

Project: 14045— Lancaster Economic Development Strategic Plan

Document: Minutes, October Working Group

Date: 10/16/2014

Working Group Meeting Minutes

PROJECT NAME: Lancaster Economic Development Strategic Plan
MRA PROJECT #: 14045
MEETING DATE: October 16, 2014
LOCATION: Lancaster, PA — Bright Side Opportunities Center
SUBJECT: October Working Group Meeting
PREPARED BY: Megan Griffith; October 20, 2014

The project team met with the Working Group to review data collected and present emerging recommendations for the purpose of soliciting preliminary feedback. The meeting concluded with a short breakout exercise during which attendees provided comments regarding the four recommendation themes.

1) INTRODUCTION

- A. Marshall welcomed the Working Group, and invited attendees to introduce themselves
- B. Marshall introduced the project team;
- C. Tom McGilloway reviewed progress. Project is on schedule, in the early stages of collecting input regarding the draft strategies.
- D. May plan additional meetings.

2) OVERVIEW OF INPUT RECEIVED

- A. Tom summarizes recurring themes gathered from the primary input:
 - a. Connections
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Economic Development—Classic and Entrepreneurial
 - d. Financial challenges and opportunities
 - e. Poverty and Housing
 - f. Investing in Human Capital, skills development
 - g. Image, leveraging the brand and challenging perceptions
- B. See slides for more detail

3) DATA CONCLUSIONS

- A. Tripp reviews data collected, highlighting key takeaways
 - a. Retail market opportunities exist, primarily, in food, personal services, arts and entertainment, visitors, and in locally-owned businesses.
 - b. Office market challenges include a lack of Class A space, low rent rates (not competitive with the rest of the county), vacancies, and underrepresented spaces and vacancies
 - i. Macro trends work in favor of urban areas
 - c. Hotel market demonstrates opportunities for continued growth, high Average Daily Rates (ADRs)

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- d. Residential market opportunities seen in macro level trends; need for more aggressive marketing.
- B. See slides for more detail

4) EMERGING RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Tom reports on the major themes
 - a. Community Development As Economic Development has been revisited and is now titled *A Healthy Community as Economic Development*
- B. Tom reviews neighborhood-center-specific recommendations, as presented in previous meetings
- C. Tripp discusses Tradition to Innovation recommendations
 - a. Clustering potential
 - b. HUB Zone opportunities, combined with other existing Economic Development tools
 - c. Emphasizes that workforce development will be absolutely necessary if this plan is to be successful.
- D. Tripp reviews strategies related to A Healthy Community
 - a. Need for more diversity in housing (a county-wide challenge) can be met with Lancaster City development opportunities
 - b. Opportunity to establish a Community Land Trust
 - c. Notes the potential for a Lancaster Bike Share; recognizing that a Bike Share is already being considered in the city
- E. Tom presents recommendations for Building on Success
 - a. Identifies key opportunity sites
 - b. Plan will be a long-term, phased strategy
- F. Tripp discusses recommendations for Leveraging the Lancaster Brand
 - a. Need for comprehensive marketing initiative
 - b. Actively and positively promote Lancaster and city living
 - c. Engage with key partners (e.g. PA Dutch CVB)

5) BREAKOUT ACTIVITIES

- A. Attendees break into four groups, one for each recommendation theme.
- B. Groups are asked to consider the following questions:
 - a. Within this theme, what might be missing that we need to add? Can be asset, challenge or strategy.
 - b. Amongst the group, what are your reactions to the ideas presented?
 - c. Related to the topic at hand, what are some peer examples for us to begin to look for?
 - d. We talked about some big picture ideas – what are some quick victories or wins?
- C. Healthy Community as Economic Development
 - a. Utilizing vacant and underutilized properties
 - b. Interest in Land Bank, would need to know more
 - c. Increase homeownership
 - i. Employer incentive program

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- ii. Availability of parcels for higher density housing
- D. Building on Successes: Opportunity Sites for Investment
 - a. Numerous good development properties; but...
 - b. Many/most parcels owned by owners who are not likely to commit to directions suggested—for reasons of business, financially not feasible, or politically not feasible
 - c. Laws and finances restrict/constrict against preferred development vision/agenda
 - d. Need to coordinate between numerous property owners
- E. Leveraging the Lancaster Brand
 - a. Attracting one or few is all it takes to initiate a larger draw
 - i. So much is already happening
 - b. Being more welcoming: to transplants, to locals, to businesses, to visitors, etc.
 - i. “Explore with us”
 - c. Increase in programming
 - i. Events have been successful in the past (e.g. Riddlequest, First Friday, etc.)
 - ii. Growing activities for young people
 - iii. More activities for families (Family Friday)
 - d. Entertainment needs: movie theater/IMAX; Arts, museums, theatre
 - e. Support neighborhoods; community pride
 - i. Profiles of everyday people; celebrate diversity of the city
 - f. Circulator needed; getting around Downtown. Need accessibility (can’t get around after visitors park)
 - i. Accessibility for locals (bike share, have a loop)
 - g. Need for consistency in message; same between visitors, businesses, residents
- F. From Tradition to Innovation: Classic Economic Development and the Growing Entrepreneurial Economy
 - a. Impact Hub, good idea. Collaborative
 - i. Have universities take a lead role
 - 1. Internship programs built-in
 - 2. Sponsorship (could also be businesses)
 - ii. Need synergy; generated by proximity
 - 1. Prefers cross-collaboration; avoid silo mentality generated when industries/trades are sorted into separate neighborhood centers
 - iii. Existing models references: Silicon Valley, New Orleans, Asheville, Allentown
 - b. Provide affordable housing for diverse income/employment groups
 - c. “Old money” and Real estate are disconnected from investment needs (e.g. tech industries and start-ups)
 - d. Fill need for East Coast Tech Hub (only in NYC and Boston)
 - e. Must restore connectivity
 - f. “Makers” is a broad term; use space/facilities differently
 - i. Unique building needs
 - g. Neighborhoods will be key—impacted positively and negatively by future 24-hour maker centers

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