



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

DEPARTMENT
OF COMMUNITY
PLANNING
AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



CITY OF
LANCASTER

CITYOFLANCASTERPA.GOV



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings, everyone,

It is an honor to help create a stronger, more equitable Lancaster, block by block, under the leadership of Mayor Danene Sorace.

It is doubly an honor to lead the amazing team of individuals, who make up the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development, and who put in the tireless effort to serve the residents of Lancaster City.

2024 marks a watershed for the Department. After five years of significant change and thoughtful organizational development, we have reached new heights. By building on our stepwise improvements, we have achieved some extraordinary things over the past year, including myriad home repairs, more affordable housing creation, and small business advancement.

This report shares our progress. And celebrates our collective wins. Thank you, sincerely, to all the many partners and stakeholders that have made these successes possible.

Challenges abound and there is still much work to do ahead.



Christopher Delfs,
Director
Department of Community Planning
and Economic Development

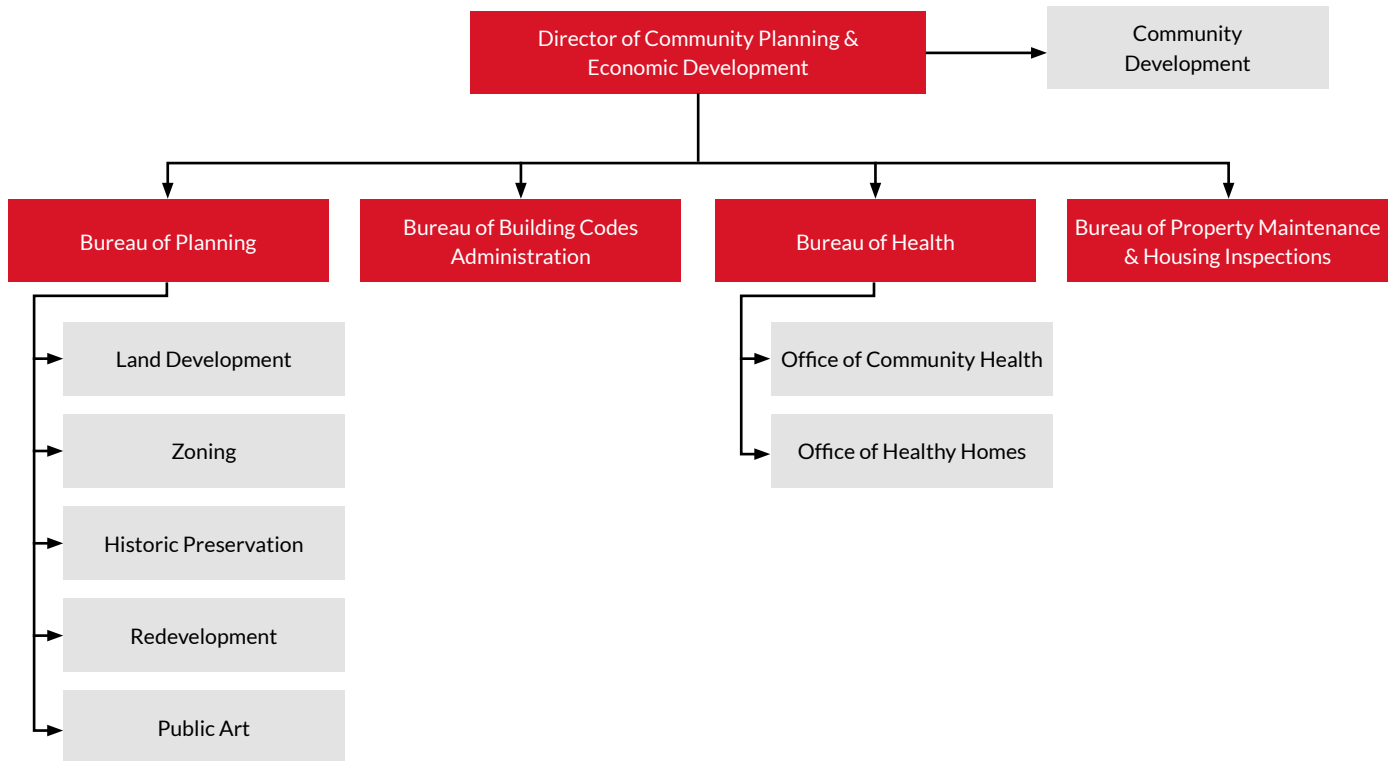


Danene Sorace,
Mayor
City of Lancaster

WHO WE ARE

The **Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED)** is an agency of nearly 50 professionals dedicated to elevating the quality of life for city residents, employers, and visitors.

We provide programs and services through a set of bureaus and offices:



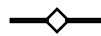
The Department has an annual operating budget of almost \$5 million. In 2024, more than three-quarters of those costs were covered by CPED revenues and grants, not by local taxpayers.



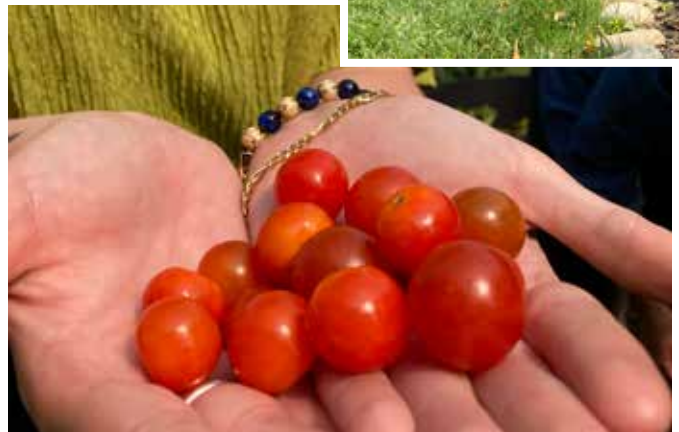
V I S I O N



Our vision is to realize **healthy**, **prosperous**, and **secure** communities across all city neighborhoods.



Towards this vision, we are proud to report highlights from our work in 2024.





HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

HEALTHY HOMES

In 2024, CPED invested more than \$3.75 million in the city's aging housing stock and helped more than 200 low to moderate income households make needed home repairs on features such as doors, windows, roofs, heating systems, and sewer lines.

Through this repair work, we were able to attain lead-safe housing for 494 household members, including 272 children.



HEALTHY FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

In 2024, CPED completed over 1,000 health inspections of restaurants and other food businesses (including 76 new businesses), supporting a thriving culinary economy in Lancaster City.

85% of food establishments had no health violations. Where we found issues, we helped business owners correct the problems professionally and efficiently and provided education, support, and accountability to promote long-term compliance.



HEALTHY URBAN ENVIRONMENT

The City government is responsible for a range of services that contribute to healthy urban living. Here are a few important ones that the CPED team delivered to the public in 2024:



Vector mitigation

CPED baited 75% of the city for mosquitoes to help control West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne illnesses.

We responded to 79 calls for assistance with vectors such as insects and rodents.



Lead poisoning response

CPED supported 72 households with children experiencing lead poisoning, which involved remediating lead hazards within the home and/or coordinating other lead poisoning prevention and response services.



Social and mental health

CPED provided assistance to 289 people in need of health and housing social work services, such as eviction prevention or shelter.



Unsafe construction

CPED reduced unpermitted construction work in the city, stopping and addressing 187 of the most dangerous situations that posed risks to workers or the public.



PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES

LAND DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

Our land development services facilitate complex design and construction projects that usually span over 1-3 years. Several exciting projects are in process or recently complete, such as The Apartments at College Avenue, the Alistair, and 202 Queen Apartments.

Since 2018, the City has approved 2,127 new residential units. 596 units have been built and 734 units are under construction, as shown in the table below.

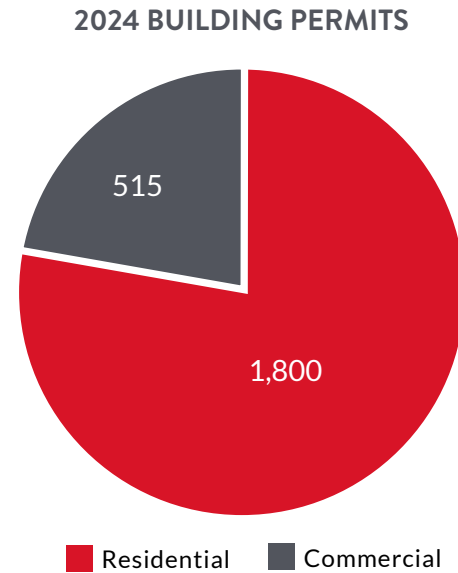
TIMEFRAME	TOTAL UNITS APPROVED	UNITS BUILT	UNDER CONSTRUCTION	APPROVED <i>(Not yet started)</i>	UNDER FORMAL REVIEW
2018 - Present	2,127	596	734	797	145

We estimate that almost 13 percent of the homes built or under construction during this time period are affordable housing units.

CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

The number of commercial and residential building permits issued each year, along with the construction value of these projects, serve as good bellwethers for the strength of the local economy.

In 2024, CPED issued 1,800 residential building permits and over 500 commercial permits. Together, the value of this construction totaled nearly \$269 million.



COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

In 2024, CPED increased its number of commercial property inspections, with the goal of better protecting historic buildings and promoting the reuse of buildings before they fall further into disrepair and become blighted.

CPED is proactively working towards ensuring all vacant and abandoned properties register with the City, as required by ordinance. We have catalogued over 200 properties, which helps us to better identify outstanding maintenance issues and communicate with property owners.

CRIZ SMALL BUSINESS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As a primary member of the City Revitalization and Improvement Zone (CRIZ) Project Committee, CPED evaluated and helped to award a total of \$961,244 in grants and low-interest loans to a total of 21 diverse businesses, with 24% awarded to businesses owned by persons of color and 38% to women-owned businesses.



HISTORIC RESOURCES AND PUBLIC ARTWORKS

The city's historic architecture and cultural heritage, as well as its art scene are vital elements of the local economy, which draw nearby visitors and tourists alike.

In 2024, CPED launched 12 public art projects, engaging over 75 artists and enriching the cultural fabric of the city. Highlights from 2024 include the Plum Street Roundabout Sidewalk Mosaic, the Bench Mark Program Mural, and the 2024 Amtrak Artist Exhibition.

CPED also continued to evaluate and catalogue the city's historic resources in a comprehensive inventory. Since 2016, we have recorded approximately 8,000 of the 14,000 properties in the Lancaster City Historic District, recognized as one of the largest districts in the National Register of Historic Places.





SECURE COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2020 gave the City of Lancaster an unprecedented opportunity to fund a range of public priorities throughout the city. Partnering with City Council, CPED and City staff analyzed and awarded \$10 million to affordable housing projects and \$5 million to community facility improvements between 2022 and 2024.

The City’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME programs also contributed to the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

Major new affordable housing developments in the city include:

DEVELOPER	PROJECT	# OF AFFORDABLE UNITS	AMOUNT INVESTED
SACA	Conestoga North Phase II	9	\$ 1,797,468
HDC MidAtlantic	The Apartments at College Ave	64	\$ 1,350,000
Landis Homes	Landis Place on King	8	\$ 1,042,000
YWCA	Y Forward	16	\$ 1,139,016
Chestnut Housing Corporation	Milburn Apartments	8	\$ 1,100,000
Community Basics	Manor Youth House	9	\$ 1,150,000
Thaddeus Stevens	Duplexes	8	\$ 500,000

CLAY STREET HOMELESS SHELTER

Of the \$10 million in ARPA funds allocated to meet affordable housing needs, \$1.6 million was specifically assigned to homeless housing and support services. CPED and the Mayor's Office helped to secure an additional \$527,000 for shelter development and outreach personnel.

In collaboration with the Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities and Lancaster County Homelessness Coalition, the City shepherded the design, construction, and opening of a new low-barrier homeless shelter. The shelter, located on East Clay Street, has 80 beds and received its first guests in late December.



SAFE AND STABLE RENTAL HOUSING

There are approximately 15,000 rental units in the city. CPED housing inspectors review all these rental units every two to four years to make sure they are safe and habitable.

In 2024, our team conducted almost 5,000 systematic or complaint-based inspections (exceeding our annual targets) and ensured that all code violations are being addressed by

property owners. Thanks to consistent attention by our team, more than 95% of the rental units were rated in fair or good condition.

Further, more than half of all 15,000 rental units have been certified lead-safe since new ordinances went into effect in January 2023.

PROPERTIES WITH PROMISE

CPED staffs the city's Land Bank Authority and Redevelopment Authority of the City of Lancaster (RACL) and helps to execute the decisions of the Authorities' boards. The purpose of this work is to help revitalize troubled properties and foster neighborhood stability.

CPED and the Authorities routinely manage over 20 properties. Over the past two years, we have successfully rehabilitated several buildings and created 10 new residential units.

In 2024, CPED and the Land Bank successfully executed the sale of the Strawberry Hill properties, paving the way for 12 affordable housing units and community spaces in the heart of the SoWe neighborhood.





LOOKING AHEAD

PLANNING INITIATIVES AND INNOVATION

Healthy Lives Healthy Lancaster

CPED conducted the first ever city-focused community health assessment, scheduled for completion in early 2025. Nearly 3,000 community members participated, and the public engagement yielded over 1,000 formal surveys. Several priorities were identified during the assessment process, including:

- Promoting healthy food systems, housing, streets, parks, and water.
- Improving public health emergency preparedness.
- Collaborating with community partners to ensure accessible health and social services, especially for our most vulnerable residents.



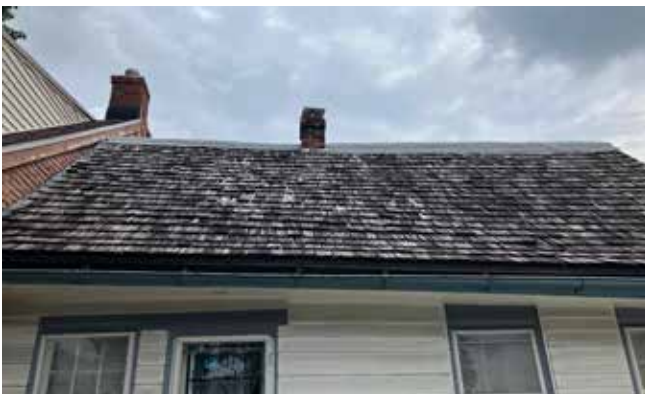
Community Development Block Grant Consolidated Plan

In 2025, CPED will engage with the community to develop a 5-year plan to spend approximately \$7 million in Community Development Block Grant funds on activities such as housing, infrastructure, public services, and economic development.

Continued Investment in Housing Quality

By the end of 2024, CPED had secured an additional \$12 million to invest in lead remediation and critical home repairs over the next five years, setting a course to extend and expand the Department's positive impacts in the community.

BEFORE



AFTER



Permitting and Plan Review Software

CPED is part of a multi-department effort to modernize the City's permitting technology and streamline the permitting process. The City aims to make the permitting process easier and more efficient for owners who wish to make property improvements, from building a deck to upgrading a storefront to constructing new apartments.

Early Comp Plan Implementation

In October 2023, the city adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 30 years. The plan called for targeted small area planning in areas anticipating change and/or investment. Three exciting initiatives are getting underway.

East End Small Area Plan – In advance of the County Prison moving to a new location, CPED is undertaking a plan to define the land uses and infrastructure intended for the prison site and surrounding neighborhood.

Stadium District Small Area Plan – In partnership with the Lancaster City Alliance and CRIZ Authority, CPED will analyze the potential to create a coherent and vibrant entertainment district around Clipper Magazine Stadium.

Sunnyside Nature and Recreation Preserve

Master Plan – In partnership with the Partners for Environmental Stewardship nonprofit organization, CPED will create a master site plan for a new nature and recreation preserve on the northern side of the Sunnyside peninsula, which will be integrated with a center for environmental excellence.

EAST END SMALL AREA PLAN

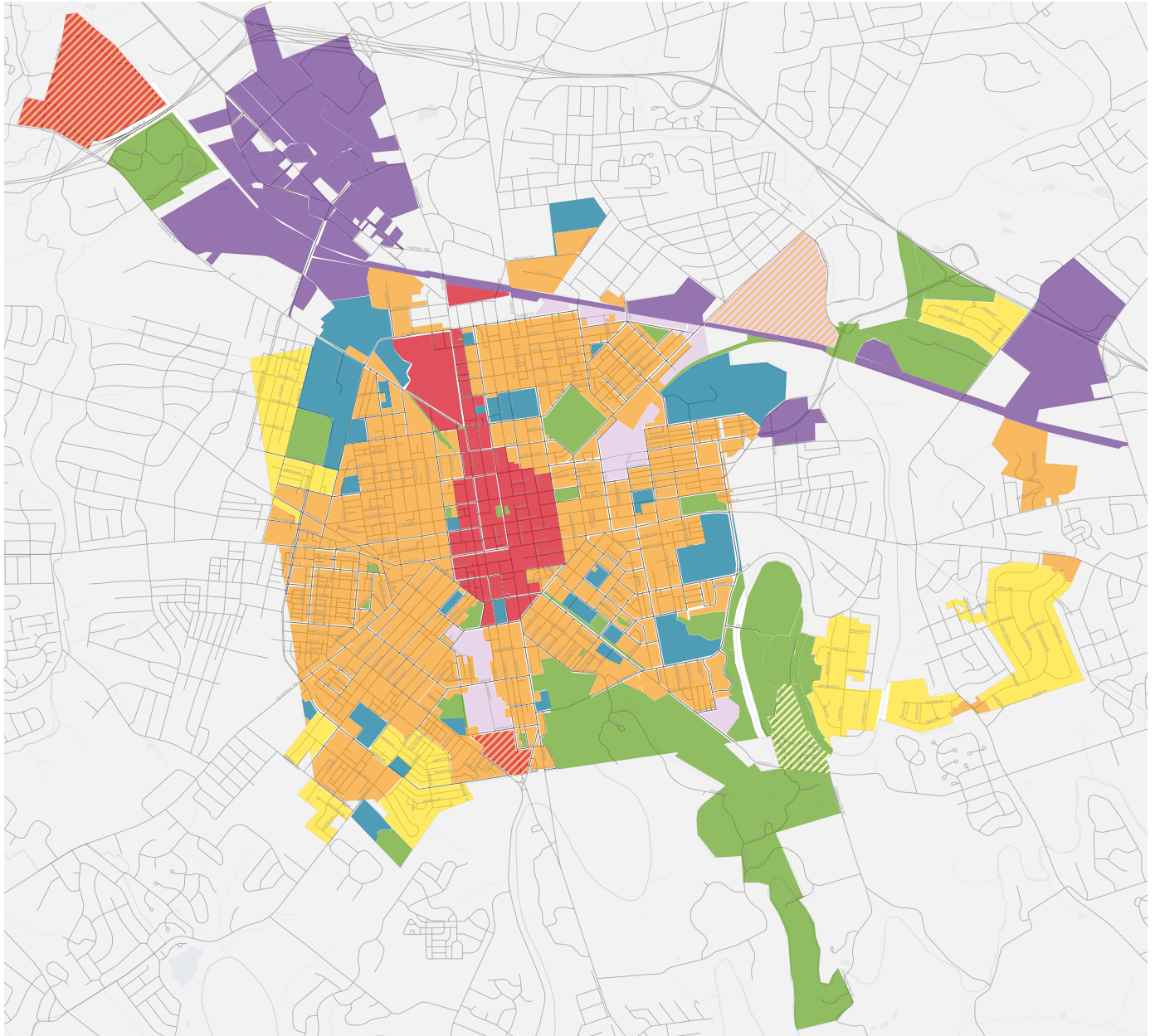


LEGEND









- City of Lancaster
- Primary Study Area
- Secondary Study Area
- ★ Lancaster County Prison
- Railroad
- Parks
- Cemetery
- Water



LANCASTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP



LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p> Residential
Defines primarily residential neighborhoods of moderate density with medium-sized lots and minimal small-scale commercial amenities, which are suited for moderate density housing.</p> | <p> General Commercial/Industrial
Defines an area generally, but not exclusively, suited for high-intensity industrial and regional commercial uses that draw from a broad market area and are connected to Limited Access Highways and other major roads.</p> |
| <p> Neighborhood Mixed-Use
Defines primarily medium density residential neighborhoods with occasional neighborhood-scale commercial amenities.</p> | <p> Light Industry & Innovation
Defines an area generally within an urban context that is suited for small-scale commercial, light industry, and emerging low-impact industrial sectors, such as technology. Some long-term operating heavy manufacturing may also exist.</p> |
| <p> Urban Centers
Defines a compact, mixed-use neighborhood that serves as an employment center, regional destination, and neighborhood with mixed-use buildings and high-density residential.</p> | <p> Parks & Open Space
Defines an area that includes a broad mix of passive and active parks, open space, recreational areas, and environmental conservation, which may also include designated monuments, cemeteries, trails, and supportive facilities.</p> |
| <p> Institutional
Defines a relatively cohesive group of buildings and public spaces owned by public or quasi-public institutions such as colleges, universities, schools, hospitals, religious organizations, non-profits, and their supportive services.</p> | <p> Dual Land Use
Areas on the FLUM that are striped with two future land use categories indicate that area is appropriate for both land uses and/or an innovative mix of the two. Further planning analysis would be required to determine the most ideal mix and locations for the land uses.</p> |

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120 North Duke Street • P.O. Box 1599
Lancaster, PA 17608

