

MEETING REPORT

PROJECT NAME: City of Lancaster Economic Development Strategic Plan
MRA PROJECT #: 14045
MEETING DATE: June 23, 2014; Meeting 1, 2:00-4:00 pm
LOCATION: Lancaster, PA; City Council Chambers, Southern Market
SUBJECT: **Working Group Meetings**
ATTENDEES: PROJECT TEAM: Megan Griffith; Mark Hackenburg; John Hershey; Tom McGilloway; Alexandra Odum; Tom Smithgall; Marshall Snively; Bob Shoemaker; Colleen Wagner; Shelby Nauman; Antoine Lebeaut

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS: Vy Bahn; Edward Bailey; Jennifer Baker; Shaun Balani; Ben Bamford; David Bender; John Biemiller; Melissa Brosey; Dawn Cox; Brian Davison; Joe Devoy; Andy Esbenshade; Tony Essis; Paul Fulmer; Adriano Gomez; Doug Groff; Mary Colleen Heil; Jeremy Hess; Gary Hobday; Ole Hongvanthong; J. Samuel Houser; Wendell Huyard; Greg Keasey; Melody Keim; Cynthia Kettering; Jessica King; Phil Lapp; Kevin Lehman; Ryan Martin; Melanie Martinez; Noah Miller; Greg Orth; Jocelyn Panl; Lori Pickell; Tom Ponessa; Shanon Solava Reid; Stephanie Reese ; James Reichenbach; Diane Richards; Elvin Rodriguez; Fritz Schroeder; Bob Shenk; Jim Shultz; Scot Standish; Alison Weber; Samuel Wilsker

PREPARED BY: Megan Griffith; June 27, 2014

Consultant team met with Project Working Group to identify priority concerns, baseline "givens," and to seek general input.

1) INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- a) Marshall Snively called the meeting to order; introduced Tom Smithgall who provided project background. Marshall clarified the purpose of the Working Group; and noted upcoming project dates, including July and August meetings.
- b) Marshall asked Working Group members to introduce themselves.
 - a. Point made that this effort must include areas southeast of the Downtown Core and that it includes *all* major routes into and out of the city so as to ensure development is spurred in other parts of the city.
- c) Consultant team was introduced.
- d) Tom McGilloway reviewed team background and presented project process [see attachment]
- e) Tom McGilloway, John Hershey, and Mark Hackenburg facilitated the discussion.

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2) FACILITATED DISCUSSION:

Desired Plan Outcomes:

- A. Study areas should be viewed not just as commercial corridors; but as self-defined areas.
- B. Commercial anchors needed in all neighborhoods;
 - a. Need anchors for commercial uses, bring \$ into community to spur/leverage economic development locally (not just in downtown).
 - b. Without initial investment, neighborhoods lack resources to spur further revitalization/investment
 - c. Gaps in commercial uses (e.g. grocery)
- C. Athletically-friendly (walkable, bikable, etc.)
- D. Clearly communicate resident/business owner/various stakeholders' role and responsibility (use an empowering approach) in planning process; understand audience and community
- E. Focus on what's implementable (realistic, achievable); identify catalytic strategies
- F. Promote city as a destination; market downtown areas
 - a. Existing assets (schools, etc.); possible exercises to show community members
 - b. Show residents what has been accomplished
 - c. Neighborhoods won't become destinations without a destination use; need more things to do
- G. Ease of transportation (including connections to airport)
- H. Get to know neighborhoods, some areas with high turnover; need to frame strategies with neighborhoods in mind (facilitate resident adoption of plan)
- I. Engage youth in planning process (they will inherit this plan as their own)
 - a. Empowering churches and non-profits to create children-/family-friendly environments
- J. Inspire young professionals; provide opportunities, offer mentorship (infrastructure to facilitate emerging professionals)
 - a. Be willing to listen to unique needs of emerging professionals
- K. Connect residents to their communities, develop resident pride in community (example: use public art, parks, etc.)
- L. Consider way to prevent corridor competition; work together instead of against one another
- M. Become a tech-savvy city
 - a. Innovation zones
 - b. Partner with colleges
 - c. Tech Infrastructure
- N. Incubator, possibly community supported; a space for spurring creativity, meeting and engaging with others (both socially and professionally)
- O. Understand the share of county tourism generated/located in Lancaster City (measure and leverage)

Baseline "Givens"

- A. Demand for living in Lancaster City outweighs housing supply

- a. Trends, future needs require more housing
- b. Need for rentals and condos that are reasonably priced
- c. Shortage of properties available for ownership; pricing out mid/affordable housing
- d. Cost disconnect (new development offered at higher price point)
- e. Empty nesters (physical accessibility and other challenges associated with older housing stock)
- f. Preservation of affordable housing options needed to maintain and grow strength of community, particularly in challenged neighborhoods; prevent and reduce threat of gentrification
- B. Current conditions: some insular communities, need to better connect
- C. Key regional location of city; major rail station; convenient to major cities
- D. Visitors and In-Migration; Pull professionals, leverage ease of access/central location of city
 - a. Need to better promote city and attractions to visitors (travelers, students, families, tourists included)
 - b. Diversify attractions (not limited to Amish-related attractions); requires coordination, recognition of city as a destination
 - c. Plan should recognize existing potential, enhance what exists
- E. Assets include universities and educational institutions (pull diverse group of students)
 - a. Students bring new experiences to community as well as an additional audience
 - b. Support continued growth
- F. Arts and culture; creativity/creative industries
 - a. Have strong cultural craftsmanship
- G. Strong work ethic (not just limited to creative industries)
- H. Existing focus on safety (existing initiatives and programs); improved and supported by strategies
- I. Economically disadvantaged populations; process should be inclusive
 - a. Relatively healthy city, but challenges should not be underplayed
 - b. Homelessness major factor in success; need to address
- J. Lancaster is a "gem": polish it, don't replace it
- K. Previous buy-in from major employers has facilitated neighborhood growth and success; a model to replicate (identify: what were the key factors that led to those successes?)
- L. Pride in neighborhoods, leads to further stimulation

Current Initiatives

- A. CRIZ; need to publicize the program among all residents and business owners/entrepreneurs
 - a. Explore opportunities for businesses to utilize district benefits
- B. Parks-related work: maximize consistent neighborhood use of parks (forthcoming program)
 - a. Parks as generators for further investment
- C. Coalition for a Bicycle Friendly Lancaster
 - a. <https://www.facebook.com/CoalitionForABicycleFriendlyLancaster>
 - b. Bike trails and routes throughout the city—active transportation

- D. State movement on sustainable communities; city received gold standard (environment, financial sustainability; social sustainability).
- E. Business and entrepreneurial information and knowledge in older generations; would like (more/new) initiatives to facilitate trade-off of knowledge
 - a. SCORE
 - b. Assets
 - c. Community First Fund
 - d. Duke Street Business Center
 - e. Others; Still, however, current initiatives need to reach larger audiences
- F. Mentor programs help find work placement for refugee community; engage with social initiatives
- G. Historical revitalization and improvements to older buildings
- H. "Buy local" trends, economic identity and driver
- I. Lancaster Young Professional Network
- J. Corridor One (light rail line to Harrisburg; existing research and studies)
- K. Lancaster Transplant: promoting city, showing different side of the city; provide opportunities to people to network and share skills
 - a. Invite fringe culture
 - b. Market and advertise current events
- L. Full Service Community School Initiative—provide resources for students, partner with local resources
- M. 2012 merge of Mayor's Office of Special Events & LancasterArts
- N. New website this summer promoting the City

Unique Aspects to Corridors

- A. All Areas/General
 - a. Local brews/beer culture (historical, tradition in city as well)
 - b. Underground Railroad history throughout Lancaster (mostly in SE, but in other parts of city as well)
 - c. Extreme shifts at city line cut off (mostly issue in Train Area, experienced in all areas of city)
- B. Duke Street
 - a. Diverse cultural history— Latino and other heritage
 - b. Howard Ave. — one of the City's earliest neighborhoods
- C. King
 - a. Trash; seems as though street cleaning misses certain areas; need for attention from city government
 - b. Dramatic shift in landscape; dichotomy
 - c. Drug culture present; safety issues
- D. Prince/Queen
 - a. Previous factory buildings, aging but functional; good properties — "mirrors of yesterday"
 - i. industrial heritage; rail corridor
 - b. Additional historic assets (cemetery, etc.)
 - c. Deteriorated housing stock; abandoned properties

Initial Priorities

- A. Food/beverage/entertainment focus group: some argue that Lancaster has enough of these venues, but others disagree
 - a. Major revenue generators, draw for visitors.
 - b. New residents will want entertainment venues. Should not hamper development
 - c. Tellus360
 - d. Attract business (food, beverage, entertainment) 7 days/nights a week; businesses working together to do so
- B. Eliminate excessive red tape; facilitate/streamline process for attracting investment
 - a. Clear conditions and challenges of utilizing older stock/infrastructure
 - b. Tools to address cost-prohibitive perception of making structures usable for investment
- C. Perception hurts city
 - a. Lancaster has many of the same positive elements of urban living without the same challenges encountered in other cities
- D. Understand vacant/underutilized properties downtown
 - a. Many have been neglected for some time
 - b. Vacant upper floors
- E. Generational businesses kept local; prioritize connections between generations – transition of knowledge, investment, leadership, ownership, etc.
- F. Improved sidewalk conditions; lighting conditions – perceived safety
 - a. Public commitment to infrastructure
 - b. Public ownership of the city; appreciate the value of city government/city services
- G. Fill gaps in retail opportunities; meet basic needs of residents, day-to-day needs)
 - a. Authentic, make retail work for residents
- H. Embrace conventions as they come into town; welcome visitors/embrace them; show visitors a good time, demonstrate value in city. Make visitors feel at home, like family

Potential “Red Herrings”

- A. Parking; accommodate needs, critical to consider during strategy recommendations
 - a. Use of parking garages/structures/lots creatively during off-hours (local residents)
 - b. May only be a perception issue
- B. Inclusive process; engage diverse stakeholders, residents, populations, etc. Bring everyone to the table.
 - a. Consultants to facilitate; make engagement a priority
 - b. Working Group to help spread the word and pull the right people into the conversations
- C. “If you’re not from here, you’re not from here” mentality.
 - a. Be mindful, respectful, understanding of local concerns
 - b. Reverse: “You don’t need to live in the city to love it.”

- c. City is core of county, but non-city residents give city bad PR
- d. Perception issue is a challenge with schools
- D. This is a joint collaboration; "we're in this together" – the success of the city must include both city and county/regional residents
- E. Balance revenue sharing, proportionate investment between city and county

3) ACTION ITEMS:

- A. Project team will review and clarify meeting notes.
- B. Marshall will distribute minutes to Steering Committee and Working Group
- C. Working Group, Steering Committee, and representatives of the community-at-large, as well as the Project team, share a responsibility to make this process as inclusive and engaging as possible.
- D. All to convene for July 9-11 meetings.

MEETING REPORT

PROJECT NAME: City of Lancaster Economic Development Strategic Plan
MRA PROJECT #: 14045
MEETING DATE: June 23, 2014; Meeting 2, 6:00-8:00 pm
LOCATION: Lancaster, PA; City Council Chambers, Southern Market
SUBJECT: **Working Group Meetings**
ATTENDEES: PROJECT TEAM: Megan Griffith; Mark Hackenburg; John Hershey; Tom McGilloway; Alexandra Odum; Tom Smithgall; Marshall Snively

Attended by Mayor of Lancaster, J. Richard Gray

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS: Deborah Barber; Peter Barber; Monica Billing; Bob Brandt III; Edward Drogaris; Hawa Good; Ed Gordon; Rick Gray; Tracy Horst; Charlotte Katzenmoyer; Anne Kirby; Emily Landis; Jessica Mailhot; Jeff Mclain; Mike McMonagle; Jason Negron; Jeffrey Owen; Tom Ponessa; Charasay Powell; Dawn Weiss; Denise Witman; W. Henry Yaeger

PREPARED BY: Megan Griffith; June 27, 2014

Consultant team met with Project Working Group to identify priority concerns, baseline "givens," and to seek general input.

4) INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- a) Marshall Snively called the meeting to order;
- b) Mayor Gray addressed group, welcomed project team. Emphasized the importance and need of a strategic plan in Lancaster.
- c) Tom Smithgall provided project background. Marshall clarified the purpose of the Working Group; and noted upcoming project dates, including July and August meetings.
- d) Marshall asked Working Group members to introduce themselves.
 - a. Point made that this effort must include areas southeast of the Downtown Core and that it includes *all* major routes into and out of the city so as to ensure development is spurred in other parts of the city.
- e) Consultant team was introduced.
- f) Tom McGilloway reviewed team background and presented project process [see attachment]
- g) Tom McGilloway, John Hershey, and Mark Hackenburg facilitated the discussion.

5) FACILITATED DISCUSSION:

Desired Plan Outcomes:

- A. More tourism; economic development through tourism
- B. Focus on corridors and their surrounding neighborhoods
- C. Utilizing 2nd and 3rd floors of buildings; address underutilized properties
- D. Making the city more visitor-friendly
- E. Use of open space; not limited to just aesthetic greenspace, but usable (for residents)
 - a. Ensure open space meets needs of neighborhood
- F. Respectful and encouraging of existing residents
 - a. Inclusion in process
 - b. Sensitive strategies
- G. Framework for implementation the ultimate plan; keep the plan off a dusty shelf and provide tools necessary to implement it.
- H. Focus on small business development; encourage/draw-in and retain talent
- I. Updated infrastructure – technology-focus
- J. Use corridors as alternative transportation routes
- K. Stress/emphasize the unique character and draw of each corridor
- L. Improve attractiveness for businesses to locate downtown
- M. More public art in downtown as well as in corridors
 - a. Draw on unique qualities of each community
 - b. Expand definition of public art to include art that engages residents/public as artists (e.g. art station)
 - c. Maintain quality of public art (subjective)

Baseline "Givens"

- A. Change perspectives of "influencers," residents, businesses
- B. Historic nature
- C. Critical importance of the central market to the viability of downtown
- D. Importance of art to community, central role and cultural value
- E. Walkable and bikable, accessibility; city needs to catch up in terms of ensuring pedestrian/cyclist safety
- F. Music included in arts;
 - a. Arts = broad category
- G. Geographic location of city
 - a. Conveniently located close to major East Coast cities;
 - b. Transportation and accessibility
- H. Diverse city, but not always enough communication between diverse groups; perpetuates segregation and division
- I. Strong Entrepreneurial spirit
- J. Huge housing market
- K. Need for new hotel
- L. Educational institutions, opportunities to enhance relationships
- M. Active faith-based organizations
- N. Many small groups are already doing many great things independently, piecemeal

Current Initiatives

- A. Coworking movement
 - a. Candy Factory

- B. Makers Movement; alongside art initiatives
- C. Lancaster Central Market—Exploring the creation of Market District, visibility/wayfinding, outreach initiatives (tie-in to other community group initiatives)
- D. DID Merchant Group meets regularly (once a month)
- E. City's Green Infrastructure Plan and program; addressing environmental regulations while improving quality of life
- F. First Fridays, Music Fridays, etc.
 - a. Music initiatives engage children
- G. Arts initiatives
 - a. Handz On! Realistic Fine Art (youth program)
 - b. Programs in southeast area (Churchtown)
- H. SCORE
- I. Potential: could benefit from central manager to coordinate events, initiatives, and ongoing projects; facilitate conversations between key people; clearinghouse
- J. Theater development; Symphony; American Music Theater
 - a. Creative Works of Lancaster
 - i. Silence of the Socks
 - b. Found space theater movement; Wood Stove House (House concerts)
 - c. Underground arts activities
- K. Need to showcase emerging artists
 - a. The Discerning Eye
- L. Multicultural festivals, showcase Lancaster diversity
- M. Strong, local neighborhood groups
- N. Only a few downtown locations for family use with activities for young children
 - a. Science Factory (just north of Downtown)
 - b. The Arch, art collective, make art accessible for children
 - c. North Museum (just west of Downtown)
- O. Dealing with panhandlers, challenge (existing LCA initiative)
- P. Educational components address many of abovementioned themes
- Q. Acknowledge what's already happening; more effort to facilitate the number and growth of these initiatives
- R. Local farmers' market movement

Unique Aspects to Corridors

- A. All Areas/General:
 - a. Unique character of corridors and neighborhoods
 - b. No north/south bypass; Prince/Queen has become major transportation corridor.
 - i. How can we use this to our benefit? How can we capture traffic, keep passersby in area?
 - ii. View traffic as an asset due to increased visibility
 - c. Architecture of buildings, historical aspects of corridors
 - i. Leverage, harness, recognize nostalgia of underlying community history – use to push effort forward
 - d. Interesting to consider Beaver St.

- e. Encourage storytelling, learn from generations past
 - i. Harken back to past
- f. Note: cannot enter Lancaster without traveling through a neighborhood; opportunity to experience uniqueness of corridors prior to downtown
- B. Duke Street
 - a. Link with county park in multi-modal approach
- C. King:
 - a. Ongoing development, would love to see continue farther (both in terms of direction and into the future)
 - b. Highlight unique areas, provide new opportunities
- D. Manor Street
 - a. Previously unaddressed in most plans/strategies; often forgotten
 - b. Great potential, unique character (has both advantages and disadvantages, given its compactness)
- E. Train Station Area:
 - a. Large, undeveloped properties
 - b. Note: Harrisburg Pike boundary on map does not indicate southern edge of roadway, but will be revised to include this area

Initial Priorities

- A. Create a way to connect thinkers with doers. Grow energy and entrepreneurial spirit.
 - a. Think Tanks
- B. Consider underrepresented communities; understand and recognize the effect of this plan on those communities
 - a. Include those communities in process
 - b. Strong effort now to make it clear that this project is reaching out to everyone; must be extremely inclusive!
- C. New, desirable affordable housing supply
 - a. Younger generations
 - b. Aging populations
- D. Retail and services to support basic needs of residential populations
 - a. Bodegas, corner stores for toiletries, etc.
- E. Activities for families (locals and visitors alike) in downtown area. Network with hotels to communicate options to tourists/guests
- F. Communication framework; a common clearinghouse
 - a. Capture what's going on, encourage coordination of efforts, allow for joint efforts; Identify assets and coordinate
- G. Think of city the way a developer views and plans a shopping mall. City, as a whole, can be a destination
 - a. Cluster uses and attractions which support and enhance nearby uses
- H. Demonstration projects; need to show the potential and benefit of larger plan with smaller components
- I. Be realistic about resources. Strategies must be implementable
 - a. Leverage existing assets
 - b. Target specific locations/venues to meet strategies/needs
- J. Improved continuity along corridor; avoid gaps, edges, barriers
 - a. Connect dots

- K. Market research to identify why shoppers buy outside of Lancaster City; what could they instead be purchasing here, what is absent in area; leakages
 - a. Survey, questionnaire

Potential "Red Herrings"

- A. Competing priorities between various groups
 - a. Finding balance
- B. Unaware of ongoing initiatives (important to publicize/market initiatives)
- C. Perceptions of Lancaster as small town versus growing city; some longtime residents are opposed to change
- D. Recognize the work of those advocating for a Downtown Trolley
 - a. Train station= initial destination
- E. Lancaster city proper is 4sq. Mi.
 - a. Perception of Complaints of development /investment only occurring Downtown and northwest
 - b. Territorial/regionalism (and associated competition over funding)
- F. Eastern City Annex must be included in planning process
- G. Limited resources
- H. ADA and building codes
- I. Maintain city identity while going through transformation
- J. Diverse personalities in merchant associations/groups, some more vocal than others
- K. PennDOT
- L. City government must make it easier for changes to be made; facilitate development, eliminate red tape and/or reduce procedural barriers
 - a. However, may not be as challenging as surrounding townships; tools and guides might be valuable
- M. Relationships with surrounding communities, townships

6) ACTION ITEMS:

- E. Project team will review and clarify meeting notes.
- F. Marshall will distribute minutes to Steering Committee and Working Group
- G. Working Group, Steering Committee, and representatives of the community-at-large, as well as the Project team, share a responsibility to make this process as inclusive and engaging as possible.
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