

SUMMARY

Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee

2007

GROWING TOGETHER: A Comprehensive Plan for Central Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is a regional plan for eleven municipalities that are members of the Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee (LIMC). The municipalities are Lancaster City, the boroughs of East Petersburg, Millersville, and Mountville, and the townships of East Hempfield, East Lampeter, Lancaster, Manheim, Manor, West Hempfield, and West Lampeter. The plan is the first of its kind in Pennsylvania. No other comprehensive plan in the state has been a cooperative effort of so many municipalities in the core of a metropolitan area.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The eleven municipalities agreed to participate in developing *Growing Together* in late 2002 and early 2003. A Steering Committee consisting of representatives from each of the municipalities and from the Lancaster County Planning Commission (LCPC) met monthly to guide the project. Two consulting firms worked on the plan: ACP-Visioning and Planning, Ltd. of New York, New York, and Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc. of West Chester, Pennsylvania. A stakeholder workshop, four public meetings, a community summit, four public forums, and sessions with students and minorities provided community input for the project. Municipal officials had opportunities to review goals, objectives, strategies, and complete drafts of the plan. The participating municipalities adopted *Growing Together* in April 2007.

THE REGION

Central Lancaster County covers 154 square miles, with landscapes as diverse as historic Lancaster City, sprawling low-density suburbs, and rich farmland. Municipalities and residents alike have become increasingly uneasy with recent development, and they are seeking a new approach that balances the old and the new, that preserves and enhances the assets that make the area special, and that sustains growth and prosperity for the future while preserving those qualities from the past that make the place so unique.

Central Lancaster County's population was 198,383 in 2000; it is expected to exceed 240,000 by 2030. Median age ranges from 22.4 years in Millersville Borough, a college town, to 43.7 in West Lampeter Township, the site of a large retirement complex. The population is 84% white, 6% Black or African American, 2% Asian, and 8% other or more than one race. The Hispanic population was 22,400 in 2000, after increasing by 68% during the 1990's. The labor force includes 67% of the population age 16 and older; unemployment is low (2.7% in 2000). Income is high compared to state and national averages, but 7% of families were below the poverty level in 1999.

THE PLAN

Much of *Growing Together* is structured around 18 major goals, 115 more detailed objectives, and nearly 300 strategies for accomplishing those objectives. The plan includes four key directions:

- Expand regional cooperation.
- Use land resources more efficiently.
- Enhance the support role of the LIMC.
- Strengthen the economic role of Central Lancaster County.

There is already a high level of cooperation in Central Lancaster County, but *Growing Together* sets a stronger agenda for continued and expanded intermunicipal cooperation. There also need to be strong partnerships among municipalities, public agencies, special interest groups, businesses, and the public. Exploring cooperative funding strategies and cooperation in the development of land use regulations will be important.

Future growth should occur primarily inside Designated Growth Areas, and it should occur in the form of integrated, mixed use development. Growth should be encouraged particularly in the 36 locations designated as Growth Opportunity Areas, where *Growing Together* recommends more compact, mixed use growth (see Future Land Use Plan).

- County of Lancaster
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee

CONTACT

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Statistics in *Growing Together* highlight the benefits of pursuing higher density development:

Land Needed to Accommodate Growth Until 2030 at Various Densities:

Dwelling Units per Acre	Acreage Needed
5.5	6,500
10	3,900
16	2,437

Buildable Land that Will Remain within Designated Growth Areas in 2030 if Development Is at Various Densities:

Dwelling Units per Acre	Acreage Remaining*
5.5	805
10	3,996
16	5,459

Note: The difference in farmland consumed at 5.5 vs. 16 dwelling units per acre is equivalent to 60± farms.

Many objectives and strategies in *Growing Together* suggest a leading role for the LIMC in their implementation. The LIMC can be a coordinator, convener, awareness builder, communicator, and facilitator. This enhanced role for the LIMC will require changes to its funding and organizational structure.

The economic activity in Central Lancaster County drives the entire county's economy. Some of the objectives and strategies in *Growing Together* recommend providing an adequate supply of land – as new development, redevelopment, and infill – to accommodate future economic growth, particularly in priority areas identified by the LCPC.

The Land Use chapter of *Growing Together* includes two important plans, a Future Land Use Policy Framework Plan, and a Future Land Use Plan. The graphic plan for each of these, along with a brief description of each, appears on the reverse side of this summary.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

Following, stated in full, are the 18 major goals in *Growing Together*. After each goal is a summary of some of the topics and issues addressed by the objectives and strategies for that goal. The complete *Growing Together* plan also indicates what entities should implement each of the strategies and the time frames within which the strategies should be addressed.

LAND USE – AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION –

Growth management tools will be used to preserve contiguous agricultural land, to enable farming of that land, and to focus development within designated growth areas.

Farmland preservation, regional transfer of development rights program, preferential taxation, accessory farm businesses, responsible nontraditional farming techniques, removal of barriers to farming.

LAND USE – GROWTH MANAGEMENT –

Development of land will be managed effectively to plan and locate communities with compatible land uses and densities within designated growth areas, while preserving and maintaining valuable open space.

Cooperative planning, Land Use Advisory Board, growth opportunity areas, design guidelines, education, designated growth areas, joint municipal zoning, regional land use policies, incentives to direct growth, revitalization, heritage resources, greenways and trails, accommodation of economic growth, industry clusters.

LAND USE – REDEVELOPMENT AND INFILL –

Vacant and underutilized land and buildings will be developed and reused to attract residents, encourage commerce and the arts, and reduce development pressure on farmland.

Flexible zoning, mixed use districts, multimunicipal land controls, brownfields, tax incentives, infill, accelerated approval processes, reuse, tax increment financing, attraction of economic activity.

LAND USE – DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS –

Livable, diverse-income neighborhoods will be developed to include housing choices and a mix of uses and to promote walking and alternative transportation.

Flexible regulations, higher densities, mixed uses, architectural guidelines.

LAND USE – URBAN CORE –

The urban core will be revitalized and promoted with the support of the whole region to offer clean, safe, and attractive opportunities for business and culture, and to maintain its historic character.

Revitalization, safety, physical appearance, cleanliness, intergovernmental partnerships, boroughs as core centers, employment, economic development, Lancaster City as a destination, neighborhoods, parking, diversity of stores.

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LAND USE – COMMUNITY CHARACTER –

Attractive, safe, walkable neighborhoods will be developed and existing communities will be protected and strengthened to enhance the unique character and strong sense of place of Central Lancaster County and to promote positive interaction among residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Incentives, mixed use zoning, neighborhood centers, community interaction, uniform land regulations and code enforcement.

HOUSING –

Affordable, diverse housing choices across all income ranges will be made available to encourage homeownership and rental properties, and to further smart growth.

Incentives, balanced supply, diverse prices, funding, mixed uses and housing types, adaptive reuse, infill, mixed income, homeownership, rental housing, proximity between housing and employment.

VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION –

A well-maintained and efficient road network will be established to promote continuous traffic flow and reduce congestion, with an emphasis on truck traffic control.

Road maintenance and improvements, traffic signal and intersection improvements, design criteria, capital improvement programming, official maps, truck traffic, parking, signage, connectivity.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION –

An easily accessible, efficient, and affordable public transportation system will be available to improve access to homes, jobs, shopping, attractions, and recreation.

Transit and rail improvements, scheduling, route linkages, shuttle buses, safety and convenience, publicity, incentives, parking, development patterns that support public transportation.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION –

A planned, interconnected, and safe network of alternative transportation options will be developed to move people and goods.

Sidewalks, walking paths, bicycle trails, street shoulders for non-motorized transportation, connection of activity centers, road sharing.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES –

A full range of efficient community facilities and services will be provided to serve the educational, recreational, safety and health needs of all residents.

Multimunicipal cooperation, maintenance, regional facilities, cooperation with school districts, libraries, emergency services, health care, recreational and cultural programs.

PARK AND OPEN SPACE –

A well-maintained, intermunicipal park system will be developed, with due regard for private property rights, and will include parks in all areas, clean facilities, and recreation along and in the waterways, all connected by greenways for biking, walking, and non-motorized use.

Greenway and Park Advisory Board, reserving land for future parks and greenways, opportunities for all recreation, community involvement, accessibility to all kinds of parks, coordination among public and private providers, public education.

NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION –

Air, water, and soil quality will be improved and protected, and natural areas, waterways, and riparian buffers will be protected and preserved in order to provide a healthy living environment.

Air quality, water quality, waterways, soil quality and stability, natural area preservation, riparian buffers, education.

HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION –

Historic resources will be preserved, maintained, and reused to recognize and reinforce the historic character of both urban and rural areas.

Regional strategies, inventories, regulatory measures, reuse and rehabilitation, financial incentives, public awareness and support, education, tours, incentives, diverse cultural heritage, cultural tourism.

UTILITIES: WATER AND SEWER –

A cost-effective, sufficient, well maintained, and environmentally sound public utility system will provide water that meets acceptable standards and effective solid waste, sewage, and stormwater management to protect public health and manage growth in the region.

Sewer and water utilities, regional coordination, stormwater management, energy saving practices, refuse disposal, recyclable recovery, septic systems, limiting public services outside growth areas.

IMPLEMENTATION – GENERAL –

“Growing Together” will result in measurable positive change in Central Lancaster County that is consistent with the vision set forth by residents and is accompanied by a renewed spirit of regional cooperation.

Increased community participation, public education, expanded intermunicipal cooperation, review and update of *Growing Together*.

IMPLEMENTATION – INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION –

Coordinated, responsive, energetic intermunicipal leadership will promote cooperation, efficient provision of services, regional infrastructure planning, cooperative funding strategies, information sharing, community participation in decision making, and reduction in local bureaucracies.

Benefits of intergovernmental cooperation, regional planning for infrastructure needs, activities with regional impacts, cooperative funding strategies, information sharing, public official roundtables.

IMPLEMENTATION – TECHNIQUES –

Appropriate and enforceable regional ordinances, regulations, and techniques will be adopted to address issues such as mixed-use development, traditional neighborhoods, compact residential areas, and agricultural preservation.

Effective and creative regulatory techniques, sample zoning provisions, thorough and consistent regulation.

One of the themes running throughout *Growing Together* is the need for more education. Public officials, others who might be involved in implementing *Growing Together*, and the general public should be informed about the strategies presented in the plan, the benefits they will provide, and the means by which they can be implemented.

Please contact your municipal office, the Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee, or the Lancaster County Planning Commission to learn more about *Growing Together*, to find out how to obtain a copy of the plan, or to be updated on implementation activities that are underway. The entire content of *Growing Together* may be accessed on the internet at www.co.lancaster.pa.us/planning.

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