

*A New Comprehensive Plan
for the
City of Lancaster*



Policy Plan

1993

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for the
City of Lancaster*

Policy Plan

*Department of Housing and Community Development
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Table of Contents

| | |
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| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 1 |
| I. INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| II. THE CITIZENS' VISION | 7 |
| III. COMMUNITY CHARACTER | 10 |
| IV. HOUSING | 17 |
| V. ECONOMY | 27 |
| VI. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT | 38 |
| VII. PUBLIC SAFETY | 49 |
| VIII. LAND USE | 55 |
| IX. TRANSPORTATION | 60 |
| X. FACILITIES AND SERVICES | 64 |
| XI. ENERGY CONSERVATION | 69 |
| XII. INTERGOVERNMENTAL/INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION | 73 |
| XIII. TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION | 77 |
| XIV. CONCLUSION | 81 |
| GLOSSARY | 83 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 85 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the City of Lancaster moves forward to the Year 2000, its citizens are faced with many challenges and decisions. Visitors from other urban centers view Lancaster as a successful small city, with its attractive neighborhoods, solid housing stock, relative cleanliness, thriving businesses, active civic involvement, and responsive local government. Many long-term residents of Lancaster have another opinion, since they have witnessed a change in the quality of life and the beginning signs of urban decline. Because of its generally well-preserved historic buildings, the city has an outward appearance of great stability. However, changes in the socio-economic characteristics of the population have caused social issues to assume prominence and to have impacts on the public and private sectors of the community.

The community has recognized the need for a new comprehensive plan to guide future development and to address the changing needs of Lancaster's population. In 1991 the City formally began developing a new comprehensive plan and set forth the citizen participation process that would be followed during the next two and one-half years. The stated purpose of the *New Comprehensive Plan* was to develop long-range goals and objectives that reflected a community consensus regarding the direction of future growth, development and community revitalization over

the next 20 years. The planning process itself, which remained open and dynamic, was considered to be an equally important purpose of the *Plan*.

Early in the planning process, hundreds of Lancaster City residents and other concerned parties described what they considered to be the city's positive features worthy of protection as well as the pressing concerns that must be addressed to protect the quality of life. Citizens also recommended policies and strategies for future action.

The *New Comprehensive Plan* is intended to serve as a guide for the entire community of

Lancaster in setting priorities for future decision-making. All players, including local government, school districts, businesses, service institutions and agencies, churches, community organizations and private citizens, must work together to achieve the goals and objectives set forth herein. With this coordinated effort, the City of

Lancaster will remain a desirable place in which to live; will continue to be a successful small city; will remain a viable urban center with commercial, governmental, cultural, institutional, and other services supporting a larger region; and will continue to be the social, cultural and commercial hub of Lancaster County.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN THEMES

Five major themes emerged from this process and are the basis for the recommendations contained in the *New Comprehensive Plan*:

- (1) Lancaster City is the hub of the County;
- (2) Lancaster City's strength is its neighborhoods;
- (3) Lancaster City's children are the community's future;
- (4) The Lancaster community, under the leadership of the City, must ensure public safety; and
- (5) The City's financial stability is a key to addressing community needs.



A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

I. INTRODUCTION

The Need for a New Comprehensive Plan

Smaller and medium-size American cities, or cities with populations between 50,000 and 150,000, serve as home to 40 million people and hundreds of corporations and businesses. These communities contribute an important dimension to the economic, social, and cultural life of the United States.

The challenge of smaller cities in the 1990's has been to respond to numerous changes and demands, many of which are shared by large urban areas, such as youth gangs, homelessness, the influx of drugs, economic pressures, and the decline of once-vibrant downtowns.

Positive Environment

Fortunately, smaller cities share positive community characteristics and qualities that make them appropriate laboratories for innovative programs: neighbors knowing each other, citizens participating in community affairs, and families taking an interest in the schools.

Other factors typical of smaller cities that create a more positive environment for civic change include (1) greater responsiveness and interaction of local government with citizens, (2) a civic investment by corporations

and businesses in the community, (3) the regional influence of smaller cities, which serve as centers of health care, culture and recreation for a greater area, and (4) a capacity to build and sustain healthy civic infrastructures. The challenge for smaller cities is to focus their attributes on growing urban problems and to address change in a manner that reinforces their positive characteristics.

Change is the Norm

Throughout its history the City of Lancaster has experienced profound change. When Lancaster was incorporated as a borough in 1742 with its boundary set at one mile in each direction from Penn Square, most of the land consisted of farms and open space. An 1824 atlas shows the core of the city, consisting of approximately one quarter of the total area, as developed land.

Why a New Comprehensive Plan?

The primary reasons why Lancaster needs a new comprehensive plan, as set forth in the City's October 1992 document, entitled, *A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster: An Introduction*, are the following:

- (1) To deal successfully with the challenges of a changing city;
- (2) To build a community consensus for Lancaster's future;
- (3) To preserve Lancaster's positive qualities;
- (4) To address Lancaster's pressing concerns;
- (5) To support the policy recommendations of the new Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan; and
- (6) To meet the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Construction of homes, schools, warehouses, factories, stores, and institutions occurred at a steady pace without zoning or land development controls until 1948, when the first zoning ordinance was adopted. By this time, approximately 80 percent of the four-square mile area was developed. From 1742 to 1950, Lancaster's population grew from 1,000 to 63,774, and many different ethnic groups called Lancaster home. In 1947, the City began a 20-year expansion process, annexing a number of irregularly shaped tracts, adding 3.3 square miles to the total land area.

Suburban Challenges

In spite of the expansion of Lancaster's geographic area, the automobile and rapid suburban development began taking its toll: a 30-year decline in population began, reducing the city to the 1980 level of 54,725 people, and relocation of businesses and jobs to shopping malls and industrial parks resulted in a depressed economy.

The federally-funded urban renewal program of the 1960's

and early 1970's also took its toll on the community, razing hundreds of residential and commercial buildings, some in severely blighted, unsafe condition but many with structural soundness and significant historic value.

An upward swing began in the mid-1970's with the revitalization of the downtown and the emergence of a private/public partnership to preserve and maintain the city's buildings and stimulate economic development. A leveling of the resurgence in the 1980's and a population that was becoming increasingly lower income created cause for concern among community leaders and a recognition that Lancaster must assume a proactive posture in shaping its future.

Lancaster is Successful

The City of Lancaster, unlike many other older urban centers, is a successful city and a desirable place to live and conduct business. But like many other older cities in the Northeast, Lancaster is experiencing social change: decline in percentage of the middle-

and upper-income population, rapid increase of the minority population, overt youth violence and drug-related activity, and a population increasingly in need of social services.

Lancasterians as a whole, traditionally characterized by conservative attitudes, have exhibited a high degree of tolerance for much of the social change. However, there is a strong sense of urgency on the part of many residents that something must be done to protect the quality of life that most Lancasterians have enjoyed for generations.

A New Comprehensive Plan

The development of a comprehensive plan for the City of Lancaster was determined to be an important step in addressing the changing nature of the city. The primary reasons why Lancaster needs a new comprehensive plan were set forth in the City's October 1992 document, entitled, *A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster: An Introduction*.

The Planning Process

In June 1991, the City officially embarked on the beginning of a two and one-half year process to formulate a *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster* to address the high priority concerns of its citizens. Unlike comprehensive plans of the past, for which paid consultants or City staff were the primary authors, the *New Comprehensive Plan* was intended to reflect the priorities, concerns, and recommendations of residents, business people, community leaders, and participants in the daily affairs of Lancaster.

Blueprint

The *Blueprint for a Comprehensive Plan*, adopted by the City Council in June 1991, outlined the schedule that the City Administration would follow during the coming months and described methods to be used in obtaining citizen input. Recognizing that comprehensive planning per se would not be a priority interest for citizens, City staff embarked on an aggressive approach to seek the input of numerous people who live and/or conduct business within the city.

Outreach

Sensitive to the changing socio-economic characteristics of the population, the staff made special outreach efforts to ensure that citizen input reflected the concerns of persons



Public participation was a hallmark of Lancaster's New Comprehensive Plan. Public presentations sparked ongoing discussions. This group continuing discussions after a Columbia University presentation, typifies the extent of citizen involvement.

from varied economic and cultural backgrounds.

The approach used to involve hundreds of citizens and community leaders in the planning process was quite varied: numerous one-on-one interviews with business and civic leaders; 68 small, geographically scattered, neighborhood meetings; opinion surveys; public forums; and periodic newsletters. Concurrent with the efforts of City staff was the special analysis of issues facing Lancaster undertaken by students from the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. Their June 1992 report, entitled *Issues for Lancaster: A Preface to the Comprehensive Plan*, identified

many governmental, economic, social and physical planning issues and included policy suggestions in each broad area.

Citizens' Agenda

As a result of the citizen participation process, priorities for the future, the "Citizens' Agenda," emerged and served as a basis for more intense analysis. The primary areas of citizen interest and concern were fivefold:

- (1) neighborhood enhancement,
- (2) public safety,
- (3) economic development,
- (4) transportation and parking, and
- (5) quality of life.

Long Range Goals

Thirteen long-range goals were developed as a result of the early issue identification and citizen agenda-setting phase. These goals were described in the above mentioned *Introduction*, which was formally endorsed by the Lancaster City Planning Commission and City Council as "an appropriate statement of goals for the *New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster*."

Goal Refinement

In order to refine the long-range goals and identify broad policies and strategies for achieving the goals, three Citizen Task Forces (Built Environment, Economic Environment, and Human Environment), appointed by the Mayor, worked intensely from Septem-

ber 1992 through April 1993 in developing recommendations that could eventually be formulated into specific action plans. The Task Forces were advised not to limit their recommendations to actions to be undertaken by City government alone because a **comprehensive plan** addresses the needs of the entire community and defines the roles of all members of that community.

Task Force Reports

The final *Task Force Reports* reflect the thoughtful considerations and deliberations of volunteer citizens from diverse backgrounds. The thoroughness of the recommendations and their success in addressing the issues and concerns that were identified in the early months of the comprehensive planning process reinforced the City's

opinion that its citizens would be the best "consultants" for the *New Comprehensive Plan*.

The Final Steps

The final steps in the two and one-half year comprehensive planning process leading to the production of the first *Policy Plan* draft included the review of the *Task Force Reports* by the City Planning Commission and the Commission's recommendation of specific policy suggestions to be incorporated in the final *Policy Plan*. Also, the staff conducted a number of additional interviews with local officials to obtain input regarding required elements of the *Plan* that had not been addressed during the citizen participation process, e.g., fire protection services and water supply.

Future Planning and Implementation

The policies within this *Policy Plan* for the *New Comprehensive Plan* address the positive qualities, issues and priority concerns of the City of Lancaster as identified by its citizens. The specific policy

recommendations set the direction for detailed action plans to follow. Through careful implementation of the recommendations by all of the designated responsible parties and by the strengthening of the

community's private-public partnership, Lancaster will continue to remain a successful small city, enjoying a real sense of community and a new "Spirit of Lancaster."

II. THE CITIZENS' VISION

Common themes heard throughout the planning process clearly defined the kind of future the citizens of Lancaster hoped would be achieved if proper steps were taken now to address community priorities. The messages that clearly emerged from the extensive planning process and that served as a foundation for the recommendations of this *Policy Plan* are listed here.

If Lancaster is going to deal successfully with the challenges of a changing city and continue to be a vibrant, liveable community, it must work to achieve these priorities.

The Citizens' Priorities

- (1) Develop a sense of community and responsibility among all persons who live, work, own property, provide services, and conduct business in the city;
- (2) Strengthen neighborhoods through positive interaction among neighbors and create a sense of pride and responsibility among all owners, residents and businesses;
- (3) Provide a nurturing environment for children and youth to ensure that they become contributing, productive members of the Lancaster community;
- (4) Ensure public safety;
- (5) Strengthen the economy by increasing the tax base, improving the business climate, and assuring quality job opportunities for all persons; and
- (6) Protect and enhance the city's liveable character created by its pedestrian-orientation, architecture, trees and other greenery, parks, and community services.

Vision for the Future

The term "vision" has become the symbol of comprehensive planning efforts around the country in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The word suggests the ideal future image or the desired qualities of a community as envisioned by its citizens. In the eyes of many planners, it suggests a return to pre-suburban or traditional communities, where neighbor-

hoods revolved around a strong commercial hub, residential areas were friendly havens with positive neighbor interaction, people could walk to work and service centers, and the sense of community outweighed personal interests.

In the *Policy Plan for the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan*, the County planners have described the traditional

importance of Lancaster City as the social, cultural and commercial hub of Lancaster County. Its "Urban Vision" for the central city sets forth an image that many citizens of Lancaster would endorse:

The City of Lancaster has re-established its role as the social, cultural, and commercial hub of the County. Downtown

Lancaster thrives with activity. Sidewalks are filled with shoppers working their way through the various stores and restaurants of the City's central business district. Tourists stroll the streets and alleys admiring the City's historic resources and unique architecture while workers relax during their lunch-break enjoying the City's greenspace - its parks, plazas, playgrounds and town trails. In the evening, people (young and old) are drawn to Penn and Lancaster Squares to experience the lively outdoor events and entertainment activities held throughout the summer.

Looking to the future, the Citizens' Vision for Lancaster City presents an image of Lancaster as a people-oriented, well-maintained, safe community in which to live, work and play, in other words, a "liveable community."

People Oriented

As a people-oriented place, the city gives attention to pedestrian amenities, including sidewalks in good repair and with adequate street lighting, small neighborhood parks and walking trails, safe intersections in busy commercial areas, and attractive tree-lined streetscapes; to activities which enhance the human environ-

ment, such as special community-wide events and cultural activities, block parties, outdoor cafes, art and craft shows, and musical entertainment; to programs that increase understanding and positive interaction among people of varied cultural backgrounds; to the quality of educational and recreational programs for children; and to the adequacy of services for people with health problems or other special needs.

The automobile has a diminished impact on the community as fewer people rely on single-occupant vehicles to travel to work, and more people commute by walking, carpooling or riding mass transit.

Well Maintained

As a well-maintained community, Lancaster is characterized by property owners, be they owner-occupants or investor owners of residential or commercial properties, who take pride in their own properties, keeping them in good repair and maintaining the historical character of the architecture, and who participate in neighborhood improvement activities. All occupants, whether owner-occupants or tenants, regularly sweep their sidewalks and gutters and keep yard areas free of accumulations of trash and other debris.

Litter and graffiti are rare occurrences, and young people know that neither one will be tolerated by their parents or the

neighborhood. The Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods and the hundreds of organized block groups throughout the city conduct regular neighborhood cleanup/fix-up activities.

Formerly vacant residential and commercial buildings have been rehabilitated according to appropriate design standards and contain uses that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods. Special attention is given in the downtown and in neighborhoods to attractive greenery, both in the sidewalk areas and on private property.

Safe Community

As a safe community, Lancaster has expanded community policing to all areas of Lancaster; hundreds of neighborhood associations have formed to promote positive, social interaction and to send a clear message to would-be criminals and vandals that their behavior will not be tolerated; positive recreational and cultural activities exist for all youths; and newcomers to Lancaster learn quickly that certain behavioral patterns practiced elsewhere are unacceptable in our community.

The safety of the community is also enhanced by an active housing code enforcement program that assures the elimination of safety or health hazards in residential properties and by smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and proper electrical wiring in each residen-

tial and commercial structure. With Lancaster's reputation as a safe city, visitors from other municipalities in Lancaster County come to the downtown for shopping, restaurants, and entertainment, and tourists crowd Central Market, the stores and cultural attractions.

A Desirable Place to Work

As a desirable place to work and conduct business, the city has a positive business climate which has been created by financial institutions serving community credit needs, by the Lancaster Chamber of Com-

merce and Industry providing support services to businesses, by City government being responsive to the needs of businesses, and by a well-trained, productive work force. Most of the original four-square mile area of the city has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, thus providing tax incentives for the redevelopment of older commercial buildings. In order to facilitate business and development, the City's chief development official oversees an effective process that moves property owners and investors through the approval process; and zoning and building codes promote

business development without compromising health, safety and welfare. The positive business climate is further enhanced by convenient transit and parking facilities which are available for employees, customers and clients.

In addition, neighborhood businesses that provide services to residential areas or complement the residential character of neighborhoods are thriving; and a vibrant downtown strengthened by an active Downtown Investment District is a more desirable place to locate a business than a shopping mall.

This is the "Citizens' Vision." The citizens of Lancaster have identified goals and policies to achieve their Vision. The *Policy Plan* describes how this "Vision" can be achieved. What follows are recommendations to enable this Vision to become a reality. Building a community consensus is the first step in shaping a positive future.

III. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Various terms have been used to explain the meaning of "community character": "distinctive identity," "liveable community," "the spirit of place," and "special quality." The 1992 report, *Preserving Community Character*, prepared by the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County for the City of Lancaster and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, states that the character of a community is defined by its physical, cultural, and social qualities.

Community Character

As presented in this chapter, community character refers to the community's physical and neighborhood characteristics, such as architectural styles, the condition and use of buildings,

landscaping, neighborhood appearance, parks and play areas. Factors influencing Lancaster's special character are 250 years of history, its cultural and social diversity, and the physical environment created by its citizens.

Urban Qualities

The most important objective behind the Built Environment Task Force recommendations was the desire to preserve and protect the special qualities and character that distinguish Lancaster City from surrounding suburbs, towns and villages. Protecting the aesthetic and historic quality, structural integrity, and urban character of the city's neighborhoods and buildings will help to preserve Lancaster's

community character.

An Evolving City

Preserving and protecting community character does not mean creating a Williamsburg-like restoration. Lancaster is a continually evolving city with rapidly changing socio-economic characteristics. With population change come varied needs, tastes, and policies. Protecting community character means encouraging good design and planning that is representative of the age from which it emerges at the same time that it is sensitive to the historic fabric. It also means avoiding the standardization of design, the insensitivity to human scale, and the lack of any sense of community found in much suburban development.

Historic Buildings

Preserving community character requires a recognition that Lancaster's historic buildings and its streetscapes are essential elements of its appealing character. Unfortunately, ongoing threats to the city's historic fabric exist: neglect and/or improper alteration of buildings by property owners; financial inability of property owners to maintain their properties; demolition to enable the construction of new buildings or parking facilities; and long-term vacancies, resulting in property deterioration. Preserving/maintaining the historic



Neighbors and neighborhoods make the city work. Lancaster's citizens emphasized their desire for strong safe neighborhoods all through the New Comprehensive Plan process.

fabric of Lancaster and encouraging/facilitating the reuse of older structures to meet current needs are important elements of any plan to protect community character.

Sense of Neighborhood

Of equal importance to the physical characteristics of Lancaster in creating its distinctive identity is the sense of neighborhood throughout the city. Neighborhoods do not have identifiable boundaries distinguishing one from another; rather the extent of a neighborhood is defined by its residents. In some instances, a neighborhood may include only one block; in others a several block area surrounding a park or an area with a common characteristic, such as historic designation, may be viewed as a neighborhood.

Neighborhoods are not strictly residential; corner grocery stores, small shops and restaurants, home occupations, churches and schools are scattered throughout residential areas and blend well with the predominant residential character. Neighborhood associations may be informal or organized or they may form in response to proposed development activity.

Desirable Place to Live

What was clear during the five-month comprehensive plan neighborhood meeting process early in 1992 was the great importance individual residents placed upon the sense of neigh-

borhood. Where positive interaction, formal or informal, existed among neighbors, the neighborhood was viewed as a desirable place to live. Where neighborhood pride and a sense of ownership existed, the physical quality of the neighborhood, the perception of safety and the general well-being of its residents were positive.

Our Strength is Our Neighborhoods

A theme that has emerged from the citizen participation process of the *New Comprehensive Plan* is, "Our strength is our neighborhoods." Protecting and strengthening the residential character of Lancaster and promoting the sense of neighborhood are key elements of preserving community character.

Pedestrian Orientation

In addition to its aesthetic and historical quality and its neighborhoods, Lancaster's special identity includes its pedestrian orientation. As pointed out in the Lancaster County Growth Management Plan, the city's historical pattern of development, which resembled that of Philadelphia, provided for compact neighborhoods where walking was the predominant form of transportation. During the neighborhood meeting process, numerous residents cited their ability to walk to stores, neighborhood parks, cultural centers and activities and places of employment as a positive feature that

enhanced Lancaster's liveable quality.

Because many residents use walking as a common form of travel, the attractiveness of streetscapes, including street trees, front yard landscaping, well-maintained properties and historic structures, are elements of the city's community character that should be preserved and strengthened. Furthermore, future development should consider pedestrian orientation: accessibility of basic needs and services, compatibility with or enhancement of the streetscape, and pedestrian safety.

Focus on Citizens

The *Policy Plan* of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan recommends objectives to protect the community character of the County and of the city, towns, villages and rural areas. The City's *Policy Plan* endorses the County's objectives and recommends additional policies focused on the priority concerns and desires of its citizens.

POLICY GOAL: To protect and enhance Lancaster City's physical attractiveness and historic quality while allowing for reasonable growth and development.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. Planning guidelines or codes for new development addressing overall patterns of development in undeveloped or underutilized areas of the city should be established in order to encourage thoughtful and appropriate urban development and to prevent unplanned piecemeal, vehicle-oriented, suburban-style development.

Street and block patterns should have an urban design that promotes pedestrian travel. New buildings constructed on in-fill lots or on large, vacant tracts of land should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood or should create an urban streetscape.

To avoid a suburban appearance, private parking should be located behind buildings or in block centers rather than in more visible locations. On-street parallel or angle parking for visitors/shoppers should be provided to serve as a buffer between moving traffic and pedestrians.

Because little vacant land remains within the corporate lim-

its of Lancaster, the City should update its Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance as soon as possible in order to ensure that future land development projects are compatible with Lancaster's urban character, create pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, are environmentally sensitive, and provide for an enhanced quality of life.

2. 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.

The City of Lancaster is characterized by many mixed-use neighborhoods, where residences are located in close proximity to commercial and industrial buildings. At the time of the first City Zoning Ordinance (1948), approximately 80 percent of the city was developed. Therefore, the separation of different types of uses, which is typical of zoning ordinances,

was not required by the City.

With the passage of time, many former commercial and industrial buildings became vacant as businesses relocated or ceased operation. A number of developers have recognized the economic benefit of adaptive reuse projects, such as City Crossings (former Haddad Building) and Rosenwald Court (former Farmers Supply Building), and have successfully preserved historic buildings contributing to Lancaster's community character.

The City's zoning provisions, particularly those regulating permitted uses and parking, should be revised, if necessary, to allow commercial enterprises that are neighborhood oriented or have minimal neighborhood impact to be located in existing storefronts or nonresidential structures.

The City should identify underutilized, nonconforming buildings in residential areas and obtain neighborhood input regarding appropriate reuses. Also, developers should obtain neighborhood input regarding proposed reuses. Building/housing codes should be re-evaluated in order to remove

obstacles to adaptive reuse without sacrificing safety.

3. The formal designation of historic areas throughout Lancaster should be expanded in order to provide financial incentives and legal protection for preserving the city's historic character.

Currently, the City has two legal means of protecting historic character. The most well-known means is the local Board of Historical Architectural Review (HARB) process, which regulates property improvements in designated Historic Districts.

The second method is the rehabilitation of structures with federal and state funds, requiring work to be done in conformance with national standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties. In addition, certain buildings and areas within the city have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. As pointed out in *Preserving Community Character*, National Register status provides financial opportunities by enabling qualified rehabilitation projects to benefit from a 20 percent investment tax credit.

However, there are no restrictions upon individual property rights, and no review of any privately funded rehabilitation or demolition activities which are not part of a project requiring an increase in sewer service (Pennsylvania's plan-

ning module process includes State review of a project's impact on historic resources).

In order to encourage more property owners to petition to become part of the local Historic District, the City should streamline the review process, lower the percentage of property owners who must petition for District designation from its present 80 percent, and continue its ongoing efforts to educate the public about the advantages of Historic District designation, such as increased property values, enhanced community pride, and protection of architectural and neighborhood character.

Guidelines should be established to allow staff to administratively approve certain proposed changes to buildings, such as exterior light fixtures, flower boxes, and storm windows, in order to reduce some of the perceived bureaucracy in the local Historic District review process.

Other forms of historic area designation, such as zoning district overlays, and expansion of the National Register Historic Districts, including the downtown, should be explored. A professional determination of the historic significance of all structures in designated areas of the city will be a necessary prerequisite to any formal district designation.

4. Zoning area, setback, height and bulk regulations for new construction should be re-evalu-

ated and revised where necessary to assure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

The City's Zoning Ordinance permits reduced front yard setbacks in infill situations; however, where there is no neighborhood context, a 20-foot front yard setback is generally required. In order to promote urban streetscapes, "build-to" setback lines in infill situations and a 5-foot minimum setback with front yard landscaping should be considered. Height limitations for new construction, particularly for new apartment construction, should be re-evaluated for neighborhood compatibility.

5. 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 environment; therefore, demolition and/or improper alteration of historic structures should be strongly discouraged unless the demolition is unavoidable for an economic development project that will increase jobs, expand the tax base, and support the utilization of other his-

toric buildings.

After undertaking a city-wide historic sites inventory, the City should develop a demolition permit review procedure that takes into consideration the impact of demolition on the historic fabric of the immediate community and evaluates alternatives to demolition. The City should consider amending its Zoning Ordinance to prohibit/restrict the demolition of historically significant structures (Sections 603(b)(2) and 604(1) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code would permit such an amendment). Applications for demolition permits for National Register-eligible structures should be subject to public review.

Both the City and the private sector should provide incentives to encourage preservation and/or adaptive reuse of historic structures. At times, economic development projects may require the demolition of older buildings; the benefits of new jobs, business retention/expansion, new business loca-

tion in the city, and an increased tax base must be weighed against the negatives of removing older structures.

6. In order to maintain the historic character of Lancaster and the desirability of neighborhoods as places to live and to create a higher level of awareness and appreciation for historic buildings and neighborhoods, a system of design review should be established for changes to existing structures and for new construction in areas outside of official Historic Districts.

Outside of official Historic Districts there are no design standards for privately-funded rehabilitation or new construction activity, with the exception of the downtown. There, facade changes and signage have been reviewed since 1980 by the advisory Exterior Commercial Property Review Committee (ECPRC). In order to protect the historic

fabric of the community, written design guidelines should be developed as a handout for all persons involved in building-related projects within the City. Protecting the integrity of historic structures and encouraging compatible new construction are purposes of the proposed guidelines. To dispel the perception that adherence to design guidelines is too expensive, cost should be a consideration in the design review process.

Urban design addresses not only structures but also landscaping, and the City should encourage landscaping both on private property and in the public right-of-way. The system of design review could include the following: (1) amendments to City codes to protect character-defining structural elements; (2) review of major projects by an ECPRC-like citizen review committee; and (3) administrative review by well-trained City staff of minor improvements or alterations, e.g., window and door replacements or porch reconstruction.

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

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. Neighborhoods should be strengthened in order to promote a sense of ownership and to improve the desirability of neighborhoods as places to live.

One of Lancaster's strengths is its neighborhoods. Over and over again during our neighborhood meeting process, city residents stated that what they liked most about their neighborhood was "the neighbors." The sense of neighborliness that exists throughout Lancaster contributes to the desirability of the city as a place to live. City government should take a lead role in strengthening neighborhoods: supporting the ongoing efforts of the Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods, serving as a catalyst for the formation of additional organized block groups, facilitating block parties and special neighborhood events, and encouraging churches, neighborhood businesses and civic organizations to become involved in neighborhood activities are among the efforts to be undertaken.

In some neighborhoods, litter and graffiti are serious prob-

lems, and organized block groups should undertake ongoing cleanup efforts and education among all residents. The City also should support programs to increase home ownership and to promote a sense of neighborhood pride among investor owners and tenants.

The downtown is a special neighborhood requiring particular attention. The Downtown Investment District, City and business community must work together to promote and strengthen the downtown as the hub of the City. The vitality of the downtown and the perception of the downtown as a safe, enjoyable place will enhance the perception of the City as a whole.

2. The City should implement an urban forestry program in order to enhance the City's streetscapes, increase energy efficiency in homes and businesses, and improve air quality.

Lancaster's street trees and the City's effective Tree Planting Program were mentioned repeatedly during the neighbor-

hood meeting process as positive features. Not only are trees important for the environment, helping to clean and cool the atmosphere, but also they enhance the attractiveness of the city's streetscapes.

The City should develop a Comprehensive Landscape Plan which promotes tree planting and landscaping on public and private land and protects the city's few remaining natural areas. The City encourages property owners on streets without trees to participate in the Tree Planting Program. In order to enhance the City's ongoing urban forestry efforts, residential developers should be required to plant street trees in accordance with a Landscape Plan.

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

The City should continue to post public notification signs for proposed subdivision/land

development plans being considered by the Planning Commission and should mail notices to adjoining property owners informing them of proposed changes or development activity. When a particular Zoning Hearing Board appeal has the potential of widespread impact, public notification efforts should include more than the current notification method of posting the property with a sign and delivering a flyer to adjoining neighbors.

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

The City's Parks and Recreation Plan, adopted by City Council on September 22,

1992, compares the current amount of recreation land available in Lancaster to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines.

A comparison of the total community, neighborhood and mini-park land, including publicly-owned land that is awaiting conversion into parkland, with the NRPA guidelines revealed that the city has 99 percent of the amount of recommended public recreation land. The comparison of the existing acreage of mini-parks/tot lots with the NRPA guidelines, however, indicated that the city has 57 percent of the recommended acreage. Within the 10-year time-frame of the Parks and Recreation Action Plan, no new tot lots are recommended.

The Built Environment Task Force recognized the difficulty of finding vacant land and funding its acquisition and

development but recommended that the City should work with neighborhood groups to find small parcels of vacant land or lots with underutilized, architecturally insignificant structures that could be developed into neighborhood parks or tot lots. To reduce public costs, neighborhood groups should maintain the City-owned lots, although the initial park/tot lot development may be a cooperative effort. Active neighborhood associations could consider purchasing small, undeveloped lots in residential areas in order to create small, privately-owned tot lots. Residential developers should include meaningfully planned private and/or public open space within their projects or should contribute to a park fund if their development is near an existing park.

IV. HOUSING

The principal housing strategy for the City of Lancaster is to encourage reinvestment in the existing housing stock. The City seeks to preserve and enhance Lancaster's reputation as an attractive place to live and to build on the strength of its neighborhoods. Efforts will focus on increasing public safety, assisting the School District in demonstrating its high quality education, advertising the available infrastructure, improving the housing stock through rehabilitation, working to eliminate vacant and blighted houses, and promoting the proximity to shops and cultural attractions in order to encourage private investment in housing. In particular, the City's strategy concentrates on preservation of the existing housing stock and development of new programs to promote home ownership.

The majority of housing units in the City of Lancaster were constructed before 1940. With the age of the housing stock and the reality that Lancaster is essentially a built-out community, the City's housing strategy focuses on the preservation of existing housing through maintenance and rehabilitation. Maintenance of the City's existing standard housing stock is equal in importance to the rehabilitation of substandard units. Without adequate maintenance, standard



Lancaster's housing strategy concentrates on home ownership and the preservation of existing housing through maintenance and rehabilitation.

units will eventually deteriorate to a point where major investment may be necessary to upgrade them. In the worst-case scenario, a property may become economically infeasible to rehabilitate, thus threatening needed housing units.

Additional strategies address housing affordability for lower-income households and increasing opportunities for home ownership. The strategy of preservation extends to the preservation of existing shelter facilities, such as Harb-Adult and the Shelter for Abused Women.

Maintenance of existing public housing is also important since there are few government resources and no apparent support for the expansion of pub-

lic housing in the city. In order to ensure that necessary maintenance and rehabilitation occur, an effective code enforcement system is required.

The development of new housing units is appropriate in certain instances. Construction of new single-family dwellings on the limited vacant residential land remaining in the city and the conversion of vacant manufacturing or other nonresidential structures to dwelling units are desirable, provided general compatibility with existing neighborhoods is respected.

In 1992, the City entered into a contract with a housing consultant for the analysis of existing housing-related issues and for the development of ob-

jectives, policies and strategies that would serve as a basis for the housing element of the *New Comprehensive Plan*. The consultant's report serves as a companion piece to this *Policy*

Plan, and a number of the policies contained herein are recommended in the 1993 *Housing Plan*.

This chapter defines the steps that City government

should undertake and the policy directions which will guide its future actions as a key participant in housing partnerships and as an actor in its own right in the housing community.

POLICY GOAL: To preserve and maintain the existing housing stock.

The preservation of the high quality of Lancaster's housing stock must remain a central focus of the City's efforts. As incomes continue to rise at a slower pace than housing prices and maintenance and rehabili-

tation costs, the housing stock will require additional attention.

The City's first priority is to stimulate the maintenance of existing homes by the private sector. Second, the City must

work to stimulate, ensure and ultimately support the rehabilitation of deteriorated structures. Finally, the City must be prepared to bring abandoned structures into service.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. Housing code enforcement should be strengthened in order to protect the quality of housing for all residents, to prevent neighborhood deterioration and to promote public safety.

As a tool of maintenance and preservation, code enforcement must recognize and accept cost effective solutions, protect character-defining elements of historic structures, and emphasize energy efficiency. The programs themselves should not be administratively burdensome to home purchasers, existing owners or renters.

Code enforcement must be coupled with incentives, such as rehabilitation grants and low interest loans, as a part of the overall effort. Reverse mortgages are also an option to be promoted to assist both low-income homeowners or elderly homeowners to utilize the equity in their properties with-

out being forced to sell their homes. Utility companies should be approached as resources for public education programs and as potential funding sources for certain rehabilitation programs.

Housing code enforcement is currently performed primarily on a complaint basis because of limited staff and funding. The primary source of funding is the City's Community Development Block Grant Program. An effective but labor intensive system of code enforcement is the periodic inspection of all structures in a neighborhood over three or four years. This approach is commonly referred to as systematic code enforcement.

The City does not have the local tax revenues, and, therefore, the ability to conduct city-wide systematic housing code enforcement. In fact, over half of the housing inspectors' time is devoted to nonhousing issues, such as trash and weed removal.

Therefore, the City must adjust its approach in an effort to effectively use the resources available in order to provide the highest level of service possible. Ideally, the City would reinstitute housing code enforcement on a systematic basis, with multifamily dwellings being inspected with greater frequency than single-family dwellings.

Because the quality of the housing stock has a major impact on neighborhood stability and public safety, the City should establish dedicated, local funding sources for code enforcement, such as multifamily registrations and code compliance letters for residential property transfers. A transaction based inspection system, often referred to as a buyer notification system, would require property inspection at the time of sale. The rental housing stock should similarly be inspected at the time that a unit is vacated by a tenant. The document indicating that the

unit satisfies code requirements is commonly referred to as an occupancy certificate. The housing staff should create a file of all multifamily units. Because the high turnover in rental units is difficult to track, the unit would only be inspected if the file shows that the vacated unit has not been inspected within a certain period of time.

A transaction based system will ensure the periodic inspection of most structures. However, a strong "complaint response" capacity should be maintained. An aging, long-term owner that ceases property maintenance will only come to the City's attention through a complaint. A landlord that allows the rapid deterioration of a unit would avoid scrutiny for some time in the absence of a complaint response system.

A relatively new and very important element of code inspection includes the testing and abatement of lead-based paint hazards. Since most dwellings were built before 1940, the incidence of lead-based paint is estimated to be significant. All code enforcement programs should include testing and abatement of lead-based paint. A County health department, recommended by the *Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan Policy Plan*, would enhance enforcement and follow-up of lead-based paint cases (see Chapter X. Facilities and Services for further mention of a County health de-

partment).

With Lancaster having a 53 percent renter-occupancy rate (1990 Census), landlords and tenants have a significant impact on the condition of the housing stock. Landlords should be required to maintain their properties and provide trash/recycling service for their tenants; tenants should assume responsibility for the cleanliness and proper care of their units. The City should continue the Vacant Property Reinvestment Program to address the issue of vacant, blighted properties owned by individuals who are unwilling or unable to rehabilitate their properties.

2. The City should update its housing-related codes and ensure that adequate, properly trained staff exist to enforce them.

The current Housing Code was adopted in 1960. A thorough review and update should occur to address current needs, and a balance between the desires of neighbors and those of property owners/developers must be achieved. In accordance with the *Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan Policy Plan*, the City should coordinate its code revision efforts with those of other Lancaster County municipalities in order to achieve a degree of regional housing and building code uniformity. Code revisions should provide special consideration for architec-

turally and historically significant structures. Adequate staffing is necessary if code enforcement is to be effective.

3. The single-family character of neighborhoods should be protected by limiting apartment conversions and new apartment construction and subjecting both activities to neighborhood review.

During the neighborhood meeting process, the predominance of single-family dwellings was cited as one of Lancaster's primary positive qualities and as a factor contributing to desirable, more stable neighborhoods. The Built Environment Task Force stressed that an adequate number of single-family homes already have been converted to apartments and that conversions of single-family dwellings to two or more apartments, with the exception of large dwellings with five or more bedrooms, should be discouraged. The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to provide a minimum gross square-foot floor area for the conversion of a dwelling to apartments and should require special exception review for apartment conversions outside of the downtown area. In addition, new apartment construction in all zoning districts except the Central Business District should be permitted by special exception, with conditions addressing play

areas/open space and neighborhood compatibility.

4. The historic character of Lancaster's housing stock should be protected and promoted as one of the benefits of City home ownership.

The expansion of existing Historic Districts or the creation of new Districts should be encouraged where appropriate. **It must be emphasized that the rich architectural heritage of Lancaster is the strongest asset in the city's competition with the suburbs in the housing marketplace.**

The City should determine the feasibility of easing requirements for the expansion or creation of Historic Districts to encourage the designation of additional areas. The long term

success of Historic Districts depends upon the ability of officials to clearly communicate the "do's and don't's" of Historic Districts to residents early in the designation process.

The Department of Housing and Community Development should include a staff member with proper education and substantive experience with the assessment and management of historic resources to ensure that the City has the requisite expertise to effectively administer the Historic District program and to ensure that publicly and privately funded rehabilitation and construction activity retains the historic character of buildings and neighborhoods.

The City should also consider sponsoring a grant and loan program structured to provide incentives for preservation

and renovation of historic structures.

5. Public housing should be maintained and preserved in order to continue to be a community asset.

Lancaster contains various forms of public housing owned directly by the Housing Authority as well as shelter and transitional facilities supported by public funds. In order to preserve and maintain this specialized housing stock, the City should monitor the conditions of public housing units, shelters and transitional facilities. The City also should encourage the ongoing maintenance and preservation of all units owned by the Housing Authority.

POLICY GOAL: To encourage the conversion, rehabilitation, re-use and development of existing vacant and underutilized structures suitable for residential use

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

1. Opportunities for the re-use, conversion, and rehabilitation of existing buildings and new construction should be at the heart of a strategy to improve the tax base.

Efforts to bring obsolete buildings back into productive use will have the potential to create new revenue for the City. New construction for residential uses stabilizes existing residential neighborhoods and can support increasing property values.

Many nonresidential buildings are not able to accommodate their original uses and have become obsolete. Changes in production processes have forced manufacturers to opt for single story facilities with easy access to truck traffic and parking. The resulting inventory of industrial structures presents an opportunity for an expansion of the city's housing stock. Developers of this potential new housing should be encouraged to produce units that are accessible for persons with disabilities in excess of the percentages currently required by law.

The City should establish an information base of all vacant, underutilized buildings that are suitable for rehabilitation, conversion and reuse for residential purposes. The City should continue to offer its tax abatement program for residential improvements to remove the disincentive for rehabilitation. Furthermore, the City should enhance its plan review process by training its staff as facilitators and improving communication and cooperation among City "field review" staff to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.



Renovations currently underway at the Umbrella Works feature reconstruction of the original tower. Originally an umbrella factory, this building most recently housed the Van Sciver's Furniture store. It will soon provide housing and shops for Lancaster residents.

POLICY GOAL: To promote pride in ownership.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. Home ownership should be increased in order to promote neighborhood stability.

a. The City should provide information about the amenities of city living to encourage home ownership

The City and real estate professionals should work together to promote Lancaster as a liveable community in order to attract new homeowners and to retain existing ones. The City should educate realtors about the architectural quality of the housing stock, the high market value of many homes, and the advantages of city living. The City and Lancaster County Association of Realtors should develop a brochure for potential homeowners promoting Lancaster as a desirable place to live, and realtors should sponsor special events to promote the sale of homes.

Three negative perceptions/factors identified by citizens as obstacles to attracting and/or retaining homeowners are (1) the quality of the public education system, (2) high municipal and school property taxes, and (3) public safety. The

School District of Lancaster should continue and increase efforts to promote a positive image of the quality of public education and should encourage the use of school facilities for neighborhood activities. The City should encourage large employers to educate their executives and other employees about the amenities of city living. The City should work with the State and County in creating a more equitable taxing system in order to reduce the tax imbalance between Lancaster and surrounding municipalities. Furthermore, the City should promote neighborhood associations as a means to enhance perceptions of safety and neighborliness.

Credit counseling, home ownership training, renter mediation and other forms of educational assistance are also important components of the public services needed to enhance residential neighborhoods. The private, public and nonprofit agencies that provide these important services should continue to be supported by the community.

b. Home ownership through assistance to homebuyers, especially for first time

homebuyers, should be promoted.

The City should help urban renters become urban homeowners and assist in converting suburban renters into urban homeowners. The City, private lenders, and employers should undertake programs or provide assistance to overcome the obstacle of down payment/settlement costs. An aggressive four-part program to assist buyers will provide a competitive advantage for Lancaster.

i. Create and sponsor an Employer-Assisted Housing Loan Program.

An employer-assisted program creates a pool of money to be lent for down payment and closing cost assistance. This program would eliminate a major barrier for many potential homebuyers.

ii. Create a moderate income down payment assistance Plan.

The City must work to ensure a diverse housing market for low-, moderate- and upper-income residents. As a method to maintain and increase moderate-income home ownership, the City should create a down payment assistance program.

iii. Use Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) leverage with private financial institutions.

The City's leadership has developed a strong relationship with many members of the banking community, who have responded positively to the CRA's local investment requirements. This relationship will play an important role in ensuring adequate financing of mortgage loans and economic development activity in the future.

Financial institutions play a major role in lending patterns, a role which they have recognized with the formation of the Lancaster Council of Community Affairs Officers, a panel comprised of representatives of local financial institutions. The partnership among these institutions will ensure that adequate and equitable distribution of loans is made throughout the community.

iv. Support and encourage lease purchase home-ownership models, such as the program operated by the Spanish American Civic Association (SACA).

For many individuals, down payment and settlement costs present an obstacle to home ownership. The Spanish American Civic Association has become a significant non-profit housing provider in the

Lancaster community, and its focus has been to create home ownership opportunities for lower-income individuals through alternative methods of financing.

2. The City should address the needs of the housing marketplace to ensure that Lancaster can effectively compete with the suburbs.

It is impossible to maintain and preserve a housing stock in areas where neighborhood infrastructure is deteriorating or obsolete or where key components are missing. To compete in the housing market, the City should address specific neighborhood concerns by considering some of the following suggestions:

a. The City should explore obtaining public access easements for common (private) alleys to assure their ongoing vehicular and pedestrian use by neighbors.

Common alleys provide access for rear yard parking in many neighborhoods; and, occasionally, one or more neighbors may block common alleys, preventing other neighbors from using them. A program to acquire public easements would serve as a middle ground between converting common alleys to public rights-of-way and the present inability of the City

to intervene in common alley disputes.

b. Adequately accommodating the automobile within residential areas without compromising neighborhood character is critical for the City to successfully compete with the suburban housing market for middle-income buyers.

Only a small percentage of people walk to work or use mass transit; therefore, private vehicle parking is an important real estate selling point. The Parking Authority and City should investigate the use of vacant lots to address residential parking demand.

c. The City should form a task force to re-examine existing traffic patterns in order to support safe and pleasant residential and commercial neighborhoods.

The conversion of streets to State highways and major connectors has had profound impacts in the quality of life in many residential areas. The task force should examine reduced speed limits, the conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets, and traffic origin-destination patterns.

d. The City should develop an approach that will implement the sug-

gestions in the Park and Recreation Plan, define solutions, and address long term maintenance responsibilities.

Suitable parks and recreational opportunities must be available for Lancaster to compete with the suburban housing market.

e. For the City to have a positive impact on the residential quality of life during a period of lean public resources, it must operate in partnership with both the private sector and the neighborhoods.

The City must build upon these positive local traditions

in ways that will encourage and stimulate the continuation and expansion of neighborhood organizations. The City should provide access to (1) resources through neighborhood groups, (2) budgeting and allocation procedures, (3) staff who can address emerging problems, and (4) the planning process.

POLICY GOAL: To assure housing affordability for people at various income levels throughout Lancaster County.

POLICY OBJECTIVE:

1. Housing programs and regulations that impact both owner-occupied and rental housing costs should be re-evaluated and revised or strengthened where appropriate.

In order to assure housing opportunities for persons at all income levels, the City should continue to seek federal and state funds to reduce the costs of new housing construction or substantial rehabilitation being undertaken by nonprofit housing developers.

To reduce the costs of new housing construction or substantial rehabilitation by for-profit developers, the City should explore special local taxing districts to finance certain infrastructure costs.

The City should increase public awareness of the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) Program (a three-year abatement of in-

creased taxes resulting from the higher assessed value created by improvements). The County also should participate in the LERTA Program. The City should investigate the feasibility of tax increment financing for housing development.

The County of Lancaster should continue its advocacy of affordable housing opportunities throughout the County, and other municipalities should be encouraged to revise regulations contributing to higher development and real estate costs.

Lancaster City has more than its "fair share" of affordable rental housing. The County, other County municipalities, private lenders, and for-profit and nonprofit developers should promote affordable housing in all municipalities within County-designated Urban Growth Boundaries.

In conjunction with other municipalities assuming their "fair share," the City should consider revisions to its Zoning Ordinance to provide additional affordable rental opportunities for unrelated persons; specifically, its regulations addressing nonfamily units and parking for rooming houses should be re-evaluated.

2. The City and County should assure fair housing opportunities for all individuals.

Both the City and County of Lancaster are committed to promoting equal housing opportunities for all individuals, regardless of race, national origin, religion, sex or disability. Programs to assure that housing discrimination does not occur should continue.



**EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY**

V. ECONOMY

Historically, Lancaster City served as the economic hub, the marketplace, for the County of Lancaster. The early highway system and electric street-car lines led directly to Penn Square, stimulating the downtown economy and contributing to the city's retail, commercial and industrial diversity.

Despite its diversified economy, Lancaster has felt the effects of the movement of business and industry from the city: unemployment and under-employment of its residents and a poor tax base. The economic strength of the city has been eroded by local and global forces. In order to regain its position as commercial hub, the City must establish policies to regain its economic strength.

Reduced Tax Base

As has occurred across the United States as well as in the City of Lancaster, the departure of middle- and upper-income homeowners and retail and professional businesses to the suburbs and the influx of lower-income residents have left the city with a reduced tax base and a declining economy. This reduced tax base has hampered the ability of City gov-

ernment to provide the level of service its citizens require.

Cultural Diversity

Throughout its history Lancaster has proven to be an attractive location for people of varied cultural backgrounds. From its earliest days, Lancaster has been a multicultural community. The most recent immigrants are Hispanic, primarily of Puerto Rican origin, arriving from larger cities, such as New York and Philadelphia.

Employment opportunities for Lancaster's newest immi-

The City of Lancaster stands as a testimony of diversity in harmony. It is the home of globally aggressive 'Fortune 500' companies situated next to small businesses that drive the local economy.

(Enterprise Zone, New Business Opportunities, 1991)

grants are, for the most part, low-paying service sector jobs with little opportunity for advancement. The worsening of the general economy in recent years has intensified competition for jobs. Thus, avenues for advancement have grown narrower, exacerbating social and economic divisions.

Employment

Although the city is more stable economically than many other similarly sized cities, it has a consistently higher unemployment rate than the county as a whole. Traditionally, the city's unemployment rate is three percentage points higher than that of the county. For example, in 1990, the unemployment rate for the city was 6.5 percent, while the unemployment rate for the county was 3.1 percent.

An even greater disparity exists between the unemployment rate for the city's White population and the unemployment rate for Black and Hispanic persons. In 1990, the city's White unemployment rate was 4.5 percent, while the Black unemployment rate was 11 percent, and the Hispanic rate was 13 percent. Although there is a larger available work force in the city, the major em-

ployment centers are located elsewhere in the county, and transportation often is an obstacle.

The City of Lancaster recognizes that there is an important distinction between any job and a job that will allow an individual to adequately provide for his or her family and

offer an opportunity for personal development and self-fulfillment. The latter is what is referred to as a "quality job." Policies in this chapter focus on the increase in the number of quality jobs rather than the elimination of nonquality jobs.

The City of Lancaster endorses the economic policies

contained within the *Policy Plan* of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan. The City's *Policy Plan* recommends specific policies to address the special needs and issues of the Lancaster City economy. It also emphasizes the City's need and desire to be a major player in the area of

economic development, an element of the community that has far-reaching consequences for the residents of Lancaster. These policies reflect the priority concerns of the citizens of Lancaster and will serve as a guide for economic development decisions in the future.

POLICY GOAL: To 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.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The Lancaster community should increase inter- and intra-governmental, inter- and intra-agency and private sector collaboration in achieving economic development goals.

No single organization can effectively achieve the goals set for a community; this requires a partnership among various entities. In order to have a successful partnership, effective communication and collaboration are paramount.

In order to create a positive climate in which to conduct business, the City should strive to create an environment of cooperation and open communication among its own agencies, members of the private sector, and other public entities working toward economic development goals. A consortium with the goal of strengthening the economy of the City of Lancaster through communication, information sharing and collaboration, including all of the various economic development players, should be created.

Many public and private entities and programs dedicated to economic development exist in Lancaster, causing confusion at times regarding their specific purposes. The City should develop a directory of economic development organizations to assist individuals/businesses seeking technical or other assistance.

The City will be completing a Community Economic Re-

covery Program (CERP) through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Commerce for the purpose of strengthening the city's industrial base. The CERP will require a Board of Directors, which is intended to continue after the completion of the CERP. This Board possibly could serve as the basis for the economic development consortium.



The City Line Business Center has brought jobs and revitalization to a vacant store.

2. Develop policies and programs which retain and enhance local business.

The City of Lancaster should place a high priority on retaining existing firms and creating opportunities for businesses to grow and expand. The City should cooperate and collaborate with existing agencies and committees that are currently involved with efforts to strengthen the city's economy, such as the Lancaster Alliance, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Economic Development Company and the Downtown Investment District. The City should target its retention and recruitment programs to businesses and industries that provide long-term employment opportunities and quality jobs, for example, technical and communication industries, State offices, and health care providers.

Programs such as the Enterprise Zone, which offers an array of financial assistance to businesses willing to invest in the Enterprise Zone, should be continued as a tool to retain and attract businesses. The City should explore the creation of specially designated "development action areas" where concentrated development and revitalization activities would occur. The southeast area is one neighborhood that should be targeted as a development action area because of its traditional higher unemployment

rate and depressed economic conditions.

The City should also collect available information about business activity, employment and other major economic indicators affecting the economy in cooperation with business and industry. This information-gathering activity should be used to identify opportunities and areas of concern for economic development and to evaluate the impact of economic development policies. The Community Economic Recovery Program (CERP) will initially collect data concerning industries. The City should expand data collection activity to general businesses as well.

The City should investigate and reasonably use innovative efforts to retain businesses in Lancaster, such as tax increment financing or assistance in environmental cleanup, and should regularly acknowledge the contributions of city businesses. In cooperation with the Downtown Investment District (DID), the City should also continue to assist businesses desiring to expand by informing them of existing vacant and underutilized buildings in Lancaster.

3. The City, in cooperation with other economic development players, should attract new business and investment to Lancaster to create new job opportunities for city residents, and should ensure equal opportunity

for quality jobs for all people.

The City of Lancaster should work in cooperation with other economic development players, such as the Economic Development Company (EDC), Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the DID, to identify and pursue firms seeking new facilities and to assist these firms in locating and developing facilities in Lancaster. In particular, areas of the city with concentrations of lower-income persons and chronically higher unemployment should be targeted. The City should encourage the development of existing commercially and industrially zoned vacant land and buildings. Groups such as the Strategic Projects Action Group of the Southeast Area Commercial/Industrial Revitalization Program should be strongly supported and encouraged.

4. The City, in conjunction with economic development organizations, should support and encourage the retention and creation of small business. (For the purposes of this document, small business is defined as a business with 20 employees or less.)

As the majority of jobs created in the United States are in small businesses, the City should support the retention and creation of small busi-

nesses in Lancaster. The City should encourage the development of a venture investment forum, whereby investors and potential small business owners interact and create partnerships.

The City should also offer technical assistance and, where feasible, financial assistance to Lancaster Enterprise, Inc. and the Lancaster Coalition for Business Development and Opportunity to expand and create minority businesses and industries. The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Small Business Group should actively recruit minority businesses as members to promote networking

among entrepreneurs. The City should also encourage businesses to seek seed money loans, Federal Economic Development Administration funds, Small Business Administration loans and financing through the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority. The City should continue its strong support of the incubator concept. (The incubator concept involves sharing of resources, such as clerical, phone answering services, et cetera, in order to save costs during the first years of business.) Because entrepreneurial training increases the likelihood of success in small business, the City

should continue and expand its Business Planning and Mentorship Program.

5. The City should develop an approach to market the City of Lancaster locally, regionally and nationally.

The City should investigate methods of marketing the attributes of Lancaster and what it can offer businesses and industries. Positive qualities to be emphasized for businesses and industries include excellent water and sewer service, professional fire service, ideal location in the Northeast, and available work force.

POLICY GOAL: To enhance Lancaster's economic environment by providing adequate infrastructure for economic development and maintaining public policies and actions which support and promote economic development activity.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The City should maintain industrially and commercially zoned land close to transportation services.

The City of Lancaster is essentially a developed community with very little vacant land remaining. The few remaining undeveloped, industrially zoned sites should retain their industrial classification. The City has been approached to rezone such land to allow for retail establishments; however the City should strive to retain industrially zoned sites. In order to achieve the goals listed elsewhere, quality sites for future industrial development must be available.

2. The City, utilities, and transportation authorities should maintain and improve public works, public facilities and services and transportation services and systems to enhance and ensure a favorable environment in which to conduct business.

The existence of basic infrastructure (water, sewer, gas, electric, roads, et cetera) is a benefit for many businesses looking to expand or to locate new facilities. The city has an excellent infrastructure in place, and these positive selling points should be promoted. Since not all elements of the infrastructure are under the jurisdiction of local government, the City should continue to build partnerships to encourage the provision and maintenance of basic support systems. For example, the City should work with the County and transportation agencies to obtain adequate funding for high priority transportation and transit improvements.

The ability for workers to travel to jobs is also an important component of economic development. Commuting to the suburban workplace is essential for many city residents, and lower-income individuals often lack personal vehicles. Therefore, the Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA), possibly in coordination with suburban businesses, should estab-

lish commuter routes from urban residential areas to suburban employment centers. Furthermore, the RRTA should expand its evening transit services to allow employees on varied work shifts to utilize mass transit and should continually re-evaluate the suitability of its fixed routes for commuter travel.

3. The City should promote a positive business climate and improve its responsiveness to the needs of businesses.

Because of the population density and age of buildings, the City devotes special attention to regulations governing safety issues, such as fire and construction. At times, the attention to regulatory detail may appear excessive or over-rigorous, leading to a perception by developers and businesses that the City is "anti-business." The City should promote a philosophy of cooperation with private individuals. The philosophy should be practiced by every City employee and achieved

through the training of City personnel. The Zoning and Building code staff should work with the Economic Development staff to ensure that businesses are aware of the technical assistance available to them.

The City should also look to other public entities, such as the State Department of Envi-

ronmental Resources and the County Planning Commission, to reduce overlapping development reviews and permit application processes that impede business formation and expansion.

An element of the economic environment includes the types of economic development as-

sistance available to local businesses. In order to retain and improve this aspect of economic development, the City should continue to explore new financial assistance programs, update and refine existing programs and seek outside funding sources to leverage local funds.

POLICY GOAL: To increase the tax base in order to allow the City to provide services and infrastructure and to be competitive in attracting new businesses and retaining existing businesses. The City should position itself for growth.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The City and business community should work together to increase assessed valuation.

The City should seek to increase the assessed valuation through rehabilitation and, where appropriate, new construction. By increasing the assessed valuation, the City will be able to continue the 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.

2. The City and the County Board of Assessment should carefully examine any requests for tax exempt status by non-profit organizations to ensure that they meet the criteria for exemption under Pennsylvania law.

Twenty-five percent of the

properties in the city are tax-exempt. This situation places a burden on tax-paying property owners, who must cover the costs of services provided to tax-exempt facilities that serve the entire county. This issue must be aggressively addressed to rectify inequitable taxation. The City should support the State-sponsored municipal service tax for nonprofits with tax-exempt status.

3. The State should be encouraged to change its formula for funding local school districts to include increased enrollment and the percent of tax-exempt properties in the district as factors.

Businesses and industries must pay school district taxes. The School District of Lancaster tax is the highest in Lancaster County, primarily due to the local tax base, the State funding allocation method, and the mandated requirements for special services.

This tax is a disincentive for businesses and industries to locate and remain in the city. If the State addresses this inequality, property owners in the School District may experience some relief from their tax burden.

4. The City should identify sources of revenue other than the property tax to improve its capability to provide basic services to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens.

Past State attempts to institute tax reform have been unsuccessful, and cities throughout the Commonwealth continue to be burdened by increasing municipal costs and declining general revenues. New sources of general fund revenue must be identified, such as enterprise funds (administrative fees for basic services, such as water or waste collection), activity permit fees, or two-tier taxing systems.

POLICY GOAL: To strengthen Lancaster City's image as the cultural hub of Lancaster County and create a vibrant, healthy downtown.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The Downtown Investment District (DID), City, and Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry should promote, support and recommend actions which will encourage workers, shoppers and tourists to remain in the downtown.

The DID was created in September, 1991. The City encourages and continues to support the DID through the contribution of services and technical assistance. The City should continue to support the various programs of the DID, such as public safety, parking, special events, et cetera. The City and the DID should encourage sidewalk activity, such as vendors and outdoor cafes. Amenities such as these will attract and retain downtown office workers. The City, Chamber and DID should also promote and encourage support of major downtown cultural centers, such as the County Library and the Fulton Opera House.

The City and DID should address the real and perceived issues of public safety. The concern for public safety pre-

vents many individuals from enjoying the amenities that exist in the downtown. The City should encourage moderate- to upper-income housing downtown, which will, in turn, encourage activity after 5:00 p.m.

Activity at the Downtown Visitors' Center in the Southern Market Center has steadily increased over the last five years to a yearly rate of 70,000 visitors. Because of this volume, it is important for the City to encourage its use and availability. The City, in cooperation with other economic development players, such as the Chamber and Pennsylvania Dutch Visitors Bureau, should seek funding to allow the Downtown Visitors' Center to stay open after 5:00 p.m. and on Sundays. In addition, the staff and volunteers at the Visitors' Center should be well informed about the many positive activities occurring in the downtown and should encourage tourists to remain in the city.

2. City and County government, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the DID should work

together to increase the accessibility of downtown, decrease traffic congestion and improve the availability of convenient, accessible parking.

The City of Lancaster, County of Lancaster, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and DID should strongly advocate the use of mass transit. The City, Chamber and DID should encourage downtown employers to provide mass transit passes instead of free parking. The RRTA should establish "Bus Transfer Areas" off the main streets and promote the expansion of Park and Ride sites. The City should encourage the Chamber's efforts to promote carpooling.

The Parking Authority and the City should consider suggestions, such as those presented by the DID, to address the perception of a lack of accessible, convenient parking for shoppers and tourists. The City should weigh the pros and cons of subsidizing development projects that include parking lots which are in direct competition with the Parking Author-

ity garages. A business total receipt tax for parking lots should be investigated to keep a level playing field for the Parking Authority.

The City should also consider offering incentives or loan programs to assist businesses in making downtown properties comply with the American with Disabilities Act. By doing this, the City will be more accessible to persons with disabilities.

3. The City should promote the historical and cultural character of Lancaster.

The City of Lancaster has an historic charm contributing to its physical attractiveness to business owners, shoppers, tourists and residents. Property owners who rehabilitate historic structures may be eligible for Historic Tax credits; therefore, the City should investigate the feasibility of designating the downtown as a National Register Historic District or a local Historic District in order to provide financial incentives and increase property values.

The City should generally discourage the demolition of older structures; however, the proposed demolition of older structures should be weighed against the benefits of economic development.

The city is often referred to as the hub of the county in terms of social and cultural events. In order to remain as the hub, the City should promote the activities of the Cultural Council and advocate for an expansion of its efforts in order to enhance and coordinate cultural opportunities. The Cultural Council should encourage developers, marketers and promoters to sponsor cultural events throughout the City of Lancaster, such as the Celebration of Cultures, and the Core States Bike Race.

4. For the city to be the cultural hub of Lancaster County, appropriate facilities must be located in the downtown. The City, business, and cultural community should review downtown facilities to ensure that Lancaster

will serve in this role.

A number of significant cultural facilities exist in the downtown, for example, the Fulton Opera House, the Pennsylvania School of Art and Design, the Pennsylvania Academy of Music, and the Community Gallery.

In order to strengthen the position of the downtown as the civic/cultural/arts center, other facilities may be needed. Major obstacles to the creation of new centers or expansion of existing ones are (1) the availability of space, (2) capital costs, and (3) ongoing operating costs. Many cultural facilities are nonprofit and dependent on private donations and occasional government grants. The Lancaster business community traditionally has been generous in its support of cultural/arts programs, and the City has provided financial support within budget constraints. This support should continue in order to strengthen the city's position as the cultural hub of the county.



POLICY GOAL: To increase the availability and quality of employment skills and training for Lancaster City residents.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The City should work in cooperation with employment training organizations to encourage the provision of adequate employment training opportunities to city residents.

The City should work toward this goal by supporting the formation of a consortium between existing job training agencies, vocational-technical schools, the School District of Lancaster, and employers to avoid duplication of effort and ensure that the training provided will suit the needs of area employers.

Stevens State School of Technology also plays a major role in the provision of technical training. The City should continue and expand its interaction with this organization to ensure that technical training is available.

2. The Lancaster community should carefully explore the feasibility of a locally controlled community college.

Harrisburg Area Community College has a branch located in Lancaster. Although city residents have access to this facility, there is no assurance that the curriculum will serve the needs of local residents. A locally controlled community and technical college will ensure the adequate provision of employment training opportunities to serve local business needs and will be sensitive to the local population, such as persons of diverse cultural backgrounds, single parents, and older students. A locally controlled community college would be an asset to the community and would provide non-traditional students with accessible, affordable opportunities

to further their economic status. The 1993 draft *Feasibility Study for a Lancaster County Community College*, prepared for the Lancaster County Foundation Community College Study Project Steering Committee by Leah P. Young & Associates, concluded that "Lancaster County should establish a County based community college." The study identified the need for greater technical and related work force training in Lancaster County in order for the County to compete successfully with state and global economies. The establishment of a Lancaster County Community College is viewed as a key element of an economic development strategy focused on preparing youths and adults for current and future jobs.

VI. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Lancaster City is viewed by many as a successful small city. When addressing a local audience in April 1993 as a guest speaker for one of the *New Comprehensive Plan* Public Forums, Mr. John Feingold, Director of the New York Regional Plan Association, stated that Lancaster City is where many other communities would like to be. Visitors to Lancaster from other metropolitan areas have commented on the attractiveness of the city and its sense of community. Many city residents have indicated satisfaction with their immediate neighbors and neighborhoods and have identified the strong sense of community involve-

ment and volunteerism as factors contributing to Lancaster's success.

The future success of the City of Lancaster depends largely on the community's efforts to ensure that its human environment remains healthy and on its ability to deal in a holistic manner with major critical issues identified as priority concerns by its citizens and service providers. A holistic approach to the human environment means addressing issues of safety, neighborhood revitalization, human services planning and delivery systems, a nurturing environment for children and youth, minority access to and involvement in

the mainstream, opportunities for life-long learning, health care, and support systems for elderly and disabled persons.

Positive Attitude

A positive attitude about the future of the City of Lancaster is the single most important ingredient for the successful future of the city. Setting the right "tone" in addressing problems in the human environment means believing that problems can be identified, analyzed and solved and that good citizenship and citizens working together for a better city can make a difference. The right tone also requires everyone to accept responsibility rather than assigning fault and to understand the message of the Human Environment Task Force: "The Human Environment: Everybody's Business."

Changing Population

The population of the City of Lancaster is changing. Some of these changes are positive, such as our increasing cultural diversity, the strengthening of neighborhoods, the growing involvement of people of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds in civic affairs, and the community-wide sensitivity to human needs. Other changes are not positive: increasing poverty and homeless-



The future of Lancaster's neighborhoods and children are two primary concerns of Lancaster's citizenry.

ness, growing domestic violence, youth violence, drug and substance abuse and related crime, increasing teen pregnancy and single-parent households, and reduced readiness for skilled and professional jobs and for the responsibilities of adulthood and good citizenship.

The quality of the human environment determines the overall quality of life for individuals as well as the community as a whole. The accessibility and effectiveness of human services have significant impacts on the quality of the human environment for many individuals.

Human Services

Included under the umbrella of "human services" are the traditional nonprofit and governmental agencies providing family and personal counseling; public and private educational institutions and agencies; recreation agencies; medical service providers; family and individual care providers; churches; community service organizations; and for-profit counseling and human service agencies. Although human services are available for the various segments of the population, a number of obstacles impede the effective delivery of human services to all individuals in need of assistance; among them are (1) overburdened human service providers, (2) inadequate funding to support the services needed to meet the demand, (3) inadequate coordination of services, and (4) in-

ability of individuals to obtain needed services because of cost, accessibility, and/or lack of awareness of available services.

City's Role

The City of Lancaster, unlike the County of Lancaster, has not been a traditional provider of human services. The City's involvement has been limited primarily to the funding of human services as part of its annual Community Development Block Grant Program and to the partial funding of educational and recreational agencies through its General Fund Budget. Because the City does not have substantial funds for the support of human services, its primary roles have been to be an active participant in larger community planning efforts, such as the Strategic Plan of the School District of Lancaster and the Youth Services Institute, and to be an advocate for its citizens in order to ensure that the special needs of city residents are being addressed by county-wide human service providers.

The future role of the City has been clearly stated by the Human Environment Task Force in its final Task Force Report: "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 en-

vironment which affect the City." With improved human services, the City and its citizens can make a strong commitment to creating a human environment that promises a strong future for Lancaster City.

The *Policy Plan* of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan contains broad policies to address the human service needs of all county residents; these policies should be supported and acted upon by human service providers. However, human services are only one component of the human environment, and other elements impact the quality of life. Therefore, in addition to endorsing the County's human services recommendations, the City's *Policy Plan* recommends specific policies to address other elements of the human environment that are of concern to city residents and service providers.

Positive Environment

In order to foster a positive human environment in the City of Lancaster, the community must create 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, and (5) recognizes and challenges leaders to make alliances and overcome barriers to better services. The policies contained herein,

which reflect the priority concerns of the citizens of Lancaster, will serve as a guide for intervention by local government, public and private agencies and citizens in order to create the climate needed for a healthy human environment.

POLICY GOAL: To ensure that all residents in need of support services receive necessary assistance.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. County-wide opportunities and services should be equally available to all residents of the city.

Problems in the human environment are best approached through aggressive collaboration with agencies, units of government, neighborhoods, families and citizens. The City cannot “go it alone” on any issue. The City should participate in the county-wide human services planning process to ensure that city residents are adequately served by public and private service providers. Because the city has more affordable housing than any other municipality in Lancaster County, it has the greatest concentration of families and individuals in need of support services. As a result of this concentration, numerous human service agencies are located within Lancaster. The City, in its role of convener, facilitator and catalyst, should support the coordination of human service agencies in order to avoid duplication of services. The City also should promote the use of volunteers and advocate proper funding levels for high priority human service needs. The County, with support from the

City, should promote the fair distribution of employment and housing for all income groups throughout Lancaster County. Seeking ways to promote alliances, collaboration and partnerships 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.

2. Policies and programs that will ensure accessible and affordable health care for all residents, particularly children and youth, disabled persons and senior citizens, should be promoted.

The inaccessibility and unaffordability of health care for millions of Americans has caused this issue to be a high priority on the national agenda. Locally, children and youth who are dependent on their parents for proper health care, unemployed and underemployed individuals with little or no health insurance, senior citizens on fixed incomes with no or inadequate supplemental health

insurance, and persons who lack mobility and are unable to travel to health care facilities are all potential at-risk individuals. While serious illnesses, e.g., heart disease, cancer, diabetes, have been long-term, widespread health problems, certain illnesses have surfaced as new priorities because of the alarming rate of occurrence and the high rate of fatality or disability, e.g., HIV/AIDS, drug addiction, lead poisoning and breast cancer. Community efforts to reduce the incidences of these illnesses, through public education, preventative and early detection measures, and proper treatment should increase. Coordination among major health care providers and smaller, private health practitioners should occur on an ongoing basis to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of health services.

3. The community should promote a supportive environment for senior citizens and disabled persons.

Senior citizens are a great community resource. Many retirees are active community and neighborhood leaders and vol-

unteers; they also often are long-term homeowners and offer stability to neighborhoods. While many senior citizens are fortunate to be healthy and financially secure, many others suffer from failing health, inadequate financial resources to satisfy basic needs and to maintain their homes, and isolation. While there are excellent support services for senior citizens, provided by the Lancaster County Office of Aging, the Lancaster Recreation Commission Happy Hours Program, the Red Rose Access Program (formerly the Lancaster Integrated Services Transportation System), local churches, the City

of Lancaster Housing Rehabilitation Program, and the Lancaster Housing Authority, among others, many senior citizens remain at-risk. Existing efforts to improve the quality of life for senior citizens should continue. In addition to the traditional support services, other efforts should be considered, such as the employment of senior citizens by local businesses and the review of City zoning regulations in regard to impact on elderly homeowners. Twenty years from now, the "War Babies" will be senior citizens, and policies adopted now will impact the growing ranks of senior citizens.

Persons with disabilities are faced with many obstacles to a satisfactory quality of life. Employment, housing, transportation, and social and recreational activities, aspects of life that most people take for granted, often are major hurdles for disabled persons. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has caused the public sector and many members of the private sector to examine their facilities, hiring practices and programs to assure the removal of barriers for persons with disabilities. Compliance with the provisions of the ADA should be a high priority for the Lancaster community.

POLICY GOAL: To strengthen the nurturing environment for children and youth in order to create a bright future for them.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1. The City should participate meaningfully and aggressively in partnerships and alliances with the social service network, especially county and city school systems, in order to promote appropriate services for youth which are accessible and well-focused on the needs of children and their families.**

The children of Lancaster are the future of the city. Children look to adults for leadership, encouragement, and role models; and most children, with the proper nurturing and guidance, will contribute to the success of Lancaster.

For many children in Lancaster County the future appears quite dim. As pointed out by the Human Environment Task Force, a recent report of the United Way of Lancaster County's Children's Forum, entitled, *Our Village—Our Children*, listed "alarming statistics" for the incidence of children living in deep poverty, teen pregnancy, occurrence of infant and neonatal deaths, rates of child abuse and child sexual

abuse, and incidence of children ages 12 and under living in homes with one or more addicted parents. The Task Force also noted that while advocacy for children is conducted by approximately 30 groups in Lancaster, action on behalf of children is weak and lacks effective coordination. In spite of the many programs and services for young people, children and youth continue to "fall through the cracks" and to lack proper nurturing, shelter, medical care, and guidance.

The Lancaster community should take the position that children are our highest priority and our best resource with regard to our future. Policies which promote innovative approaches to a better environment for children should be advocated, with a special emphasis on early intervention for at-risk children before problems arise. At the May 1993 National Forum on Preventing Crime and Violence, held in Washington, D.C., U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno advocated a national agenda for children, beginning with prenatal care and "lots of love for newborns," followed by proper

child care, preventive medical care and early education during the first, formative three years of life.

Recent efforts to coordinate services and develop partnerships among youth-serving agencies, such as the Youth Services Institute, must continue. As convener, facilitator and advocate, the City must continue to actively participate in community planning efforts, with special emphasis on the county and city school systems, and to assist agencies in obtaining funds for programs to serve at-risk children and youth. The business community also should work to improve the environment for youth, such as by providing employment and training opportunities and serving as role models. Special emphasis by youth-serving agencies should be focused on young families and improving parenting skills, ensuring proper health care and promoting better school readiness.

2. Constructive activities for youth should be promoted and enhanced.

Recreation-oriented agencies should strive to increase the

general community awareness of their programs and to offer free or low-cost recreational opportunities for young people. School-based activities should be continued and enhanced.

Additional activities for older youth, which emphasize adult leadership and role models, should be provided.



Whether it be an after-school pickup basketball game or a summer playground program run by the Lancaster Recreation Commission, Lancaster's parks provide constructive activities for Lancaster's young.

POLICY GOAL: To ensure that people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds participate in the planning and decision-making process.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The community at large should promote the interaction and collaboration of persons of diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds in order to ensure that all residents of Lancaster participate equally in the common goal of improving the quality of life.

The City of Lancaster has experienced rapid social change within the last two decades. As the most culturally diverse of Lancaster County's 60 municipalities, Lancaster City has celebrated this diversity with annual festivals, exhibits, and community dinner meetings. During the early neighborhood meeting phase of the *New Comprehensive Plan*, the city's cultural diversity ranked as one of the top ten positive features of the community. Unfortunately, racism, discrimination and intolerance continue. The County of Lancaster, the City of Lancaster, the School District of Lancaster, and the Conestoga Valley and Lampeter-Strasburg School Districts (serving eastern Lancaster City)

should assume lead roles in facilitating special events, cultural understanding workshops, citizen involvement, and equal opportunity in employment, housing and services for all persons. Positive interaction among children and youth of all social, ethnic and economic backgrounds should be a priority. Furthermore, persons of diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds should become active citizen participants in community affairs and should identify common goals and beliefs in order to work together to improve the quality of life.

2. The City should facilitate the use of structured neighborhood forums and mediation in order to promote greater understanding and resolve conflicts in neighborhoods with diverse populations.

As the city's neighborhoods experience increasing racial, ethnic and economic diversity, the need for understanding, positive interaction and cooperation among neighbors also

increases. The City should encourage the Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods and other neighborhood organizations to ensure that all residents of a neighborhood interact with each other in a positive, supportive manner.

3. All government agencies, public and private human service organizations, and local businesses should have deliberate policies to promote the selection, hiring and training of a workforce which reflects the community they serve.

In order for persons of diverse cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds to participate fully in the community and in decision-making processes, they must be equal participants in the economic structure of the community. An often-heard phrase is, "The best solution for social problems is a good job." When individuals of diverse backgrounds are well represented at all levels in the workforce, they serve as encouragement for others to en-

ter the “mainstream” and help to break down social barriers caused by ignorance. Reducing the widening gap in income

and wages between groups in the city through hiring practices, job training, education and support services, e.g., day

care, should be a priority for all employers, educators, and job-related service providers.

POLICY GOAL: To promote education for residents so that they can handle the demands of the workplace and the demands of good citizenship.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. The community and its educators should ensure that all students have the skills necessary for the workforce or for post-graduate education/training upon graduation.

The overburdening of the American public education system has received national attention. The public educational system is being overloaded with children with special needs, e.g., children from homes with alcoholism and drug abuse or children with severe behavioral disorders; and public schools must supplement basic education with special services, putting pressure on limited resources. Our country's inability to compete successfully in the world marketplace has been attributed to the difficulties faced by the educational system. The great debate over Outcome Based Education, i.e., whether children should reach a required level of achievement in order to graduate or simply attend school for a minimum amount of time, reflects the widespread confusion over the role of pub-

lic education. Employers complain about the inadequate skills of the work force. High drop-out rates, particularly among Black and Hispanic youths, adult illiteracy, lack of technical and specialized skills, and inadequate basic work behavior are significant problems. The School District of Lancaster should focus efforts on the following: (1) strengthening early childhood education and intervention, (2) ensuring that each child achieves a minimum level of education and skills necessary to become responsible citizens and productive workers; (3) strengthening programs for gifted students, (4) promoting active involvement of parents in their children's education, (5) facilitating the school-to-work transition for youths through mentoring, job shadowing or other programs; and (6) continuing its special assistance programs addressing obstacles to effective learning, such as the Drop-out Prevention Program and Homeless Student Task Force.

2. The Lancaster-Lebanon Literacy Council, public and private schools, the

business community, human service providers, and community groups should increase efforts to support basic adult literacy and proficiency in English.

Adult illiteracy and language barriers present major obstacles to successful lives for many persons. Many adults with literacy problems are not equipped to participate successfully in job training and adult education programs and are unable to attain higher levels of employment. Current literacy programs should be strengthened, and citizens should volunteer as literacy and English tutors.

3. The education community, employers, and the County of Lancaster should provide opportunities for life-long learning to enable individuals to improve their skill levels so that they can meet the demands of the increasingly competitive economy and handle the responsibilities of adulthood and citizenship.

Many opportunities for adult education exist in Lancaster County, although cost, accessibility, and family responsibilities present obstacles to many individuals. Employers should increase on-the-job training opportunities for new

employees and job retraining and skill upgrading for existing employees. The education community should ensure the availability of programs and courses that are relevant to real job needs and are affordable and accessible. The Lancaster

County Library should be viewed as an integral part of the educational system of the community and a major player in life-long learning, as well as children's education, adult literacy, and business and job development. Support of its programs should continue.

VII. PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is the number one concern of city residents. The increase in crime, more than any other single factor, has had a major impact on people's perception about the quality of life in Lancaster. Realtors have reported that the perception of crime has discouraged potential homeowners from buying city property. The perception of crime also has caused fear on the part of suburban dwellers driving into the city for their jobs and has discouraged downtown shopping by non-city residents.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 1992 *Uniform Crime Report* lists Crime Index Rates for the State's 15 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (areas composed of one county or a group of counties with at least one core city and meeting criteria established by the U.S. Census Bureau). The crime rate is the number of offenses per 100,000 persons, and the Crime Index offenses include murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, lar-

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| Harrisburg | 10,482.7 |
| Pittsburgh | 8,342.8 |
| Reading | 8,298.8 |
| Lancaster | 8,281.2 |
| York | 8,016.9 |
| Philadelphia | 6,114.7 |

Top six MSA core city crime index rates for 1992.

ceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (known as Part I offenses).

Perceptions of Safety

Perceptions of public safety are affected by the incidence of crime against persons versus property. The comparison of third class cities and their actual reported offenses, as shown below, reveals some notable differences.

While Lancaster City may be comparable to other medium-size Pennsylvania cities, a comparison with other Lancaster County municipalities indicates a much higher incidence of crime within the city than within our neighbor-

ing municipalities: Lancaster City's 1992 Crime Index rate of 8,281.2 was substantially higher than the Suburban Rate of 2,397.6. Youth-related crime, particularly acts of violence involving weapons and car theft and vandalism, increased dramatically in the city and in other Lancaster County municipalities. According to the 1992 Annual Report of the Lancaster County Office of Juvenile Probation and Parole, juveniles committed more rapes, robberies, assaults and other violent crimes in Lancaster County in 1992 than ever before, and 43.8 percent of the county's juvenile crime arrests were in the city.

| City | Pop. | Murder | Rape | Robbery | Burglery | Larceny | Vehicle |
|------------|--------|--------|------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| Harrisburg | 52,725 | 11 | 73 | 556 | 1,352 | 2,386 | 652 |
| Reading | 78,903 | 8 | 62 | 541 | 1,495 | 3,531 | 549 |
| Lancaster | 55,922 | 4 | 36 | 195 | 965 | 2,884 | 389 |
| York | 42,473 | 6 | 48 | 178 | 683 | 2,185 | 171 |

Drug-Related Crime

By far the most serious problem facing Lancaster, according to residents who participated in neighborhood meetings throughout the city, is the increase in crime, and particularly drug-related crime. Many people expressed fear about night-time walking in the city, when at one time they felt safe. The plea for more foot patrols and police officers on horses and bicycles as well as faster police response to calls was heard in all areas of the city. Many people also stated that

perception has a lot to do with attitudes; and while crime is a problem, the entire city is not as dangerous as the media may cause some people, especially non-city residents, to think.

Vandalism and theft, more than crimes against persons, were widespread concerns, with car theft and vandalism being reported as common occurrences. The growing presence of gangs and youth-related violence caused a number of residents to consider moving from their neighborhoods. Most residents, however, reported feeling safe in their immediate

neighborhoods and had little concern about taking early evening walks or runs.

Fire Safety

Another public safety matter of major importance to the welfare of the community is fire safety. The Bureau of Fire 1992 Annual Report listed 431 incidences of fire in 1992, a 17 percent increase over the 368 fires of 1991. Unattended cooking was a primary cause of residential fires, with maliciously set fires, children, smoking, and poorly maintained and malfunctioning electrical equip-



Lancaster's professional firefighters are trained to handle all kinds of emergency situations. Here, they extract a motorist from an overturned car.

A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

ment cited as other major causes. Nonexistent and non-working smoke detectors are a serious concern, and the Fire Marshals' ongoing education and inspection activities stress the importance of functioning smoke detectors in every city residence.

In addition to fire suppression services, the Fire Bureau responds to hazardous materials incidences and has the lead responsibility in cleanup operations. The general citizen satisfaction with the City's quality and level of fire prevention/

suppression service was evident by the lack of any expression of concern regarding the incidence of fire or the adequacy of services during the neighborhood and Task Force meetings.

Other Public Safety Matters

Other public safety matters that were addressed by citizens include adequate street lighting in alleys and high crime areas, speeding drivers, poor visibility at intersections

caused by vans and trucks parking near corners, and housing code enforcement.

The Human Environment Task Force listed "Insuring public safety" as the number one issue of the five human environment issues it considered and stressed that the issues must be resolved so that Lancaster continues to be an attractive place to live and work. In addition to the Task Force recommendations, other policy recommendations have emerged as priority concerns from the neighborhood meetings and interview process.

POLICY GOAL: To ensure overall public safety for all citizens.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Community policing, 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, should be continued and expanded.**

In response to widespread citizen concern about public safety and the desire for more police visibility, community policing was instituted in Lancaster City in 1992. This program has been well received by neighborhood residents, and positive interaction with neighborhood adults and children has occurred. More than the dispersal of police officers into neighborhood substations, community policing is a means for mutual understanding between police officers and the citizens they serve. Changes in police recruitment and selection methods, so that police officers reflect the community in race and ethnicity, and ongoing police training to promote positive attitudes and to assist officers in analyzing and solving neighborhood problems, should occur in order to en-

hance the growing alliance between the community and the police.

- 2. Citizen groups, governmental officials, the judicial system, civic leaders and average citizens must all take responsibility for setting a tone that crime is not tolerated anywhere in Lancaster.**

Public safety is the most pressing concern of the citizens of Lancaster and is a precondition for a successful city. The issues of crime, drugs, police protection, and personal and property safety have the greatest impact on the perception of public safety and the desirability of Lancaster as a place to live, work and shop. Many residents participating in neighborhood meetings acknowledged that the perception of crime is worse than the actual incidence of criminal behavior. Public safety requires more than a certain number of police officers; it requires an enhanced degree of citizen and community responsibility. The City should strengthen its relationship with the County court system in or-

der to assure appropriate punishment of criminal behavior as a deterrent to crime. The Police Bureau should continue and expand its training of private citizens and citizen groups in crime prevention techniques. Lancaster must say collectively that crime is not tolerated in this community.

- 3. The Lancaster community should identify and promote policies and programs which effectively address domestic violence against women, senior citizens, and children.**

Personal safety, or safety in the home, is a serious community concern. Domestic violence and child abuse are increasing occurrences, with approximately 40 percent of police time devoted to incidences of domestic and child abuse. Abuse of elderly persons in their homes is often unreported but is a serious problem identified by the Office of Aging. Education and awareness are priorities in combatting domestic violence. Schools and religious organizations should increase programs to teach good

parenting skills. Employers should assure that employee assistance programs address domestic violence. Block groups should look out for the welfare of elderly neighbors. Finally, state laws and judicial procedures related to domestic violence should be evaluated and changed if necessary to enable improved enforcement and to provide greater protection for victims of abuse.

4. The City should increase fire prevention efforts through education and improved fire codes and enforcement.

While the Fire Bureau has an active public school fire safety education program, Fire Marshals should aggressively

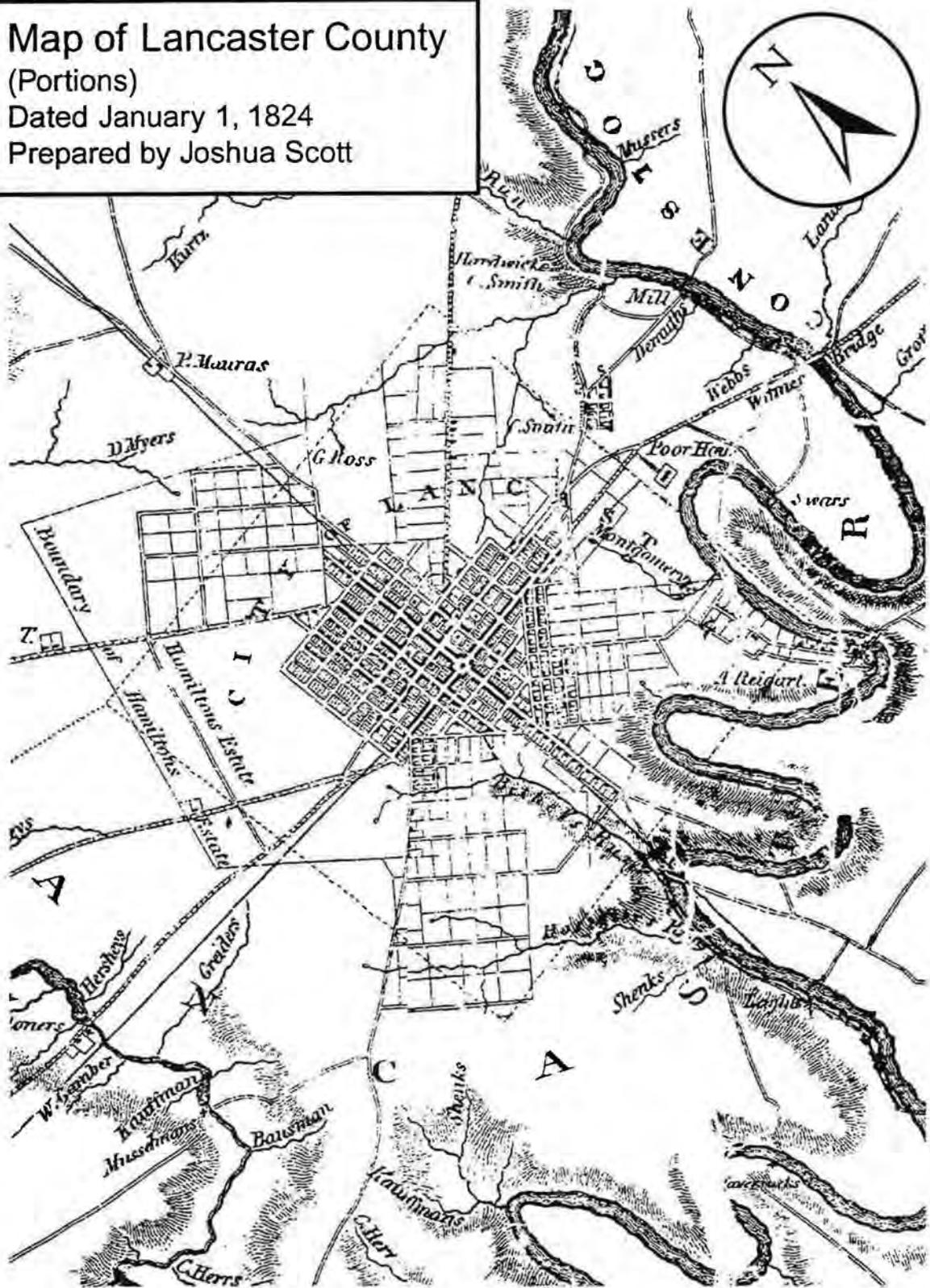
reach out to neighborhood groups through the Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods and should conduct small workshops at evening block meetings. The Fire Bureau should continue its speaking engagements before other community groups, such as the Real Estate Investors of Lancaster, public school parent-teacher organizations, neighborhood-based church groups, and tenant associations. In order to reduce structural fires, developers should be encouraged to install sprinkler systems in all new and substantially rehabilitated residential and nonresidential structures.

5. PP&L and/or the City should increase street lighting in areas where

neighbors have expressed concern about the inadequacy of the lighting.

Adequate street lighting contributes to a neighborhood's sense of security, impedes vandalism and other criminal behavior, and increases pedestrian safety. Public street lighting is a general tax expense; however, public safety is one of the primary responsibilities of local government. Where neighbors desire more lighting in common alleys, which are the responsibility of private property owners, organized block groups should make direct arrangements with PP&L for the installation and payment of the increased lighting.

Map of Lancaster County
(Portions)
Dated January 1, 1824
Prepared by Joshua Scott



A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

VIII. LAND USE

Settlement by Europeans in the area of Lancaster City occurred by approximately 1718. While largely a trading town in early times, Lancaster soon became a prominent inland center of commerce and civic activity. In 1744 a treaty between the six Native American nations and the Governors of Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland was signed in Lancaster relating to the purchase of lands. Lancaster was incorporated as a borough in 1742, and by 1754 the town had 500 houses and 2,000 inhabitants. From 1790 to 1812 Lancaster was the seat of State Government and the residence of its governors. In 1818, it was incorporated as a City.

By 1875 the original four square mile area of the city was 50 percent developed. The 1875 Atlas of Lancaster County by Everts and Stewart indicated that Lancaster had ten banks, four public libraries, six cemeteries, six cotton mills, six machine shops for the manufacture of railroad and stationary engines, boilers, castings, bolts, et cetera, twelve tailoring and clothing establishments, ten drug stores, seven watch and jewelry establishments, six hardware stores, two public markets, numerous other shops and services, Franklin and Marshall College, prominent railroad facilities, and street car (public transporta-

tion) lines within the city and to outlying communities.

Historical Land Use

An historical review of land use development patterns in Lancaster reveals a retail and service center core with mixed residential, commercial and manufacturing uses located along major roads and rail lines. While some land uses were located next to natural resources, e.g., clay pits for bricks or water for grain mills, other uses were close to labor pools or near other supportive services. As Lancaster progressed during the Industrial Revolution, it experienced problems associated with uncontrolled growth, conflicts between land uses, and the need to develop a public infrastructure capable of meeting the demands of residents and businesses.

The primary public tool for regulating the use of buildings and land and the height, bulk and location of structures is the zoning ordinance. New York City adopted the nation's first zoning ordinance in 1916 in order to regulate land uses, building height, and lot sizes. New York's law was adopted at a time when there was growing national interest in regulating land development. During the period between 1910 and 1930, mayors, councilmen, and civic leaders throughout the country realized that municipi-

pal governments were responsible for guiding the physical development of their communities. This national interest led to the federal 1928 Standard City Planning Enabling Act, which provided for local government adoption of a master plan for the physical development of the municipality and for a "zoning plan for the control of the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises."

Lancaster's Previous Comprehensive Plans

The City of Lancaster joined this national planning movement with the adoption of its first comprehensive plan in 1929, prepared by national planning expert John Nolen. However, the City did not adopt its first zoning ordinance until 1948, in accordance with the recommendation of its second comprehensive plan, the 1945 Baker Plan. By this time, the bulk of the city already had been developed in a manner which integrated residential, commercial and industrial uses.

By 1943 Lancaster was fully three quarters developed. From 1947 through 1967 the City annexed 2,097 acres (3.27 square miles), which included the sites of major industries such as Armstrong Cork Company, Schick and RCA as well as areas now dedicated as park land, including Long's Park,

the former Williamson and Kiwanis Parks (now part of Lancaster County Central Park) and Conestoga Pines. With the annexations came new vacant land, which allowed for continued commercial and residential growth.

According to the City's 1968 *Land Use Plan*, Lancaster had a total of 1,075 acres of vacant land, 500 acres of which had been committed to development. In 1988 an extensive parcel-by-parcel survey of all land uses was conducted by City staff. The results were updated in 1993 and indicated that there were approximately 300 acres of vacant land remaining, of which 160 acres were committed to development. Of the 300 acres, 176 acres were zoned residential, 14 acres commercial and 110 acres industrial.

| Land Use | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 1968 | 1988 | 1993 |
| Residential | 23.8% | 34.8% | 37.8% |
| Commercial | 2.9% | 5.0% | 5.1% |
| Public/Semi Public | 14.7% | 17.0% | 17.0% |
| Transportation | 24.0% | 26.0% | 26.0% |
| Industrial | 11.2% | 10.0% | 10.3% |
| Water | 0.8% | 0.8% | 0.8% |
| Vacant | 22.6% | 6.4% | 3.0% |

The 140 acres of uncommitted lands consisted primarily of small scattered sites of less than three acres in size. In addition, many of the sites contained physical or environmental features that made them physically or economically impractical to develop.

Future Issues

Lancaster's land use breakdown illustrates that the city will not be faced with the same growth and development issues that many other Lancaster County municipalities are experiencing. With its limited land resources, new development on vacant land will be minimal. In fact, development of all remaining vacant land could occur without generating significant impacts. While total development of vacant land is not likely to occur within the next 20 years, redevelopment and reuse of existing structures and land are likely to increase as a result of the scarcity of vacant land and the concentration of development activities within Urban Growth Boundaries.



Land use policies will help determine the future of the vacant Alcoa site, which is currently zoned for industrial uses.

POLICY GOAL: Implement land use strategies which protect and enhance the built environment and contribute to the economic and aesthetic well-being of the community.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- 1. The City should adopt Subdivision and Land Development Regulations which reflect community concerns and which serve to guide development, identify and mitigate development impacts, and enhance neighborhood character.**

The present Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance was drafted in 1979 and amended in August 1990 to reflect changes which had been made to Act 247, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (the enabling legislation for the adoption of municipal land use regulations).

In December 1992, City staff completed a draft land development ordinance which, if adopted, will set development standards into the 21st Century. Since many vacant parcels lie within developed neighborhoods and/or present physical challenges to development, flexible and innovative standards should be adopted which will enable owners to maximize the use of their land while be-

ing sensitive to the neighborhood context and the environmental characteristics of the land. An updated ordinance should also address the recreational needs of larger projects, stormwater management, traffic impacts and the desirability of landscaping along streets and within parking lots. In order to ensure that the proposed new Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance adequately addresses land development issues, an ad hoc committee, comprised of engineers, developers and interested citizens, should be formed to review the draft and make appropriate revisions.

The Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board, Historical Architectural Review Board and other public bodies should continue efforts to ensure that new "infill" projects and redevelopment/reuse of structures enhance the built environment, are compatible with neighborhood scale and character and represent development patterns which are in the best interest of the neighborhood and city in general.

- 2. The City should inform neighborhood residents of proposed development activities.**

The City should continue its policy of conducting neighborhood meetings to inform citizens of proposed rezoning and major development activity. Proposals which require Zoning Hearing Board action presently are made known to the public by legal notices, posting of the property, and notices to adjoining neighbors. While not required by law, the City posts notices on property placed on the City's Planning Commission agenda for subdivision or land development plan review.

- 3. The City should assure that utilities are involved in the land development planning process and are aware of community goals.**

Utility companies provide a variety of services to their customers and are economically tied to the local economy; therefore, they should be kept

abreast of major planning activities. Conversely, utility company improvements to existing facilities should be coordinated with local officials so as to minimize disruption of services or economic impacts upon the community. Utility representatives should also be called upon to serve on appropriate task forces with a focus on meeting community goals.

To avoid construction conflicts between utilities and to plan for rights-of-way and service locations, the City should assure utility participation in preliminary land development reviews. Pre-planning should include street lighting and locations for water, sewer, storm, electrical, gas, cable television and telephone lines.

4. The City and developers should design storm sewer controls to reduce or eliminate the need for waste water treatment.

Development of land usually results in creating impervious surfaces. Stormwater which once percolated into the ground now runs off, eventually making its way into a street where it is collected by the sewer system which, in most areas of the city, is a combined sanitary/storm sewer system. The unnecessary treatment of stormwater reduces the capacity of the waste water treatment facility to manage and treat sewer waste.

In order to accommodate the community's treatment needs through the year 2020, the City should continue its policy of managing stormwater so as to reduce the potential of flooding and to direct stormwater to groundwater recharge/detention facilities. The City should also consider requiring adjacent municipalities who use the City treatment facility to adopt similar stormwater controls.

5. The City should develop land use regulations which will allow implementation of policy objectives and community goals.

The Zoning Ordinance is the basic land use tool to regulate the location of specific land uses and the density and design of development. The Zoning Ordinance was last amended in a comprehensive fashion in 1989, although minor amendments to address community concerns occurred in 1990, 1991 and 1992. With the adoption of the *New Comprehensive Plan*, the City should undertake a citizen review process to revisit the text and suggest changes necessary which will enable the desires of the community to be realized.

In reviewing the Zoning Ordinance, attention should be given to the following areas:

- Concentrating governmental offices downtown;
- Allowing appropriate retail and service shops in commercial

areas or within neighborhoods;

- Review of permitting certain uses by "special exception" versus by "right" with specific conditions of approval;
- Establishing recreational zoning districts which support the City's Parks and Recreation Plan, including the protection of wet lands, flood plains, trails and recreational sites;
- Retaining industrial sites as industrial zones;
- Identifying potential action areas for concentrated development/redevelopment activity;
- Consideration of historic district overlays;
- Provisions to encourage home ownership and discourage conversion to multifamily housing;
- Evaluating parking requirements for all land uses;
- Considering the impacts of public parking versus private parking lots in the downtown;
- Adoption of signage regulations in harmony with those proposed by the Intermunicipal Committee;
- Revising landscaping requirements for parking lots;

-
- Adopting bonus or incentive zoning as a tool to achieve community goals or address neighborhood concerns.

6. The City should encourage the development of the Sunnyside Peninsula as a liveable community in order to accommodate the Lancaster County Growth Management Plan's targeted population increase for Lancaster City.

The area in the southeastern part of the city bordered on three sides by the Conestoga River and known as Sunnyside includes a community of single-family, detached homes, a neighborhood church, an auto parts salvage yard, a former limestone quarry and approximately 75 acres of farmland, owned by the County of Lancaster. At one time home to 135 families, Sunnyside now contains approximately 45 dwellings, the balance having been abandoned or vacated and eventually demolished because of structural deficiencies.

Sunnyside has been the subject of many planning studies. Development using a combination of traditional and “flexible” land use techniques should be encouraged so as to protect environmentally sensitive areas (flood plains, steep slopes and the former quarry site) and to create a liveable community. Development should focus on maintaining and strengthening community character through the construction of single-family dwellings according to design guidelines, the provision of supportive commercial uses and appropriate public uses, and the installation of pedestrian and family-oriented amenities.

IX. TRANSPORTATION

America's love affair with the private automobile has been well documented. The impact of the automobile on patterns of development, lifestyle, insurance and health costs, air quality, traffic congestion, parking demand, transportation planning, national, state and local economies, and governmental budget decisions has been the focus of numerous traffic studies, commentaries, reports, and plans. While most Americans view the private vehicle as the primary means of transportation, "transportation" is broadly defined by Webster as a "means of conveyance or travel from one place to another." Other means of conveyance or travel include buses, trains, aircrafts, boats, horse-drawn carriages, bicycles, and walking.

The movement of people and goods from one location to another is rarely confined to the limits of a single municipality, and the infrastructure costs of

transportation exceed the budget capabilities of local municipalities. Therefore, transportation planning and funding decisions must occur on a regional basis.

Transportation Planning

The Lancaster County Planning Commission has assumed a lead role in transportation planning in the County of Lancaster. Working closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and representatives of transportation providers, municipal representatives, and citizen interest groups, the County has developed policies to promote alternative means of transportation, encourage responsible land development patterns, improve transportation facilities, and upgrade transportation corridors.

Because transportation projects in municipalities outside the city have the potential

for significant impact on city neighborhoods and streets, City government should have input early in the planning process for any corridor improvement project that ties in with the city street system.

While the County's focus is on those transportation issues of a regional nature, Lancaster is faced with a number of transportation-related issues of major concern to city residents. During the neighborhood meeting process, citizens identified "parking" as the second most pressing city issue.

Also identified as major concerns were rush-hour traffic congestion, heavy truck traffic on downtown streets, speeding in 25 and 35 m.p.h. zones, poor visibility at intersections, and inadequate enforcement of traffic violations. The Built Environment Task Force focused its recommendations on alternatives to single-occupant vehicles and parking.

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

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. Transportation alternatives to the use of private, single-occupancy vehicles should be promoted.

One of the most effective means to reduce the use of private vehicles is to improve mass transit by making it convenient, efficient, safe and affordable. The Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA) is the key player in Lancaster County's mass transit program. While most people who rely on the bus system find it to be well run, clean, and satisfactory for their needs, many people are unable to use the bus because of their hours of employment or the locations of their homes. RRTA has actively promoted mass transit use. Its efforts should continue, and employers should institute policies to encourage employees to use the bus instead of their personal automobiles. In order to make its system more user friendly, RRTA should develop a new downtown bus terminal, informational bus stops, and more easily read maps and schedules. RRTA also should expand its services by providing transportation to accommodate employ-

ees working second and third shifts within the city and at non-city employment centers and by providing increased service to non-city housing developments and motels and convention facilities. Funding for the bus system includes passenger fares and federal, state and local subsidies, with the local subsidy being shared equally by the City and County governments. The County of Lancaster should provide a greater proportion of the local share or should assume the entire local contribution, since the

bus system is a regional service for all county residents. The RRTA Public Transportation Task Force ranked these local funding options as first and second in the October 1993 draft of their Final Report.

In addition to the bus system, train and air travel are important forms of regional mass transit with major impacts on the local economy. The County should promote the upgrading of the Lancaster Amtrak station and the improvement of other elements of the Amtrak system in order to promote in-



Transportation networks develop from the needs of the entire region, while transportation problems are felt most acutely at the local level.

creased ridership. The establishment of a light rail or high speed rail line from Philadelphia to Harrisburg with a Lancaster stop also should be explored. Furthermore, the Lancaster Airport should remain a viable feeder airport, and the development of a new Harrisburg International Regional Airport should be studied.

An effective, low-cost system to reduce congestion and parking demand in the city is car pooling for employees. The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with technical assistance from the County Planning Commission, should assume the lead role in establishing a county-wide car pooling program. Car pooling is viewed by federal transportation planners as a means to defer thousands of miles of highway construction and to save billions of dollars. Car pooling also will improve air quality by reducing the number of vehicles on the road. Therefore, employers in Lancaster should encourage and facilitate car pooling among their employees.

Other efficient means of transportation are bicycle travel and walking. The County and all municipalities, including the City, should promote development which accommodates these forms of travel and should support new bike and pedestrian trails throughout the county. Improvements such as bicycle signs along bike trails and roads, bicycle racks and

lockers, and bicycle access should be provided where feasible. Sidewalks and safe street crossings for pedestrians should be included in development plans.

Within city limits, changes in traffic patterns or construction of new streets or corridor improvements should not cause detrimental impacts on neighborhoods. The City should undertake, in conjunction with the County and with citizen input, an in-depth review of transportation characteristics and needs, including traffic flow and travel patterns, public transportation, bicycle travel and pedestrian movement. Special attention should be given to one-way streets and to transportation impacts on residential areas.

2. In order to preserve our built environment/urban context, the use of existing garage structures, as opposed to surface parking in the downtown 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 be required in order to enhance their appearance.

In 1993 Lancaster lost a number of significant historical structures as a result of parking demand. In the 1960's

the city experienced the loss of other historic and architecturally significant structures for the purpose of creating downtown parking as part of the City's Urban Renewal Program. Thirty years later the urban fabric continues to be threatened by continued dependency on the private automobile. In order to reduce the negative impact of parking lots on the built environment, the City should revise its Zoning Ordinance parking regulations to preclude commercial parking lots from certain zoning districts, to prevent parking lots along street fronts and on corners, and to require appropriate screening and internal tree planting.

In high density residential areas where no off-street parking is available, inadequate on-street parking was frequently cited as a problem during the neighborhood meeting process. Neighborhood surface parking lots should be permitted by special exception and should be located behind buildings. The City should re-evaluate its overall parking requirements for nonresidential uses to determine if they are adequate or excessive. Since many households contribute to the negative on-street parking situation in residential areas by having more than one vehicle, the City should explore methods to discourage the parking of all household vehicles on the street in high density areas. In order to create more on-street parking, the creation of angle park-

ing on wide, low traffic volume streets should be explored.

3. The Parking Authority, Downtown Investment District and City should work together in developing policies and programs to promote the use of downtown parking garages in order to stimulate business and cultural activity.

Both the Columbia University *Issues for Lancaster* and residents attending neighbor-

hood meetings acknowledged the negative perception of downtown parking. Many people object to paying for parking or believe that parking garages are unsafe. The Parking Authority, DID, and City should coordinate efforts to overcome negative perceptions about the safety and convenience of garages and to make parking a marketable, customer-oriented asset. The Parking Authority should continue to offer varied fee structures to increase garage use. In order to encourage garage use for long-

term parking, the cost of metered parking should be increased to be greater than the cost of garage parking in appropriate areas. In addition, parking fines for expired meters should be increased to be noticeably higher than one-day garage fees. While on-street parking should be metered throughout the downtown to encourage turnover parking, a number of loading areas should be designated for the discharging and picking up of persons with disabilities.

X. FACILITIES AND SERVICES

In 1730 James Hamilton laid out Lancaster, following the grid pattern with center square of the Philadelphia plan. As the new County seat, Lancaster was created to serve as a political, social and economic center; and its center square contained the Courthouse and County Jail. As the town grew, so, too, did the demands of citizens for services and regulations which could deal effectively with the issues

of the day. During its evolution from a colonial inland village, to a borough and finally a Third Class City, Lancaster has been faced with the ongoing challenge of providing facilities and services which ensure public safety, health and welfare.

Today, Lancaster supports paid and fully equipped Police and Fire Bureaus and provides a wide range of services to meet

the demands of an urban community. Each year, City government is faced with the task of allocating limited resources to fund programs, services and facilities required by the public. Lancaster's goal to maintain adequate levels of service is dependent upon the desire and ability of its citizens to fund programs which will enable the community's goals to be met.



Summertime lunch at Musser Park attracts downtown residents and employees, as well as visitors from other areas.

A New Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lancaster

POLICY GOAL: To provide needed facilities and services.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. To maintain and improve the city's parks through the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Plan for the City of Lancaster.

The 1992 Parks and Recreation Plan was developed in cooperation with citizens, neighborhood organizations and the Recreation Commission. The plan describes each of the city's park facilities and recommends actions to be taken in order to maintain or improve them.

In general, adequate neighborhood park sites exist. No major land acquisition programs are proposed, although two exceptions are noted. First, the north-central area of the city lacks a neighborhood park. If appropriate land at a reasonable cost becomes available and if park development can occur without displacing a desirable taxable business or demolishing structurally sound historic structures, the City should move to acquire the land. Secondly, lands along the Conestoga River which cannot be developed due to being flood prone should be acquired through purchase, easement restriction, donation or as a part

of a proposed land development in order to preserve a river conservation area and enable the establishment of a Conestoga River Trail system. The Plan also recommends the following actions:

- a. Develop the Northwest Corridor Park, located on the former railroad right-of-way between Harrisburg Avenue and West Lemon Street.
- b. Develop the former North Sewage Treatment Plant site as a park, possibly as a joint venture with Lancaster Township.
- c. Evaluate the relatively high maintenance costs associated with wading pools and consider alternative, less costly spray pools.
- d. Encourage County government to develop additional athletic fields in Central Park to meet local needs.
- e. Improve handicapped access to parks and recreational facilities.
- f. Develop a new Senior Center in the northeast area of the city. (The

existing center is located in a church and is not accessible to persons with disabilities.)

- g. Add more green space and plant more trees within parks. Choose appropriate landscaping with long term low maintenance costs and avoid unnecessary paving. Develop a program to encourage people to pay for the planting of individual trees in memory of individuals - utilizing small simple plaques.
- h. Beautify entrance ways to the city by promoting the Tree Planting Program and by working with the private sector to create needed landscaping. Efforts by the City and the community can create positive first impressions to visitors as well as enhancing neighborhood environments.
- i. Work with cemetery associations and investigate the use of cemeteries for passive activities through im-

proved walkways, paving, seating and security lighting.

- j. Plan for and reserve land in the northwest area for a community swimming pool.

2. The community should continue to support the County Library.

The Lancaster County Library is an important cultural institution that provides a range of services that complement the educational goals and objectives of the Lancaster community, such as promoting literacy and life-long learning. Continued financial support of the Library is necessary.

3. The City should assure that its codes and code administration encourage proper development in the city's urban environment.

The period of 1956 to 1973 resulted in the creation of many of the City's basic health, safety, and welfare regulations. These codes include building, fire, health, subdivision/land development and zoning. While the codes have been updated over time, there is a need for a comprehensive review of all development regulations in order to ensure consistency of standards. Presently, three City departments are primarily responsible for code administration: Public Works, Housing and

Community Development, and Fire. Each code has its own "code official," who applies and interprets the standards to a given circumstance or project. In addition, these codes are administered in a disjointed fashion, which can result in extended review time and conflicting requirements. To improve the present system, the City should conduct comprehensive reviews of projects in context of all codes. Furthermore, the City should undertake the following steps: (1) perform a comprehensive review of all development codes to ensure consistency, (2) consolidate the review process by regularly assembling code officials at one meeting to expedite reviews, and (3) designate a responsible codes administrator who will assure that projects are reviewed in a consistent, fair and timely manner. The designation of a key contact person who can work with developers/builders, direct questions to appropriate officials, facilitate plan approvals and guide individuals through the approval process will change the perception of how difficult it can be to obtain building or land use approvals. The City should also explore ways to make the review process more user-friendly and less bureaucratic, including increased administrative flexibility and compromise without having to resort to board or commission hearings to decide matters.

If an appeal before a board or commission is necessary, City staff should advise applicants as to the nature of the meeting process. Having to appear before an official review board can be an intimidating affair, particularly for persons with language or cultural differences. While most board and commission members are understanding of an applicant's nervousness, the room used for the hearing or the seating arrangement can create a sense of intimidation. Ways to make applicants feel more at ease should be explored in order to create a more pleasant experience for the general public.

The City of Lancaster has adopted many codes and ordinances over the years, many of which are obsolete or simply not enforced unless a complaint is received. The City should give consideration to eliminating out-dated codes or codes it does not intend to enforce. In addition, the long-standing system of "enforcement by complaint" should be re-evaluated since private citizens often are reluctant to complain about neighbors or are unaware of code violations. The staff's ability to enforce code violations that are public nuisances or create health and welfare problems should be strengthened.

In addition to the City's codes, state codes regulate development. State codes dealing with building construction, fire prevention, highway im-

provements, and environmental impacts add to the cost and length of plan review. The City should advocate changes to state code requirements, where appropriate, to address urban development.

4. The City should protect public health by assuring adequate health inspections of public facilities and the proper disposal of refuse.

Lancaster performs health inspections of all grocery stores and public/semi-public establishments where food or drink is served. The health inspector may also be called in upon discovery of unhealthy living conditions. In addition, testing is performed to assure that residents have safe drinking water and that treated water discharged into rivers meets or exceeds required bacteriological standards. The Health Bureau also is involved in the lead-based paint abatement program which focuses on homes of children with known high blood levels of lead. In addition, the Bureau investigates cases of dog biting and rabies and handles complaints of barking and stray dogs. Ensuring that the public's health is not jeopardized is an important public service and one which should be maintained. The *Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan Policy Plan* recommends that the County explore the need for and feasibility of establishing a county-wide

health department. The City's health inspector should be invited to participate in this study at its early stages.

Improper or inadequate disposal of refuse by many residents is an ongoing city problem. Under the present system of trash collection by licensed haulers, the disposal of household and commercial waste is the responsibility of the individual property owner. Lancaster currently licenses 40 haulers, with additional haulers conducting business without licenses. Residents have cited everyday trash collection as being objectionable and contributing to the city having a dirty appearance. Under the current licensed multihauler system, designated block pickup days are not possible. Additional problems with the existing system include people without a hauler accumulating trash in yards and basements, mixing their trash in with that of neighbors, or dumping it illegally on private property or along streets of the city or neighboring townships. Separation of recyclable materials from refuse destined for the landfill continues to be less than desirable.

To improve the trash/recycling collection system, the City should investigate instituting a residential contract collection system. Consideration should be given to dividing the city into multiple service areas to enable smaller hauling businesses to bid on service contracts. In addition, a weight or

volume-based billing system should be explored as a means to promote recycling and more thoughtful buying habits. Although eliminating small business opportunities for many haulers is a concern, commercial establishments and apartment complexes could continue to be served by private, independent haulers.

5. The City should assure that public buildings and facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities.

The City should continue its efforts to ensure that its public buildings and parks are accessible in accordance with the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. In addition, the City Building Official should continue reviewing all building permit applications to assure compliance with the Act.

6. The local utilities should plan for the future energy needs of the community and should place more emphasis on renewable energy sources and energy conservation.

Pennsylvania Power and Light and United Gas, Inc. are major suppliers of energy within the urbanized area. Cooperative efforts between the utilities and City should continue to assure that future energy needs and demands can be met. Impacts upon neigh-

borhood character and design consideration towards the siting of new utility facilities should be a component of utility planning. Both PP&L and UGI Utilities, Inc. should continue to promote energy conservation and should increase utilization of renewable energy sources to satisfy customer needs.

7. The City should assure that adequate water, sanitary sewer and storm water facilities are provided.

The City should implement the recommendations of its Water Strategic Growth Plan, with a focus on the transmission of water from the Susquehanna River into the distribution system. Long range planning should also identify fu-

ture water storage, capacity and pressure needs, with specific recommendations on sites and facilities needed to meet future demands.

The City should continue to provide treatment of waste water and assist businesses in meeting reasonable and achievable discharge limits as set by the Environmental Protection Agency. Innovative uses for waste by-products should also be explored, such as brick production or fuel pellets.

Storm and sanitary sewers exist as a combined system in many areas of the city. Heavy storms can and do overload the system; therefore, it is recommended that a capital improvements program be undertaken to improve upon and upgrade the sewer collection system and, where possible, separate the storm from the sanitary sys-

tem. The City should also continue to require developers to direct rain water into ground water recharge facilities and not into the sanitary sewer system.

8. Support of the City's Tree Planting Program should continue.

The citizens have frequently commented upon how important street trees are to the environment and to community character. Efforts should continue to provide street trees through the Tree Planting Program and to maintain a viable and knowledgeable arborist crew which can assist property owners in selecting appropriate trees for urban areas, recommend proper placement and care, and identify and correct hazardous conditions within or caused by trees.

XI. ENERGY CONSERVATION

The development and reshaping of man's environment is dependent on the availability, quantity, quality and cost of the energy needed to effect change. Lancaster County provides a wide variety of goods and services, all of which require the consumption of various forms and quantities of energy. In many instances, the lifestyle we choose, the type of housing we live in, our means of transportation and our shopping habits, directly impact upon how much energy we consume in any given day. In or-

der to conserve resources for future generations, Lancasterians must begin to understand how they can play a role in the conservation of energy. As consumers, we need to educate ourselves on ways to maintain or improve our quality of life through the wise use of resources. In addition, by adopting sound, cost effective energy strategies, our community can remain economically strong and globally competitive.

In order to implement energy conservation measures, Lancaster City government and

utility companies will need to assume leadership roles. Public education, neighborhood workshops and energy-efficient building standards are examples of special efforts. Actions by the City and utilities must be supplemented by involvement of the business sector, educational and other institutions, and private citizens in order to reduce energy consumption.



POLICY GOAL: To conserve energy, promote public awareness of energy issues and initiate energy saving measures.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

Residential Objectives:

1. To promote public awareness of energy conservation, Lancaster City should develop programs which focus on the benefits of energy efficient rehabilitation activities.

Information should be made available to homeowners and landlords concerning replacement doors and windows, weatherization, insulation and upgrading of heating/air conditioning systems, and energy loss through the buildings exterior. Utility companies and energy providers should also form a partnership with the City to develop additional educational materials and financial incentives to achieve conservation goals. Energy audits, which identify areas of excessive energy consumption in buildings, should be conducted as a component of building inspections and renovations in order to identify cost-effective ways to reduce energy con-

sumption.

2. Utility companies and the City should recommend energy conservation techniques which can be implemented and which preserve neighborhood character.

Energy saving techniques should be broadly considered. Conservation kits which contain such items as water flow restrictors, weather stripping and toilet tank dams could be provided at cost. For new construction, the physical orientation of the home on the lot and its proximity to utilities should be considered.

Replacement of doors and windows should be evaluated in order to determine the following: 1) cost-effectiveness, 2) feasibility of repairing existing components or damaged parts, and 3) relative efficiency and architectural appropriateness of new components. Consideration should be given to

installing or upgrading insulation when possible. Existing slate roofs and flashing should be repaired rather than replaced when possible; replacement roofing material should be of high quality so as to avoid early replacement.

3. To promote energy conservation in renter-occupied structures, the City should assist in efforts to educate landlords and tenants in order to promote energy conservation in renter-occupied structures.

Demonstration projects that identify cost effective energy conservation measures which do not result in unnecessary rent increases should be encouraged. The City should also identify possible tax incentives or grant programs offered by federal, state and local sources which focus on energy conservation initiatives.

Commercial/Civic Institutional Objective:

1. The City and utility companies should promote energy conservation measures with specific recommendations for reducing energy consumption in commercial, civic and institutional structures.

The City should promote energy audits of buildings which are undergoing modernization/rehabilitation in order to identify cost effective means of implementing energy conservation measures. City codes and land use controls should be evaluated, and amendments

establishing energy conservation standards for new construction and substantial rehabilitation should be adopted. Assistance programs in the form of federal, state or local tax credits or low-interest financing should be identified and made known to the private sector.

Industrial Objective:

1. The City and utility companies should provide information to companies which will assist them in their energy conservation efforts.

The nature and size of in-

dustries vary considerably. The common element in most industries is the use of energy to heat, light and air condition buildings. The City should provide information on architects, engineers and designers who can perform energy audits, as-

sist in operational improvements which save energy without diminishing product quality and who can suggest changes in the product or the production line which could result in energy savings.

Municipal/Educational Objective:

1. Governmental and educational institutions should develop specific recommendations which, when implemented, will result in energy conservation.

City government, in conjunction with various authorities (Water, Sewer, Parking), the School District of Lancaster, Franklin and Marshall College and private/

parochial schools, should inventory existing energy needs and identify policies or improvements which could be implemented to meet energy reduction goals. An inventory might include:

- Buildings and building systems
- Fleet management, vehicle trips, size of equipment, type of fuel used
- Use of new equipment

- and technology
- Improved land utilization, location of utilities to buildings and density
- Modifications to operations and services
- Recycling/reclamation of resources
- Identification of federal or state regulations impacting conservation measures.

Transportation Objective:

1. The City, County of Lancaster and Red Rose Transit Authority should promote development patterns and transportation programs designed to significantly reduce the amount of energy consumed by transportation in both the private and public sectors.

The City of Lancaster should continue its development patterns which promote pedestrian

versus vehicular trips. The City should promote, along with County government, the concept of "Urban Growth Boundaries," where infill development will occur, infrastructure and public transportation are in place and where services, schools and employment are within close proximity to residences. Bicycle paths and walkways should be incorporated into development and highway planning projects. Ride shar-

ing, use of mass transit and "flex time" should be considered and encouraged by employers and employees as a means of reducing energy consumption.

The Red Rose Transit Authority should continue with its efforts to promote bus usage through advertising campaigns, employee incentives, expanded bus routes and hours of operation, and easy-to-use bus stop/schedule information.

XII. INTERGOVERNMENTAL/ INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Lancaster City has historically been the hub of Lancaster County. As the urban center, Lancaster has provided a host of services and cultural activities including hospitals and medical care, library services, government offices, churches, theater, art, entertainment and commerce. The city is not an isolated community but a major provider of regional services which have benefited adjacent municipalities and their citizens.

Lancaster City is one of 60 municipalities within Lancaster County, and its children are educated by three of the county's 16 school districts. Citizens within these municipi-

palities have basic needs for services, such as fire and police protection, safe drinking water, and waste management. With the need to maintain or increase current levels of service, municipal officials are constantly evaluating local budgets and looking for ways to meet the needs of the community without having to resort to tax increases. When two or more municipalities find they are dealing with the same or similar service demand, such as providing sewer service, and are each devoting time, personnel and other resources to meeting a need, their local officials and citizens should determine if serving the demand individu-

ally or in a shared manner is the most efficient use of limited tax dollars. As needs change and service demands increase, citizens and elected officials must seek the most efficient means of meeting current needs with the resources at hand.

Because the City is not an isolated community but is an integral part of Lancaster County and is affected by policy decisions of County government and neighboring municipalities, ongoing communication, coordination and collaboration on matters related to development, municipal services, transportation and regulations are necessary.

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

The Inter-Municipal Committee was formed in the 1960's to deal with issues and concerns which cannot and should not be decided upon solely by any one municipality. The Committee consists of the following members: East

Hempfield Township, East Lampeter Township, East Petersburg Borough, Lancaster City, Lancaster Township, Manheim Township, Manor Township, Pequea Township and West Lampeter Township.

A goal of the Committee is to seek solutions to common problems and to suggest means by which the citizens within the represented area can best be served with available resources.

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

1. All municipalities in the County should support the recommendations of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan.

The City should continue its efforts in support of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Intermunicipal cooperation and dialogue are critical in achieving County goals of managing growth, assuring decent and affordable housing throughout the county, providing for transportation and recreation needs, managing and protecting resources, and providing needed services. The City, along with members of the Inter-Municipal Committee, should support the County's Growth Management Plan and adopt policies and appropriate land use regulations, such as the Community Extension Ordinance pro-

posed by the Lancaster County Planning Commission's *Handbook for Liveable Communities*, which would permit the expansion of existing boroughs and villages in a manner consistent with the communities' historic character, thus directing growth to urbanized areas.

The County's goal of "Fair Share Housing" should also be supported by each municipality with policies adopted and regulations developed to ensure that opportunities for affordable housing are not solely concentrated in the City and a few boroughs.

2. Neighboring municipalities should investigate cost-effective means to provide services.

Traditionally, each municipality has established its own

infrastructure to provide services and to deal with citizen needs. Many municipalities, when faced with limited resources, have questioned the need for providing a service individually rather than jointly or through a service contract with an adjacent municipality. In order to improve efficiency and reduce costs, several municipalities within the county jointly fund and share police protection; and consolidation of several volunteer fire departments has also taken place. Many municipalities contract for water and sewer service with the Lancaster City Water and Sewer Authorities rather than provide their own treatment facilities.

Lancaster City, in cooperation with members of the Inter-Municipal Committee or other representatives of local

government, should continue to explore the feasibility of consolidating services and of jointly planning and funding programs for the greater good of the urbanized area. Examples which might be considered are the following:

- Joint fire and police service
- Stormwater management within watersheds
- Transportation - local road and highway planning, transit, intersection improvements
- Affordable housing
- Consistency of general codes/ordinances and code enforcement
- Joint purchase/development/maintenance of park and recreational lands
- Creation of joint park and recreation commissions
- Joint adoption/administration of a county-wide building code and health code.

3. Local school districts should collaborate with the City in meeting community needs

Lancaster City is served by three school districts: Lancaster, Lampeter-Strasburg and Conestoga Valley. In addition to providing educational opportunities to local youths, the districts provide recreational opportunities, cultural events

and adult learning classes. The City and school districts should discuss areas of mutual concern and assist each other in reaching community goals.

One area of concern voiced by local residents was the perception that schools do not want children or adults to use district recreational facilities as they would a public park. The public perception is that their tax dollars are not well spent when facilities go unused or are underutilized. With the use of both City and school facilities and expansion of the role of the Lancaster Recreation Commission in optimizing the use of facilities and resources, Lancastrians could have one of the best, most diversified, and least expensive recreational programs in the Commonwealth.

School districts are also perceived by the citizens as being disconnected from issues faced by City government. However, there are numerous shared issues, and a greater cooperation and exchange of information must take place between these bodies. A learning disability may be caused by ingestion of lead-based paint; home health conditions may affect the classroom; and building or demolition plans for school facilities may have significant impacts upon neighborhood character. These and many other issues point to the need for greater collaboration and exchange of information.

4. Lancaster's business, civic, and governmental leaders should promote an awareness of local government concerns at the County, State and Federal levels.

Lancaster's community leaders should promote and support policies and programs generated at the County, State and Federal levels which complement and make possible the realization of the goals and objectives of this Plan. In addition, community leaders need to express their concerns and educate the local citizenry on matters which would have a negative impact on reaching the goals contained herein. A "team leadership" approach will be a more effective agent for change than government leadership alone.

5 The County of Lancaster and members of the Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee should share information on planning and development activity which could generate impacts.

The *Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan Policy Plan* recognizes the importance of keeping Lancaster City economically strong. The relocation of industries and well-paying jobs to the suburbs has contributed to changes in county land use patterns and in city income levels and housing patterns. Other municipalities have

enjoyed strong tax bases because of the movement of businesses and middle- and upper-income families to the suburbs, while the concentration of non-profit organizations (many of which are exempt from taxes) and persons with socio-economic problems in the city has eroded the city's tax base. Municipal elected officials, land planners, zoning officers and planning commissions should regularly discuss with adjacent municipalities development proposals which singularly or cumulatively will impact upon each other's vitality and liveability.

Since activity in the city or adjacent municipalities can have significant impacts on traffic, loss/gain of jobs, school enrollment, tax base, municipi-

pal services and the environment, local officials should exchange information in a timely fashion so that intermunicipal concerns are made known and informed planning and decision-making can occur by all parties. The County government and Inter-Municipal Committee should assume expanded roles as facilitators of intermunicipal discussions and provide education on the impacts of development. Individual and cumulative impacts of projects should be evaluated with consideration towards regional impacts. For example, the location of a Wal-Mart in one township can have negative impacts on businesses and traffic in a number of neighboring municipalities.

6. The city should be promoted as the "hub" of the county and should be viewed as the center and an interdependent, integral part of Lancaster County.

As land use patterns began to shift from urban to suburban in the 1940's and 1950's, Lancaster County began to lose sight of the importance of maintaining a strong and viable center city. The City must continue to promote itself and work with adjoining municipalities to ensure that Lancaster City is viewed as the "hub" of Lancaster County and that municipal policies and land use decisions which support this position are implemented.

XIII. TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION

Action Plans

The *Policy Plan* sets forth a direction for the future that has been developed by a process of community consensus. Not all of the recommendations of individuals have become part of the document because compromise is a part of the consensus-building process. In order to implement the broad policy objectives of the *Policy Plan*, four-year *Action Plans* will be developed, again by a process of consensus, setting forth the high priority actions and programs that will be undertaken by the community. While the City will play a lead role in many of the actions, other members of the community will be active partners in developing and carrying out elements of the *Action Plans*. Only by working together as a community will we succeed in achieving our goals and ensuring that Lancaster remains a successful community.

Resources

In order to carry out the recommendations of the *Policy Plan*, new sources of revenue and additional and retrained and/or reassigned staff will be necessary. An objective listed in the *Lancaster County Com-*

prehensive Plan Policy Plan is to “ensure adequate funding for the expansion of public facilities and services.” The County’s *Policy Plan* states the following:

Municipalities should establish capital improvements programs to ensure adequate funding for the expansion of public facilities and services. The County should assist municipalities in obtaining funding for capital improvements. Alternative funding sources such as impact fees, taxes, increased Federal and State funding, or the development of a uniform system of user fees and charges should be explored.

As property owners are well aware, real estate taxes are the primary source of local revenues for municipalities and school districts. For the City of Lancaster, real estate taxes account for approximately 39 percent of the total General Fund revenues. Other sources include earned income, occupation and per capita, and occupation privilege taxes; a variety of fees, permits and licenses; water and sewer fund revenues; interest on investments; and other miscellaneous

revenues. The County’s *Policy Plan* lists as a county-wide objective to “explore more equitable alternatives to the property tax as a means to fund municipal services” and states that “the County, municipalities and citizens should urge the Pennsylvania Legislature to explore more equitable alternatives to the use of the property tax as a means to fund municipal services.”

Rethinking Government

In order to meet citizen demands for increased services and to undertake new programs or activities in accordance with *Action Plans* for the City’s *New Comprehensive Plan*, a rethinking of the role and operation of government is necessary. Studies and reports on the national level indicate that local governments need to drastically improve their capacity and performance if they are to meet the challenges of rapidly changing social and economic conditions. Terms such as “entrepreneurial government,” “enterprising government,” and “learning government” are used to describe new ways to look at local government. The numerous recommendations for City involvement and action

within this *Policy Plan* reveal that Lancaster's citizens have great expectations of its City government. For the City to function in the manner desired by the citizenry, adequate resources must be made available.

A question that the staff presented to residents attending the neighborhood meetings was the following: "If you had to choose between hiring an addi-

tional housing inspector to improve the City's capacity to ensure code compliance and hiring a new police officer, which would you select?" Each year, the City Administration and City Council are faced with tough choices. The *New Comprehensive Plan* and, specifically, the *Action Plans*, will serve as a guide in setting priorities for funding decisions. Utilizing existing resources as

efficiently as possible, identifying and developing new revenue sources, ensuring that staff are properly trained and develop new skills to increase their effectiveness, eliminating unnecessary administrative tasks and obsolete practices, and increasing fiscal responsibility are among the steps to be undertaken to move towards implementation of the *New Comprehensive Plan*.

XIV. CONCLUSION

The Lancaster Community is at a crossroads: it is faced with the choice of taking positive action to address its pressing issues and to protect and enhance its desirable community character or of assuming a laissez-faire attitude and permitting the beginning signs of socio-economic decline to continue without intervention. What became very clear during the two and one-half year citizen participation process was the intensity of feelings Lancasterians have about their community. The sense of caring and concern is manifested by the level of citizen involvement in community affairs. Attendance at the various neighborhood meetings and public forums during the process illustrated that many people do not want to sit idly by while decay and decline continue. Clearly, Lancasterians feel that this is a community worth preserving and improving. This *Policy Plan for the New Comprehensive Plan* serves as the guide to ensure that the community works together to protect and preserve Lancaster's special qualities.



GLOSSARY

Build-to Setback - A point along the street where new construction would generally be in line with existing adjacent buildings.

Bulk Regulations - A zoning term used to express the percentage of a lot covered by buildings.

Downtown Investment District (DID) - A governmental authority, funded by property owners within a designated area of the downtown, created for the purpose of promoting, marketing and supporting downtown retailing and cultural events and the betterment of downtown.

Exterior Commercial Property Review Committee (ECPRC) - An advisory group which works with downtown property owners and retailers on signage and facade improvement proposals prior to the City issuing building or signage permits.

Historic District - Local - A designated area where exterior improvements, signage and facade changes are reviewed by the Historical Architectural Review Board and City Council with the intent of protecting neighborhoods that have been determined to be architecturally and/or historically significant.

Historic District - National Register - An area designated by the federal government possessing historical and architectural qualities worthy of preservation and eligible for special incentive programs aimed at preservation.

Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) - A seven member advisory body appointed by City Council empowered to review the impact of planned exterior changes to a building on the architectural and/or historical character of the building and the Historic District.

Lancaster Alliance - An organization formed in June 1993 comprised of executives from 12 of Lancaster County's largest corporations with the goal of helping to improve the economic and social conditions of Lancaster City.

Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods (LCN) - An organization of neighborhood groups focused on issues of safety and quality of life in their neighborhoods.

Nonfamily Unit - An apartment or single family dwelling occupied by no more than three unrelated persons.

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247) - A law which enables municipalities to plan for future growth, manage energy resources and promote public safety, health and welfare through the adoption of local codes and ordinances regulating the use and development of land.

Planning Module - An application to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources dealing with sewer main extensions and sewer tap-in points.

Reverse Mortgage - A financial option which allows a homeowner with a paid off mortgage to receive a monthly income from a bank in exchange for the bank holding title to the property.

Setback Line - A line on a parcel of land drawn parallel with the property line and generally expressed as being a set number of feet back from the property line. The area between the property line and setback line is referred to as the required yard, and, generally, no buildings may be erected in this area.

Tax Increment Financing - A means of financing public or private improvements by utilizing the additional tax revenues generated by development projects within designated areas of the community to pay off the public bond or loan for the improvements.

Urban Growth Boundary - A line drawn on a map around an area that includes a city or borough at its center, developed portions of townships and limited undeveloped land for the purpose of separating areas that are appropriate and logical for development from areas inappropriate for development, such as prime agricultural land and natural areas.

Zoning Overlay District - Zoning districts with special regulations or review criteria designed for specific areas, such as flood plains or historic sites/districts, that are in addition to or in place of the regulations of the underlying zoning district.

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