



Edition 2



Building On Strength Economic Development Strategic Plan for the City of Lancaster

Welcome!

This is the second edition of the Building On Strength Quarterly Report! At the launch of The Plan in June 2015, we pledged to provide community updates on a quarterly basis. You are receiving this communication because of your commitment to the City of Lancaster and your participation in the development of The Plan and implementation.

While Building On Strength is a fifteen year initiative, we are pleased to report that many of the 25 Recommendations under the four Plan Strategies are moving forward. The progress of each is highlighted below. We encourage you to share this information with your Lancaster friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

For more information and to view the entire Building On Strength Plan, visit:
www.lancastercityalliance.org/building-on-strength.

STRATEGY 1 | EXPANDING SUCCESS: TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENT

1A - Investment Sites

Plan Recommendation: Identify key sites within Lancaster City that present short- and long-term opportunities for investment.

Status:

- South Queen and Vine intersection - Request For Proposal issued in March to area and regional developers with responses due in June.
- Since December of 2015, several significant projects were underway or completed. These include:
 - Newly completed Family Dollar store opened at **Conestoga Plaza** on S. Duke Street.
 - The conversion of the **Keppel Building** in the 300 Block of N. Queen to market rate apartments and retail space began in February.
 - The **Bulova Building** at Queen and Orange was sold at auction. Closing will likely take place in 60-90 days. The project will be mixed-use, potentially including retail, office and residential spaces.
 - **Marriott** expansion plans continue.
 - The long vacant **Excelsior Building** on E. King Street opened as the City's newest events venue.
 - The **Ironworks Business Park** on S. Prince was very active with all but one parcel now sold or under agreement.



Lead Organizations: Lancaster City Alliance (LCA), Economic Development Company of Lancaster County (EDC), City of Lancaster

1C - Development Clearinghouse

Plan Recommendation: Establish a one-stop-shop system to facilitate businesses and developers.

Status:

- With the City consolidating its workforce in the City Hall and the annex, all staff involved in providing reviews and approvals for development projects in the City are now located on two floors.
- The City has created a team approach to reviewing major projects, encouraging developers to sit down early in a project timeline to meet with all City Departments. A second meeting is encouraged when ready to submit applications for approvals.

- The City is also in the process of setting up a new municipal software system that will track permitting and licensing required for any City project. The system will also track inspections on development projects.
- The new system is scheduled to be in place and fully functional in early 2017 and should ensure a more coordinated City review and approval process for development projects.

Lead Organization: City of Lancaster

1F - Land Bank

Plan Recommendation: Acquire individual blighted properties and prepare them for sound investment.

Status:

- The City began research on establishing a Land Bank in the City. The purpose of the Land Bank would be to assist in the assemblage of properties as they come on the market for major economic development projects.
- The City Redevelopment Authority will likely serve as the Land Bank for the City, with some additional representation.
- The County Redevelopment Authority is currently working with the County Commissioners and other County departments to establish a Land Bank for the County outside the City.
- The City is allowing the County process to continue before establishing the City Land Bank.
- The City is currently reviewing ordinances and policies and procedures of other city-centered land banks in the State.
- The Land Bank is anticipated to be in place sometime in 2017.

Lead Organization: City Redevelopment Authority

1G - Community Land Trust

Plan Recommendation: Identify key sites within Lancaster City that present short-term and long-term opportunities for investment.

Status:

- Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership (LHOP) is currently implementing activities that define Community Land Trusts such as deed restrictions. The expansion of this effort and guidelines will be discussed in combination with the development of a Strategic Plan based on the LHOP-led Coalition for Affordable Housing (C4SH).

Lead Organization: Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership

1H - Plan Funding Program

Plan Recommendation: Continue to use existing funding. Additionally, consider engaging a broad partnership of entities in establishing a fund.

Status:

- Financing:
 - CRIZ legislative changes proposed and under consideration.
 - Continued progress toward a community investment fund (patient capital).
- The Economic Development Strategic Plan Steering Committee and Finance Squad members are engaged in a prioritization process for the 40 + identified investment sites.

Lead Organization: Lancaster City Alliance

STRATEGY 2 | EMBRACING THE COLLABORATIVE ECONOMY: CULTIVATING ENTREPRENEURS



2A - Entrepreneurs Forum

Plan Recommendation: Host regular forums (a minimum of two per year) to engage the entrepreneurial community, gather feedback on policies and programs, and brainstorm about ways to continue to foster the entrepreneurial climate in Lancaster.

Status:

- After the success of the inaugural Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurs Forum held on December 10, 2015, the second is planned for May 12, 2016. Visit www.cultivatelancaster.com for more information and a list of the great partners and sponsors for the event.

Lead Organization: Lancaster City Alliance

2C - Neighborhood Healthy Food Initiative

Plan Recommendation: Establish a healthy food initiative that includes partnerships with existing entities such as Lancaster General Health and other partners and extend into the Commercial Hubs.

Status:

- Partners submitted an application for a planning grant to the Kresge Foundation's "Fresh, Local & Equitable: Food as a Creative Platform for Neighborhood Revitalization" program. This grant would fund the development of an implementation plan to increase access to affordable and healthy food, and spur economic development in the southeast quadrant through food kiosks and a demonstration kitchen on South Duke Street, an incentive program to maximize food benefits,

and nutrition education programming that serves the diverse needs of the neighborhood. Awards will be announced April 1.

- Corner Store Initiative: LG Health has recruited 20 stores into the Healthy Corner Stores initiative – they can be identified by the circular blue signs in their windows. These stores have gradually increased the number and variety of healthy foods they sell, and they have displays in the store to help customers identify these items. In the next phase of the initiative, the stores will receive assistance to improve their capacity to sell fresh foods through refrigeration units, new displays, etc.
- Next Steps: Create an illustration of the partners' long-term vision for a thriving healthy food environment in Lancaster City, and develop measurable long-term goals and objectives to achieve the vision.



Lead Organization: Lancaster General Health

STRATEGY 3 | LEVERAGING THE BRAND: MARKETING LANCASTER CITY

3C - Building the City Brand for Tourism

Plan Recommendation: Continue to develop marketing materials that profile shopping, dining, events, and opportunities to explore Lancaster City, extending beyond Downtown to places “off the beaten path.”

Status:

- The Lancaster Office of Promotion (LOOP) reported growth in tourism since opening the City-focused Visitor Center in July 2015. There have been over 10,000 visitors to date, from approximately 40 different countries and over 40 states.
- LOOP will now be a part of the Economic Development department at City Hall, under Randy Patterson’s direction.
- LOOP and Discover Lancaster will lead the tourism task group for 3C together. Over the next quarter, the task group will meet to discuss the collective resources and how we can best deploy those resources to continue building the City brand.

Lead Organization: Lancaster Office of Promotion & Discover Lancaster

STRATEGY 4 | QUALITY OF LIFE: REINFORCING COMMERCIAL HUBS

4B1 - Two-Way Street Conversions

Plan Recommendation: Increase safety, ease of navigation and business visibility by converting existing one-way streets to two-way as funding becomes available.

Status:

- The Mulberry Street Two-Way Conversion Project is underway and expected to be completed in Spring/Summer 2017. The \$2.7 million project includes bike infrastructure. Updates are available at www.cityoflancasterpa.com on the city's blog.
- Charlotte Street is currently being designed for conversion to a two-way street. Funding has not been secured for construction.

Lead Organization: City of Lancaster

4B3 - Bicycle Network

Plan Recommendation: Develop a variety of bicycle facilities including a cycling network for connectivity, accessibility to jobs and recreation through alternative transportation.

Status:

- Lancaster City/Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee (LIMC) have contracted with Alta Planning and Design to develop a multi-modal plan for the City and Metro area.
- The City of Lancaster has targeted 3 priority bicycle infrastructure projects and has applied for State funding to implement them. The projects are the Christian Street Cycle Track, Bike Lanes on key streets and corridors and connecting to the "goat path" – an 11-mile multi-modal loop that would transport users in and around the City of Lancaster.

Lead Organization: City of Lancaster

4B4 - Gateways and Streetscapes

Plan Recommendation: Fund and implement enhancements to gateway areas and commercial hub streetscapes to increase investment and economic development.

Status:

- West King/Manor Street – The City of Lancaster has applied to the State for funds to install 77 pedestrian style lights along both sides of W. King Street between Prince and Charlotte, and eight blocks of Manor Street starting at King - to continue the Downtown streetscape improvements to this commercial hub area.

Lead Organization: City of Lancaster, Lancaster Downtown Investment District

4C - Commercial Hub Partner Organizations

Plan Recommendation: Organize advocacy groups than can spearhead "clean and green" efforts, organize events, and advocate for commercial corridor areas.

Status:

- Since the launch of the ED Plan in June 2015, four Commercial Hub Meetings have been held in neighborhood anchor organizations, attracting over 260 individuals:
 - South Duke Street (at Crispus Attucks Community Center)
 - South Prince Street/South Queen Street (at Community Action Program)
 - West King Street/Manor Street (at St. Joseph Catholic Church)
 - East King Street (at La Academia Partnership Charter School)
 - New Holland Avenue (Nxtbook Media)
 - The Manor Street Task Force, comprised of property owners, elected officials, planners, and neighborhood residents, will finalize recommendations by June 2016 to revitalize Manor Street.
- We will continue to hold Commercial Hub Meetings with all Commercial Hubs on an ongoing basis, approximately every six months.
- Neighbors and stakeholders are sharing ideas and are eager to work together and with neighborhood anchor organizations to improve quality of life.



Lead Organizations: Lancaster City Alliance, Neighborhood Organizations