



MAKING PROGRESS.
GOOD FOR EVERYONE.





The Coalition for Smart Growth is a unique and diverse group of community organizations and individuals drawn together by a shared interest in the future direction of Lancaster County...interested enough to craft a roadmap for Smart Growth. The Coalition's intent is twofold: 1) to provide a framework within which discussions about Lancaster County's future can take place and 2) to incorporate public policy recommendations into practical applications.



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IN THE FALL OF 2002, THESE GROUPS BEGAN MEETING TO DISCUSS SMART GROWTH:

- Agricultural Preservation Board of Lancaster County
- Associated Builders and Contractors
- Building Industry Association of Lancaster County
- Economic Development Corporation
- Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County
- Hourglass Foundation
- Housing Development Corporation
- Lancaster County Association of Realtors®
- Lancaster County Association of Township Supervisors
- Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Lancaster County Conservancy
- Lancaster County Conservation District
- Lancaster Community Indicators Project
- Lancaster County Planning Commission
- Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority
- Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership

While other community groups were unable to participate, the Coalition will continue to seek their input and support.

WHY WAS THIS EFFORT UNDERTAKEN?

There are two answers. First, time is not indefinite. The Coalition is united by a sense of urgency to move forward. Second, what also unites the Coalition is a passion for the “preferred future” of Lancaster County, a future earmarked by several recurrent themes:

Smart Growth and economic vitality are synonymous. A sustainable economy will enable Lancaster County to retain a low unemployment rate, remain a destination for economic development, and provide the means for the essential quality of life that we all should be able to seek.

Regional planning is essential. Many of the issues confronting Lancaster County cross political boundaries. Regional planning is essential to smart growth. The Coalition recommends that municipalities, school districts, community groups and county government work together on a regional basis to plan for and manage growth which will ensure economic vitality.

Diversity should be welcomed. Demographic, geographic and socioeconomic diversity is a key ingredient to the success of smart growth. All segments of Lancaster County’s population should be encouraged to participate in and contribute to the planning and implementation of smart growth practices. Communities should mobilize the resources of their residents to grow smarter and become actively involved in decision-making.

Education is crucial. In order to ensure a “smart” future, our elected and appointed officials, our fellow citizens and our children should be educated as to the long-term value of smart growth. Community awareness, on all levels, will drive the process and ultimately lead to smart growth practices as the norm, not the exception.

Funding is tantamount to success. From creating policies to increasing awareness to improving infrastructure, all aspects of smart growth presuppose that we have an obligation to pay our own way. As budgets are developed, county, municipal, industry and community groups must commit the dollars needed to implement smart growth.

Throughout the summer of 2003, the Coalition divided into six Task Forces to focus on public policy recommendations in the following areas:

- Agriculture
- Community Planning
- Economic Development/Vitality
- Housing
- Human Resources
- Natural and Cultural Resources

The purpose of this Executive Summary is to provide a succinct overview of the Coalition's Policy Paper that includes recommendations in full detail. Please read the Policy Paper in order to appreciate the complexity of the issues, their interrelationships and, most importantly, the task at-hand — to implement smart growth practices immediately. Copies of the Policy Paper are available by clicking on "Contact Us" at www.SmartLancasterCounty.com.

The following is a snapshot of recommendations from the six Task Forces:



AGRICULTURE

Lancaster County's farms contribute significantly to the community heritage and quality of life that we cherish. Our farms are also a precious economic resource that must be protected. We support Lancaster County's farmland preservation programs' continued focus on protecting the viability of a healthy agribusiness industry.

Agricultural preservation should occur outside of growth areas in a strategic fashion, reinforcing growth areas but not preventing long-term expansion.

Zoning and other regulations should be adopted to give farmers the flexibility to adapt to emerging technologies and the ever-changing demands of the marketplace.

The Coalition encourages compact development and adaptive reuse of existing buildings to decrease development pressures on greenfields.



COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Coalition recognizes that the key to community planning, as it relates to smart growth, is regional planning. Lancaster County's population will inevitably grow. How we address growth is the issue.

Regional Planning provides for efficient and coordinated decision-making and delivery of services as well as prudent use of capital when the demand for services increases.

Strategic Comprehensive Planning is essential to the development of a "preferred future" vision for the County and its communities. They create a framework for adoption of consistent land use policies and regulations and provide a means to systematically update a community's vision.

Designated Growth Areas represent one tool by which communities within a region can plan for growth in a manner consistent with their vision of the future.

Infrastructure is categorized as essential physical systems (water, power, etc.) and quality of life/community services (parks, emergency services, streetscapes, etc.) which should be regionally planned and coordinated, implemented, maintained, budgeted and funded.

Transportation issues impact every person and every business in this County. Transportation planning focuses on safety, mobility, capacity and improved access and is a critical component of regional planning efforts.

Capital Improvement implementation of adequate regional infrastructure improvements requires a commitment to absorbing initial costs just as the maintenance of existing infrastructure requires a commitment to budgeting funds for maintenance.

Land Use Regulations must support a community's vision for the future while also supporting smart growth. Land use regulations should be consistent, regional in context and flexible.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

Sustainable and diverse economic growth will enable Lancaster County to retain its low unemployment rate and remain a destination for economic investment. Aggressive marketing and workforce development initiatives will lead to economic growth.

Lancaster County should focus economic development efforts on core industry clusters to anticipate demand for workers in areas of economic growth.

Inter-municipal cooperation is essential to achieve consistency in permitting and taxation processes.

Existing infrastructure within growth areas should be maintained and improved to support the growth of business and industry.

Empty sites or buildings should be redeveloped or rehabilitated to provide new opportunities for business.



HOUSING

Providing adequate and affordable housing for the entire spectrum of our population is a countywide obligation. Every community in Lancaster County should ensure that sufficient housing choices exist for all residents. We recommend that private and public housing organizations undertake a study of the County's housing market to serve as a benchmark.

Homeownership and rental housing choices must be affordable for all segments of Lancaster County's population and uniformly available in every community.

Subdivision designs containing more affordable housing choices should receive a density bonus and fee waivers from local government.

The housing industry and municipalities should partner to create ordinances that make it easier to build traditional neighborhoods and mixed-use housing communities.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Workforce development is the keystone of Lancaster County's diversified economy and competitiveness in the marketplace. Educators and industry leaders must work together to ensure that students of all ages are presented with a variety of career opportunities, educational programs and training necessary for our workforce to remain skilled in emerging technologies.

Educators and employers should coordinate and increase internship and apprentice programs for high school students.

Career planning information should be fully integrated into middle and senior high school curricula.

Lifelong learning must be promoted to ensure Lancaster County's workforce has the ability to acquire the latest in technologically advanced skills.



NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Smart growth protects and enhances valuable natural and cultural resources while minimizing the impact of growth.

Protecting our air and water quality, preserving open spaces, encouraging adaptive reuse and nurturing our heritage is everyone's responsibility. Historic preservation efforts are vital in preserving the fabric of our communities and assist in the creation of economic opportunities.

Public and private organizations must work together to protect Lancaster County's environmental resources, particularly water quantity and quality.

A coordinated package of financial, regulatory and technical assistance incentives for historic preservation should be developed and made available to municipalities, property owners, developers and community organizations.

The future of smart growth in Lancaster County depends on one essential given: that we all have an obligation to make it work. Smart growth will require each of us to carry a vision of our “preferred future” forward and turn it into reality.

Elected officials, at all levels, must comprehend and then act in accordance with the County and community's vision.

Economic development organizations must strategically position Lancaster County ahead of the rest as an attractive place for which to do business.

Planning commissions must encourage and support sound planning and consistent, innovative land use regulations. Municipal planners/engineers and the professional design community, then have an obligation to properly use them.

Once given the tools to remain profitable, the agriculture community must utilize them in order to “save the farmer,” in addition to the farmland.

Developers must focus not just on building buildings, but on building communities — the places where we live, work, and play.

Conservation and preservation groups, developers and economic development organizations must work together to protect both the cherished resources and the vitality of the future of Lancaster County.

The community at-large must embrace economic diversity; therefore housing providers must be encouraged to develop affordable housing.

Those involved in workforce development must advocate for the tools needed to fulfill the promise of Lancaster County's economic future.

This Coalition asks the public to set aside differences, as we have, in support of the common good. Smart growth benefits us all.



How You Can Become Involved:

Call your local municipality to find out about committee meetings, volunteer opportunities, etc.

TOWNSHIPS:

Bart Township786-2877
Brecknock Township445-5933
Caernarvon Township445-4244
Clay Township733-9675
Colerain Township529-2570
Conestoga Township872-4301
Conoy Township367-4927
Drumore Township548-2660
Earl Township354-0773
East Cocalico Twp336-1720
East Donegal Twp426-3167
East Drumore Twp786-3622
East Earl Township354-5593
East Hempfield Twp898-3100
East Lampeter Twp393-1567
Eden Township786-7915
Elizabeth Township626-4302
Ephrata Township733-1044
Fulton Township548-3514
Lancaster Township291-1213
Leacock Township768-8585
Little Britain Twp529-2373
Manheim Twp569-6408
Manor Township397-4769
Martic Township284-2167
Mount Joy Twp653-4959
Paradise Township687-7711
Penn Township665-4508
Pequea Township464-2322
Providence Township786-7596
Rapho Township665-3827
Sadsbury Twp610-593-6796

Salisbury Township768-8059
Strasburg Township687-6233
Upper Leacock Twp656-9755
Warwick Township626-8900
West Cocalico Twp336-8720
West Donegal Twp367-7178
West Earl Township859-3201
West Hempfield Twp285-5554
West Lampeter Twp464-3731

CITY:

Lancaster City291-4711

BOROUGHES:

Adamstown Borough484-2280
Akron Borough859-1600
Christiana Borough610-593-5199
Columbia Borough684-2467
Denver Borough336-2831
East Petersburg Borough569-9282
Elizabethtown Borough367-1700
Ephrata Borough738-9222
Lititz Borough626-2044
Manheim Borough665-2461
Marietta Borough426-4143
Millersville Borough872-4645
Mount Joy Borough653-2300
Mountville Borough285-5547
New Holland Borough354-4567
Quarryville Borough786-2404
Strasburg Borough687-7732
Terre Hill Borough445-4581

The Coalition for Smart Growth offers a presentation to interested community groups and municipalities. To schedule a presentation, please call our marketing partner, Scheffey Advertising at 717-569-8274.

Visit our website, www.SmartLancasterCounty.com, for updates on the Coalition's progress.



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