

# What impact does LEADS have on Lancaster: Past, Present and Future



# The History of LEADS

- LEADS was formed in 1997 by a group of 50+ city residents or owners of downtown city property.
- Founding members include Art and Nancy Morris, Richard Scott, Rob Ecklin, Tracy Smith and Steve Murray.
- LEADS was founded on the basic principle of action, hence Lancaster 's **Economic Action for Downtown's Success**.
- One founding goal was to bring for-tax businesses downtown, starting with the former Bon-Ton building.



# History Continued...

- LEADS opposed the building of a HACCC campus downtown due to its non-taxed status.
- LEADS played a large role in bringing the convention center to downtown even when many in the community opposed the idea.
- LEADS began to be criticized for only being an organization that looked at the negative.



# A New Day

- After facing criticism LEADS began exploring ways to promote downtown growth in more positive ways.
- In 2000 LEADS rolled out a proposal to place hanging baskets throughout downtown's business district.
- 26 baskets were originally hung around Central Market and Penn Square.
- 2006 was the first year LEADS began decorating downtown for Christmas.



# LEADS Today

- Over the past 10 years LEADS has gotten away from its political roots and has focused more on bringing business downtown through beautification efforts.
- Our board includes ten volunteers who are all passionate about Lancaster City and seeing it continue to grow.
- Our main focus is currently on hanging baskets and Christmas decorations.



# Some Stats

- We hang 250 baskets throughout the downtown business district (more will be added in 2020).
- It takes around 6 hours a day to water the plants.
- We go through about 36,000 gallons of water a season.
- Our Gator travels about 1,000 miles a season.
- We hang 550 wreaths during the holiday season.
- We hang 10,000+ lights on the Christmas Tree



# The Future of LEADS

- A closer partnership with the City of Lancaster.
- Expanding beautification to neighborhoods outside the downtown business district.
- Creative partnering with neighborhoods and groups to bring more business to downtown.



# How Can You Be Involved?

- Adopt-a-basket!
- Become a “partner”.
- Volunteer.
- Spread the word about what LEADS does.

