The Department of Economic Development of the City of Lancaster is responsible for the implementation and coordination of the City's economic development program and direct participation in the development of policies related to economic development and small business and industrial development. It maintains liaison with business and industry, including community business groups, the Chamber of Commerce, retail association, real estate brokers, banking institutions and local and national companies headquartered in the City.

The Department assists in implementing development projects and programs that lead to long term economic benefit to the City by expanding the tax base and revenue of the City and the creation of jobs for City residents.

The Department will prepare a Community Economic Recovery Program (CERP) through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Commerce.

The City coordinates and implements the strategic plan for the Southeast Area Commercial and Industrial Revitalization Program, the Northwest Business and Industrial Park, the Enterprise Zone Development Program, and the PRIDE program..

Expanded Tax Base

The Economic Task Force believes that the recommendations should be funded through an expanded tax base instead of increased taxes. The Task Force is supportive of investigating other sources of funding for its recommendations, such as Community Development Block Grant funds, State funding sources and Federal grant programs.

Task Force Accomplishment

In the Economic Environment Task Force, a very diverse group of individuals with vastly different viewpoints were able to meet, discuss and agree on the policies necessary to bring about a renaissance of economic vitality

in the City of Lancaster during the next ten to twenty years. This ability to work together toward

common interests speaks well of Lancaster's citizens, and of its hopes for the future.



Task Force Conclusions & Recommendations



A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

Goal I: Increase the quantity and quality of job opportunities through the creation of an environment which promotes and supports business and industry and attracts new investment.

Objectives and Strategies

- A. To increase the intergovernmental, interagency and private sector collaboration in achieving City economic development goals.**

Strategy: Facilitate the establishment of a permanent, private sector organization to review all major economic development activities and recommend policy directions for Lancaster City.

**Primary Occupations of
Lancaster's Workforce**

Service Occupations	15.2%
Administrative Support	14.4%
Machine Operators, Assemblers and Inspectors	14.2%
Professional Specialities Occupations	10.6%

**Primary Industries Employing
Lancaster's Workforce**

Retail Trade	19.0%
Manufacturing, Durable Goods	16.0%
Manufacturing, Non-durable Goods	11.2%

B. Develop policies and programs which provide opportunities for local businesses to operate and grow in Lancaster. Continue efforts to attract new business and investment to the region.

Strategy: Give priority to programs and projects which retain existing jobs and investment in the City.

Strategy: Retain and enhance business activity presently located in the City. The City will encourage City firms to remain and enhance business operation at their existing locations. When the needs of these businesses or industries cannot be met at the present location, the City may provide assistance to relocate in the City.

Strategy: Attract new business and investment to the City to create new job opportunities for City residents. In cooperation with other economic development players, identify and pursue firms looking to locate new facilities and assist them in developing new facilities in the City.

Strategy: Cooperate with other agencies and commissions that are involved in retention and recruitment activities.



Strategy: Target the City's business retention and recruitment programs to businesses and industries that encourage long-term employment opportunities, decrease unemployment, and increase the disposable income of City residents.

Strategy: Work with business and industry to collect available information about business activity, employment, and other major economic indicators affecting the economy of the City. This information gathering function will be used to identify opportunities and areas of concern for economic development and to evaluate the impact of economic development policies and practices.

Strategy: Encourage the use of existing vacant buildings.

Strategy: Support innovative efforts to retain or attract businesses in the City. Examples include:

- a. Recommend that the topic of tax increment financing be investigated further;
- b. Encourage the City to offer assistance in environmental cleanup;
- c. Acknowledge existing businesses' efforts to remain in the City.

C. Support and encourage the retention and creation of small businesses in the City.

Strategy: Support the Small Business Center as it serves emerging and existing small businesses in Lancaster City.

LANCASTER ENTERPRISE, INC.

The purpose of Lancaster Enterprise, Inc., is the relief of poverty, the elimination of prejudice, the stimulation of economic conditions in the minority community, and the elimination of neighborhood tensions through programs that are designed to improve economic conditions and economic opportunities for minorities in Lancaster City and County. Lancaster Enterprise, Inc. sponsors business counseling and educational programs geared specifically toward problems faced by the minority business person.

Lancaster Enterprise, Inc., has its business offices at 617 West Chestnut Street, Lancaster, PA 17603.

Demographics of the City of Lancaster

	City	County
Total Population	55,551	422,822
Total Housing Units	22,468	156,462
Educational Attainment		
High School Graduate or Higher	61.4%	70.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	13.5%	16.7%
Labor Force		
Residents 16 Years & Older in Labor Force	63.8%	69.1%
Income		
Median Household Income	\$22,210	33,255
Median Family Income	27,002	37,791
Per Capita Income	10,693	14,235
Poverty Level		
All Persons Living Below Poverty Level	20.9%	8.0%
All Families Living Below Poverty Level	16.3%	5.3%

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 1990: Summary Tape File 3 on CD-ROM,
US Bureau of Census, producer and distributor, 1992

Strategy: Encourage the development of a venture investment forum.

Strategy: Assist in the creation of new minority businesses and industries through continued support of Lancaster Enterprise, Inc.

Strategy: Encourage the provision of seed money loans, Federal Economic Development Administration funds, Small Business Administration loans and financing through the PIDA.

Strategy: The City should continue its support of the concept of "incubators."

Strategy: Support existing Entrepreneurial Training programs.

Economic Development Company of Lancaster County

The Economic Development Corporation of Lancaster County (EDC) is a private, nonprofit countywide economic development organization.

The mission of the EDC is to enhance the physical and economic well-being of Lancaster County by bringing together essential elements affecting modern business—human resources, capital, and government—in an environment of responsible and orderly change.

The EDC administers loan programs targeted at manufacturing and industrial firms. It represents the State in two major programs; the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) and the Pennsylvania Capital Loan Fund (PCLF).

The Economic Development Company of Lancaster County is located at Southern Market Center, 100 South Queen Street, Lancaster, PA 17603.

D. Develop an approach to market the City of Lancaster locally, regionally, and nationally.

Strategy: The City, in coordination with other appropriate players, should create a centralized “Public Relations” Office to positively market the City.

PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

The Private Industry Council (PIC) is a non-profit affiliate of the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Composed of business volunteers and community representatives, PIC oversees job training grants for Lancaster County. These funds are provided through the Federal Job Training Partnership Act and are designated for training economically disadvantaged residents of Lancaster City and County or those in need of retraining due to lay-offs or plant closing. The PIC reimburses companies for 40-50 percent of qualifying new employees’ wages during training; the training period lasts between two to six months depending on the skill level of the job.

The Private Industry Council is located in the Southern Market Center, 100 South Queen Street, Lancaster, PA 17603.

Goal II: To increase the availability and quality of employment training for Lancaster City Residents

Objectives and Strategies

A. Provide adequate employment training opportunities to City residents.

Strategy: Support the formation of a consortium between existing job training agencies, vocational-technical schools, and the School District of Lancaster to avoid duplication of effort.

Strategy: Continue to work with the PIC and other job training and placement agencies to provide a well-trained, reliable workforce to businesses.

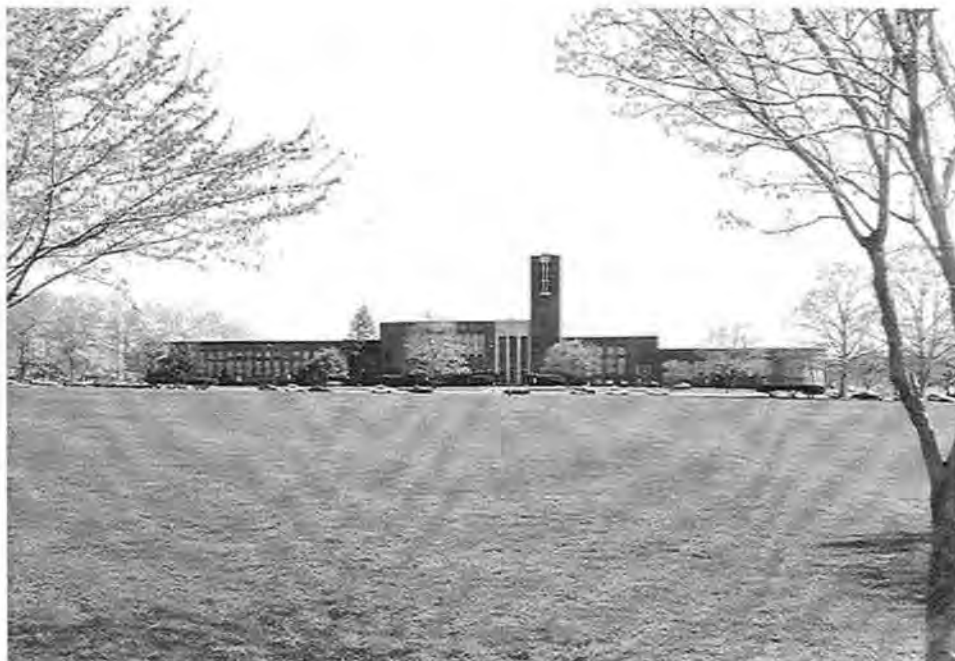
Strategy: Support the creation of a locally controlled community and technical college.

Lancaster Area Vocational-Technical Schools

The mission of the Lancaster County Vocational Technical Schools is to provide services to secondary students and adults as a community resource utilizing a flexible, diverse approach supported by technology, traditional vocational training and related academic skills which promotes an individual toward future careers or additional education.

The Lancaster County Area Vocational Technical Schools offer quality technical and professional training to students. A variety of educational options are available to high school students, including the opportunity to earn college credits from a local community college.

The courses available at Brownstown, Mount Joy and Willow Street Bo-Tech schools are designed to prepare the student to enter the workforce upon graduation. Many graduates have also found their Vo-Tech education helpful in related areas and have been granted exemptions from basic level courses or training in apprenticeship programs; art, business, culinary, technical and armed forces schools; and two and four year colleges. More than 95 percent of all Vo-Tech graduates are employed or continuing their education within three months after graduation.



Goal III: Ensure that all students have the skills necessary for the workforce and/or college upon graduation.

Objectives and Strategies

- A. Support and encourage the School District of Lancaster to target its curriculum to ensure that students are prepared for the workforce.**

Strategy: Support the School District of Lancaster's many special assistance programs such as the Drop-out Prevention Program, Homeless Student Task Force and Mentoring program.

Strategy: Support broad-based career development.

Strategy: Support the expansion of a mentoring or job shadowing program.

Strategy: Support the School District of Lancaster in its attempts to improve its programs and facilities.

Goal IV: Enhance Lancaster's economic environment by providing adequate infrastructure for economic development and developing public policies and actions which support and promote private development activity.

Objectives and Strategies

- A. Maintain an adequate supply of commercially and industrially zoned land within the City close to adequate transportation services.**
- B. Maintain and improve public works, public facilities, transportation systems and public safety, as necessary, to enhance and ensure the continuation of a favorable environment in which to conduct business and industrial operations.**

Strategy: Cooperate with other agencies in the City to ensure adequate funding for high priority transportation and transit improvements.



- C. The City should support the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Company in their advocacy for businesses, working with the State Legislators and other State agencies to assure that Pennsylvania's laws, policies and infrastructure meet the needs of current and prospective Lancaster businesses.**

D. Provide a positive business climate to encourage the City to be responsive to the needs of business.

Strategy: Re-examine ways in which City government and City personnel and procedures can become more responsive to business needs.

Strategy: Promote a philosophy of cooperation with private individuals and businesses and teamwork within City government. The philosophy should be promoted by every City employee, and achieved through training of City personnel.

Strategy: Work with County, regional, State and Federal agencies to reduce overlapping development reviews and permit processes that impede business formation and expansion.

Strategy: Add to the assessed valuation through rehabilitation and, where appropriate, new construction of housing, businesses and industries. (By increasing the assessed valuation of the City, the City is able to continue necessary public services without substantial tax increases. The continued provision of these services, in turn, will attract new business and industry, which will reinforce the cycle of economic revitalization.)



Goal V: Foster efforts to strengthen the City's positive image as the cultural and ethnic hub of the County, build toward a vibrant, healthy Downtown, and increase tourism.

Objectives and Strategies

- A. Promote, support and recommend actions which will encourage workers, shoppers and tourists to remain in the Downtown.**

Strategy: The City should support Downtown Investment District Authority (DID) programs.

Strategy: Address both the real and perceived issues of public safety in Downtown Lancaster.

Strategy: Encourage housing Downtown.

Strategy: Encourage activity after 5:00 p.m.

Strategy: Investigate sources of funding to allow the Downtown Visitors Center to stay open longer.



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B. Increase the accessibility of Downtown, decrease traffic congestion, and improve the availability of convenient, accessible parking.

Strategy: Promote the use of mass transit.

Strategy: Recommend that employers use mass transit passes instead of parking fees.

Strategy: Support the creation of “Bus Transfer areas” off the main arterials.

Strategy: Recommend support of Park and Ride facilities at additional sites.

Strategy: Advocate for road improvements; for example: Fruitville Pike bridge (PennDOT’s 12 Year Program).

Strategy: In order to create more accessible parking to shoppers and tourists, recommend that the Lancaster City Parking Authority “rope off” the first few floors in the morning so that employee parking is directed to the upper floors.

Strategy: Encourage employers to work with employees to suggest and develop innovative methods to increase shared ride car pools.

Strategy: Propose that the Lancaster Parking Authority either reduce parking garage fees or increase parking meter fees so that garage parking is less expensive than street parking.

C. Promote historic preservation to further enhance the character of the City for residents of Lancaster and therefore encourage more people to reside in the City. Also, the charm of the City created through historic preservation will enhance the tourist potential.

Strategy: Investigate the feasibility of expanding the existing historical districts.

D. To promote and market the City of Lancaster as the ethnic and cultural center of the County.

Strategy: Appoint a panel to develop a strategic plan to enhance and coordinate cultural opportunities.

Strategy: Encourage developers, marketers, and promoters to produce cultural events throughout the City of Lancaster.

Goal VI: Promote the health and well-being of all citizens, ensuring that Lancaster's social environment enhances the City's progress toward economic development goals.

Objectives and Strategies

- A. Ensure that the City of Lancaster's *New Comprehensive Plan* integrates the City's approach to issues of poverty, physical and mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, crime and other social factors which impact economic development.**
- B. Recognize the changing ethnic diversity of the City of Lancaster and build a new, inclusive community identity which will preserve and strengthen community character.**



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Lancaster Employment and Training Agency

The Lancaster Employment and Training Agency (LETA) provides a vast array of training programs and career services to help individuals at no cost to eligible Lancaster City and County applicants. The types of programs LETA offers are vocational skills training, work experience, on-the-job training, job search, and specialized programs. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. LETA is located at 128 East Grant Street, Lancaster, PA 17602.

- C. **Work with public agencies and private developers to ensure the availability of affordable housing for all Lancaster residents in every section of the City.**

Strategy: Support the efforts of the Lancaster City-County Housing Task Force.

- D. **Work with other governmental agencies to encourage greater Federal and State financial contributions for job training, education, affordable day care, substance abuse treatment, crime prevention, and other critical social needs. The City should strengthen and support efforts within the community to address these issues.**



Acknowledgments

The Economic Environment Task Force would like to express its appreciation to the following individuals who shared their expertise on economic development issues.

Michael Fessler, UGI

Moirajeanne Fitzgerald, Downtown Business Associates

Jim Hyson, Susquehanna Valley Community Development Loan Fund

Owen Kugel, OK Development

Kim Richards, Downtown Investment District

Stephen Stayman, Fulton Bank

Derrick Stephenson, Lancaster Enterprise, Inc.

II: Human Environment Task Force Report

Human Environment Task Force

Timothea M. Kirchner, Chair

Kimberly M. Armstrong

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David B. Haywood

Betty Gantz London

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Dennis Mitterer

Mary Moore

Joseph Morales

Donald Palmer

Jane Phillips

Maureen Powers

MacDonald Stacks

Gerald Wilson

Darlene Woody

The Task Force members include police officers, teachers, administrators of social service agencies, a member of the City Planning Commission, and several interested citizens.

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A Message from Timi Kirchner

Chair of the Human Environment Task Force

Dear Fellow Lancasterian:

"Since children represent the future, it is critical that municipal leaders be involved in their support and in their education."

"Economic development, public safety and the quality of life in our communities all depend on the proper education of today's children. In fact, one measure of the quality of life in our communities is the quality of education."

"Municipalities may not have a major direct role in schools, but they do have a major and direct role in establishing neighborhoods as nurturing and supportive environments for families and their children. The resulting family-friendly neighborhoods provide the support that families need so that they can be effective partners in the education of their children."

"The trend in education is to consider children holistically, and this requires bringing schools, City Hall, and the community together. Cities and towns can help to bring this about by cultivating partnerships and seeking collaborations."

All that you just read is from a National League of Cities report called *Education: Everybody's Business*. The report goes on to say that a community must not just focus on education for young children but also "education for the work force, and education for life-long learning."

Although the Human Environment Task Force is not solely focused on education, per se, the development of strong human capital that makes a city more desirable is, indeed, accomplished by a community that puts a high priority on assuring that its citizenry are well prepared to assume their responsibilities in society. When you talk about taking a holistic approach, this means you look at such issues as safety, human services, youth, minority access to and involvement in the mainstream, social service planning systems, and creating opportunities for life-long learning. Each of these topics has been the focus of the Human Environment Task Force.

We have also been very careful about thoroughly studying the negative and positive aspects of the human environment. This City has, as we have learned, a strong core of people of all ages, cultures and economic status who are deeply vested in the future of this community. They talk of all the positive things that are here in Lancaster for them and hope that the City can maintain and broaden these opportunities. We also look, with deep concern, at the growing number of children who are living in poverty, the growing number who are dropping out of school, the growing drug problem, and should vigorously address these issues so that the City can reverse the negative trends. Our report, I hope, will reflect a strong commitment to creating a human environment that promises a strong future for the City.



As I reflect on what I want this report to do, I think of the tone that the kids set as they talked to us. The kids told us that they wanted this community to conduct seminars—on a grand scale and often on understanding differences. They told us that there were lots of things to do in this town, in their schools; they had to develop the attitude of access. They told us that the issue of violence among youth and poor attitudes toward school was based in the support system, or lack thereof, surrounding those kids who were walking down a bad road. “Where are the parents?” they asked. “Why does the community tolerate such destruction?” they seemed to be asking us. Why don’t we, as adults, take an active role in teaching important “working together” attitudes to everyone, early and often?

Are we, as a City, creating the climate for full citizen participation in maintaining our strength and aggressively addressing our weakness? This, I believe, is the heart of what the Human Environment Task Force must answer in its recommendations on the City’s role in assuring a safe, inclusive, learning environment.

At the very least, we should view the City as the convener of interests to solve problems or to create preventive strategies. At the very least, the City should set the tone for what is desirable and what is unacceptable in our community. The City should set the tone for all of us to accept responsibility rather than assigning fault. In other words, our report should give the message: “The Human Environment: Everybody’s Business.” This City convenes its various communities to establish community standards and a means by which we can assure them.

Sincerely,

Timi Kirchner
Task Force Chair

I. Approach of the Task Force to the Human Environment in the City of Lancaster

The Human Environment Task Force for the *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster* was appointed in August 1992 to provide a citizen viewpoint on critical issues which the City of Lancaster faces now and for the future. The Task Force met twelve times to discuss topics of concern to its 16 members in the areas of social services, education, crime, and youth. The Task Force issues this report of its findings and recommendations as part of the citizen participation process of building a *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster*.

This report is a reflection of what a concerned and representative group of citizens think about Lancaster's human environment.

The Task Force was not a board of inquiry, nor a study commission created to catalogue the urban ills of Lancaster, nor a research effort. Rather, the Task Force was asked to review those elements which contribute to the human environment and to suggest responses to problems identified. In addition, the Task Force was asked to identify positive trends which should be supported and encouraged as future

stages of the *New Comprehensive Plan* are developed.

The report does not propose "solutions" to social problems. Indeed, many of the issues have no solutions and are far beyond

the scope and capacity of a local government such as the City of Lancaster to resolve. The report does provide some focus on the potential role of the City as convener and facilitator, outlining



ways that the City can play a constructive role in such important policy areas as "learning," "children" and "neighborhoods." The City is not assigned the task of creating a new "department of human services." The set of policy issues needing to be resolved by the *New Comprehensive Plan* are more broad than specific. The value of this report is to prompt interested citizens to think about the human environment in the City in

new ways, beyond such rigid categories as "crime," "public education" or "social services." The report is designed to describe a set of community priorities and to outline a process of problem-solving. The Task Force wants to encourage a climate—a way of doing business in Lancaster—which values such concepts as "participation," "collaboration," "partnership" and "responsibility." In short, the report should encourage

readers to adopt a way of thinking about the City of Lancaster which clearly identifies community priorities and sets about seeking responsible partnership to improve the human environment in Lancaster.

Finally, the Task Force believes that a positive attitude about the future of the City of Lancaster is the single most important ingredient to the suc-

cessful future of the City. It is all too easy to lapse into an attitude of inaction in the face of what could look like one intractable problem after another. The City already has enough detractors who can recite a litany of urban ills while at the same time denying any responsibility for constructive efforts.

The Task Force believes that the City of Lancaster still "works"—and will continue to "work"—if citizens both recognize problems in a timely manner and are encouraged to define and to support public and private actions which will have an impact on problems. Setting the right "tone" about the future of Lancaster cannot be underestimated as the City looks to the next twenty years—a tone which says that problems can be identified, analyzed and solved; a tone which calls out good citizenship, a value promoted in the City; a tone which says that citizens bound together to work for a better city can make a difference. In the end, the City, defined as its citizens, must be the most effective spokesperson for its own prospects—for its own future. This report is intended to show how a group of citizens can be positive about the City of Lancaster.



A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

II. Five Major Areas for Policy Decisions in the Human Environment

In the next twenty years the success of the City of Lancaster in resolving five major critical issues in the human environment will largely determine whether Lancaster can continue to be an attractive place to live and work. The five issues are presented in order of importance.

- a. Insuring public safety**
- b. Revitalizing City neighborhoods**
- c. Celebrating diversity**
- d. Strengthening the nurturing environment for children**
- e. Promoting life-long learning**

Intervention by local government and private agencies—as well as citizens—in these five broad areas will have the most effect on the direction of the City in the next twenty years. These five areas are proposed as community priorities for the City of Lancaster.

A. Insuring Public Safety

"The community-oriented police department makes the highest commitment to collaborative problem solving, bringing the neighborhoods into substantive discussions with police personnel to identify ways of dealing with neighborhood problems. The community-oriented police department recognizes that constructive action by police and community is always better than action by the police alone."

(U. S. Department of Justice, Perspectives on Policing, "Values in Policing", 1988)

The issues of crime, drugs, police, and public safety are much discussed among Lancasterians today. Discussion of crime and the effects of crime predominate in many settings. The crime discussion often diminishes the effective consideration of other

civic matters. As a reflection of the larger Lancaster community, the Human Environment Task Force had many views about crime—its causes, its effects, and its solutions.

In order to succeed, Lancaster must assure safety—personal

safety, citizen safety, neighborhood safety, and in the end, public safety. Safety is the precondition for a successful City. Safety is more than the number of police. Safety requires an enhanced degree of citizen and community responsibility in Lancaster.

Critical Issues

1. The Police

The nature of the police is changing as is the community's perception of the police. "It seems more and more apparent that the police alone cannot solve many crime and order problems," according to a U. S. Department of Justice publication (1992). The role of the police is being redefined as it becomes clear that the police themselves cannot keep neighborhoods safe. The nature of police activities is often characterized as follows: (a) police are reactive to crime as calls for service grow and more time is taken up with "real crime"; (b) police can only play defense—there is no time for offense; (c) police do not adequately reflect the community and are seen as outsiders in some communities. More residents must come to believe that the police can and will help with their problems.

2. Community Responsibility

Lancaster has a confused view of community responsibility for public safety. In certain communities, people appear to tolerate crime and do not see the

police as someone to help. Some residents fear reprisals if they cooperate with the police; some residents will only call police in the most drastic of situations. Others see their "community"—their neighborhood—as a very small space, in some cases only their individual houses. Others see greater public safety as possible only with a significant increase in the number of police officers, in many cases in numbers of police officers that clearly cannot be afforded by the City. Yet despite the predominance of the crime issue in the human environment, Lancaster is statistically still one of the country's safest cities.

3. Domestic Violence

Safety of one's person is the first concern of all residents. Safety in the home must be assured. For women and children, violence in the home is an increasingly common and more dangerous occurrence. Rising domestic abuse and child abuse is affecting Lancaster and its view of public safety. Approximately 40 percent of police time is devoted to domestic abuse and child

abuse. Abuse must be understood as crime; awareness of the extent and nature of the problem of abuse as part of the crime problem is lacking.

4. Drugs

Drugs and substance abuse play a large role in all communities in Lancaster. Particular adverse effects are seen in disadvantaged communities. Real crime has risen as the result of drugs. The lack of apparent success against the drug problem has increased citizen frustration with crime.

5. Youth Violence

In 1992, juveniles committed violent crimes against people in record numbers. The trend today by a number of juveniles is to possess and use weapons for whatever reasons. Some parents increasingly are unable to control their children and have difficulty finding support. Family difficulties and the decline in the importance of traditional institutions, such as churches and neighborhoods, are often cited as causes. Overall, the escalation of youth violence is a most unsettling trend.

Potential Responses

1. Police/Community Alliance

The process of reorganizing and reorienting the police to the community—and encouraging the community and the police to form an alliance with each other—represents the most promising method to assure increased public safety. “Community policing” is just beginning to have an effect. Community policing is more than simply dispersing police into neighborhood substations. “Because community policing is a philosophy rather than a tactic—a proactive, decentralized approach—it can be shaped to meet the specific needs of the community it is designed to serve,” the U. S. Department of Justice has observed (1992). Changes in police recruitment and selection methods and ongoing police training will enhance the growing alliance between the community and the police. Patrol officers can be given more responsibility to analyze and solve neighborhood problems; the community needs additional ways to interact with street-level police officers. Increased citizen involvement with the police—both formal efforts and informal street corner encounters—is necessary to increase police effectiveness. Positive role models among police—

role models which reflect the community in race, ethnicity and attitude—will promote the police-community alliance.

2. Community Responsibility

Lancaster must say collectively that crime is not tolerated in this community. Elected officials, neighborhood activists, civic leaders, and average citizens must all take responsibility for setting a tone in Lancaster that crime is not tolerated in any community in Lancaster. The City should advocate appropriate punishment of criminals in order to insure a deterrent to crime.

3. Countering Domestic Violence

Lancaster should identify and promote good public policies which effectively address domestic violence against women and children. Education and awareness of domestic violence as a crime is a first step. Coordinated educational efforts can have a positive effect. In addition, programs to teach good parenting skills need to be enhanced and increased in Lancaster. Schools and religious organizations have a particular responsibility to teach parenting skills. Employers could increase the number and size of employee assistance

programs in order to reduce the possibility of domestic violence. Finally, changes to State laws which require family reunification, when this is not safe, may be needed and should be advocated. When safety of a family member is threatened, systems would support independence of family members at risk.

4. Citizen Groups

More can be done to strengthen and to help them focus citizen anti-crime organizations. The police need effective anti-crime organizations which support police strategies. Organizations need good leadership and ongoing support from City and County governments. More formal support in leadership training and funding will be necessary for citizen groups to achieve their potential as allies of the police.

5. Judicial System

The courts and the prisons are part of the public safety solution. The police and the community need the increased support of the courts—at all levels—and the adult-juvenile system. In some areas of domestic violence, particularly sexual assault, laws and procedures need to be changed. The City will need to strengthen its relationship with County court systems in order to effect changes.

B. Revitalizing City Neighborhoods

"Neighborhood as policy. At a minimum, neighborhoods are places in which people live or work near each other, recognize their recurring proximity, and signal this recognition to each other....Residents of cities construct 'cognitive maps' in which they allocate distinctive places as 'theirs'—their neighborhood. Moreover, neighbors are not just the residents of a special geographical area but also include shopkeepers and their employees, other workers who frequent areas regularly (postal workers, for example), and even the homeless."

(U. S. Department of Justice, Perspectives on Policing,
"Neighborhoods and Police: The Maintenance of Civil Authority," 1989)

Critical Issues

1. Sense of "Ownership"

The sense of "ownership" of City neighborhoods has declined in recent years. This change is reflected in a loss of a sense of control over events in neighborhoods. At first glance, a decline in homeownership is seen as the cause because the belief is strong "when it's not yours, you don't care." Other factors—absentee landlords, absence of neighbor-

hood amenities such as parks, trees and street lighting—are also cited as causes of the lack of the feeling of neighborhood.

2. Downtown

Downtown Lancaster is viewed as the centerpiece of the City, the symbolic hub of all City neighborhoods. As the perception has grown that Downtown Lancaster has eroded, the impact on residents' sense of

neighborhood has been negative.

3. Neighborhood promotion

Existing neighborhoods in the City, even those which are vital, safe and attractive, are not easily identified and are not effectively promoted by the City, realtors, private interests—even the neighborhood itself. There is no effort to promote Lancaster as a City of neighborhoods.



Potential Responses

1. Small efforts make a large impact

Small efforts such as neighborhood litter cleanup, tree plantings, and neighborhood street fairs and block parties have the potential for large impacts in the image of City neighborhoods and how residents feel about their street and their block. In addition, small events help broaden the feeling of "what's mine" by introducing neighbor to neighbor and creating a renewed sense of neighborhood identity. Existing programs which foster small positive neighborhood-based efforts need to be strengthened, enhanced and expanded.

2. Community-wide events

Community-wide events especially focused in Downtown Lancaster will provide constructive activities within easy walking distance of neighborhoods. In addition, City-wide events will enhance the sense of the City and strengthen the perception that Lancaster is "a nice town to live in." This image starts with the perception of Downtown Lancaster.

3. Housing Strategy

An effective and coordinated City housing strategy is needed to preserve and promote neigh-

borhoods where people live. The housing strategy should include a strong homeownership promotion element which maintains and increases the level of homeownership in the City. The homeownership element can include partnerships with community organizations and mortgage lenders. The homeownership element should also include a promotional element, which includes realtors, designed to market City neighborhoods as effectively as is now done for suburban subdivisions.

4. Good rental units

A homeownership effort should not be seen as simply an anti-renter strategy. Good rental units make a strong city. Policies which promote and encourage responsible renters and responsible landlords are needed. Enhanced housing code enforcement, including an apartment inspection program, should be considered. Changes in the City's Zoning Ordinance to further protect and preserve residential areas should also be considered.

5. Civic neighbors

Businesses, churches and other civic institutions have an important role in being both good neighbors themselves and in promoting a stronger sense of neigh-

borhood in the City. Even modest efforts by business, such as ice cream giveaways and other sponsorships, are widely recognized and promote good will.

6. Neighborhood parks

Maintenance and expansion of neighborhood parks is a cost-effective strategy to promote neighborhoods in the City. In addition, County Park is a park resource with great potential.

7. "Fair Share" housing

The City should strongly advocate the concept of "fair share" housing—a fair distribution of housing opportunities for all income groups throughout the County—in order to insure that subsidized and assisted housing are not unduly concentrated in the City. This process will require the City to collaborate with other municipalities, with the County, and public-private partnerships to insure that a "fair share" housing plan becomes a reality.



EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

C. Celebrating Diversity

"Lancaster has a very well-articulated image of itself based upon its European origins (frequently including a blind spot concerning the African-American population), but the City's recent arrivals, many with roots in Puerto Rico, are also now part of the City's emerging history. The challenge for Lancaster is to create the common ground where these different cultures can coexist and learn from one another. There are no simple recipes for such an outcome."

("Issues for Lancaster: A Preface to the Comprehensive Plan", Columbia University, 1992)

Critical Issues:

1. "Melting Pot" mythology

The "melting pot" mythology predominates as the City has changed in its racial and ethnic composition. Such a view suggests that the new communities of recent arrivals—and some who have been here since the town was founded—are expected to adopt a view of themselves which threatens their identity.

2. Social change

Social change is occurring rapidly in Lancaster. In 1990, the Hispanic population was 11,420, up 4,880 from the 6,540 Hispanic residents in the City in 1980. Lancaster now has the highest percentage of Hispanics of any city in Pennsylvania. While Puerto Ricans predominate, others have roots in Latin America and other Caribbean islands.

3. Diverse population

The City's population is the most diverse of any of the 60 political

subdivisions in Lancaster County. Besides Hispanics, other racial and ethnic groups are also present in Lancaster. These groups include African-Americans with a population of 6,802; and Asian and Pacific Islanders 1,091. Overall, Lancaster is a culturally rich community. This diversity is symbolized by the "Hall of Flags" proudly displayed at Carter-MacRae School which represents 72 separate countries with students in the School District of Lancaster.

4. Sensitivity

Lancaster may be described as a tolerant place but not a place

that has exhibited sufficient sensitivity to the cultural diversity which presently exists in the City. Many structures and institutions have been slow to respond to the change. Conflict does exist as a result. Racism can still be described as a problem in Lancaster along with a growing division among socio-economic groups. There is not sufficient interaction between racial, ethnic, and economic groups.

5. Diverse family structures

Diversity also includes different family structures such as female-headed households.



Potential Responses

1. City as facilitator

The City should play a strong role as a convener of diverse groups, providing positive settings for groups to exhibit their cultural heritage. By facilitating a common meeting place where diverse groups can interact, the City could assist in breaking down barriers among racial, ethnic and other groups.

2. Becoming a multiracial society

"Becoming a conspicuously multiracial society is bound to be a somewhat bumpy experi-

ence for many ordinary citizens" *Time Magazine* recently stated (1990). A process is needed to help neighborhoods where diverse populations presently reside to resolve conflicts. This process should include structured events—"workshops"—where conflicts can be identified and resolved, and greater understanding promoted.

3. A government's work force should reflect the community

All government structures should have deliberate policies

to promote the selection, hiring and training of a workforce which reflects the community they serve. This should be viewed as a commitment to a process rather than setting of artificial numerical goals.

4. Search for commonality within diversity

The vision of celebrating cultural diversity in Lancaster should be based on the image of a search for commonalities among groups—good citizenship, for example—but also be based on respect for cultural differences. Celebrating diversity means groups can and should maintain their cultural identity. Celebrating diversity also means that "bad" behavior—such as drug abuse and violence—is unacceptable in Lancaster because this behavior harms everyone.

5. Reduce the income gap

An economic strategy aimed at reducing the widening gap in income and wages between groups in the City is necessary for a strategy of celebrating diversity to succeed. Job training, education, and social services are part of celebrating diversity.



D. Strengthening the Nurturing Environment for Children

“What does it take to help children whose families are struggling to survive the challenges of single-parenthood, inadequate education and training, unemployment, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, or chronic disability?”

(“What It Takes: Structuring Interagency Partnerships to Connect Children and Families with Comprehensive Services,” A Joint Publication of the Education and Human Services Consortium, 1991)



Critical Issues

1. Children are the future

The Task Force believes that children in Lancaster are the future of the City. Children in Lancaster are remarkably resilient, despite many threats, and can succeed despite the many obstacles in their path. Children are looking to adults for leadership, encouragement, and role models. Most children in Lancaster are "good kids" who will contribute to the success of Lancaster.

2. The state of children in Lancaster

In many ways the state of children in the City of Lancaster sim-

ply magnifies the trends described in national publications: poverty, teenage pregnancy, school dropout, absence of quality child care, child abuse, inadequate health care. Recently, the United Way of Lancaster County's Children's Forum presented a report on children in Lancaster County called "Our Village—Our Children." Among the "alarming statistics" the report shows:

- Nearly one of seven of our County's children ages 0-4 lives in deep poverty (1992 Federal Poverty Level for Family of Four: \$13,950).
- Lancaster County has the fourth highest teen birth rate in the State. In 1990, 608 teenagers delivered babies.
- Lancaster County has

the seventh highest number of reported cases of child abuse in the State. These cases have more than doubled since 1986, to 775 in 1991.

- Reported child sexual abuse cases have increased by approximately 70% over the same period.
- More than 8,000 children ages 12 and under live in homes with one or more addicted parents.
- In 1990, Lancaster County had the fourth highest number of infant deaths and the sixth highest number of neonatal deaths in the State.

3. Fragmented services

The social service delivery system is perceived by families to be inaccessible, fragmented, and not responsive to such basic needs as counseling and parenting education.

While advocacy for children—people and groups who speak aggressively on behalf of children—is conducted by some 30 groups in Lancaster, action on behalf of children is weak and lacks effective coordination.

Potential Responses

1. Innovative approaches to a better environment for children

The City should take the position that children are our highest priority and our best resources with regard to our future. Policies which promote innovative approaches to a better environment for children should be advocated, especially efforts to foster early intervention for at-risk children, before problems arise.

2. Policies should support young families

Lancaster should seek local policies which reach out to families, especially young families, to promote better parenting skills, healthy babies, and better school readiness.

3. Align with schools and youth services providers

Because social services affecting children are not directly provided by City government, the City must participate meaningfully and aggressively in partnerships and alliances with the social service network, especially the County and the City school system, to promote appropriate services for youth which are accessible and well-focused on the needs of children and their families. The "Youth Services Insti-

tute" is one such strategy aimed at alliance-building and partnership between the City, County, School District, private agencies and community-based organizations. While these efforts will be difficult, perhaps even painful, for the City, they must be seen as an integral part of the leadership efforts of the City in the human environment. The political leadership in this community should be challenged and held accountable for their efforts to build effective partnerships to better serve youth and families.

4. Promote and enhance constructive activities for youth

Efforts to promote and enhance constructive activities for youth are needed. Some existing efforts, such as the Lancaster Recreation Commission, because it is largely funded by the City, and school-based activities, could be enhanced and expanded. Additional activities, especially for older youth, would assist in meeting youth expectations of adult leadership and positive role models.



E. Promoting Life-Long Learning

"Local government needs to be concerned about three kinds of education:

- education of children and youth*
- education for the work force*
- education for life-long learning."*

(National League of Cities, "Local Officials Guide—Education: Everybody's Business", 1992)

The City of Lancaster, to be a successful place, requires educated citizens who can handle the demands of the work place and the demands of good citizenship—indeed, the demands of modern life.

Critical Issues

1. Low community value on education

Lancaster appears to place a low value on education. In Lancaster the "work ethic" is more important than the "education ethic." As a result, education is frequently not viewed as a viable pathway to success. Too often a strong back and a will to work is seen as sufficient to secure good employment in Lancaster.

2. Adult illiteracy

Adult illiteracy is a larger barrier to a successful life for many persons in Lancaster than is commonly believed. Many adults with literacy problems are not equipped to participate successfully in job training and adult education programs, and too often these adults fail to benefit from such programs.

3. Barriers and lack of minority role models in education

Minority group students feel disenfranchised by the traditional educational system due to the lack of role models as success stories and the barriers encountered in some educational systems.

4. Need for "second chance" educational programs

Generally there is not sufficient recognition of the need for enhanced "second-chance" educational programs, and for job retraining and skill upgrading efforts. Too often these efforts are crisis-oriented, i.e., either unemployment or a significant barrier such as drug or alcohol dependency must be present before participants can be enrolled.



Potential Responses

1. Increased support for basic adult literacy and English as a second language

Increased attention to, and support of, basic adult literacy and English as a second language is needed by many in the City. The demand by adults for such programs is strong. The costs are comparatively small for the benefits provided.

2. Highlight the case for life-long learning opportunities

The Lancaster community should discuss and highlight the case for education, including the need for life-long learning opportunities. This process should include the feasibility of a locally controlled community college. In addition, employers and educational leaders must describe

in more compelling terms the demands for a skilled work force in the face of increasing global economic competition. This discussion must be made relevant to Lancaster. Employers should be encouraged to increase on-the-job training opportunities for front-line workers.

3. Enhance early childhood education

Early childhood intervention and education should be enhanced as a local strategy. The goal should be to get all young children to enter school ready to learn.

4. More attention to the school-to-work transition

More attention, especially for minority students, is needed to ease the school-to-work transition in Lancaster. This strategy should include more youth apprenticeship efforts and stronger local partnerships between the School District, employment training agencies, employers, and service providers.



III. Successful Problem-Solving in the Human Environment

Problems in the human environment are best approached through aggressive collaboration with agencies, units of government, neighborhood, families and citizens. The City cannot "go it alone" on any issue. Such a collaborative process does not lend itself to grand plans or to dramatic pronouncements. Rather, patience, compromise, and trust-building are required. The City must be seen as a committed, reliable, and predictable partner which can negotiate alliances with many independent agencies and individuals who have not traditionally acted in consort with the City. Seeking ways to promote alliances, collaboration, and partnership in the human environment must become the expected way of doing business in Lancaster. Self-help efforts—

whether for groups, neighborhoods, families or individuals—are to be encouraged and supported.

Early intervention services are more effective for the community and the family than crisis-oriented services. Preventive help works better than corrective help.

The City of Lancaster needs to adopt the motto "It's Not Somebody Else's Problem" and to encourage all segments to take responsibility for solving prob-

lems in the human environment. Individuals and families should take responsibility for improving their neighborhoods. The City should aggressively encourage, promote, and nurture a climate in the City which is oriented to solving community problems. Certainly, not all problems can be predicted now. Yet encouraging a problem-solving atmosphere in the City will provide the best opportunity for confronting present and future issues in the human environment.



V. Conclusions and Recommendations

In order to encourage the best possible human environment in the City of Lancaster, a certain climate for doing business must be created, enhanced, and widely supported:

The human environment requires a climate which –

- 1. recognizes human needs**
- 2. develops public sentiment for action and change**
- 3. encourages the development and implementation of good public policies**
- 4. promotes an institutional readiness to develop shared initiatives**
- 5. recognizes and challenges leaders who make alliances and overcome barriers to better services.**

The City must work to promote trust among groups and agencies. Effective, frequent and ongoing communication among groups and agencies can be promoted by the City if it assumes the role of convener, facilitator, and catalyst on issues in the human environment which affect the City.



LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS, INC. PHOTO

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Vernon Fisher, Executive Director, Neighborhood Services
Carlos Graupera, Executive Director, Spanish American Civic Association
Mary Hohensee, Lancaster/Lebanon Literacy Council
Casey Jones, House Principal, McCaskey High School
Capt. Michael Landis, Lancaster Bureau of Police
Mayor's Youth Council (Students from McCaskey, Lancaster Catholic and Lancaster Country Day Schools)
Molly Moyer, United Way/LINC
Derrick Pack, Student, McCaskey High School
Traci Scott, Teacher, Price Elementary School
Wesley Shope, Member, Project Steering Committee, Community College Project
Mike Stewart, Student, McCaskey High School
Sandra J. Strunk, Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13, Adult Enrichment Center
Leah Young, Consultant, Community College Project
In addition, members of the Task Force also made presentations on issues.

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III: Built Environment Task Force Report

Built Environment Task Force

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A Message from Wendy Tippets

Chair of the Built Environment Task Force

Dear Fellow Lancasterian:

Perhaps the most important objective behind the development of the Task Force policies is the desire to preserve and protect the "spirit of place" unique to Lancaster: preserving the special qualities and character that distinguish Lancaster from surrounding suburbs, towns and villages. This will prove to be essential to Lancaster's survival and future success as a thriving community in a world where increasingly a sense of "place" has been lost to a disturbing national tendency towards standardization and uniformity in planning and development. Changes to our regulations guiding planning should be developed with this in mind. It is important to note that preservation should not preclude growth that is responsive to changing needs but that future change should complement the structure of space and character and be mindful of the "built order" that is particular to the City. This should not be misinterpreted as a plea for replication of what already exists; rather we should encourage good design and planning, representative of the age from which it emerges, while working within and being sensitive to the historic framework.

While the Task Force members were unified in their support of the stated goals, general policies and intentions behind the goals and policies, there was considerable



discussion and debate as to the means of implementing the policies. In using this document, emphasis should be placed on the policy statements and the intentions behind those statements. While a significant amount of Task Force time was spent on the development of specific strategies, these recommendations are not intended to be comprehensive; but instead they should serve as a point of departure. It is anticipated that through the ongoing process of developing the Comprehensive Plan, the recommendations will undergo further refinement.

More important than the final document itself has been the process of involving and educating members of the community in the creation of the document. Through the process, the Task Force and community members at large have become better informed about the working operations of the City. Hopefully, as informed citizens, we will be able to use our knowledge to intelligently contribute to the decision-making process in the future.

In closing, I would like to thank all of the Task Force members for their commitment and thoughtful contributions. Special recognition should go to the guest speakers, City staff, in particular, Craig Lenhard, City Planner II; and the tireless efforts of Paula Robinson, Chief Planner, in the compilation of this document.

Wendy Tippetts
Chairperson



A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

I. THE FOCUS OF POLICY DECISIONS

The Built Environment Task Force had as its focus many of those functional areas traditionally viewed as public sector responsibilities. While public policies and regulations do have significant impact on the built environment, the Task Force realized that the private sector and individual citizens have equally important roles to play in protecting those qualities and elements which have made Lancaster City a special place and in bringing about improvements which enhance the quality of City life.

In looking to the next 15 to 20 years, the Task Force has recommended policies and strategies for future action to address the following broad objectives:

1. Reinforcing and strengthening the City's role as the hub of the County;
2. Protecting the aesthetic and historic quality, structural integrity, and urban character of the City's neighborhoods and buildings in order to preserve qualities and features that are unique to the

City, and that distinguish the City from the surrounding suburbs, small towns and rural areas throughout the County;

3. Assuring that the type of occupancy and physical design of adaptive reuse of existing buildings and new construction is compatible with existing neighborhoods in order to promote positive environments without discouraging interest and variety;



4. Protecting and promoting the single-family character of neighborhoods within the urban environment;
5. Promoting affordable housing as the common responsibility of all municipalities within the County;
6. Improving and expanding park area and landscaping within the City;
7. Reducing the negative impacts of motor vehicles;
8. Strengthening neighborhoods to enhance residents' sense of community;
9. Promoting the viability and further development of the Central Business District as the center of government, commerce and culture;
10. Strengthening the City's role in promoting Lancaster as a vibrant community; and
11. Promoting the City's influence and involvement in regional and State planning.



A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

II. THE TASK FORCE PROCESS

Initial Charge To the Task Force

During the early citizen participation process for the New Comprehensive Plan, hundreds of citizens described their thoughts about the City of Lancaster and about their immediate neighborhoods. Many comments focused on the physical makeup of the City: its buildings, parks, streetscapes, parking, and community and public facilities. Based on frequently heard comments, specific broad goals pertaining to the Built Environment emerged:

1. To protect and enhance the City's physical attractiveness and historic quality while allowing for reasonable growth and development;
2. To assure that quality housing exists for residents in all income levels and to promote pride in ownership;
3. To strengthen neighborhoods and to make all neighborhoods desirable, safe places to live; and
4. To promote the safe, efficient movement of people and goods.

In addition to the above goals, which were targeted at the physical environment, two broad goals which relate to the process of planning and implementing the *New Comprehensive Plan* and its action strategies were identified:

1. To assure that people of all racial and ethnic

backgrounds participate in the planning and decision-making process; and

2. To increase intergovernmental, interagency and private sector collaboration in achieving the community's goals.



The Built Environment Task Force was assigned these six broad goals and charged with the task of developing specific policy recommendations and strategies for future community action. As part of the planning process for each goal, the Task Force was asked to consider how the goal is now being addressed and to identify agencies/programs that are relevant. A process of consensus was used in developing recommended policies and strategies; where a recommendation was formulated by several members but without consensus, the lack of consensus was noted.

Task Force Proceedings

The 20-member Built Environment Task Force met 15 times during the eight-month Task Force process, which began with a September 14, 1992 kick-off dinner at the Brunswick Hotel. Task Force members included concerned City residents as well as individuals with professional backgrounds in architecture, real estate, development and property management.

In order to assure that the Task Force addressed each of the as-

signed topics in the relatively short time period, Chairperson Wendy Tippetts established the structure for the Task Force process in late September, identifying possible dates, topics to be discussed, and guest speakers who would address certain topics. The general method used to develop specific policy and strategy recommendations included the following steps: (1) identify broad issues related to an assigned goal; (2) invite a guest speaker to address his/her area of expertise and to respond to questions from Task Force members; (3) conduct a general discussion



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among Task Force members, guided by questions that emerged from the broad issue identification and the discussion with the guest speaker; (4) identify preliminary consensus points during this general discussion; and (5) review and finalize consensus points at a follow-up meeting.

The guest speakers who contributed their time and knowledge to the process served as valuable educational resources and provided the background needed for the development of broad policy recommendations. The Built Environment Task Force is indebted to the following officials for addressing their areas of expertise: (1) Christopher Neumann, Lancaster County Planning Commission Chief

Transportation Planner; (2) Jim Lutz, Red Rose Transit Authority Executive Director; (3) Larry Weaver, City Zoning Officer; (4) Pat Oberholtzer, Historic Board of Architectural Review member; (5) Marc Buckius, City Housing Code Coordinator; (6) Steve Johnson, Lancaster Parking Authority Executive Director; (7) Craig Lenhard, City Subdivision/Land Development Planner; and (8) Richard Nissley, City Public Works Director.

Guiding Philosophies

The vast majority of Task Force members were City residents, and the three members living outside the City had strong

professional or personal interest in the welfare of Lancaster. What became quite clear during the two-and-one-half to three hour discussions was the intensity of feelings and concern for the future of Lancaster. Similar to many of the hundreds of City residents who spoke to staff members in late 1991 and early 1992, the members of the Task Force deeply care about their City and want to assure that its positive features are preserved and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.

The overall principles that guided the recommendations were the following:

1. Strong neighborhoods are key to Lancaster's continuing and future success;

2. Active citizen participation is essential to protect the positive quality of life that residents have enjoyed for generations;
3. All residents of Lancaster, regardless of income, owner or renter status, age, race

- or ethnic background, must work together to assure that Lancaster remains a liveable community;
4. Both the public and private sectors must work together to assure the future health and well-being of the Lancaster community;

5. The City of Lancaster municipal government has an obligation to promote the City; and
6. Regional planning is essential to the successful realization of many of Lancaster's goals.



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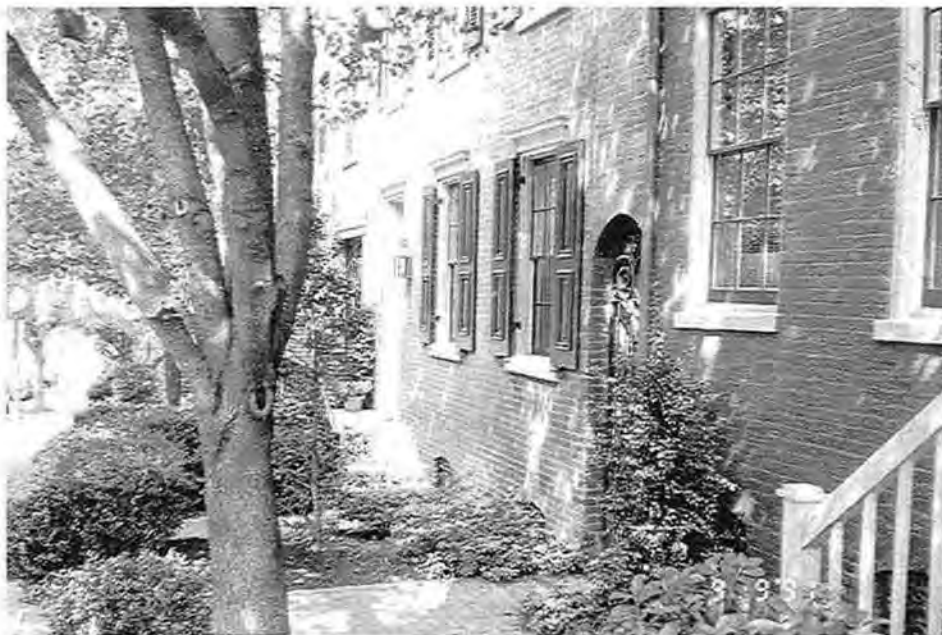
III. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In recent years considerable attention has been given to the concept of “liveable communities.” Both on the national and local levels importance is placed on the development of community character and the special identity of a place, favoring traditional planning and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes.

In considering the specific long-range goals assigned to the Built Environment Task Force and the overall principles guiding their recommendations, Task Force members identified broad policies for each long-range goal and developed specific strategies addressing each policy. The recommendations of the Built Environment Task Force are as follows:



Goal: To protect and enhance the City's physical attractiveness and historic quality while allowing for reasonable growth and development.



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- I. Policy: In order to create a higher level of awareness and appreciation for historic buildings and neighborhoods, a system of design review should be established. This system should include neighborhood input and design guidelines for all changes to existing structures and for new construction in areas outside of official Historic Districts in order to maintain the historic character of Lancaster and the desirability of neighborhoods as places to live.**

A. Design Review

1. Design Review Committees

- a. Neighborhood Design Review Committees should be established outside of designated Historic District areas.
- b. Committees should be established by City Ordinance and members appointed by City Council; committee members should reside in the neighborhood of the committee on which they serve, since these are neighborhood based review committees.
- c. Committees should review, in a timely manner, permit applications for exterior alterations and/or demolition of existing buildings and for new construction, except that certain improvements may be approved by staff according to specific guidelines, e.g., reroofing with in-kind material.
- d. Approval of design would result in an application being forwarded to the Building Official; denial would cause review and formal action by an appeals board.

2. Design Guidelines

- a. Written design guidelines which promote the preservation and maintenance of the architectural integrity of existing structures and compatible design of new construction should be developed as a handout for all persons involved with City building-related projects. (See Appendix A for additional recommendations regarding design guidelines.) The purpose of the design guidelines is to provide clarity and uniformity in the design review process.
- b. Compatibility and economics should be considerations in the design review process when individual proposals are reviewed.
- c. The City should adopt a Comprehensive Landscape Plan, which addresses landscaping both on private property and in the public right-of-way.



II. Policy: Planning guidelines or codes for new development addressing overall patterns of development in undeveloped or underutilized areas of the City, for example, Sunnyside and the Northwest Triangle, should be established in order to encourage thoughtful and appropriate urban development and to prevent unplanned piecemeal, vehicle-oriented, suburban-style development.

A. Elements To Be Addressed

1. Street and Block Patterns

- a. Existing street and block patterns should be extended/continued as practicable.
- b. If there is no existing context, an urban street/block pattern that promotes pedestrian travel should be designed.

2. Orientation of Buildings to Streets

- a. The “street edge” should be maintained using “build-to” lines characteristic of the adjacent/surrounding neighborhood.
- b. If there is no existing context, building setbacks should be established to create an urban streetscape.

3. Location of Parking

- a. Required off-street parking should be located within the center of blocks or behind buildings rather than on the periphery of blocks or in more public/visible locations.
- b. On-street parallel or angle parking for visitors/shoppers should be provided to serve as a buffer between moving traffic and pedestrians.

III. Policy: The formal designation of historic areas throughout the City should be expanded in order to provide financial incentives and legal protection for preserving the historic character of Lancaster.

A. Historic Districts

1. Historic Architectural Board of Review Process (See Appendix B for map of existing Historic Districts)
 - a. The percentage of property owners that must sign a petition to have an area included in the HARB District should be reduced from 80% to 60%.



- b. Guidelines for specific changes that can be approved administratively by City staff should be developed in order to make the process less time consuming.
- c. Education of HARB area property owners should be ongoing to encourage familiarity with requirements and review procedures.

2. Other Historic Area Designations

- a. The National Register Historic Districts within the City should be expanded to include the Central Business District and other areas identified by the Historic Preservation Trust 1992 Preserving Community Character survey as eligible areas.
- b. Zoning district overlays for historic areas should be considered, based on a complete survey of all historically significant structures in the City.



IV. Policy: The rich architectural heritage of Lancaster City is one of the community's primary strengths. The City's historic resources contribute to the positive community character of Lancaster and enhance the significant aesthetic quality of our urban fabric; therefore, demolition and/or improper alteration of historic structures should be strongly discouraged.

A. Historic Resource Protection

1. Comprehensive Resource Inventory

- a. A City-wide historic sites survey which inventories all historic buildings and classifies them individually by levels of historic significance should be undertaken.
- b. The survey file should be readily available to developers, contractors, realtors, private property owners, and any other interested parties.

2. Demolition Permit Procedure

- a. The City should develop a demolition permit review procedure which takes into consideration the impact of demolition on the historic fabric of the immediate community and evaluates alternatives to demolition.
- b. Amendments to the BOCA Building Code adopted by the City should include impact review procedures for the demolition of any historic building, for example, neighborhood notification, a description of the historic significance of the structure, reasons the structure cannot be retained, steps to be taken to mitigate the impacts of the demolition activity on the historic character of the neighborhood, and the intended use of the property after demolition occurs.
- c. No demolition permit should be issued prior to the applicant's providing evidence that all plans and financing for the future use of the property have been approved.
- d. Demolition permits for structures with the highest level of historic significance should be approved by City Council.

3. City Staffing

- a. The City should hire a full-time Historic Resource Specialist within its Department of Housing and Community Development. Examples of responsibilities include reviewing all building permit applications for historic impact, overseeing government-funded rehabilitation projects, and providing technical assistance to property owners.

B. Incentives for Preservation

1. City Government Incentives

- a. The use of zoning/land development bonuses as a developer incentive for preservation should be studied.
- b. The LERTA tax abatement should be withheld for any project causing the demolition of historic structures.
- c. Adjustment of interest rates for government-provided or guaranteed development loans to encourage preservation should be explored.



2. Private Sector Incentives

- a. Financial institutions should provide incentives, e.g., lower interest rates, for projects involving the adaptive reuse of historic structures in accordance with preservation standards and should consider disincentives for projects that include the demolition of historic structures.
- b. The City should provide realtors a brochure, to be given to buyers of historic properties, describing the value of historic structures and encouraging owners to preserve the architectural integrity of their property.



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V. Policy: Adaptive reuse of existing nonresidential structures and the reuse of existing storefronts in residential areas should be encouraged in accordance with guidelines that assure neighborhood compatibility of new uses.

A. Commercial Uses in Residential Areas in Existing Storefronts

1. Conversion of Former Storefronts Back to Commercial Use
 - a. Reuse of storefronts should be encouraged and zoning provisions should allow commercial enterprises that are neighborhood oriented or have minimal neighborhood impact.
 - b. Parking requirements for retail commercial uses should be re-evaluated in terms of impact on the existing urban fabric.
 - c. Impact standards regarding noise, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, noxious odors, et cetera, should be established.
 - d. Neighborhood review of reuse should occur through the special exception process. (A significant minority of the Task Force supported permitting low-impact uses by right.)
2. Commercial Uses in Residential Districts Where Now Prohibited
 - a. Small commercial retail and service centers in new housing developments should be permitted and encouraged.

B. Adaptive Reuse of Existing Nonresidential Buildings

1. Types of Uses That Should Be Permitted
 - a. Vacant and nonconforming buildings and buildings containing nonconforming uses in all neighborhoods should be identified by a City-conducted survey of underutilized resources, and input should be sought from residents about types of reuse considered to be appropriate in order to establish reasonable guidelines for development. These guidelines should establish overlay districts which identify opportunities for development that are endorsed by the neighborhood.

- b. Developers should conduct neighborhood meetings about proposed reuses to provide opportunities for neighborhood input.
- c. Performance or impact criteria for uses permitted by right or special exception should include but not be limited to noise, traffic, parking, hours of operation, lighting, and storage of chemicals.

2. Building/Housing Codes

- a. Continued flexibility of Building Code enforcement staff and appeals boards should be encouraged.
- b. Code requirements for certain elements should be re-evaluated (some of the current standards may add to costs and present design problems in reuse projects) in order to encourage reuse without sacrificing safety.



VI. Policy: Zoning area, setback, height and bulk regulations for new construction should be re-evaluated and revised where necessary to assure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

A. Zoning Setback and Height Standards

1. Front Yard Setbacks

- a. In infill situations, a “build-to” line should be established in keeping with the neighborhood context and relative to structures on the block face.
- b. Where there is no neighborhood context, a 5-foot minimum setback from the property line with front yard landscaping should be considered.

2. Height Limitations

- a. Height limitations for new construction should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
- b. The existing height limit of 75 feet for new apartment construction in the Conversion Apartment, Conversion Apartment-1, Mixed Use and Neighborhood Commercial Districts, should be re-evaluated for reduction.

Goal: To assure that quality housing exists for residents in all income levels and to promote pride in ownership.



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I. Policy: Housing code enforcement is a responsibility of City government that should be strengthened in order to protect the quality of housing for all residents, to preserve our built environment, to prevent neighborhood deterioration and to promote public safety.

A. City Housing Inspection

1. Frequency of Inspection

- a. Housing code enforcement should be done on a systematic basis, with each residence in an area inspected for Code compliance.
- b. Single-family and two-family dwellings in excess of 16 years of age should be inspected.
- c. Multifamily dwellings should be inspected with greater frequency than single-family dwellings, such as once every 4 years for multifamily and once every 8 years for single and two-family dwellings.

2. Nature of Inspections

- a. Inspections system should be fair and equitable; emphasis should be on major safety matters, (e.g., wiring) rather than on minor, more cosmetic matters (e.g., cracked window panes).
- b. A Code Letter indicating that a dwelling meets the minimum standards should include a statement indicating that the inspection report is not a guarantee of the integrity of the components inspected.

3. Funding

- a. The City should establish a dedicated funding source for the Housing Code enforcement program, since continued 100 percent reliance on Federal funding for staff and administrative costs jeopardizes future continuation of the activity.
- b. Housing inspection should be viewed as a public safety responsibility of general City government.

B. Responsibilities of Landlords and Tenants

1. Landlords

- a. Absentee landlords should report the names of their property managers to the City.
- b. State landlord-tenant laws should be amended to provide better protection for landlords against tenants who damage their property and are not current with the rent.

2. Tenants

- a. Education regarding tenant responsibilities should be promoted.
- b. Tenants who report property defects to City inspectors should be protected from retaliation by the landlord.



II. Policy: The single-family character of neighborhoods should be protected by limiting apartment conversions and new apartment construction in residential areas and subjecting both activities to neighborhood review. An adequate number of single-family homes already have been converted to apartments. While conversions of some single-family dwellings, e.g., those with five or more bedrooms, may be appropriate, conversions of single-family dwellings to two or more apartments is generally undesirable and should be discouraged.

A. Apartment Conversions

1. Restrictions

- a. The areas of the City where conversions of existing single-family dwellings to apartments are permitted should not be expanded.



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- b. In order to discourage further conversion of single-family homes, the conversion of existing, small single-family houses to apartments should be restricted by imposing an approximate 3,000-3,500 minimum gross square foot area (a reasonable number should be determined after more study by the City) of the total floor area of the dwelling in order to allow conversions to two or more apartments.

- 2. Neighborhood Review

- a. With the exception of the Central Business District, all apartment conversions should be approved by special exception.

- B. New Apartment Construction**

- 1. Areas Beyond the Downtown

- a. New apartment construction in all districts where now permitted should be permitted by special exception, with conditions addressing play areas/open space and neighborhood compatibility.

- 2. Central Business District

- a. New construction of apartment structures in the Central Business District should be encouraged and permitted by right.

III. Policy: The percentages of home ownership throughout the City should be increased in order to promote neighborhood stability. Strategies to increase home ownership should address the following factors which impact buying decisions: (a) property taxes, (b) the quality of education, (c) realtor attitudes, (d) neighborhood parking, (e) neighborhood playgrounds and parks, (f) crime and safety, (g) property values, (h) down payment and settlement costs, and (i) costs of maintaining an older home.

A. Attracting New Buyers to the City

1. Promoting Lancaster as a Liveable Community

- a. Realtors should be educated as to the architectural quality of the City's housing stock, the high market value of many City homes, and the advantages of City living: for example, "open houses" for realtors should be held to expose them to the City's housing quality and neighborhoods; City government and bank officials should address realtors, with slide presentations, at monthly luncheons of the Lancaster County Association of Realtors.
- b. Periodic "housing fairs" or other events, such as neighborhood tours/open houses or trolley tours to open houses throughout the City, should be held to promote the sale of City houses to potential new homeowners.
- c. A brochure promoting Lancaster City as a desirable place to live should be developed as a handout for realtors to give to prospective buyers.
- d. A list of realtors who are willing to sell City houses should be developed by the Association of Realtors so that potential buyers moving to the area can be referred to these individuals.

2. Overcoming Negative Perceptions and Factors

- a. The School District of Lancaster should continue and increase efforts to promote a positive image of the schools.
- b. County-wide efforts to develop a more equitable taxing system and County-wide reassessment should be encouraged in order to reduce the tax imbalance between the City and surrounding municipalities.

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- c. The strengthening of existing and creation of new neighborhood associations should be promoted as a means to enhance perceptions of safety as well as the sense of neighborliness.

B. Enabling Renters to Become Owners

1. Overcoming the Down Payment/Settlement Cost Obstacle

- a. Federal and State funds should be allocated for down payment/settlement loans or mortgage loan guarantees for eligible buyers.
- b. Employer-assisted home buying programs and other innovative techniques, such as community-based private lending pools or lease purchase programs, should be identified and implemented.
- c. Private lenders should be encouraged to modify credit standards for homebuyers.

2. Home Maintenance Responsibilities

- a. Private lenders and nonprofit organizations should provide homeowner counseling to prospective buyers who have never owned a home.
- b. City Code Letters or private code inspection reports should be required for all property transfers to future owner occupants so that buyers are aware of deficiencies requiring attention and the costs associated with necessary improvements.

IV. Policy: Housing programs and regulations that impact both owner-occupied and rental housing costs should be re-evaluated and revised or strengthened where appropriate to assure housing affordability for people at various income levels throughout the County.

A. Home Ownership

1. Development Costs

- a. Federal and State funds should be considered to reduce some of the costs of new housing construction or substantial rehabilitation in order to increase affordability.
- b. Special local taxing districts to finance certain infrastructure costs for new housing development should be explored and adopted if appropriate.
- c. Other Lancaster County municipalities should be encouraged to revise regulations (e.g., reduce large minimum lot sizes) that contribute to higher development and real estate costs, which, in effect, limit the availability of affordable housing outside the City.



- d. Public awareness of the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) Program (three-year tax abatement on higher tax assessment for improvements) should be increased.

2. Increasing the Supply of Houses

- a. Nonprofit housing developers, such as Habitat for Humanity and the Spanish American Civic Association Development Corporation, should continue to provide home ownership opportunities.
- b. The formation of additional Community Housing Development Organizations with programs to buy, rehabilitate and resell houses at or below market rates should be encouraged.



3. Maintenance Costs

- a. The City should increase its support of the Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan and Grant Program.
- b. Mortgage lenders should include a maintenance escrow with the monthly mortgage payment as an option for homebuyers.

B. Rental Housing

1. County-wide Affordable Housing

- a. Existing planning efforts to promote affordable housing throughout Lancaster County should be strengthened.
- b. Municipalities outside of Lancaster City should be strongly encouraged by the County to assume their “fair share” of lower income housing.

2. Housing for Unrelated Persons

- a. The City Zoning Ordinance should be amended to permit nonfamily units, or three unrelated persons, throughout the City (a nonfamily unit requires two off-street parking spaces).
- b. Consideration should be given to reducing the parking requirement for rooming houses if a study illustrates that the present requirement of one space per rooming unit is excessive.

Goal: To strengthen neighborhoods and to make all neighborhoods desirable, safe places to live.



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I. Policy: Neighborhood notification should occur for all development activity and for all changes of use of existing properties to encourage neighborhood participation/interaction.

A. Types of Notification

1. Posting Signs

- a. Notification signs on each frontage, similar to those used for Zoning Hearing Board agenda items, should be used for subdivision or land development items being considered by the City Planning Commission.

2. Notices by Mail

- a. The City should notify adjoining property owners by first class mail of proposed changes or development activity.

II. Policy: Neighborhood Design Review Committees should be promoted as a way to bring neighbors together for a common, positive purpose.



III. Policy: Small neighborhood parks and/or tot lots should be developed in areas where none exist to provide safe, convenient open space areas for families.

A. Neighborhood Parks/Tot Lots

1. Identifying Available Property

- a. The City should work cooperatively with neighborhood groups to find land and develop park plans.
- b. Demolition of underutilized nonresidential structures or structures without architectural integrity or significance and use of undeveloped lots should be explored.
- c. Lots should be visible from the street or alley, and dwellings should face the area to maintain visual control of the lot by residents.



2. Maintenance

- a. The City should purchase and retain title to the lots, and residents should maintain them. The City should have the right to sell the land if lot is not maintained.
- b. Overall site designs, including landscaping, should be developed for the lots.

3. Responsibility of Developers

- a. Residential developments should include some meaningfully planned private and/or public open space.
- b. If the development is near a park, the developer could be given the option of making a financial contribution to a park fund in lieu of a land set-aside.



IV. Policy: The City's Tree Planting Program should be continued and promoted in areas without street trees in order to enhance the City's streetscapes.

A. Expanding the Tree Planting Program

1. Planting New Trees

- a. Property owners on streets without trees should be encouraged to participate in the Tree Planting Program.
- b. Developers of residential subdivisions should be required to plant street trees in accordance with a Comprehensive Landscape Plan.

2. Tree Maintenance

- a. The City should remove diseased street trees for a nominal fee if owner buys a replacement tree.
- b. Owners should continue to be responsible for tree maintenance.



Goal: To promote the safe, efficient movement of people and goods.



I. Policy: The Parking Authority, Downtown Investment District and City should work together in developing policies and programs to promote the use of parking garages in the Central Business District in order to stimulate Downtown business and activity.

A. Downtown Parking

1. Garages

- a. The Parking Authority, Downtown Investment District and City should coordinate their efforts to reduce monthly fees in the garages.
- b. The Parking Authority should undertake an architectural/design analysis of the facades of the garages to consider ways to improve their compatibility with the Downtown streetscapes, e.g., creation of storefronts, and to improve access.
- c. Design guidelines should be developed that address horizontal lines of facades; window and door openings resembling or compatible with adjacent occupied buildings; ground level commercial space or an entire street facade with office/commercial space; facade materials compatible with surroundings; landscaping; and setbacks.
- d. The Parking Authority should develop a system which provides discounts for residents in an effort to encourage and promote more efficient use of garage space in the City.
- e. Consideration should be given to a “positive image” campaign to overcome the negative perception about the safety and convenience of garages.
- f. To encourage the use of the garages and new businesses in the Central Business District the Parking Authority should establish a sliding scale fee structure for new businesses where the initial fees may be less than standard rates.

2. Meter Parking

- a. On-street parking should be metered throughout the Central Business District to encourage turnover parking.
- b. In areas where appropriate, the cost of metered parking should be increased to be greater than the cost of garage parking.
- c. The parking fine for meter violations should be increased (now \$6.00) to be noticeably greater than all-day garage parking (\$5.60).
- d. Combination loading/handicapped spaces should be established in various Downtown locations.



II. Policy: In order to preserve our built environment/urban context, the use of existing garage structures as opposed to surface parking in the Central Business District and surrounding residential neighborhoods should be promoted, and further development of surface lots should be restricted or prohibited. Where surface parking lots occur, appropriate screening and landscaping should occur to enhance their appearance.

A. Commercial Parking Lots

1. Regulations

- a. In order to discourage demolition of existing buildings and to encourage efficient use of existing parking facilities, new commercial parking lots should not be permitted in the following zoning districts: Central Business, Conversion Apartment, and Mixed Use.
- b. Buildings along street fronts and on corners should not be demolished to create surface parking lots; rather, parking lots should be located to the rear of buildings or in the core areas of blocks along alleys.
- c. Parking lot screening should permit either landscaping or brick walls along perimeters of lots, and internal planting areas with deciduous trees should be required.

2. Tax Structure

- a. In order to discourage surface parking lots, a two-tier tax system which taxes parking lots at a higher rate than buildings or a business/total receipt tax should be investigated (such a tax has been upheld by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court).

B. Neighborhood and Business Parking

1. Parking Lot Regulations

- a. Buildings along street fronts and on corners should not be demolished to create surface parking lots.
- b. Parking lots accessory to buildings should be located behind the buildings and not in front yards within the original four-square mile area of the City.
- c. Neighborhood surface parking lots should be permitted by special exception, with visual impact on the neighborhood being a consideration.



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- d. Landscaped or architectural screening should be required and internal tree planting should be encouraged.
 - e. Use of shared parking facilities should be allowed where hours of operation, i.e., day versus evening, are different.
 - f. Permitting “stacked parking” (parking lots requiring the moving of cars in order to move others) for uses other than single-family homes should be studied.
2. On-street Parking
- a. The Permit Parking Program should be revised to have a graduated fee schedule, i.e., a higher rate for each additional vehicle, in order to encourage reduced on-street parking.
 - b. The Zoning Ordinance should permit, by special exception, on-street parking to be counted toward some of the required number of parking spaces for a use if a formal parking study verifies the availability of on-street spaces.
3. City-owned Parking Lots
- a. The City should hold neighborhood meetings to determine future disposition of Urban Renewal Project parking lots that are not being adequately utilized for neighborhood parking.

III. Policy: Transportation alternatives to the use of private, single-occupancy vehicles should be promoted. The Task Force recognizes that the success of transportation planning is indisputably linked to planning and legislation on national, state and regional levels. The Task Force encourages the City to take an active role in affecting change to policies at all of these levels in support of the development of transportation alternatives.

A. Mass Transportation

1. Red Rose Transit System

- a. RRTA should continue its promotions of mass transit use.
- b. Employers should pay for bus passes for employees instead of providing parking if adequate bus service to their facilities exist; flexible work hours should be encouraged to promote bus use.
- c. Monthly fares from outlying areas of the County should be reduced to provide a greater incentive for persons not to drive their cars.
- d. RRTA should survey new housing developments to determine if bus service is needed or appropriate.
- e. Free or low-cost bus loops, using smaller buses, should be operated within the City, with frequent service to the train station, in-City supermarkets, County Park, or other appropriate destinations.
- f. A new bus terminal, containing appropriate commercial uses, should be developed in the Central Business District in order to promote the mass transit system and to remove sidewalk congestion from North Queen Street; conversion of an existing parking lot to a bus terminal should be considered.
- g. The RRTA system should be more user friendly, with bus stops displaying easily read maps and schedules and with printed route information having a more universal coding system.
- h. RRTA should provide direct service to surrounding motor inns in order to encourage tourists and business travelers to use the bus system.

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- i. RRTA should explore the provision of direct service to the Lancaster Airport terminal in cooperation with the Airport Authority.
 - j. Efforts to promote Park and Ride service from outlying areas into the City should be continued.
 - k. Since RRTA has become a regional bus system, County government should pay for the entire local share (now a 50-50 County-City local share with no other municipality assuming responsibility).
2. Other Considerations
- a. An increase of the gasoline tax should be supported, provided the revenues raised are dedicated to mass transit improvements.
 - b. The Lancaster Amtrak station should be upgraded to include passenger amenities, such as comfortable seating, a restaurant, gift shop, or other compatible commercial uses.



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B. Pedestrian Paths and Bikeways

1. Bicycle Travel

- a. In order to encourage the use of alleys for bicycle riding, bicyclists should be permitted to ride two ways in alleys, regardless of traffic patterns.
- b. A bike path between Long's Park and the Lancaster County Park should be developed.
- c. Local efforts to develop regional trails throughout Lancaster County should be promoted.
- d. New City bike paths should be designated, with appropriate signage, as part of regional bike systems.

2. Pedestrian Travel

- a. Sidewalks should be constructed along corridors where high pedestrian use is likely or desirable, e.g., along South Duke Street to the County Park, along Harrisburg Pike to Dillerville Road, along the Conrail right-of-way to Long's Park and Park City.
- b. Safe pedestrian crossings should be provided where none exist, e.g., across President Avenue at Harrisburg Avenue/Dillerville Road intersection.
- c. "Rails to Trails" should be developed throughout the County as a way to preserve historic corridors and to encourage nonvehicular travel.

C. Vehicular Travel

1. Traffic Volume

- a. The Lancaster County Planning Commission should continue efforts to identify alternative routes for north-south truck travel and to promote the use of rail systems for the regional transportation of goods.

2. Traffic Patterns

- a. Consideration should be given to the opening of West Liberty Street, with special attention to the impact on Armstrong World Industries, in order to improve the connection between the northern and western areas of the City.

- b. To the extent possible, the future Northwest Industrial Triangle should have an urban street pattern, extending the street grid where practicable and maintaining the definition of the street edge by placement of buildings along the edge in keeping with traditional urban patterns.
- c. Any changes in street patterns or construction of new streets should not cause the demolition of residential structures.
- d. In order to support cohesive, safe and pleasant residential and commercial neighborhoods as places of destination in Lancaster (rather than as fleeting images along major thoroughfares), the City should form a task force to re-examine existing traffic patterns, i.e., reduced speed limits, the conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets, and traffic origin-destination.



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IV. CONCLUSION

The built environment of the City of Lancaster has many positive qualities which contribute to the overall desirability of Lancaster as a place to live and conduct business. Fortunately, many public and private programs have been in place which have helped to protect this environment. Unfortunately, some past public policies, shortcomings in regulations and staffing levels, and neglect by property owners have contributed to decline in some instances. After considering the issues that have been identified through the Comprehensive Plan process and the input of our guest speakers, the Built Environment Task Force has developed recommendations designed to protect and enhance the built environment and to help Lancaster continue to be a successful city.

In completing its task of developing policies and strategies to address the broad goals established by the citizens of Lancaster, the Built Environment Task Force members acknowledge the difficulty of the immediate task ahead: integrating the recommendations of the three Task Forces and the further citizen input to be obtained in coming months into the New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster. Beyond that, the community at large will have the responsibility of implementing the recommendations of the Plan. The citizen participation process upon which the New Comprehensive Plan is based must continue throughout the remaining steps of Plan development and future steps of Plan implementation. The built environment is one leg of a three-legged stool that holds the seat of the community; the citizens are the foundation upon which the stool rests.



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APPENDIX A

PROPOSED DESIGN

GUIDELINES

The following are recommendations of the types of guidelines to be included in a new City of Lancaster Development Design Guide to be created for the rehabilitation, renovation and new construction of residential and nonresidential buildings.

A. Facades

1. Covering of original facing materials, e.g., brick or stone, with vinyl siding or other facing material should be prohibited on primary facades on public streets or alleys, with limited exceptions. The primary facade is the front of the building facing a street or alley, or in the case of corner lots on street intersections, the front and side facing the streets.
2. Covering of original facing materials on other elevations should be discouraged.
3. Maintaining a character consistent with the general architectural context of the neighborhood should be a rule of thumb.

B. Architectural Features

1. Removal of porches, stoops, porticos, bays, cornices, turrets, parapets, roof structures and other architectural features on the primary facades on public streets or alleys should be opposed or strongly discouraged. As a general rule, original architectural features should be maintained on primary facades on public streets or alleys. Their removal on other elevations is generally inappropriate and should be discouraged.
2. If any of these architectural features must be replaced, similar materials should be used if possible, but other materials should be allowed if appropriate in context with the neighborhood.
3. Enclosing of porches should be permitted if the integrity of the architecture is retained and there is no negative impact on adjoining properties.

C. Windows

1. If windows are deteriorated, repair should be encouraged but replacement with the same material or with material with similar appearance should be permitted; the original design, style, dimension and configuration of windows should be maintained.
 - This guideline pertains to primary facades on public streets or alleys.
2. Removal of windows is generally inappropriate and should be opposed or discouraged.

D. Material and Design of New Construction

1. Materials, proportion and scale should be compatible with neighboring structures.
2. Although strongly not recommended, vinyl and other synthetic materials should be permitted since they reduce construction costs.

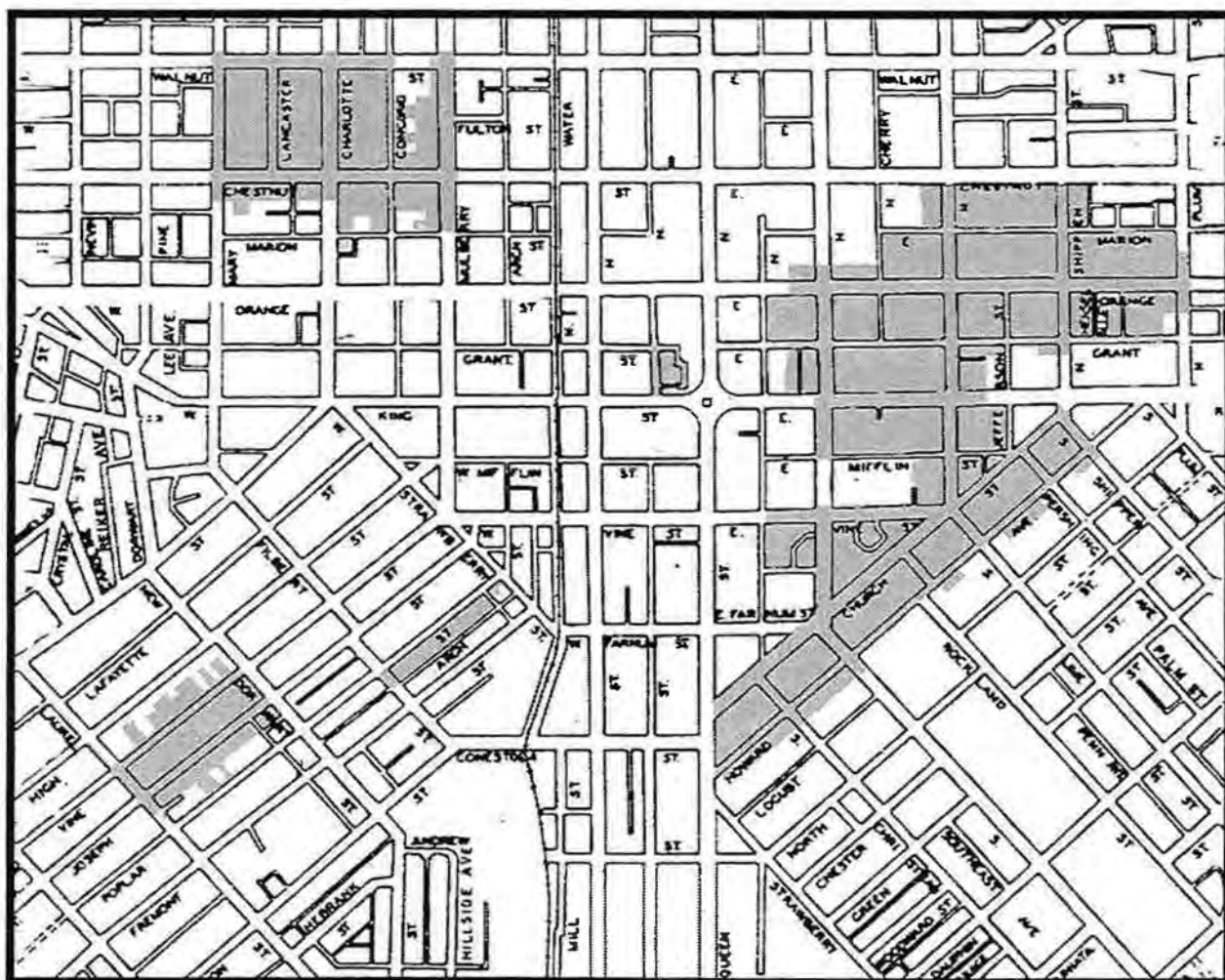


Appendix B

See following pages for detailed area maps.

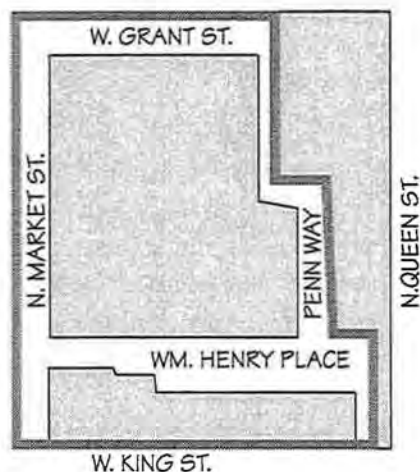
Lancaster

HISTORIC DISTRICTS

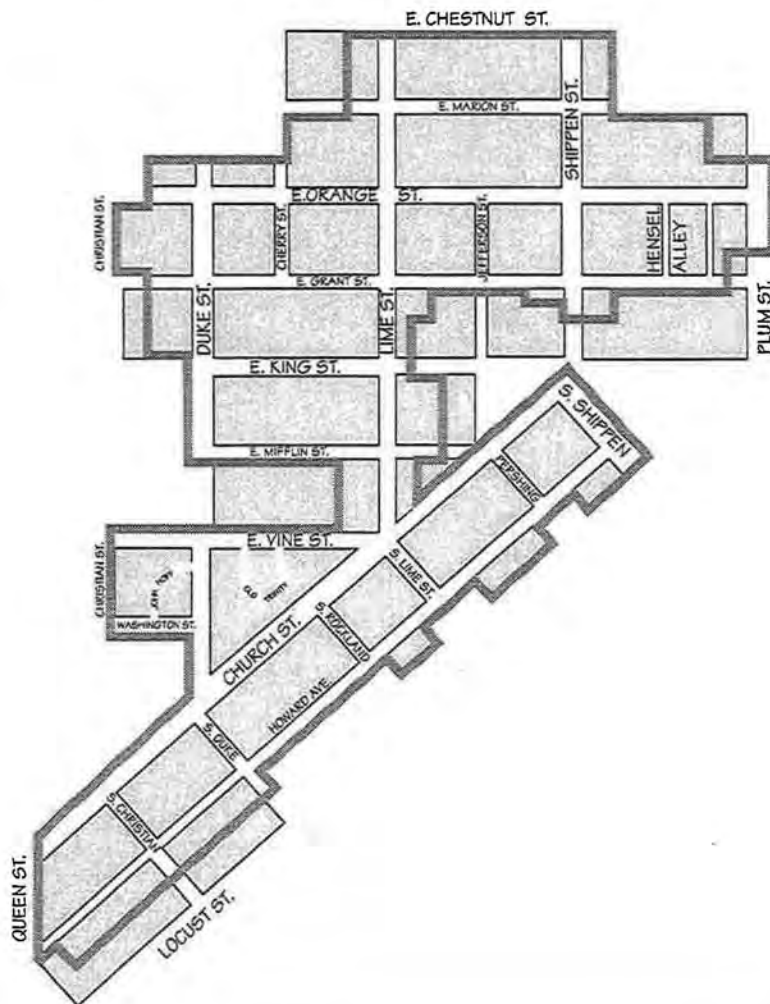


A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

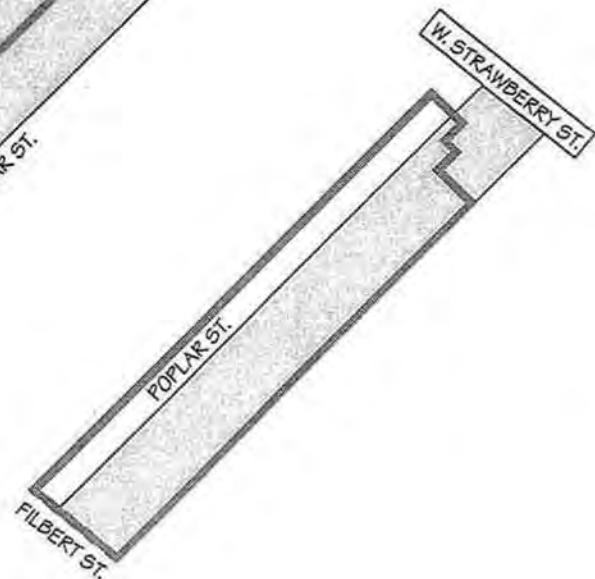
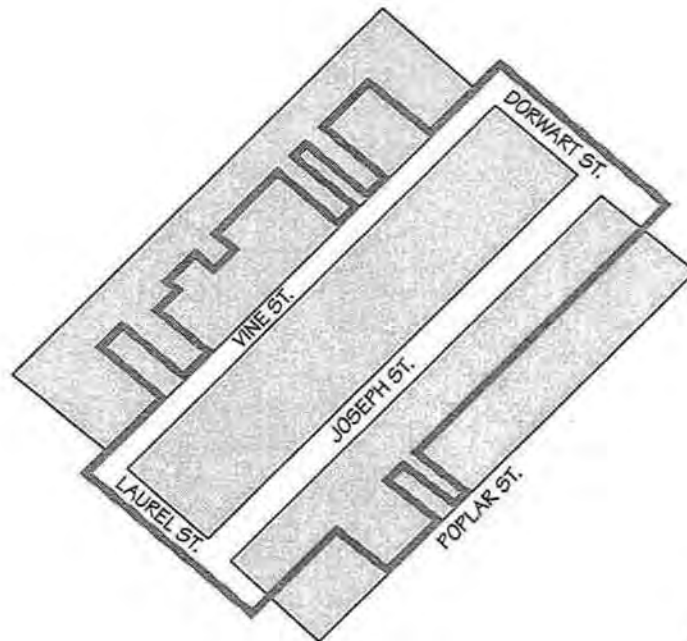
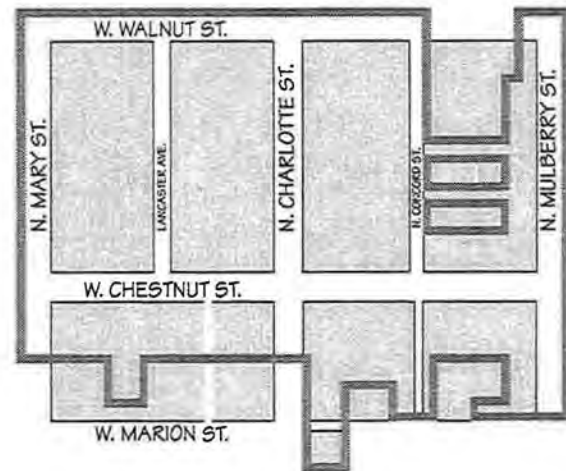
This area situated at Penn Square includes Central Market, The Heritage Center and associated buildings totaling four properties.



This area contains some of the oldest and most distinctive buildings in Lancaster, including Trinity Lutheran Church, the Lancaster County Courthouse, numerous commercial buildings, and hundreds of handsome residences.



This area is notable for its excellent late Nineteenth Century architecture, with a range of Victorian styles.



The development of these two residential areas of this map are generally recognized as part of the growth of Lancaster related to the arrival of many German immigrants between the late 1840's and the 1880's. The establishment of the nearby Conestoga Cotton Mills during the mid-Nineteenth Century and its labor force demands, made this section part of the prime area for the construction of housing units. These two separate areas are part of a larger area known today as "Cabbage Hill".

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Final Steps in Completing the *New Comprehensive Plan*

In the remaining months of 1993, the process for the *New Comprehensive Plan* will turn to preparing the specific policy recommendations that will be included in the formal *Policy Plan*, intended to guide the community's decision-making process during the next twenty years. In addition to the *Policy Plan*, the *Housing Plan* being prepared by the consulting firm of John Rahenkamp, Inc. as one of the primary components of the *New Comprehensive Plan*, will be finalized. Accompanying the *Policy Plan* and *Housing Plan* will be a five-year *Action Plan*, which will identify the specific programs to be developed, steps to be undertaken and regulations to be adopted

or amended in order to implement priority policy recommendations. Several special topical reports on parking and land use are also planned.

Additional opportunities for citizen participation will occur throughout the remaining steps of developing the *New Comprehensive Plan*. A series of public meetings on the draft *Policy Plan*, *Housing Plan*, and *Action Plan* will take place September through November of 1993, with formal endorsement by the Planning Commission and adoption by City Council anticipated late in 1993.

Many other planning efforts are being undertaken in the Lancaster commu-

nity, such as the School District's Strategic Plan, the United Way Community Needs Report, the City's Community Economic Recovery Program and the long-range and annual plans of numerous community agencies. The *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster*, which will present the priorities of the citizens of Lancaster, will be a useful guide for these other planning activities. The *New Comprehensive Plan* is intended to be an overall guide for the Lancaster community. If all sectors of the community work together to achieve common goals, Lancaster will continue to be a successful City.

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Lancaster Newspapers photograph by Richard Hertzler. Other photographs courtesy of Vernon C. (Dick) Richard, P. Craig Lenhard and Marsha Di Bonaventuro. Graphic design by Vernon C. (Dick) Richard.

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