

# CITY OF LANCASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

April, 1999

Burns, Bertsch & Harris, Inc.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	
I. Introduction	1
II. Situation Analysis	3
III. Planning Vision	8
IV. Planning Strategies	
10	
V. Policy Statement	14
VI. Land Use Plan	24
VII. Open Space Plan	26
Appendix A	
Current Land Use Map	
Slope Map	
Floodplain Map	
Hydric Soil Map	
Accessibility Map	
Appendix B	
Visioning Exercise Report	28
Interview Results	32
Open House	40

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Lancaster has been experiencing a change in its development pattern, and in response, prepared a development plan with general policy guidelines. This plan represents the work of the Lancaster Zoning Task Force as well as the citizens of Lancaster. It is intended to serve as a guide for future development decisions, ensuring that the decisions are consistent with Lancaster's specific vision of itself.

This plan begins with the development with an issues discussion. Issues of vision, conservation, and development are discussed.

The second section is a thorough assessment of the currently existing conditions and trends that can be seen with respect to all facets of the community's life: growth patterns, economic conditions, needs of the population, natural, cultural and historic resources, the ability of the land to sustain various intensities of uses, and the ability of the local government to provide necessary services and infrastructure.

Thirdly, a planning vision is established. The vision tries to incorporate the basic premise of fairness to all residents of the City, both lifelong residents and new.

The fourth section provides planning strategies that can be used to accomplish the planning vision.

The fifth section provides a Policy Statement aimed at framing the criteria, objectives and principles when implementing the City's development policies and regulations. The objectives and supporting principles in the Policy Statement provide a base for preserving Lancaster's historic heritage, conserving the natural resources and protecting property rights.

To legally support the underlying zoning and zoning changes in the City of Lancaster, a future land use plan is needed. The sixth section is the future land use plan and map that was developed by the Lancaster Zoning Task Force after receiving input from the citizens at the Open House. To supplement the future land use plan, an open space plan was also developed. This plan is provided in section seven.

## COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

### Residential

- Homes for the residents of the City should be set within a physical environment that offers quiet and privacy; which is healthy, safe, convenient, and attractive; which is consistent with the quality of life in the City of Lancaster; which ensures stable property values and affords open opportunities to all citizens.

**Industrial**

- Industrial uses should be developed on land that is appropriate in location, character, and extent for industrial use. Any industrial site shall be developed in a safe manner with enhanced site design and architectural compatibility with surrounding development.

**Commercial/Office**

- Commercial uses should be developed on land that is appropriate in location, character, and size to serve the residents and those persons who work in the area in a clean, attractive, architecturally compatible, safe, and convenient manner with the goods and services they require.

**Trafficways**

- The thoroughfare system within the City shall be planned, located, designed, constructed, and upgraded as growth occurs. The aim is to provide for the logical development of the City's road system and to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

**Recreational Facilities**

- The park system, aimed at serving the City, shall be planned, located, designed, and constructed to provide: recreational opportunities for the City, each neighborhood and sub-neighborhood with park grounds and playgrounds, and recreational facilities for use by all age groups.

**Open Space**

- The City of Lancaster's remaining natural features and other areas gained by annexation should be provided for and protected in keeping with the community vision.

**City Services and Facilities**

- City service facilities should be provided to efficiently meet the administrative, maintenance and public safety needs of the community.

**Environment and Appearance**

- The City of Lancaster's scenic beauty, unique features, local heritage, and quality development should be protected and enhanced through the implementation of the community vision.

## I. INTRODUCTION: Issues Discussion

### Issues of Vision

Everyone involved in the City of Lancaster, City Council, new and long-time residents, developers, major property owners, visitors, and others have an image or mental picture of the City of Lancaster. Each has a unique life perspective that influences their experience of the City and hopes for its future.

While those various perspectives sometimes represent competing interests, the Lancaster Zoning Task Force was able to define a series of vision statements that express the desire to preserve the historical areas and redevelop the industrial areas in an attempt to attract new development, thus creating jobs and increasing city's revenues.

### Issues of Conservation

The remaining open vistas of the City of Lancaster interlaced with the Hocking River corridor, the rolling hills, and undisturbed woodlots are threatened by haphazard development. The majority of land within the city limits is already "built-out" and continued haphazard development jeopardizes the remaining open space.

In the face of increasing development, the historic image of the City and quiet, solitude and natural beauty of the surrounding area that attracts new residents will be significantly altered if traditional development patterns continue. Some of the historic structures are becoming dilapidated or altered and their historic architecture is not being preserved. The limitations of the land to sustain development without damage to the environment has been tested. Before specific development regulations and guidelines are developed, it is wise to thoroughly inventory the natural, historic, archeological and cultural resources of the City. The carrying capacities of soils and water bodies as well as other constraints regarding other features must be detailed in the inventory. Further, this analysis will show that the entire city is not uniform with regard to types of soils, slopes and other natural features. Therefore, if any conservation criteria is adopted, it may vary between areas. The use of a Geographic Information System (GIS) database can be used for this purpose, and should continue to be consulted on a regular basis. This analysis then forms the scientific basis for criteria with which to establish development policies and to evaluate development proposals. A visioning process, as an expression of the aspirations of the City's residents, establishes the cultural basis for such criteria. Thus far

in the planning effort some analysis of the demand and population growth potential within the City has been undertaken<sup>1</sup>, and follows in the descriptive section titled "Situation Analysis". But, a complete analysis of land constraints has yet to take place.

### Issues of Development

Regional growth and development trends are expected to continue, especially after the Route 33 and Route 22 by-passes are constructed. The majority of pressure will be large lot single family housing. Since economic growth in and around the City of Lancaster has been slow, the majority of residents occupying the new housing will be working in the City of Columbus or Franklin County. This will further increase the traffic load. Also Hocking Township and the other surrounding townships are not financially able to provide the infrastructure needed to accommodate the expected levels of growth. Sewer services would need to be extended from the City of Lancaster. This is not a feasible option at this time. Without this service, higher density residential development would not be feasible due to the concentration of hydric soils in the area.

An additional issue is the appropriate amount of non-residential development to encourage to service the needs of the residents. What criteria of scale and other features are needed to enhance rather than detract from the visual experience?

Any development standards and regulations must be crafted to be legally defensible. Property owners cannot be denied all economic use of their land. It will be a challenge to guide growth through development patterns and traffic flows that enhance the landscape and allow the city to grow with a sense of community between all its residents.

---

<sup>1</sup> See later section, Situation Analysis, for population information.

## II. SITUATION ANALYSIS

All good plans begin with a thorough assessment of existing conditions. Though most residents already have a qualitative sense of what the data tells us, measuring the magnitude of change and potential for future change is an important activity of the planning process. Assessing the City of Lancaster's current situation is critical to understanding what is unique about the City and how that uniqueness can be enhanced or maintained. The tension between three major elements: the natural setting or what nature put there; the cultural setting, or what its inhabitants put there, and the image residents and visitors have of the city, is what adds up to what Lancaster is today. Certainly, there are "planning problems" that need to be resolved. But without understanding the context or setting in which these problems arose, we may risk destroying what makes this area special.

### Exterior Pressure & Regional Influence

Fairfield County is one of the fastest growing counties in Ohio, with a projected year 2010 population of 143,550. Northwestern Fairfield County is the fastest growing area. The proximity to the southeastern Franklin County border makes this part of Fairfield County an attractive location, especially for residential development. However, the construction of the Route 33 by-pass will provide more access to the City of Lancaster and the surrounding townships, especially Hocking, Greenfield and Berne Townships. This will encourage more growth. The extent of this growth depends largely on as yet unknown fluctuations in the economy. If the local economy remains strong, the extent of absorption of already "approved" development proposals and the capability of remaining undeveloped land to absorb additional growth will be the physical limiting factors. None-the-less, pressure to develop the areas surrounding the by-pass can be expected to be asserted well into the next decade.

### Socio-Economic Characteristics

The City of Lancaster is the most populated municipality in Fairfield County. However, the overall growth rate in the City of Lancaster is less than 1 percent per year. Fairfield County is experiencing a much higher growth rate than the City. In 1990, the population was 34,507 or 14,029 households. The Ohio Department of Development estimates that Lancaster had a population of 35,442 in 1996, an overall increase of 2.7 percent. The average household size in Lancaster at that time was 2.46 persons per unit compared

to the statewide average of 2.8 persons per household.<sup>2</sup> In 1990, 15.7 percent of householders in Lancaster were older than age 65, compared to 13 percent statewide.

Over 42 percent of the housing units were built prior to 1950. The average price of an existing home in Lancaster is approximately \$96,000. However, the average price of a newly constructed home in Lancaster is \$116,000. The corresponding average mortgage payment based on the average price of an existing home is approximately \$588 per month, in addition to property taxes and maintenance. The median household income in 1990 was approximately \$22,430. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has stated that no more than 30 percent of a households monthly income should go to pay the mortgage, property taxes, insurance and utilities. Therefore, it would be difficult for the average household in Lancaster to purchase a home. Long time residents of the City, for so long as they desire to remain in their long time family homes, will not find increasing housing values per se to be a burden, since their homes were acquired at lower prices and may even be "paid off". For residents on fixed incomes, the most pertinent issue of affordability is to what extent the property tax (which increases along with value of their home and the expense of providing ever greater community services) becomes burdensome. Some of those already living in Lancaster and desiring to remain may at some point require different housing that is not only affordable, but more importantly is efficient, easy to maintain and in close proximity to convenience services and health care facilities.

Occupational, industry and income data for 1990 show that 83 percent of the City of Lancaster's workers over sixteen were private wage and salary workers. Approximately 7 percent of the workforce was employed by the local government while 10 percent was employed by either the state or federal government. Recognizing that this data is nearly ten years old, it can only be used as a baseline at this time.

Many of the large employment centers within Lancaster have closed or are in the process of closing. The industrial base has experienced limited growth and therefore many individuals have been forced to seek employment outside of Lancaster's borders. According to the 1990 Census, 43 percent of the workforce works outside of the City of Lancaster. Based on the 1990 Census, nearly 80 percent commute as single riders via automobiles. The typical commute averages forty to forty-five minutes. The high proportion of residential land use and limited employment centers in Lancaster, coupled with the lack of public transit, creates a large amount of traffic on roads in the

---

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Data Users Center

City. The likelihood of reducing more trips into and out of Lancaster is minimal, but working towards a more varied land use mix (e.g. more localized personal services and increasingly flexible work arrangements) may help reduce further congestion.

## Land Use

The City of Lancaster's significant natural features - topography, Hocking River corridor, and mature woodlands - combine with various man-made improvements to create a distinct visual appearance. Very few agricultural areas remain in the City. The majority of agricultural land is located on the western periphery with a small concentration also located in the southeastern portion of the City. More contemporary ranch style and multi-level homes with mailboxes line the roadways on individual lots of one acre or more. Newer residential development is concentrated within several large scale subdivisions that by physical design have the effect of segregating the residents from interaction with the rest of the area.

The City of Lancaster has a rich history which is reflected in the downtown core and along the once rural roadways leading out of the City. The majority of historic structures in the downtown core are occupied and continue to be maintained. However, a few of the structures along Main Street are in need of repair/restoration.

Currently, most of City is developed. Residential uses, mostly single family, make up the majority of land use in the City. There are a limited number of multi-family housing sites. This could potentially be a problem for the City because of the high number of individuals living below the poverty line.

Nonresidential uses, as shown on the "Land Use Map" (Appendix A), are scattered throughout the City, some as non conforming uses. Industry is concentrated along West Fair Avenue and along railroad lines on the Southeast. Some light manufacturing can also be found along State Route 33. State Route 33 also serves as the main commercial strip. Main Street also serves as a commercial corridor. Public and quasi public facilities including City and County offices, fire/safety facilities & utilities make up only a small percentage of the overall land use. The majority of these facilities are located in the downtown district.

The major changes in current land use for the near future can be expected to be from the redevelopment of existing structures. For example, many of the historic homes in the downtown core have been converted to offices. It is expected that this trend will continue. It is also expected that commercial redevelopment will continue along State Route 33. Remaining raw land will most likely be converted to residential uses of varying densities. Thus housing will occupy an increasing amount of the City's land area. At

this time, the City of Lancaster's retail and service base is capable of supporting these new additions.

## Natural Environment

Historically, development in the City of Lancaster has followed the path of least "natural" resistance. Most of the City's recent development has occurred in the level areas along the Hocking River corridor. Much of the City is relatively flat with only a few areas near the far northern and southern boundaries experiencing slope difficulties. (Refer to the Slope Map found in the Appendix A)

The environmental consulting firm of Bennett & Williams has prepared a series of maps which paint a picture of the natural environment. A significant portion of the city is in the 100 year floodplain, as illustrated by the Flood Plain Map found in Appendix A. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is in the process of tightening federal regulations regarding development in the floodplain. If these regulations pass, development will no longer be allowed in the 100 year flood plain. If properties are damaged, FEMA will pay for the damages but restrict new development on the site. The City of Lancaster will be greatly affected by this new legislation. As a proactive measure, tighter floodplain regulations must be enforced. The open space plan developed for the City suggests that floodplains be used as active recreation areas such as walking or bike paths.

Along the floodplain and on the southeastern side of the City, hydric soils are present. (Refer to Hydric Soil Map in the Appendix A) These soils have extremely high water tables, slow permeability and often experience severe ponding. In addition, these soils serve as groundwater recharge areas. Many of Lancaster's industrial sites are located near these hydric soils. Thus increases the groundwater contamination potential. These soils also limit the type of development that can occur. Buildings constructed on hydric soils should not have basements, due to flooding problems.

Development Suitability Thus, the plan must consider the natural limitations of the land and its capacity to sustain and recover from increased human activity. Fairfield County is in the process of developing a multi-layered geographic information system (e.g. GIS). This technology has been used to map these complex factors and to identify those areas that are most suitable for conservation or development based on the type of soil, topography, underlying geology drainage, and availability of utilities. All of these factors combined yield varying degrees of suitability throughout the City.

Infrastructure Even if development does not continue, demands will continue to be placed on Lancaster's

infrastructure - sewer, water, roadways, schools and other community services. Since demand for future development is expected to outpace previous growth, the issue of "adequate capacity" of that infrastructure must guide the discussion of city development policies. Once infrastructure is in place, the issue of the cost of maintaining the system will become the critical issue.

Water & Sanitary Sewer Plans have been developed and are maintained by the individual water and water pollution control departments. Each department provides service to a limited number of residents outside the city limits. However, this is not the current policy. Before utilities can be extended, approval must be obtained from the Utilities Service Commission. It is their policy not to extend services beyond city limits.

Transportation System The origin and destination of traffic within Lancaster is strongly influenced not only by the location of employment and intensity of development, but also by the mix of land use types ( i.e. proportion of commercial, residential, etc.). Capacity for most arterial and collector streets and their respective intersections is also limited and confounded by the proliferation of driveway and curb cuts. The Accessibility Map found in Appendix A shows that the majority of the City is located within 1500 feet of a road. Traffic generated by newer development, as well as commuters utilizing routes that traverse Lancaster to other areas (e.g. Columbus) has contributed significantly to congestion, especially along Route 33.

Planned roadway improvements such as the Route 33 and Route 22 by-passes, will facilitate movement around the city and at the same time subject additional land to pressure for residential and non-residential development. These improvements will also generate more trips per peak hour on surrounding roads, including collectors and local streets.

Additionally, the current roadways need to be prioritized for improvements.

### III. PLANNING VISION

The overall planning **VISION for the City of Lancaster** includes both a set of visual images and a plan. The vision resulted from exercises conducted over the past year with the Lancaster Zoning Task Force as well as citizens. For a complete summary of those results, see Appendix B.

#### ❖ **Visual Images**

The overall vision is reflected in six images that maintain a sense of community within the City of Lancaster. Having a "vision" or mental picture of the City's appearance in the future provides a framework for planning decisions. Without such a vision, haphazard development can occur placing excessive demands upon the City's infrastructure as well as school facilities. With a vision, development could occur within the framework of the "preferred image". The following elements of Lancaster's vision establish the "preferred image" and although not definitive, they at least serve as a beginning.

#### **1. Incorporation of Historic Architectural Features into New Commercial Building Design**

The integrity of existing historic areas can be preserved and enhanced by requiring that new structures within historic areas incorporate historic architectural features. Also, this will create a stronger community image.

#### **2. Conservation of Remnant Natural, Cultural and Historic Areas which Serve as Community Identifiers**

Remnant natural areas or those areas that were left after Lancaster was developed should be carefully preserved. The importance of the communities' character cannot be overstated. Historic and cultural areas are finite resources which cannot be taken for granted.

#### **3. City, County and State Roads Linking Communities and Creating Edges for Residential Neighborhoods**

Major arterials should serve as edges to neighborhoods, defining each neighborhood and serving as a travel corridor linking residents with other neighborhoods and surrounding communities. These areas could be enhanced if additional area along their respective rights-of-way were used for alternative modes of transportation (e.g. bikeways, trailways, and/or natural buffers, etc.).

#### **4. Local Roadways Connecting Neighborhoods and Linking Centralized Community Facilities or Park, Recreation and Open Space Areas**

Lancaster needs a system of defined collector roads, as a means of safely accessing neighborhoods and reducing dependence on other city and county roads. Such a system of "connectors" or collector streets can link areas in a way that no other roadway is positioned to do. Collectors primary role is to move traffic from the neighborhoods to the major arterials. Their limited access, moderate volumes and typically centralized location create an excellent opportunity to link neighborhoods and facilities that are community oriented (e.g. parks, recreation and open space) in such a way that ensures optimum utilization.

#### **5. Park and Recreation Areas Prominently Located within Residential Neighborhoods**

In an area that now appears to be predominantly "built-out", the need to reserve open space for future use is readily apparent. Open space should be required to be set aside as part of any development proposal. Such open space should include broad bands of natural land adjacent to major streets and collector streets. The natural corridors could define neighborhoods, provide areas for walking trails and bikeways in addition to providing a rural flavor to any development.

#### **6. Development of Community and/or Neighborhood Scale Nonresidential Uses**

Prior to any non-residential development being authorized, criteria needs to be established aimed at assuring that a community need is being met. The City of Lancaster also serves as a regional market for much of Fairfield and Hocking Counties. At this time it appears that the regional market is adequately being served by existing facilities. Priority should be given to facilities that will serve the citizens of the City of Lancaster. When guidelines are established and followed, the adverse impact of retail uses, can be successfully mitigated. Such mitigation efforts, in addition to assuring that a community need is being met, should establish locational limitations, square footage maxims per building, buffering parking from view, and minimizing ground signage. In all circumstances any nonresidential use should be designed to reflect the small town character of the community.

## IV. PLANNING STRATEGIES

A number of approaches could be chosen to make Lancaster's vision and plan a reality. Taking a strategic approach helps focus the City's efforts in the right direction early in the implementation process and incorporates what is truly unique about the City. When followed, these strategies are designed to bring the plans recommendations to life in a timely manner with responsibilities shared by all of the stakeholders in the process.

### ❖ Conservation Strategies

#### **1. Limit Density within Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

Many of the undeveloped sites within the city limits are located on or near environmentally sensitive areas such as flood plains, hydric soils or steep slopes. Development on these sites should be controlled. One way to accomplish this is to limit densities. An overlay district could be incorporated that develops standards to regulate growth. In this way, additional development standards can be incorporated to regulate growth without affecting the underlying permitted residential uses and densities. This concept becomes crucial if the City anticipates annexing into the surrounding rural townships.

#### **2. Emphasize More Creative Design**

Encourage the use of more creative design, such as the incorporation of historic architectural features into new commercial design. Also, the use of the "Conservation Development Standards" will allow development of maximum gross yield of building lots while retaining protected natural areas.

#### **3. Create Standards for Developing and Redeveloping Each Type of Land Form**

Under conventional development using minimum uniform setbacks, the area for siting the building increases as the size of the lot increases. As a result, the amount of area that can be disturbed during the development process increases dramatically as the size of the lot increases. Another alternative is to reduce the area in which the building can be located to minimize site disruption.

#### **4. Utilize Conservation Easements to Preserve Native Landscape**

The cost of acquiring property for natural or cultural resource conservation is often possible only at a considerable expense. Other alternatives contain inherent legal risks such as the taking of property for public purpose. In the case where homeowner associations are not in place, an open space set aside or conservation easement may be more appropriate than fee simple acquisition. As an agreement between property owners and the holder of the easement (governing treatment of the property by current and future owners), the conservation easement allows the property owner to continue owning and using a property while assuring its protection from development.

#### **5. Develop a Tree Ordinance**

When office or commercial centers are constructed or redeveloped, require tree plantings along roadways and in parking lots. This will not only enhance appearance, it will reduce runoff. Trees will also reduce the "urban heat island" effect created by blacktop and parking lots. Requirements may be as simple as requiring the planting of one tree for every five parking spaces created. The trees will also serve as buffers between uses.

### **❖ Development Strategies**

#### **1. Establish Maximum Development Densities Based on Land Capability and Infrastructure Availability**

Development densities permitted by the current zoning code often differ from what some land is capable of supporting and what the infrastructure (e.g. sewer, water, roadways) can support. The City should modify existing development standards to ensure that land can sustain the additional development.

#### **2. Establish Neighborhood Development Standards**

Conventional subdivision development maximizes the amount of land devoted to private home ownership. In order to retain as much of the site's existing natural features as possible, planned development regulations take yard space (typically under private ownership) and place it into common areas. The zoning code should require a set-a-side of useable open space for park use to meet the needs of the occupants of the development. This could be accomplished through land dedication requiring at least fifteen percent of the sites' gross acreage to be designated open space or an established

fee in lieu of dedication or the open space could consist of natural areas set aside for the use of residents.

### **3. Limit Scale of Nonresidential Uses to Neighborhood Level, Professional and Personal Service Uses**

Community and regional scale nonresidential, commercial and office, uses are currently located along Route 33. Proposed non-residential uses within the City of Lancaster should focus upon those uses which are directed at meeting the convenience needs of City residents and be oriented to the neighborhood.

In order to avoid a strip-like appearance along future roadways, commercial/office developments should be concentrated at the major arterial and collector street intersections. Such proposals should be limited to two acres at the intersection. In addition, a planned review process and guidelines for nonresidential uses should be made a part of the review process and incorporated into a planned development district for commercial uses. This includes criteria related to maximum square footage, building orientation, parking location and hours of operation. In addition, signage shall be limited to the structure itself and landscape screens with indigenous trees buffering should be required.

### **4. Create Mixed Use, Pedestrian-oriented Areas, with Time Limits on Approvals and Construction Phasing**

Current City zoning contains separate districts for each land use type. If an applicant wishes to create a mixed use district, it requires separate commercial, office and residential zoning. The original intent of planned unit development ordinances was to allow a mix of uses with certain limitations on the relationship of one use to another and the total amount of land area devoted to each use. Developers can then utilize one use to buffer another (e.g. buffering residential districts from commercial districts with attached housing) and still maintain the image of one development.

To avoid speculation and to be sure that development plans are not out-dated, city officials should place shorter time limits on development approvals (e.g. one year) and limit the amount of time permitted for project development (e.g. five years). Applicants may extend the time period but only after Planning Commission review.

### **5. Create an Historic Overlay District with an Architectural Review Board**

As previously discussed, the historic resources within the City of Lancaster are finite. Efforts should be taken to

ensure the resources are preserved as an integral part of the community. To maintain existing property values, attract new business, and ensure the continued vitality of the historic district, limitations on redevelopment in the downtown area are needed.

#### **6. Develop and Enforce a Sign Ordinance**

The community has expressed a concern about the existing state of sign blight in the community. To enhance the overall appearance of the community, a sign ordinance must be developed and enforced.

#### **7. Optimize Utilization of Park Land Located Adjacent to Other Community Facilities and Establish Links with Neighborhoods**

The provision of open space for parks and recreation is a key ingredient in the overall open space concept for the City of Lancaster. The City of Lancaster can procure these open space areas either through the planned development regulations, acquisition or dedication, common ownership or conservation easements. An additional requirement for "fees-in-lieu" of land should be applied when appropriate land is not available or additional land would duplicate existing facilities.

#### **8. Adopt Access Management Guidelines and Modify Existing Network Before Expanding**

Major improvements can be made through the efficiency of a local transportation network if access is controlled. This requires the development of an access management plan that can be derived from state and county guidelines which can also be made a part of all development review proposals. Systematically widening roadways in response to increasing traffic does not completely solve the problem of congestion.

Reducing the number of entrance points along Route 33 will help traffic flow within the City.

## V. POLICY STATEMENT

Subject to its power to act, the Planning Commission and City Council shall adopt and be bound by this Policy Statement. Modification of this statement shall follow the procedures used in the initial adoption of the Policy Statement, thereby offering the opportunity for discussion and change.

### ❖ PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this planning policy statement is to:

1. **Ensure Consistency.** Promote the legal requirement of reasonableness by avoiding arbitrary decisions and furthering the uniform application of the various planning procedures.
2. **Promote Efficiency.** Simplify the preparation of materials for Planning Commission action through the provision of guidelines and criteria. This will promote expeditious disposition in the interest of both the public and the petitioner.
3. **Establish a Public Record.** Provide a clear statement of policies upon which the community may rely.
4. **Maintain a Basis of Planning.** Assure the judicious use of resources. Planning decision, such as zoning actions, need to be founded upon adopted principles and objectives. This will assist in accomplishing the intended purpose, and avoid the legal problems of arbitrary and capricious actions.
5. **Develop a Planning Method.** Promote the rational utilization of land and the economical provision of required facilities and services both for the individual, and collectively in the public interest. This is accomplished through the allocation of land to a variety of uses based upon desired community objectives and intensity criteria.
6. **Ensure Adoption, Amendment and Binding Effect.** Establish formal procedures for the adoption and amendment of this Policy Statement recognizing that there is a need for continuity and community support.

## ❖ POLICIES WITH GENERAL APPLICABILITY

### **TOTAL COMMUNITY INTEREST**

Planning loses its vitality as well as its credibility if it: (1) becomes a mere composite of neighborhood desires; (2) is abused to advance the interest only of certain individuals or special interest groups; (3) is implemented arbitrarily or capriciously; or (4) becomes unreasonable or confiscatory in its application to private properties.

It is our policy that the general welfare of the area in its entirety must be served by all planning measures. Therefore, general, as distinguished from individual, interests will be furthered.

Economic benefit to individuals shall be subordinate to the community economic considerations. Implementation of planning shall not be conducted solely for the purpose of increasing value.

### **REASONS FOR ACTIONS**

The Planning Commission and, where appropriate, City Council, shall list its findings of fact and reasons for recommendations and actions.

### **BY-PASSED LAND**

In order to prevent development inconsistent with the plan, requests for development must demonstrate to the Commission that all adjacent land could be developed consistent with existing zoning and/or an approved overall development plan.

### **CHECK LIST ANALYSIS**

To promote a systematic review of major development, and all rezoning amendments, considerations shall be analyzed by using the following questions as guidelines:

1. Would the proposed development be contrary to the future land use plan?
2. Is the development (change) contrary to the established land use pattern?
3. Would change create an isolated, unrelated district?
4. Would change alter adversely the population density pattern?
5. Will the proposed development increase the load on public facilities beyond reasonable limits (water, sewers, streets, schools, etc.)?
6. Are the present development boundaries logically drawn in relation to existing conditions?

7. Will the change adversely influence living conditions in the surrounding area?
8. Will the change seriously affect the natural character of the land to the point of creating potential hazards?
9. Have the basic land use conditions changed?
10. Will approval be a deterrent to the improvement or development of adjacent property in accordance with existing plans and regulations?
11. Will the proposal constitute a grant of a special privilege to an individual which will not be granted to others of at the expense of the general welfare?
12. Are there reasons why the property cannot be used as it is presently planned or zoned?
13. Is the change out of scale with the area's needs? The neighborhood's needs? The City's needs? The region's needs?
14. Are there alternative undeveloped sites for the proposed use(s)?

## ❖ SPECIFIC ISSUES

### **AESTHETICS OR APPEARANCE**

The City of Lancaster's residents have identified the preservation of the historic areas and natural character of the surrounding land as a high priority concern. Proper care for these two amenities are of economic as well as aesthetic benefit to the citizens, present and future, because it creates a better quality of life. The desire to preserve and protect the area in an attractive manner should continue to be an important determinant for development approaches.

### **BUFFERING**

Physical separation of uses through transitional areas, open space, fencing, and/or planting areas will be required. The extent of the application of this effort ought be determined by the degree of incompatibility between the uses.

### **REDEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

As the City of Lancaster continues to grow, there will be increasing pressure to modify existing land use patterns within the older portions of the City as well as land adjacent to major thoroughfares. The existing land use pattern has occurred over time and the parcel patterns and uses are appropriate for those times and uses. However, as private owners explore redevelopment opportunities, and seek new zoning patterns from the City consistent with those opportunities, it is imperative that land use patterns, configurations and arrangement reflecting the public

interest be considered. As redevelopment occurs, concern must be given first to the historic importance of the area under question and the effect that the change will have upon the historic image of Lancaster; secondly, recognition must be given to the need to reassemble land from the existing parcel make-up into tracts which could accommodate the proposed uses. An alternative to the creation of new parcel configurations might include joint owner agreements or other legally binding arrangements which would result in meeting the principles of the plan.

#### **PROPOSALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT**

All redevelopment proposals must meet the following general requirements:

1. Provide a "sketch plan" identifying existing land uses and proposed zoning classifications and uses.
2. Describe the effect upon the existing street pattern and designate ingress/egress patterns improving traffic management within the general area.
3. Establish open space or historic easements where appropriate.
4. Establish buffer areas where redevelopment other than for single family purposes occurs adjacent to existing single family developments.
5. Identify "special needs" unique to the redevelopment in consultation with the Planning Commission.

#### **PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION**

As the City continues to develop, there is an increasing need to have a people oriented, pedestrian environment. It is the City of Lancaster's intention to encourage bicycle and pedestrian linkages.

#### **TRAFFIC (ARTERIES AND ACCESS)**

The tremendous public investment in traffic-carrying facilities including streets, highways, and expressways must be protected by preventing indiscriminate access and strip development. In the review development requests, including rezoning requests of land abutting major streets, adequacy of right-of-way width will be determined by the Planning Commission

#### **PLANNED CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENTS**

In keeping with the planning principles, Planned Conservation Developments, including a mix of land uses, will be encouraged where appropriate in areas annexed to the City.

## ❖ COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES AND SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES

The following areas are considered vital to maintain the community's well-being and the positive image which has contributed to the City's growth. Their protection will receive continuing consideration. These principles should supplement the previous "VISION and STRATEGIES" and not be viewed as alternatives.

### **RESIDENTIAL**

#### **A. Objectives:**

Homes for the residents of the City should be set within a physical environment that offers quiet and privacy; which is healthy, safe, convenient, and attractive; which is consistent with the quality of life in the City of Lancaster; which ensures stable property values and affords open opportunities for all citizens.

#### **B. Principles:**

1. Permit a rate of residential growth which does not exceed the ability of the City to provide adequate services, so as to avoid undue congestion or undesirable conditions brought on by high-density, overcrowding, and/or rapid development.
2. Assure adequate living space for all by taking into account existing development patterns and demands for public services.
3. Provide a variety of dwelling unit types throughout the community.
4. Provide a sound framework for neighborhoods by preventing them from being bisected by major trafficways or isolated from necessary community services.
5. Ensure thoroughfares and utilities (water, sewage, storm drainage) which are adequate for the proposed development. Development will not be permitted until assurances are given that such facilities will be provided.
6. Assure traffic safety through the design of street systems which discourage through-traffic in residential neighborhoods and by severely limiting uses which generate non-residential traffic.
7. Encourage development of neighborhoods that are attractive through the careful preservation of existing topography, trees, and other natural attributes; and the promotion of other measures aimed at maintaining an aesthetically desirable environment.

8. Reduce automobile orientation by requiring paths to be completed within and between developments and encouraging the use of other pedestrian/bikeway linkages within and between developments.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

### **A. Objectives:**

Industrial uses should be developed on land that is appropriate in location, character, and extent for industrial use. Any industrial site shall be developed in a safe manner with enhanced site design and architectural compatibility with surrounding development.

### **B. Principles:**

1. Permit those types of industries which will stabilize and diversify the economic base.
2. Create separations between industrial and residential neighborhood development by locating industrial district so that they will be buffered.
3. Reduce traffic congestion by locating major industrial uses near major thoroughfares and interchanges and on the edge of the City where they are more accessible.
4. Prohibit air and noise pollution and/or other pollution by requiring industries with such potential to be developed as planned developments which incorporate special buffering requirements aimed at eliminating negative impacts and also by locating them a reasonable distance from major residential areas.

## **COMMERCIAL/OFFICE**

### **A. Objectives:**

Commercial uses should be developed on land that is appropriate in location, character, and size to serve the residents and those persons who work in the area in a clean, attractive, architecturally compatible, safe, and convenient manner with the goods and services they require.

### **B. Principles:**

1. Assure logical access to goods and services by encouraging planned, integrated commercial areas of compatible size with surrounding uses, and in proper locations to serve the residents.
2. Encourage desirable, productive commercial land development by creating sites with street access that can be developed in harmony with surrounding land uses in the area.

3. Encourage attractiveness by incorporating standards within the development process which will result in well designed commercial areas, integrating parking, shops, landscaping, and adequate buffering.
4. Assure compatibility of style and scale of commercial and office development with adjacent development through such means as the establishment and retention of adequate buffer areas and control of access to the site.
5. Preserve privacy for abutting and nearby properties by requiring appropriate setbacks from streets and internal property lines in keeping with adjacent development.
6. Ensure harmonious relationships of commercial and office development with trafficways and other land uses by locating commercial and office areas on improved major thoroughfares, and requiring adherence to sound traffic principles.
7. Small scale commercial developments may be considered as part of neighborhood development if such development is "nested" and oriented to the residents.

## **TRAFFICWAYS**

### **A. Objectives:**

The thoroughfare system within the City shall be planned, located, designed, constructed, and upgraded as growth occurs. The aim is to provide for the logical development of the City's road system and to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

### **B. Community Development Principles:**

1. Provide easy access to all public facilities, particularly schools and parks.
2. Protect residential neighborhoods from through-traffic or non-residential traffic.
3. Internalize traffic to encourage sound development patterns.
4. Provide for the separation of transportation modes within neighborhoods and along major streets where desirable for the public safety.
5. Develop streetscapes as attractive and integral parts of public open spaces, including an appropriate setback from the centerlines of all major thoroughfares as a natural buffer.
6. Reduce automobile orientation by requiring pedestrian paths to be completed within and between developments and encouraging the use of other pedestrian/bikeway linkages within and between residential, retail developments and office parks.
7. Reduce traffic hazards and preserve investments by avoiding spot and strip commercial development, and the

inappropriate intrusion of commercial development into residential and industrial areas.

### **C. Traffic Movement Principles:**

1. Provide a variety of street systems, specifically designed to service the distinct traffic needs in the area, including: an expressway system, a major street system, a collector street system, local streets, and boulevards where desirable.
2. Provide for access to all developed or readily developed property.
3. Maintain needed traffic capacity and desired quality of flow in the system by limiting on-street parking, spacing curb cuts, and providing direct access to residential uses exclusively.
4. Design all thoroughfare and terminal facilities, including parking, with sufficient capacity to accommodate anticipated traffic based upon intensity of projected and planned land use.
5. Control the intensity of land use to keep traffic volume on any thoroughfare from exceeding its planned capacity; and whenever it is considered desirable to modify the land use intensity, the capacities of the affected thoroughfares shall be modified accordingly. Street improvements shall occur within a reasonable time to accommodate traffic generation. Determination of construction schedule and financing agreements for road improvements shall occur prior to rezoning.
6. Use of private roads and easements may be considered as an alternative to dedicated public roads when developing the Conservation Concept.
7. Plan the street system and land uses to keep commercial and industrial traffic off residential streets.

### **RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

#### **A. Objectives:**

The park system, aimed at serving the City, shall be planned, located, designed, and constructed to provide: recreational opportunities for the City, each neighborhood and sub-neighborhood with park grounds and playgrounds, and recreational facilities for use by all age groups.

#### **B. Park Development Principles:**

1. Provide neighborhood parks for basic recreational opportunities which are easily accessible to local residents.
2. Provide specialty parks for meeting community-wide needs, and protecting unique landmarks and environmentally significant areas.
3. Locate parks to enhance unique landmarks and environmentally significant areas.

4. Maintain cooperative provision and use of school-park sites and facilities to provide maximum recreational opportunities.
5. Carefully review park sites accepted for use by the City to ensure suitability for the projected needs of a given area. Such review will include review of the topography, nature of the soils, vegetation, and surrounding land uses.
6. Promote and encourage the dedication and development of bicycle and pedestrian linkages between parks.
7. Maintain current levels of recreational amenities to ensure maximum usage and enjoyment by the residents.

## **OPEN SPACE**

### **A. Objectives:**

The City of Lancaster's remaining natural features and other areas gained by annexation should be provided for and protected in keeping with the community vision.

### **B. Principles:**

1. Provide an interconnected open space system to permanently maintain visual and functional linkages between parks and other open spaces.
2. Explore the use of the conservation concept through the acquisition of development rights and easements as development occurs and preserve open space, scenic views, woodlands, wetlands, and flood plains.
3. Preserve natural features such as woodland and ravines through strict enforcement of well defined flood plain, wetland, and storm water management regulations.
4. Avoid erosion and sedimentation by encouraging preventative measures during the development process.

## **CITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

### **A. Objectives:**

City service facilities should be provided to efficiently meet the administrative, maintenance and public safety needs of the community.

### **B. Principles:**

1. Locate administrative offices primarily in one area.
2. Provide a primary focus for community activities and City services within a community center.
3. Maintain City services commensurate with available revenues based on sound fiscal practice.

4. As development occurs, ensure that the private sector participates in infrastructure improvements through rights-of-way dedication and road construction.

## **ENVIRONMENT AND APPEARANCE**

### **A. Objectives:**

The City of Lancaster's scenic beauty, unique features, local heritage, and quality development should be protected and enhanced through the implementation of the community vision.

### **B. Principles:**

1. Encourage high standards in public and private building design and landscape site design.
2. Promote building and site designs that are of good scale and in harmony with permanent neighboring buildings and the natural surroundings.
3. Promote site planning in which setbacks and yards are in excess of zoning restrictions to provide an interesting relationship among buildings.
4. Enhance the visibility and character of Memorial Drive, including the restoration of natural vegetation along its right-of-way.
5. Recognize that the streams, ravines, and wooded areas are very important environmental elements within the community and should be preserved, where appropriate.
6. Develop an open space system which protects environmentally critical areas such as floodways and drainage corridors, against encroachment; preserves significant vistas and views; provides relief from expanses of development and pavement; and offers opportunities for development of systems of greenways and sites for outdoor recreation including public use of the rail right-of-way.
7. Maintain and enhance the visibility of those elements that build the image of the City such as the historic downtown and the rural character of the surrounding areas.

## VI. LAND USE PLAN

### Prologue & Intent

This Plan portrays a vision of future land use patterns within the City of Lancaster. It is not the intent of the plan to force or encourage uses other than those presently existing within the area. Rather, the Plan provides a basis for a public policy dialog and the framework for the orderly development of the area. The existing land use pattern has occurred over time and the parcel patterns and uses are appropriate for those times and uses. However, as private owners explore redevelopment opportunities, and seek new zoning opportunities from the City reflecting those opportunities, it is imperative that land use patterns, configurations and arrangements reflecting the public interest be considered. This Plan provides a guide for those discussions.

The Land Use Plan map for Lancaster is very general in nature. In contrast to zoning maps, which display exact zoning classifications for each parcel, this map does not recognize or follow property lines and is based upon very broad use categories, as described below. As such, the Land Use Plan map does not dictate how specific parcels should be zoned in the future. Rather, the Planning Commission and Council should consider the map to be only one of several tools available to assist them in making land use recommendations and decisions. The information contained on the map should always be supplemented by impact studies and other site specific information.

### Development Principles

1. All development proposals should be accompanied by a "Sketch Plan".
2. The Plan does not commit the City to specific patterns nor rezoning decisions. Discussion, related to specific proposals and the appropriate new zoning classifications, will only be considered as proposals are made to the City. The assumption is that existing land use patterns and uses are reasonable and the proposal to modify that pattern and those uses will further promote the public health, safety and morals.
3. The Plan suggests an "Open Space Concept" as the foundation for the community, preserving the natural character of the land, protecting its cultural heritage and framing an economically vital future. It may be possible to provide open space linkages and/or pathways through negotiated easements or land trusts.

## **Designations**

### **Residential**

For the purposes of this map, a "residential" land use designation includes all residential development (single-family, multi-family, condominium, etc.) including estate residential and up to and including residential designations where more intense residential development might be appropriate.

### **Commercial**

Commercial areas may contain retail or wholesale businesses, offices or highway commercial establishments. The amount of development, its intensity and signage requirements will vary according to specific characteristics of the proposed location.

The use of access management as a way to reduce traffic congestion is encouraged in all commercial districts. Also, a pedestrian orientation is encouraged in all commercial redevelopment along State Route 33.

### **Mixed Use**

Mixed use areas are areas in transition and may contain a variety of uses including: multi-family residential, offices, retail businesses and light manufacturing. These areas may also contain single-family residential if proper buffering is in place.

The use of historic preservation techniques or architectural review is recommended in the downtown mixed use district. In the other districts, off-street parking and special buffering requirements are encouraged. The amount of development, its intensity and signage requirements will vary according to specific characteristics of the proposed location.

### **Industrial**

Industrial areas include both heavy and light industrial, manufacturing, and wholesale uses, as well as some office and highway commercial development. The use of planned development districts, emphasizing quality development and open space, is recommended.

When industrial development abuts residential development, special buffering requirements will be encouraged. Signage and lighting requirements will vary depending on the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhoods.



## VII. OPEN SPACE PLAN

### Introduction

The Lancaster Open Space Plan reflects a number of policies aimed at maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in Lancaster. The plan reflects the central role that recreation, open space and leisure activities play within the community. It is important to note that a successful "open space" element builds upon a public-private partnership. Some elements will be publicly owned, such as parks and recreation lands and facilities, and other protected lands; others like the floodplains, streams, steep topography and cultural sites may be in private ownership. All contribute to the special character of Lancaster's past and must be maintained, preserved and enhanced for the future.

There are basically three functions which open space serve: (1) It can meet positive human needs - both physically and psychologically - in recreation amenities; (2) It can enhance and protect the natural resources of the community; and, (3) It can affect economic development elements like tourism, the cultural base of the community, development patterns, employment, and real estate values.

The Open Space Plan builds upon and augments what is the land base of the City and what has been built in the past. The City of Lancaster has a very solid base of park and recreation lands. It has a rich tradition of historic and cultural resources. The land reflects a variety of physiographic features such as topography, rivers and streams. Together these general outdoor recreation and natural environmental areas constitute the ingredients of the Open Space Plan.

### Open Space Plan Concept

The Plan frames a coherent, connected and usable open space system by combining three basic strategies. First are the existing park areas developed to meet citizen needs for active, sometimes programmed recreation areas. These areas include playfields, the Fairgrounds and school facilities. Secondly are the floodplains, wooded slopes and streams. Such areas create a greenway network consisting of a web of environmentally sensitive areas offering a way of preserving vital habitat corridors, wetlands and vegetation, offering visual relief from urbanization. Greenways, when developed through conservation easements, can be ideal to such popular outdoor activities as jogging, walking and biking. Thirdly, the plan recommends the development of streetscapes along Main and Broad Streets. Such streetscapes will require more detailed planning and improvement consisting of sidewalk

treatments, tree planting, sign management and street furniture. These streets constitute the historic and cultural hub of the City. The area is ripe for redevelopment and care should be exercised to assure continued economic vitality by encouraging mixed use while protecting and enhancing the visual quality of the area.

### **Regulating Land for Open Space**

Implementation of the Open Space Plan relies upon the use of the development plan, zoning, and subdivision regulations to provide for the orderly and efficient growth of the community.

The Land Use Plan identifies land use for large areas, seeking an appropriate mix of residential, office, commercial, institutional and open space uses. As developments are proposed, care should be exercised to assure that natural or sensitive areas be protected. Also, concern should be exercised to ensure additional active recreation areas are provided as new development occurs.

Lancaster's zoning code should consider the use of Conservation or Planned Unit Development processes to preserve and protect the natural attributes of the area. Open Space should be a strong consideration in any residential, commercial or industrial development. In some cases, it will mean preserving existing tree cover or streams. In other situations, it may mean the establishment of buffer areas and instituting access management to streets and adjacent areas. In the case of the Main/Broad Street corridors, an "overlay zone" should be considered.

Clearly, the City cannot afford the green space conceptually identified, nor should it own it all. A sound Open Space Plan reflects a community development ethic and should be achieved through a public/private ownership partnership.

# VISIONING EXERCISE REPORT

## Introduction

To guide the planning process and ensure plan relevancy and consistency, a community vision must be established. The Visioning Exercise Report summarized the results of a three-part visioning exercise completed by the Lancaster Zoning Task Force in January, 1999. The exercise was facilitated by Burns, Bertsch & Harris, Inc., utilizing the Nominal Group Technique. Parts 1 and 2 of the exercise consisted of the development of vision statements describing two distinct scenarios for Lancaster's future. A vision statement describes what, how, or where a community could or should be at a specified future time. For this exercise, the Task Force considered a period of 5 to 10 years. The two scenarios are listed below:

*Scenario 1: What will the City of Lancaster look like/be like in five years if things continue as they are now, with no major changes or intervention?*

*Scenario 2: What could the City of Lancaster look like/be like in five years with good planning and strong City and citizen effort, but no miracles?*

In part three of the exercise, the Task Force developed action steps for the vision statements developed in Scenario 2. Then the Task Force had the opportunity to vote on the action steps and prioritize them based on urgency. "Urgency" combines importance with opportunity, recognizing that timing and available resources must be considered in establishing priorities for action.

## Developing Vision Statements

The committee participated in a Nominal Group Technique exercise to develop vision statements for each of the two scenarios. The Nominal Group process begins with a silent writing period, during which each participant records his or her ideas. Next, the facilitators record each person's ideas, going around the table until every idea is exhausted.

All ideas are included in the record. If the group agrees that two ideas are essentially the same, they may be combined into one statement. The results for each scenario are listed on the following pages:

Scenario 1:

- What will the City of Lancaster look like/be like in five years if things continue as they are now, with no major changes or intervention?

*For this scenario, the Task Force considered both the positive and potentially negative consequences of the continuation of current development trends and policies, assuming no major changes or intervention. The purpose of this scenario was for the Task Force to determine what the City is currently doing well, as well as policy areas that may need effort and direction in the future to prevent potential community liabilities.*

**Scenario 1 Vision Statements:**

1. Chaos and municipal dollar woes
2. Small revitalized central core
3. By-pass built and Fair Avenue and Rt. 188 won't be able to handle the increased traffic
4. Broad, Columbus and Main Streets choked with traffic
5. Historic district complete bastardized
6. Continued struggle with Greenfield Township over utilities
7. No infrastructure plan for future development
8. No end to City Council's time spent on variances
9. Continued deterioration of housing around central core
10. No attitude change - no investment capital to drive change
11. E. Main Street - random development (unattractive)
12. Continuing decline of industrial base
13. Continued uncertainty for developers
14. Revitalized downtown disappearing with moderate to high end commercial encroaching
15. Majority of households will remain low and moderate income
16. True suburb of Columbus ( the slum of Columbus)

Scenario 2:

- What could the City of Lancaster look like/be like in five years with good planning and strong City and citizen effort, but no miracles?

*The vision statements for this scenario describe the City's potential for future growth, development and improvements to the quality of life in 5 to 10 years as the result of a sound and well-implemented community plan, supported by hard work and dedication from citizens and City officials. The facilitators asked the Task Force to be "optimistically realistic", accounting for what is possible without any "miracles" or unrealistic expectations.*

### Scenario 2 Vision Statements:

1. Developers **seek** to do projects in Lancaster, including redevelopment
2. Redevelopment of **large** areas around central core
3. By-pass will help solve industrial problems  
Industrial zones in CIC areas - Free movement around area
4. Stop piling on of development along Rt. 33
5. Limiting residential development in favor of a strong industrial base
6. S. Broad Street becomes a viable district
7. Organized commercial growth along Rt. 33
8. Planned savings by City because of the revitalization trend and careful planning of infrastructure
9. City revenues will be adequate to handle infrastructure of planned growth
10. City has a Capital Improvements Plan
11. City Council and **all government** recognizes that it must be user-friendly  
adhere to principles and buy into process
12. Historic area preserved
13. Convention Center - better image of Lancaster by outside
14. Public municipal parking garage downtown
15. Continued redevelopment - more jobs locally - low unemployment rate - Not a bedroom community
16. City's Planning and Development Department is the best in the State (1<sup>st</sup> must create a P&D Department)
17. Reduction of low and moderate income households and households in poverty as a percentage of the overall population
18. Well-managed growth
19. No industrial operations near the downtown
20. Integration of City as a whole - not Eastside v. Westside
21. Rt. 22, Rt. 37 by-pass / development of service roads along Rt. 33

## Developing Strategies

During the third and final step of the visioning exercise, the committee identified strategies for the vision statements. Strategy development moves the discussion beyond initial goal setting into implementation by establishing critical, urgent tasks that are necessary to achieve the visions. The Task Force again considered a 5 to 10 year time frame in developing action steps.

The final step in the process was to prioritize the strategies, again on the basis of urgency. The facilitators asked the Task Force to consider the most urgent steps to be accomplished in the next 1 to 3 years. The complete set of action steps and votes are listed below.

### Prioritized Strategies:

1. Adopt an economic development plan with strategies that are implemented (6 votes)
2. Hire a Development Director - strong, same director over the 10 years (6 votes)
3. Develop and adopt new zoning code with a vision that the community buys into (6 votes)
4. Positive annexation strategy that caused people to want to be annexed (3 votes)
5. Correctly handle Rt. 188, CIC infrastructure and other areas around core - better transportation planning (2 votes)
6. EZ funds and strategies accomplished (2 votes)
7. Industrial base develops with a lot of cooperation between the City and the residents (2 votes)
8. Council became frugal and searched for funds to establish the vision - prioritization of \$ (2 votes)
9. Recognize players and gain cooperation - keep them in the game (2 votes)
10. Attitude of public is positive and for the preservation of the historic district
11. Private sector and public sector partnerships
12. Change people's attitudes - change perceptions - good growth is in their best interest and it is really what you want (1 vote)
13. Commitment to the plan by City Council, Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission
14. Engineers Office is adequately staffed and pro-development
15. Depoliticize zoning/variance process

## Interview Results

### SUMMARY

Early in the planning process, key stakeholders identified by the Lancaster Zoning Task Force were interviewed to identify perceived issues and gain an understanding of urgency in dealing with the issues. These perceptions then provide a guide for the planning process.

The result of the surveys were both diverse and insightful. Overall, those interviewed felt that the City's greatest strength's and assets were the quality of life and sense of community, the proximity of Lancaster to Columbus, the citizens of Lancaster, and the Heritage District.

When asked about the weaknesses of Lancaster or threats to the city, by far the largest concern was the individuals within the local government not wanting to work together. Other common responses included the traffic on Route 33, the need for Lancaster to develop more industry, the small town mentality of the city officials, and the lack of local job opportunities.

Question number three on the survey was a two-part question that asked what the most important issues were facing the city presently and how could those issues be addressed through a local planning effort. The most common responses were the lack of funding for schools, parks, and infrastructure. Two frequently suggested methods for dealing with the current issues were that the city needs to develop a long term view of how to guide growth positively and that the city should try to involve as many people as possible and attempt to gain consensus on issues.

Respondents were then asked if they saw major opportunities for Lancaster now or in the near future. The fact that Lancaster is a rapidly growing area was the opportunity that most people mentioned. The construction of the Route 33 bypass was chosen by many, as was the attractiveness of Lancaster to industry.

The respondents did perceive threats to these opportunities, as was seen in question number five. The most common perceived threats were the unwillingness of city officials to change, some people not looking out for the greater community good, and the city official's lack of an agenda or vision for the city. Traffic congestion was also singled out by many as a threat.

In the next question, people were asked what the major development pressures that Lancaster faced were and whether they felt that these pressures were positive or negative.

Equal numbers of people picked residential development of the Dominion Homes and MI Homes type and the increased demand on infrastructure due to growth as the most important development pressures. Both groups of people picked these as negative pressures. A large number of respondents chose a conflicting positive pressure, which was the rapid growth of the area, especially in residences. The other most popular positive factor was a pressure to create more manufacturing jobs.

The question that was then posed was what should the City do to promote or manage development. A large number of people stated that the City should have a good, strong, zoning plan. Another very popular response was for the City to develop a strategic plan. Other popular suggestions was for the City to develop a strategy for attracting industry, create an economic development office, and have a flexible, frequently updated, land use plan.

The survey then asked what one thing would the respondents want the City of Lancaster to get out of a community planning effort. The most popular response was for a Lancaster planning effort to bring in new manufacturing job and new industry. The second most popular response was to get proper zoning in the area. Some other popular responses were for a true five year strategic plan that the community buys into and to get a better school system.

When asked if and how people would help in a community planning effort, 20 of the 32 people who responded to this question said they would participate, 8 of the 32 said they would not be willing, and 4 of the 32 were undecided. As far as what those people would be willing to do there was no consensus. Some of the responses included being willing to attend meetings and participate in the effort; working with parents, alumni, volunteers, city leaders and the students themselves in schools; provide leadership and guidance; and be on committees.

Finally, the respondents were asked for any other comments. A number of people said that they liked the method being used, while others said that zoning must represent the feelings as well as the involvement of the community. Two other common responses were that zoning must be enforced and there is a lot of community support.

## COMPLETE INTERVIEWS RESULTS

\* represents the number of times the response was repeated

1. In your opinion, what are the City's greatest strengths or assets?
  - Quality of life / sense of community (13)\*
  - Location / proximity to Columbus / central Ohio (13)
  - Citizens in the community (11)
  - Heritage District (9)
  - Good schools (8)
  - Rich heritage of the area (7)
  - Pride of the community / community involvement (7)
  - Park system (5)
  - Churches - diversity of religion (4)
  - Lancaster Festival (4)
  - Stable city and county government (4)
  - Small town atmosphere (4)
  - Cleanliness of the city (3)
  - Police and fire departments (3)
  - City services / infrastructure (3)
  - Medical center (2)
  - Location on Route 33 (2)
  - Growth of the city for jobs and doing business locally versus outside the city
  - Golf courses
  - Labor pool
  - Work ethic brought about by Anchor Hocking
  - Controlled growth with enforcement
  - Type of residential environment mixed with industry that dominate the scene
  - Can access work force of central Ohio region
  - By-pass will add attractiveness to industrial park
  - Diversity - business, residential and industrial
  - Low crime
  - Nothing - Nothing is here to entice new businesses here. There is no industrial park.
  
2. In your opinion, what are the City's greatest threats or weaknesses?
  - Individuals in the government not wanting to work together (in-fighting) (10)
  - Traffic on Rt. 33 (8)
  - Lack of industry/good paying jobs (5)
  - Lack of funds for parks, schools, infrastructure, etc. (5)
  - Small town mentality of city officials (4)

- Quality of the public school system (4)
  - No job opportunities (4)
  - Lack of controlled traffic management city-wide (3)
  - City Council and the Chamber of Commerce are too weak (3)
  - Individuals and organizations that are threatened by change (3)
  - Lack of good public transportation system (2)
  - Uncontrolled / unmanaged growth (2)
  - Increase in crime (2)
  - Problems of Columbus coming to Lancaster (2)
  - Not adequate planning for small business needs (2)
  - Lack of planning (2)
  - Too conservative (2)
  - Main Street downtown
  - Unprotected historic district
  - Lack of a common vision
  - Losing green space and trees
  - Railroad track right of way not mowed - unsightly
  - Spot zoning - no ability to regulate development
  - Schools impacted by increase in drug usage
  - Lack of diversity (racial and social)
  - Churches hold too much power
  - Location on Route 33 - not that close to major interstates
  - Lancaster has an unfriendly business attitude reputation
  - Code enforcement too lax
  - Reluctance to support school levies
  - Infrastructure
  - Over commercialization
  - Greenfield Township
  - Being engulfed by the City of Columbus
  - The rights of individuals need to be balanced against what is good for the community
  - Losing job mix diversity
  - City is not looking to the long range in terms of taxes and growth
  - Failure to capitalize on benefits of Rt. 33 corridor
  - Lack of economic development efforts
  - Zoning is over-restrictive
3. What are the most important issues facing the City right now?
- Infrastructure issues must be addressed (9)
  - Zoning issues (8)
  - Lack of funding for schools, parks, infrastructure, etc. (5)

- Lack of good public transportation in the city - buses (4)
- Traffic flow (4)
- No strong industrial base (3)
- Annexation issues (3)
- Setting higher standards for new development (3)
- Lack of education in the work force (2)
- Transition center - more public awareness (2)
- Schools (2)
- Maintaining growth with a plan that has been well thought out (2)
- Lack of understanding about the by-pass (2)
- Uncontrolled growth (2)
- Lack of planning (2)
- City needs a city administrator - take the politics out of the city government (2)
- Lack of cooperation from neighboring communities
- Too many buildings
- Absentee ownership
- Tax base - \$\$ for schools
- Developing a sense of involvement and a balance of government
- Community and land use development
- Financial problems due to people working outside of the city
- Downtown revitalization incomplete
- Increasing poverty in the City

3a. How might these be addressed through a community planning effort?

- The City needs to develop a long term view of how to guide growth positively (5)
- The City should try to involve as many people as possible and attempt to gain consensus on issues (4)
- Develop a master plan (3)
- Strengthen zoning code (3)
- Politicians and businesses need to work together (2)
- Develop a mission statement
- Need to get feedback from local citizens, maybe through a town meeting
- Focus should be on new development
- More City cooperation with education

4. Do you see any major opportunities for Lancaster right now or coming up in the near future?

- Rapidly growing area (10)
- Construction of the by-pass (9)

- Location which can attract business and industry (5)
  - None (3)
  - Restoring downtown (3)
  - Expansion of tourism (2)
  - Growth along Route 33 and Route 37 (2)
  - Two existing industrial parks (2)
  - New businesses coming to town (2)
  - Expansion of existing businesses
  - Increasing population
  - Improvement of school system
  - Lancaster Festival
  - Strong community resources
  - Opportunity to get younger families involved
  - Must have a stronger industrial base to retain youth in the community
  - Opportunity to develop alternative modes of transportation for commuting to Columbus
5. Are there any specific threats or obstacles that could prevent these opportunities from being achieved?
- Close-mindedness of the city leaders / unwillingness to change (7)
  - Hidden agendas - not looking out for greater good (6)
  - Lack of agenda / vision by City officials (6)
  - Traffic congestion must be addressed (4)
  - Lack of funding (4)
  - Lack of proper planning (4)
  - Current zoning structure (4)
  - Over regulation that hinders growth (3)
  - Lack of cooperation / communication between the City, County and the townships (3)
  - No strong leadership in the community (2)
  - Need for affordable public transportation (2)
  - Community opposition
  - City Council and the Chamber of Commerce's poor performance
  - Encroachment of Columbus
  - Schools
  - No bike paths along the Hocking River
  - Do not repeat the mistakes of the past 30 or 50 years regarding the by-pass
  - Impression of the City from SR 22 and US 33 is terrible
  - Lack of maintenance in the downtown
  - Prejudice against ``welfare'' people
  - City is too friendly to developers

6. In your opinion, what are the major development pressures facing Lancaster right now? Do you consider these pressures to be positive or negative for the City?

- Dominion Homes and MI Homes type development (-)(6)
- Growth is causing an increased demand for public services, infrastructure, schools - Can the City pay for all of this? (-)(6)
- Rapid growth, especially in the housing sector (+)(6)
- Uncontrolled growth (-)(5)
- Pressure to create more manufacturing jobs (+) (4)
- Not enough available land for business and housing that is now adequately served by water and sewer (-)(4)
- School problems (-)(3)
- Lack of developed industrial sites (-)(3)
- Lack of an industrial base (-)(2)
- None at this time (2)
- Route 33 traffic (-) (2)
- Housing development being handled piecemeal (-)(2)
- Historic district is being threatened (-) (2)
- Loss of farmland due to development (-)
- Traffic (-)
- Property taxes (-)
- Pressure to overhaul and expand infrastructure (-)
- Lack of workforce (-)
- Not enough good paying jobs (-)
- Grow in a controlled way (+)
- Lack of jobs in the City (-)
- Annexation (+)
- Tax credits for rehabbing old homes (+)
- By-pass
- Over commercialization (-)
- Inclusion of Columbus urban area into our community (-)
- Quality business growth (+)
- Tax abatements and incentives (+)
- Route 33 growth (+)
- City has no planning department (-)

7. What should the City do to promote or manage development?

- Have a good, strong zoning plan (12)
- Develop a strategic plan (8)
- Need an economic development director / office (5)
- Develop a strategy for attracting good industry (4)
- Set better development standards (4)
- Have a flexible land use plan that is continually updated (3)

- Hire consultants with experience to assist in the process (3)
- Stronger Chamber of Commerce (2)
- Identify the kinds of development we want and do not want (2)
- Ensure companies coming to town have good paying jobs (2)
- Adjust tax structure (2)
- Need to be pro-active (2)
- Need a city planning staff
- Be more open minded for opportunities
- Full-time traffic engineer
- Promote development with the input of local citizens committees
- Leverage or control the water, sewer and gas facilities
- Need a new approach to economic development
- Telecom Committee
- Right-of-Way and Cable
- Don't give developers everything they want
- The City should not have to promote or manage development
- Awareness and coordination of computer technical development

8. If you could accomplish just one thing through a community planning effort for Lancaster, what would it be?

- Proper zoning (8)
- Bring in manufacturing jobs / new industry (6)
- A true five year strategic plan that the community buys into (4)
- Controlled, quality growth (4)
- Stop talking about the bypass and get it built (3)
- Better public school system (3)
- Better managed traffic flow (3)
- To get widely accepted consensus of growth and development objectives (2)
- Develop and build a council in-tune with city / reduce fragmentation (2)
- Promote more representation in the state legislature (2)
- Revitalize downtown (2)
- Cooperation with City, Townships and County (2)
- To help older people update or maintain their properties when they are unable to do so themselves
- Get the answer to "why is it nothing gets done?"
- Master plan for infrastructure and growth to 2025
- Clean-up of roads
- Make the City a showplace along the railroad from the Northern edge of town to the Southern

- Infrastructure development
  - Ensure that every citizen views the community as a great place to live and the City is viewed as a friendly, open city.
9. Would you be willing to participate in a community planning effort for Lancaster? If so, how?
- Yes (23)
  - No (8)
  - Undecided (4)
  - Willing to attend meetings and participate in the effort
  - Work with parents, alumni, volunteers, city leaders and the students themselves.
  - Be on committees
  - Would participate in a long term planning effort from a strategic point of view
  - Provide leadership and guidance
  - Maximize the potential of the Heritage district in areas such as access and transportation
  - Economic development issues
  - Provide opinions
  - Represent city schools with superintendent involved in community planning and activities
  - Wants to be part of the process to get companies to come to Lancaster
10. Do you have any other comments which you would like to provide?
- Like the methodology being used (4)
  - Zoning must represent the feelings as well as the involvement of the community (4)
  - Whatever zoning is planned must be enforced (3)
  - It is a great thing that this effort is underway (2)
  - There is a lot of community support (2)
  - Keep the community informed about what is going on and the progress being made
  - This is a wasted effort. I do not believe that anything good will happen.
  - Applaud a positive government.
  - Heritage is important and history must be preserved.
  - A signage ordinance should be developed and enforced.
  - Success in business, education or life is based upon a challenge or a vision, planning and execution or development of the planned vision.
  - This is a great opportunity to plan for the future.
  - Since Lancaster is the gateway to Hocking Hills, we should focus on tourism for the money it can bring and consider it as part of our industry base.

- Some intersections along Memorial Drive need left turn arrows
- Can the task force address the flood plain issues on the west side?
- More up-to-date engineering practices to reduce development costs
- Don't take criticism personally
- Pleased with the outcome of the last council election
- Try to involve the citizens of metro-housing units
- Overall the City is doing a good job
- Applaud the fact that there is no time table
- Need to do a good job with zoning administration and council
- City appears to be very positive and working together
- Lancaster has a planning obligation within a three (3) mile radius of the city (be a good neighbor)
- Catch up on the 20 or 30 years we have lost as far as growth and development. The city has lost a lot to neighboring communities.
- The Eagle-Gazette has low credibility due to poor proofing and editing and encourages criticisms of the status quo for the sake of selling newspapers

## **Lancaster Zoning Task Force Open House**

On October 27, 1998 the Lancaster Zoning Task Force held an open house at the Lancaster Board of Education Service Center. There were five tables or "stations" at the open house for handouts, presentations and visual displays. The first station displayed basic demographic information about the City of Lancaster. At the second stations, citizens could view existing plans and also receive a preliminary copy of the new zoning code. At the third station, citizens were given the opportunity to complete two surveys. The future land use map was displayed at station four. If citizens disagreed with the proposed plan, they were asked to mark their preference on a map overlay. The "conservation concept" was presented at the fifth station. A series of development suitability maps were also displayed at this station so citizens could easily identify environmentally sensitive areas in the community.

## **Citizen Development Preference Survey**

### **Summary**

The first survey, the Citizen Development Preference Survey is similar to the key stakeholders survey. It is used to identify key issues as well as provide a sense of urgency in dealing with the issues. The survey serves as a guide for the development of planning strategies.

Citizens identified the historic areas and parks as some of the things they liked most about living in Lancaster and the traffic congestion and sign clutter as some of the things they liked least. The uniqueness of the historic district is something that should be preserved and enhanced. Citizens suggested a stronger historic preservation policy or the use of design review in historical areas.

Some citizens felt that Lancaster was growing too quickly while others felt that Lancaster was growing at the right pace. The majority of citizens indicated a desire to see Lancaster's historic areas, open space and natural resources preserved.

Citizens want to see more elderly housing and condominiums in the community. Manufactured housing and the conversion of older homes to duplexes should be discouraged. Citizens don't like the new subdivisions because of the cookie-cutter approach to site design, the maze of streets and the absence of trees or open space.

Neighborhood commercial is preferred to strip commercial. Citizens also want to see pedestrian oriented commercial centers. The majority also expressed the need for a sign ordinance.

The City should pursue a more aggressive policy of economic development and consider joint economic development ventures with surrounding townships. Citizens want large industries that invest in the community.

Regional planning should be undertaken with the surrounding townships. The City of Lancaster should also undertake a community planning process to protect the historic areas and preserve open space.

Complete survey results below:

(\*indicates the number of times the response was repeated)

## **Citizen Development Preference Survey**

1. What are some of the things you like most about living in Lancaster?

- friendly people (10)\*
- historic areas / older homes (9)
- parks (8)
- small town atmosphere (7)
- cleanliness (4)
- close to Columbus (4)
- orderliness (2)
- schools (2)
- houses generally well-kept (2)
- easy travel (2)
- Shaws (2)
- fairgrounds (2)
- cultural activities (2)
- businesses
- safety
- one public school district
- hospital
- all services are available in the city limits

2. What do you like least about living in Lancaster?
- Route 33 / Memorial Drive congestion (11)
  - traffic congestion (10)
  - sign clutter (5)
  - truck traffic on High and Main Streets (4)
  - poor code enforcement (3)
  - zoning not enforced (3)
  - loss of historic, attractive buildings (3)
  - too many traffic lights on Rt. 33 (2)
  - uncontrolled sprawl of housing developments (2)
  - urban sprawl (2)
  - government is too strict / rigid and not proactive or progressive (2)
  - city government's lack of communication to residents
  - lack of public transportation
  - newspaper
  - lack of downtown parking
  - people who oppose zoning
  - high cost of living
  - Bible reading
  - bike track
  - no warning of the halfway house on S. Broad St.
  - infrastructure not maintained
  - high cost of utilities
3. What are some of the best/most unique features of Lancaster?
- historic district (13)
  - Parks (6)
  - Rising park (6)
  - Square 13 (6)
  - Georgian-Sherman House (5)
  - Fairground (4)
  - well-kept appearance (3)
  - Downtown business district (3)
  - people get involved in the community (3)
  - Mt. Pleasant (2)
  - cultural arts center (2)
  - home and neighborhood pride
  - good city services
  - downtown bandstand
  - small town quality of life
  - lay of the land - some hills and some flat areas
  - close to Franklin County
  - River Valley mall

3a. How might these features be preserved or incorporated into new developments as the City grows?

- stronger historic preservation policy (9)
- better design review in the historic district (8)
- good, tight zoning (8)
- community planning (3)
- keeping good people on City Council
- keeping a good mayor
- re-routing of truck traffic away from downtown
- encourage downtown development in residential areas
- stop allowing single-family dwellings to be made into apartments, business or duplexes
- tax abatements for re-investments
- make use of unoccupied buildings
- Transportation
- rehabilitate existing urban areas

4. Is Lancaster growing too quickly, too slowly, or at the right pace?

<u>9</u>	Too Quickly
<u>1</u>	Too Slowly
<u>12</u>	Right Pace
<u>3</u>	Not Sure

- Lancaster has no vision of itself or where it wants to be in the future

5. As Lancaster continues to grow, how important is it to preserve the following:

*open space and scenic features  
cultural features*

24 Very Important  
1 Somewhat Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not Very Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not at all Important  
\_\_\_\_ Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

*historic and*

22 Very Important  
1 Somewhat Important  
2 Not Very Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not at all Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

*natural or environmental resources*

20 Very Important  
5 Somewhat Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not Very Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not at all Important  
\_\_\_\_ Not Sure

- would like to see a bike trail linking parks

6. What types of residential development would you like to see in Lancaster? Why?

- Condominiums - places for older people to live (8)
- High end special neighborhoods - Will attract professionals who work in Columbus, more tax \$ (5)
- more senior citizen housing (4)
- more single family housing (3)
- Classical (2)
- cluster housing / more PUD's (2)
- no more development - open space is being swallowed up
- more apartments
- concerned about Dominion homes and their quality
- low density
- maintain tax bases that support government services
- must plan to support the growth

6a. What types of residential development should be discouraged and why?

- low income housing - crime (5)
- chopping up old homes to create apartments / duplexes (4)
- manufactured - falls apart (4)
- large housing developments that are using up the prime farmland (2)
- apartments - attracts low income individuals, high service people come into town (2)
- housing that is too dense (2)

- need downtown residential districts which are single family only (2)
- flamboyant
- trailer parks
- surplus of rentals - often not well-cared for
- nothing in River Valley

6b. What are some of your favorite features of newer residential subdivisions in Lancaster?

- don't like any of the new subdivisions (10)
- sidewalks (4)
- curbs (4)
- street lights (4)
- Like Leonard Gorsuch's new area on Arbor Valley Drive (2)
- lots wider than 30-40'
- beauty
- neat
- colorful
- Creekside
- quality of local contractors
- Avery Hills and Stonegate
- Natural material homes
- Wide collection streets

6c. What are some of your least favorite features of the newer residential developments?

- cookie cutter approach to site design / similar design (4)
- maze of streets (2)
- crowded placement (2)
- no bike paths or walking trails (2)
- no trees or open space (2)
- excess traffic
- small lots
- don't see much innovation
- no thought of traffic congestion and schools
- destruction of existing greenspace with no attempt to beautify
- constructed from junk materials
- no sidewalks
- quality of workmanship on Dominion homes
- 1100 sq. ft homes, 2 story, vinyl sided

7. What types of commercial development would you like to see in Lancaster? Why?

- anything that offers more than a minimum wage job (3)
- good restaurants (2)
- high end clothing stores (2)
- concentrate new development around the mall area
- early American
- more downtown pedestrian commercial
- encourage more commercial, pedestrian-oriented areas in and near new residential areas
- downtown concentrated development of all business fronts
- fewer flashy businesses like Sun TV and Meijers
- walking districts - not strip malls
- anything to create stability and jobs for the future
- services industries
- office parks
- convention center / performing arts center

7a. What are some features of commercial developments that you would like to see in Lancaster, e.g. appearance, architecture, building materials, landscaping, parking, signage, etc.?

- Would like to see a sign ordinance (8) - don't allow any more signs that look like Sun's or Levi's pawn shop
- parking at rear (3)
- more in keeping with our historic heritage
- better planning of facades
- Services all the way up Rt. 33
- traditional architectural designs using natural materials
- more blending into neighborhoods
- privacy fencing for all parking lots abutting residential areas
- greenspace and trees emphasized
- tighter zoning on new builds
- multiple uses for large buildings
- more design review
- need a parking garage downtown
- demand the best and it will come

8. What types of industrial development should the City try to attract? Why?

- 400+ employee plant - puts money into the community (7) - provides an investment into the community
- high tech - clean, high pay (7)

- anything that offers more than minimum wage (3)
- light industry
- research complex
- more ``office type``
- auto - high pay
- small but secure and established companies
- look for a variety of types of companies to ensure a strong economy through diversification
- more factories - the majority of employment opportunities pay minimum wage
- glass - raw materials are available in the area
- production plants - income, tax base
- anything that creates jobs and stability

9. Should the City pursue a more aggressive policy of economic development? Why?

- Yes (18)

#### COMMENTS

- Lancaster needs more jobs that pay above minimum wage (4)
- many people living in the community are forced to seek employment elsewhere because of limited job opportunities (2)
- there is no effort now
- the Chamber of Commerce needs to assume a more active role
- travel and tourism should play a bigger role
- at least a different policy - get away from retail junk littering highways and making old shopping centers obsolete and empty
- tax incentives could attract industry and raise property values in the community
- need to keep up with the changes

10. Should the City pursue joint economic development ventures with the surrounding townships? Why?

- Yes (16)
- No (3)
- Not sure (2)

#### COMMENTS

- Cooperation helps everyone (5)
- Lancaster doesn't have enough jobs as it is
- Townships are anti-municipality. They would not be working for the general good of everyone
- bad development in either the city or township affects all of use

- it depends on how much politics is involved
- work hard to see that the area around the by-pass develops reasonably - in as "high value" manner as possible
- enhance planned growth of our economy and benefit to the largest possible portion of our community
- only pursue after taking care of the needs of Lancaster first

11. Should the City pursue regional planning with the surrounding townships? Why?

- Yes (22)

COMMENTS

- coordination of services, planning and development always best (3)
- can guide development into areas that will be annexed later
- could be eligible for grant money
- without joint planning, development will not occur in a desirable manner
- necessary in order to guarantee a balanced growth that meets the entire community's needs
- more control over land uses that could affect the City
- plan roads
- need more organized planning

12. Should the City undertake a community planning effort?

22 Yes

       No

13. If you could accomplish just one thing through a community planning effort for the City of Lancaster, what would it be?

- better traffic planning (6)
- economic development strategy (4)
- protection of historical district (3) This city need planning. There has been a loss of historical sites because of poor planning and no community plan.
- make everyone happy
- more PUD's
- planning for the future - for example: greenspaces, code enforcement, emphasis on historical preservation, coordination with modern development
- get more greenspace into development
- common areas in new developments for people to enjoy
- guarantee intelligent use of the land
- direction for the future

**Lancaster Zoning Task Force Open House  
Alternative Planning Techniques Preference Survey**

This survey presents strategies that can be used to help communities retain their character, as well as their historic, cultural and natural resources. The majority of citizens felt that the City should pursue the planning techniques listed below.

**Scenario 1: If farm or forest land is to be subdivided.....**

*number of votes received	<u>Pursue</u>	<u>Don't Pursue</u>	<u>Can't Decide</u>
1. Retain at least 50% of the site as permanent open space	30*	9	1
2. Retain existing open fields for use as community-owned farmland, parkland, recreation, etc.	29	8	0
3. Place houses away from environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife habitats	44	2	1
4. Incorporate existing historical and cultural features (houses, barns, farm roads, etc.) into the site design when feasible	43	3	0
5. Maintain rural landscapes through careful placement of houses	40	0	6
6. Use traditional rural village layouts as model layouts for new subdivisions	22	11	14
7. Encourage the incorporation of traditional housing styles into new subdivision design	32	8	9
8. Use the following traditional features in subdivision design:			
a. A central Village Green or community gathering space	37	4	5
b. Narrow, tree-lined streets	27	11	7
c. Small front yards, large back yards	14	13	19
d. Compact placement of houses to preserve natural areas	23	10	13
e. Surround development with open space or greenways	37	2	4
9. Require developers to set aside land for greenways and/or trails as part of a community-wide walking and bicycle path system	43	1	2

**Scenario 2: If New Commercial Centers (shopping, office, etc.) are to be located along major roadways.....**

	<u>Pursue</u>	<u>Don't Pursue</u>	<u>Can't Decide</u>
1. Construct buildings close to the street edge and incorporate sidewalks to encourage pedestrian activity	29	8	9
2. Require parking lots to be located to the rear of buildings	29	12	6
3. Encourage the incorporation of historic architectural features into new commercial building design	40	2	4
4. Plant trees along roadways	43	2	1
5. Use wooden signs instead of plastic signs	22	12	13

**Scenario 3: For Downtown development and redevelopment projects.....**

	<u>Pursue</u>	<u>Don't Pursue</u>	<u>Can't Decide</u>
1. Encourage mixed uses within the same building, e.g. retail on first floor, apartments, condos, or offices on upper floors	42	0	6
2. Continue to require redevelopment projects to comply with historic architectural guidelines	43	0	5
3. Conduct a marketing study to attract desirable types of businesses to Lancaster's Downtown	37	6	5
4. Encourage the development of shared parking lots in the rear of buildings	39	4	3
5. Encourage the development of a central Village Green or public gathering space	39	1	7

