

Other unique characteristics of the County, including its several towns and villages and scenic corridors, should be a focus of product development in the near future because they can also offer a truly authentic Lancaster County heritage experience. The Strategic Tourism Plan also proposes the designation of Tourism Development Areas and Corridors to facilitate this focused effort. Outside of these designated areas, the County's rural landscapes and large pristine natural areas also offer an opportunity to expand agri-tourism and eco-tourism products in a sustainable manner. These culturally and environmentally significant areas will require additional protection measures through the implementation of smart growth tools and techniques, if they are to continue to be sustainable into the future.

And last, but not least, a concerted effort needs to be made to create connections between the City and County products. This symbiotic relationship will increase the likelihood of longer stays and greater economic impact.

Thus, the Strategic Tourism Plan prioritizes the product development recommendations to create the most substantial economic impact possible, ensure sustainability, be true to the spirit of Lancaster County, enhance the quality of life for residents, and live up to the standards of quality expected by tourists. This, of course, will require the region to take a more active role in new tourism product development.

Lessons Learned & Critical Issues

- *The Amish provide Lancaster with a distinctive product offering*
- *Lancaster County's rural country setting is an important selling point and must be preserved*
- *The authenticity of Lancaster's attractions is important to visitors*
- *Lancaster County has a large volume and variety of attractions*
- *Lancaster's heritage and cultural offerings need to be developed further*
- *Lancaster County has opportunities in terms of thematic tours, product, and marketing*
- *There is a limited number of attractions for multicultural audiences, and few nighttime activities for any kind of tourist*
- *Lancaster County's tourism activities do not satisfy all demographic groups*

- *Considering the volume of attractions, there is very little collaboration*
- *Substantial portions of attractions need enhancement and reinvestment to be sustainable*
- *The City of Lancaster has opportunities for product expansion*

Strategic Goals

GOAL 1:

PROTECT, PRESERVE, AND ENHANCE LANCASTER COUNTY'S AUTHENTIC NATURAL, CULTURAL, HISTORIC, AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS AND DISTINCTIVE "SENSE OF PLACE" AS THE FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION

Lancaster is blessed with tremendous natural and man-made resources to develop, enhance and promote eco-tourism and heritage tourism. Enhancements that are made to existing product (whether infrastructure or attractions) must take advantage of the enormous pride Lancaster County has in its "sense of place." Tourists are drawn to the real and the authentic, so that creating new products that reflect the County's unique natural, cultural, historic, architectural and cultural heritage will be appealing. These new products also need to reach new markets and reflect the cultural diversity of Lancaster County's resident base. To achieve this goal, sustainable tourism practices and development that enhances the cultural and environmental quality of the County must be established. New product development recruitment guidelines also need to be prepared to provide guidance for the types of attractions and visitor services that would be appropriate and encouraged in the County. To make certain that new product development actually moves from concept to reality, personnel and technical resources must be engaged to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to "close the sale" on new attractions and visitor services.

New product in this regard can take the form of thematic and geographic-based visitor packages, and thematic automobile, bicycling and walking tours. The enhancement and expansion of the Lancaster County Heritage Program is another way to increase "authentic" heritage products in the County. Additionally, support should be given to enhance existing and create new hallmark special events, such as the existing "Quilters Heritage Celebration."

Two areas that would have substantial visitor appeal and an opportunity for success could be centered on Lancaster's craftsmanship and food.

Develop a Master Crafts Tour

The development of a Master Crafts tour could add a significant new product offering for Lancaster County. Local residents are known to be good with their hands. Homespun articles and handmade goods abound throughout the County. There are already several sites making use of a "Made in Lancaster, PA" concept, some of which are not "tourist" sites per se, such as furniture stores. Indeed, Turkey Hill's market research has indicated a high brand equity in a "Made in Lancaster" position.

A package of Master Crafts could easily be created from existing resources to link stores, sites, and individuals so the tourist could enjoy demonstrations by master craftsmen, learn about the joy of creating from scratch, and buy locally-made goods for themselves and as gifts. LCPC might take the lead here, at least initially, to develop criteria and guidelines that pertain to the authenticity of the area.

PDCVB would then create an itinerary that would be self-guided to allow the tourist to begin and end the tour at any point and choose how many points of interest to visit.

In order to create a sense of urgency that would compel the tourist to book a visit to Lancaster at a particular time and not postpone the trip, a week-long "Made in Lancaster Celebration" could be marketed. This would not require investment dollars nor any retrofitting or renovation of existing product. It would require organization and collaboration, however. Furniture stores, for example, would have to agree to pay for an ad and listing in a Master Crafts brochure (both printed and online) to help underwrite the marketing costs. For the special event portion of the celebration, stores would offer a special Made in Lancaster Celebration discount of 10%, free shipping within 200 miles, or some other incentive simply to underscore the special, be-here-then notion.

Create a "Made in Lancaster County" Food Route and Food Celebration

Another new product that could be "developed" includes the creation of a "Made in Lancaster County Food Route" and Lancaster Food Celebration. Throughout local and consumer research data, common refrains were pride in local food and interest in eating local foods. Not only is food appealing to both the local resident and the tourist, but it also abounds in Lancaster and is a fitting

exemplification of Lancaster's heritage. It is both authentic and unique. A focus on food is a good way to move tourists around the County. It has been packaged as a wonderful heritage product called Growing Traditions through the Lancaster-York Heritage Region Program, but this emphasizes markets, dairies, stands, and orchards. The Made in Lancaster County Food Route can expand the notion of Lancaster Food to make it attractive to a wide variety of audiences by including restaurants, ice cream factory tours, and specialty stores that carry distinctive food items such as Miesse Chocolates, which tie the City to the wider County product.

As with the Master Crafts itinerary, the Made in Lancaster County Food Route is simply a cohesive map with good descriptions of ALL the opportunities in the County to sample Made in Lancaster County Food. Again LCPC would set forth the criteria and guidelines; PDCVB would develop an itinerary that would be appealing to visitors.

A Lancaster County Food Celebration could be developed to create a sense of urgency in the tourist. Yet again, this idea would not require additional investment dollars or renovation of existing sites. Sample activities might include several restaurants competing for the best shoofly or rhubarb pie in a two-week period, with consumers using a common form to vote for their favorite and the winner posted on the PDCVB website; signage in stores and restaurants explaining that particular foods have been made with the latest pickings from Lancaster County and even providing a date picked (mostly in the summer months); and listings in PDCVB materials of special recipes in which Lancastrians take pride and want others to taste (similar to clam chowder in New England).

Enhance and Expand the Lancaster County Heritage Program

Currently, the Lancaster County Planning Commission is in the process of enhancing and expanding its nationally recognized Heritage Program. Currently the program designates authentic heritage resources including historic sites, services and events. The program should be expanded to include the designation of entire communities, landscapes, routes, and products. The expansion and maintenance of this program is vital to the County's integrity and attractiveness as a heritage destination.

GOAL 2:

FOCUS RESOURCES ON PRIORITIZED AREAS AND CORRIDORS THAT HAVE THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The Strategic Tourism Development Plan proposes the designation of Tourism Development Areas and Corridors, the purpose of which is to assist the public, private and non profit sectors in directing resources (both financial and technical) to create a countywide network of focused attractions and services. By clustering and concentrating attractions and services in specific areas, visitors will also become aware of these places and choose to go there.

The Plan proposes that a hierarchy of Tourism Development Areas and Corridors be established to differentiate the levels of visitor readiness, local support and thus priority. Two major categories are proposed: 1) Urban Tourism Development Areas and Corridors, and 2) Rural Resource Based Areas.

Urban Tourism Development Areas/Corridors are those that are within County-designated Urban or Village Growth Areas and are recognized as having a critical mass of attractions and services necessary for tourism development, or have the potential to become designated as Tourism Development Areas in the future with the appropriate level of support and financial resources. Many of the County's towns and villages, for example, fall into this category and could be established as "new" and authentic heritage products.

Urban Tourism Development Areas/Corridors (TDA/C's) are further broken down into Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Areas. Primary TDA/C's have existing and recognized attractions, services and infrastructure and are further defined as Tier 1 and Tier 2. Tier 1 areas need only continued enhancement of attractions and services to remain competitive, such as Lititz, Strasburg area (east of the Borough), and the Route 340 corridor (Bird-in-Hand, Smoketown and Intercourse). Tier 2 areas, on the other hand, require significant enhancement, reinvestment and upgrading in order to remain competitive. These include the Route 30 East and the Route 272 North corridors.

Secondary Urban TDA/C's exhibit significant potential for tourism development in the near future, that is, one to five years. Examples of secondary areas include, but are not limited to, the City of Lancaster, and the boroughs of Marietta, Columbia, Strasburg, and Ephrata.

Areas/Corridors defined as Tertiary, in the Plan, do not currently exhibit strength in attractions, visitor services or infrastructure but have longer term potential for tourism development provided the appropriate local public and private support is harnessed.

The second type of Tourism Development Area proposed in the Plan is *Rural Resource Based Tourism Areas*. These areas include large rural and natural landscapes, generally outside of established Urban Growth Areas, identified in the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan. Preservation of the natural, cultural and historic resources of these areas is paramount. The towns and villages within these designated landscapes could serve as gateways for interpretation and provide limited visitors services and facilities. The types of attractions and services most appropriate for these sensitive landscapes include agri- and eco-tourism based opportunities including but not limited to B&B's, country inns, farm stays, farm markets and roadside stands, wineries, outfitter services, campgrounds, scenic roads and bicycle routes.

The Rural Resource Based Areas defined in this Plan have also been designated as either Tier 1 or Tier 2 areas. Tier 1 areas are those that are generally recognized currently or are in the process of creating sustainable tourism development, such as the Susquehanna River Valley. Tier 2 areas are those that have the potential for rural resource-based tourism opportunities and include Northwestern Lancaster County Agricultural Landscape and Southern Lancaster County Agricultural Landscape. The rural towns and villages within these landscapes, such as Landis Valley, ChurchTowne and Maytown, could serve as gateways for interpretation and provide limited tourism facilities and services.

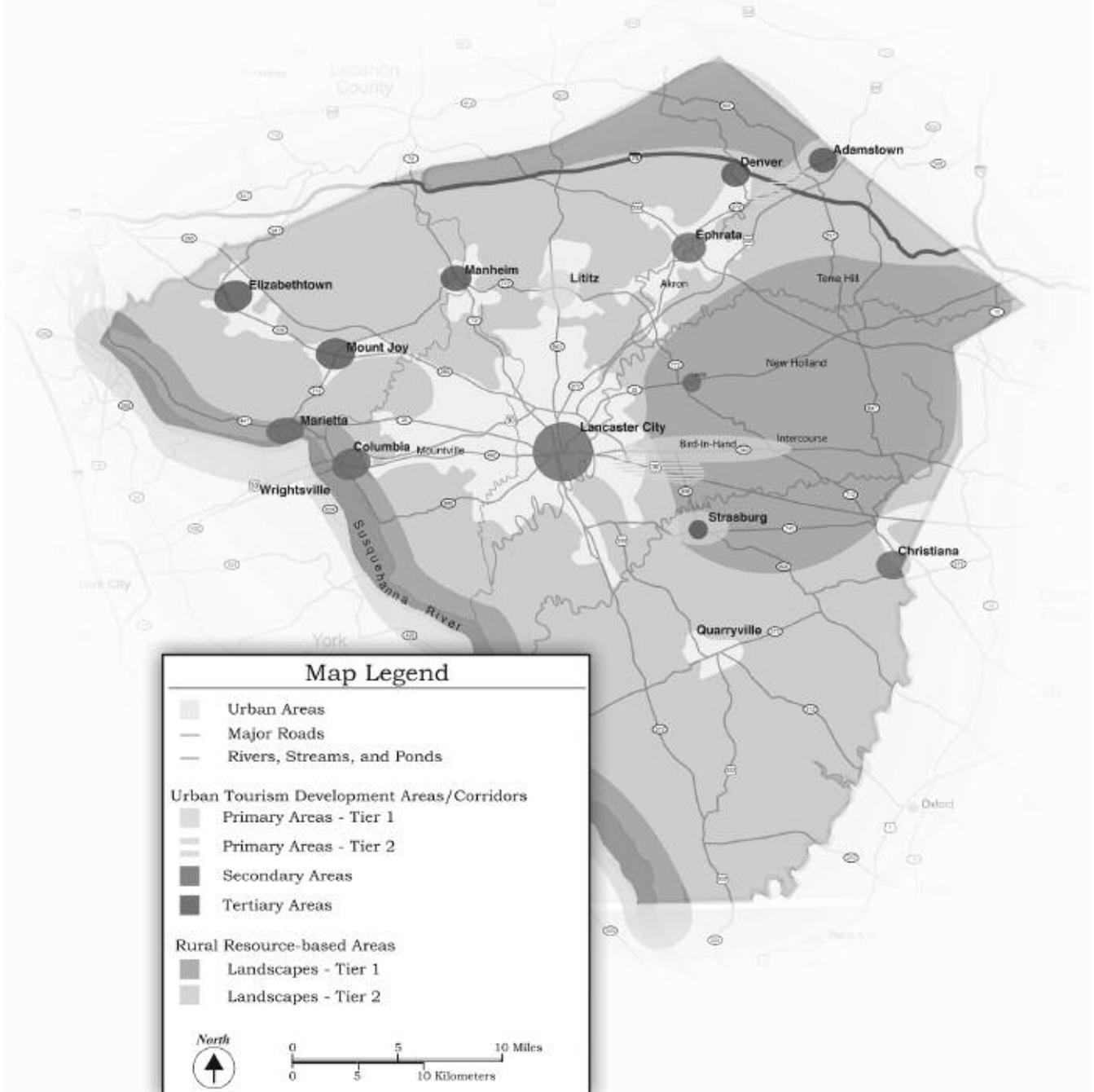
In all of the defined Urban Tourism Development Areas/Corridors and Rural Resource Based Tourism Areas, a variety of tools and incentives should be made available to improve and enhance the quality of life in these places. For example, design guidelines, historic preservation programs, tax incentives for commercial and residential property owners for façade improvements, preservation zoning, and sign controls would go very far in reaching the dual goals of creating great places to live *and* great places to visit. Brief and focused strategic plans for each existing and proposed Tourism Development Area/Corridor should be prepared. These plans should address all aspects of tourism planning and development and can serve as a "prospectus" for potential developers and individual entrepreneurs.

In addition, the concept of creating a network of Tourism Development Areas also requires that transportation linkages be established to connect the various designated areas together into a seamless system of scenic byways, shuttle routes, and non-motorized pathways which would represent a cohesive, enjoyable way of touring the entire region. These linkages could be further enhanced by

coordinating with the Lancaster/York wayfinding program already under way.

For a complete listing of designated areas, as well as the criteria for designation and an enlarged color version of this map, please see Appendix E.

Lancaster County Proposed Tourism Development Areas/Corridors



GOAL 3:

ESTABLISH THE CITY OF LANCASTER AS A NEW AND EXCITING TOURISM PRODUCT FOR THE COUNTY

The City of Lancaster has the best opportunity to become the new product for the Lancaster area. It has several advantages. It is an already existing product that is geographically compact, well-served by roads, and optimally located within the County’s tourist domains. An inventory of the City’s attractions reveals numerous historic sites, architectural marvels, museums, restaurants, galleries and specialty shops. The City exemplifies the wealth and depth of Lancaster’s heritage offering, especially in the large volume of sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This heritage is attractive to travelers. With a commitment to product enhancement and new product development, the City of Lancaster can build on its strengths to become a very attractive and competitive destination, a place not just to visit but a dynamic and interesting place where people live. For this to occur, the City must take ownership of its product. Public officials must implement an aggressive tourism product recruitment program based on solid planning, which would be augmented by private initiative.

In addition, the City as a new tourist product has begun to be marketed, albeit in limited fashion, as part of the Towns & Villages product. Because marketing and packaging of the City is still in its infancy, the City can be presented to the tourist as a new and exciting destination.

To establish Lancaster City as the new product, the City must:

Create Connections with the County Product by Providing Complementary but Different Experiences

Schematically, the connections between the City and County’s product offering can be presented as follows:

County	City
Outlets	Boutiques and galleries
Faith-based	ChurchTowne, Houses of Worship
Amish	Central Market and Quilt Museum
Heritage	Heritage
Theatre	Arts & culture
Family-based entertainment	Evening entertainment
High tourist season	Special events

While the County has shopping outlets with franchises, chain stores and brand names, the City can provide a complementary but different experience by focusing on specialty shopping such as boutiques, unique items, handmade goods, and local input.

In the same way, the faith-based experience of the County can be combined with ChurchTowne and Houses of Worship within the City. Several historic churches are already being marketed, but a greater connection must be made with attractions in the County so the tourist feels he/she can’t see one without the other.

In all surveys, the County’s main tourism asset is the Amish culture, and the agricultural landscape. The embodiment of that culture in a single building is the Central Market. It is already a major connector of the City with the County, but purely from a tourism point of view, currently its impact is limited by its three-day-a-week schedule.

Packaging the heritage product will connect the City and the County. Heritage encompasses historical, arts, and cultural attractions. The County and City are rich in both. The City holds potential for tourists interested in the Underground Railroad with Bethel Harambee Historical Services “Living the Experience,” with the Thaddeus Stevens/Lydia Hamilton Smith project, and with Rock Ford Plantation. Wheatland can be used as a threshold between the City and County. Indeed, interpretation of history can be a link connecting the City, the County and other areas in the region, such as Gettysburg and York.

“Live performance” attractions in the County should be connected to the “lively arts” in the City. Packages can link both areas using, for example, American Music Theatre, Amish Experience Theatre, Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre, The Rainbow Dinner Theatre, Sight & Sound Theatres, the Pennsylvania Academy of Music, and the Fulton Opera House.

The County hosts large volumes of tourists in the summer (predominantly families), spring, and fall months (predominantly adult travelers). The City should create a symbiosis with these audiences by organizing special authentic City events that would attract County visitors who might extend their stay in order to attend an event in the City. Another excellent model for this linking the City and County together is the *Witness* package that will be available in 2005.

There are three existing art-related events that occur just before the majority of summer tourists arrive. If they could

be pushed to later in the calendar and packaged through a PDCVB marketing effort, those events would become accessible to the tourist. If Hometown Day could be held before New York schools start their academic year, it would be accessible to tourists. Most importantly, the events must be authentic to the nature, history, and personality of the City of Lancaster.

Support New Product Development that Focuses on the Arts, Culture and Heritage of the City and Coordinate Thematically

Lancaster City has one of the largest, if not the largest, nationally designated Historic Districts in the United States. The architectural and historic resources that can be found, not only in the downtown area, but also throughout its diverse neighborhoods, provide the City with its distinctive “sense of place.” New product development, in Lancaster City, must reflect, enhance and build upon these unique characteristics.

In addition, the City now has a huge opportunity, to focus on the arts, as a complementary new product and as a catalyst for downtown revitalization and tourism development. The May 2004 Plan, *City Stages - A Design Plan for Lancaster Arts*, initiated by Destination Downtown, proposes many recommendations that provide a first step in what will be a long-term, multifaceted approach for using the arts as a means for strengthening downtown Lancaster. These recommendations should be strongly supported because they not only add a new dimension to Lancaster’s “sense of place,” but they also encourage opportunities for catalyzing collaborative projects and encouraging collective thinking among the City’s arts groups and businesses.

Other efforts currently being discussed and/or planned for that should be supported include the development of multi-cultural products such as the Thaddeus Stevens/Lydia Hamilton Smith National Historic Site and ChurchTowne African American Museum. The concept of creating a Folk Life Center that would tie together existing visual arts, performing arts and craft venues, along with new ones such as the Shear America! Collection also has great potential. All of the City’s attractions and tourism products should explore the concept of joint-ticketing which has worked very successfully in many other destinations.

Another project that will benefit both residents and visitors in downtown Lancaster is the revitalization of Lancaster Square. The project envisions three major elements:

1) removal of the concrete superstructure, 2) incorporation of the Stoner Carousel, and 3) the establishment of Binns Park. Work is now under way on the park, which will be designed as a large outdoor community gathering place and desirable location for holding events with a wide variety of requirements and sizes.

The City also has the opportunity to develop an architectural lighting program that would highlight the outstanding features of its dozens of historic buildings and structures. Such a program would, in itself, become a new evening tourism product and provide opportunities for walking tours and events.

There is a particular opportunity to create themed and neighborhood tours to work in collaboration with receptive operators. The new Lancaster City Tours and the City Stories initiative being developed by Franklin and Marshall College are excellent models for this type of tourism product development. Consumers indicated a great willingness to participate in a historical walking tour of the City. These tours, however, will need to be up to the highest standards expected by heritage and geo-tourists. Historically accurate and lively scripts must be available to interpreters who must either be trained (if not professional performers) or rehearsed (if professional performers).

Lancaster City also has a tremendous opportunity to create hallmark seasonal events and festivals that could directly relate and exemplify its unique and distinctive arts, culture and heritage.

Concentrate New Product Development Initially on Central Market and Surrounding Area

In all of the surveys, respondents identified the Amish and agricultural landscape as the main assets of Lancaster County. Central Market offers a tremendous opportunity to experience this unique culture, up close, and also understand the strong farm-to-market connection with the County. Central Market, however, is facing many challenges, including management, merchandising, and physical maintenance. A recently completed study addressed these concerns and should be consulted in achieving the goal.

Due to the significance and iconic recognition that Central Market holds with Lancaster’s residents, it is recommended that new product development be complementary and begin initially within the immediate area. Later phases of product development can be carried out in ever-widening concentric circles around this core area.

If A Convention Center is Constructed, New Products That Support and Enhance the Center Should Be Created

If a Lancaster County Convention Center is constructed in downtown Lancaster in the near future, it will be critical that consideration be given to addressing the needs of conventioners for entertainment, shopping, and sightseeing within walking distance or a short trolley or taxi ride from the Convention Center. Clearly these activities need a nighttime focus, as it is assumed that the majority of conventioners will be in meetings and sessions during the day.

Explore Options for Creating a State-of-the-Art “Lancaster Experience” Interpretive Center in Downtown Lancaster

The development of an interactive “Lancaster Experience” Interpretive Center, centrally located within the downtown area, should be explored. The Center should be an attraction unto itself and include state-of-the-art interpretive venues that enhance the visitor’s and resident’s experience and that tell the “Lancaster Story.” The Center should be of outstanding quality and serve as an orientation focal point and gateway that encourages visitors to explore the City and its surrounding countryside.

Efforts should be made to locate such a center in close proximity to other complimentary and supportive facilities or attractions such as the Stoner Carousel or the proposed Folk Life Center, both of which are identified in this Plan. It would also be logical for the Center to provide other destination and informational services to visitors and local residents within the same location.

Concentrate on Evening Entertainment of all Kinds

The City can differentiate itself from other tourism areas in the County by providing evening entertainment. The downtown area can benefit from additional restaurants, nightclubs, and bars. Evening entertainment should not be aimed solely at the adult audience, but rather should include family-based attractions and venues for young adults. Additionally, existing attractions should be encouraged to provide evening entertainment venues. The Pennsylvania College of Art and Design and the Pennsylvania Academy of Music could offer more evening events to complement the Fulton Opera House. Galleries, bookstores, and coffeehouses will all benefit from nighttime clientele.

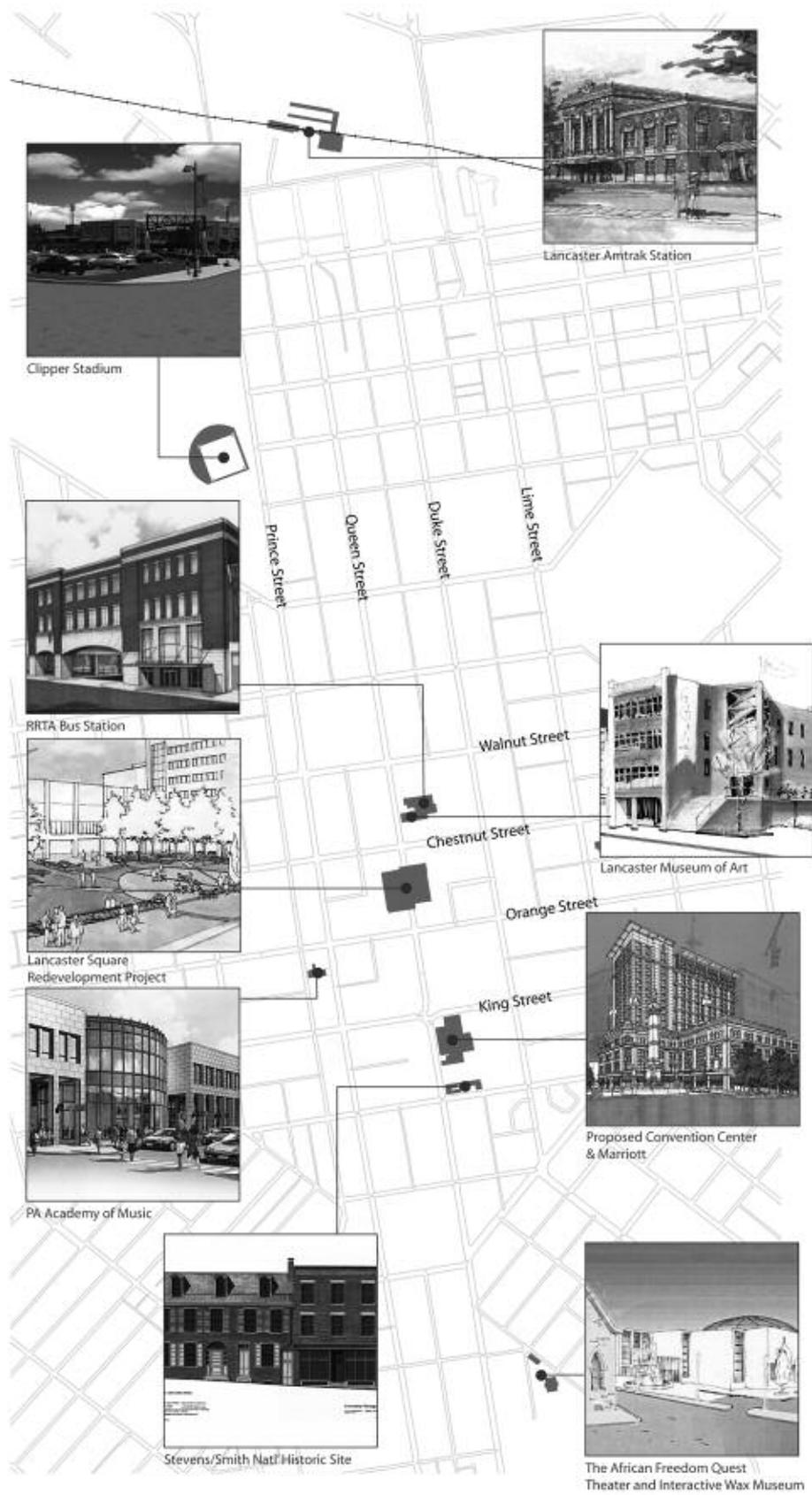
Serve the Needs of Young Adults

The City has institutions of higher learning both within the downtown area and in the immediate environs. Nowhere in the City, nor indeed in the County, is their need for leisure activity being adequately met. Additional attractions need to be geared toward the young adult audience, which consists of active students, alumni, and non-matriculated young adults in the area, groups that have considerable disposable income. For the first two categories, liaison with the local colleges will be important to product development.

Connect Multi-Purpose Stadium with Downtown

There is a tremendous amount of excitement and energy focused around the construction and opening of the new multi-purpose Clipper Magazine Stadium in the northwestern part of the City. As a result, significant new investment is occurring with the development of new dining, lodging, and entertainment venues. Every effort should be made to facilitate the connection between the stadium area and the downtown.

Tourism-Related Projects Under Way or Proposed in Lancaster City, PA



PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BUILD ON LANCASTER COUNTY'S STRENGTH AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1: TO PROTECT, PRESERVE, AND ENHANCE LANCASTER COUNTY'S AUTHENTIC NATURAL, CULTURAL, HISTORIC, AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ASSETS AND DISTINCTIVE "SENSE OF PLACE" AS THE FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Create new products and services that directly relate to the County's unique natural, cultural, historic and architectural heritage and sense of place	Mid-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Create new product that reaches new markets and that reflects the cultural diversity of Lancaster County's resident base	Mid-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Establish and create sustainable tourism practices and development that enhance the cultural and environmental quality of Lancaster County	Mid-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Establish new product development recruitment guidelines	Short-Term	LCTDC/LCPC/PDCVB
Engage personnel and technical resources to ensure the appropriate mechanisms are in place to "close the sale."	Short-Term	LCTDC
Support and enhance existing and create new hallmark special events	Short-Term	PDCVB
Create new and exciting thematic automobile, bicycling, and walking tours	Short-Term	PDCVB/LCPC
Develop a Master Crafts Tour	Mid- and Short-Term	PDCVB/LCPC
Develop a "Made in Lancaster" Food Route and an authentic Lancaster Food Celebration	Mid- and Short-Term	PDCVB/LCPC
Enhance and expand the Lancaster County Heritage Program	Mid-Term	LCPC

GOAL 2: FOCUS RESOURCES ON PRIORITIZED AREAS AND CORRIDORS THAT HAVE THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Working in partnership with local municipalities, develop a system of Tourism Development Areas/Corridors, within the County's designated Urban and Village Growth Areas	Short-Term	LCPC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare brief focused strategic plans for each existing and proposed Tourism Destination Area/Corridor 	Long-Term	LCPC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish appropriate Towns and Villages as new and "authentic" heritage products Provide assistance to communities interested in developing, preserving and presenting their heritage assets (design guidelines, Main Street Program, etc.) 	Long-Term	LCPC
Reinvest in existing recognized Tourism Development Areas within Lancaster County	Long-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Create and/or modify zoning ordinances and other regulatory and non-regulatory tools to facilitate appropriate tourism development in designated Tourism Development Areas/Corridors and Rural Conservation Areas	Long-Term	LCPC/Municipalities
Create incentive programs for individual businesses and homeowners to restore their historic properties in Designated Tourism Development Areas and Corridors	Mid-Term	Municipalities/Orgs/Agencies
Enhance agri-tourism and eco-tourism opportunities in appropriate Rural/Conservation Areas	Mid-Term	LCTDC/LCPC

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (continued)

BUILD ON LANCASTER COUNTY'S STRENGTH AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 3: ESTABLISH THE CITY OF LANCASTER AS A NEW AND EXCITING TOURISM PRODUCT FOR THE COUNTY

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Create connections between the County and City Products by providing complementary but different experiences	Short-Term	LCTDC/PDCVB/LCPC
Support new product development and partnerships that focus on the arts, culture, and heritage of Lancaster City		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and implement priority actions of the LancasterArts Initiative • Support the development of multi-cultural product including the Thaddeus Stevens/Lydia Smith National Historic Site and the ChurchTowne African American Museum and Theater • Explore the concept of creating a Folk Life Center that would tie together existing visual arts, performing arts and craft venues, along with the creation of new ones such as the Shear America! Collection • Encourage the development of additional entertaining and historically authentic walking tours • Build on the City Stories concept currently being developed with Franklin and Marshall College • Create hallmark seasonal events and festivals tied to tourism visitation that relate to Lancaster City's arts, culture, and heritage • Develop joint ticketing of attractions • Develop an architectural lighting program as a new evening heritage tourism product 	<p>Short-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Long-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p>	<p>LCTDC/City organizations</p>
Concentrate new Downtown product development initially on Central Market and surrounding area	Mid-Term	LCTDC/City organizations
If a Convention Center is constructed, new products that support and enhance the Center should be created	Mid-Term	PDCVB
Explore options for creating a state-of-the-art "Lancaster Experience" Interpretive Center in Downtown Lancaster	Mid-Term	LCTDC/City organizations
Concentrate on developing a diversity of new evening entertainment opportunities and extend current attractions/services to include evening hours	Long-Term	LCTDC/City organizations
Create opportunities for young adults by coordinating with and getting feedback from local institutes of higher education	Mid-Term	LCTDC/City organizations
Connect multi-purpose stadium and nearby lodging, dining, and entertainment facilities and services in the northwestern part of the City with downtown	Mid-Term	LCTDC/City organizations

Measures of Success:

Increased number of collaborative partnerships per year involving attractions, towns/villages, non profit organizations, networks, etc.

Increased number of new sustainable tourism product projects per year in Lancaster City as result of assistance or data supplied by the Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation.

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners

INFRASTRUCTURE/MOBILITY STRATEGY:

MAKE IT EASY FOR THE VISITOR

Background

Planning for quality visitor infrastructure is critical to the success of any tourism destination. One of the major infrastructure needs of a destination is the provision of a wide variety of intermodal transportation facilities and opportunities to improve mobility. This will require reducing vehicular congestion, providing more transportation choices, better integrating these options, and providing better and more detailed information on the travel choices that are available within the destination.

Improving and enhancing other visitor services, such as visitor information, parking facilities, a diversity of accommodations, and wayfinding programs, is also needed in order to increase the quality of the visitor experience. Because there are limited public resources with which to do all this, the tourism industry must work with government to share this responsibility.

Lessons Learned & Critical Issues

- *Lancaster is easily accessible from major markets although it is difficult for visitors to navigate throughout the County once they have arrived*
- *Public transit does not well serve the needs of visitors*
- *Developing a complete, coordinated, countywide tourist transportation system is not feasible at this time*
- *The City is improving transportation for tourists*
- *The current wayfinding system is inadequate*
- *Traffic congestion is a growing problem*

Strategic Goals

GOAL 1:

ENHANCE VISITOR MOBILITY AND ACCESS THROUGH TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Lancaster County attracts so many people – visitors, residents and employees – that the long-term sustainability of its unique amenities and environments is cause for concern. In fact, Lancaster County is one of the fastest-growing areas within Pennsylvania and has experienced double-digit growth in each of the last two decades. Increases in population have led to increasing automobile and truck traffic, which is threatening the quality of life of the County and therefore tourism.

Therefore, Lancaster County is justified in taking greater measures to limit traffic congestion and encourage alternative travel options than otherwise comparable communities.

Unfortunately, at the present time, there are very few options for travel within the County other than by automobile. Attractions dispersed throughout the County make it nearly impossible to create a countywide mass transit system economically or logistically feasible. Existing bus routes are not conducive to visitor travel either, since they emanate from downtown and don't provide convenient travel between recognized tourism domains.

Create Attractive and Efficient Transportation Linkages between Proposed Tourism Development Areas

To begin addressing these concerns, the Strategic Tourism Development Plan is proposing the creation of a system of designated Tourism Development Areas. Focus should be given to developing transportation links between these areas to create a seamless system of scenic byways, shuttle routes and non-motorized pathways which would provide a cohesive, affordable and enjoyable way of touring the entire region. Access and corridor management plans should be developed for these linkage corridors to reduce traffic congestion and increase mobility.

Initially, during the peak tourist season, a shuttle and loop service could be developed for eastern Lancaster County attractions, thereby linking Strasburg, Paradise, Intercourse, Bird-in-Hand, and the outlets along US 30. This should be at nominal cost to the tourist, or better yet, a free ride. Alternatively, or indeed additionally, weekend or weeklong passes that permit unlimited riding on RRTA buses could be successful. However, any shuttle service or bus pass would have to be offered as part of a visitor package with accommodations and promoted heavily.

Create and Enhance Transportation Linkages in Lancaster City

If Lancaster City is to be developed as the next new tourism product for Lancaster County, considerable attention will be required to improve transportation linkages between the County and City domains and within the City itself. This could begin by developing a shuttle system that would link large volume tourist areas such as Routes 340 and 30 with downtown.

Within the City, other transportation improvements are being made that have importance to tourism. Amtrak is currently undergoing significant renovations to the Lancaster Train Station which will improve roadway access with a direct

connection to Duke Street, separate bus and automotive traffic, establish a Red Rose Transit Station, create a separate waiting area for interstate bus passengers, and develop a possible themed restaurant and retail space. In addition, the new site for the baseball stadium will be only a three-block walk from the station. Local buses, trolleys and taxis must be available to station users, easily recognizable, and operated in a professional manner.

The Red Rose Transit Authority has also developed a new shuttle trolley system, primarily aimed at commuters, that should be enhanced to cater to visitors during peak seasons. Whether or not a Convention Center is opened, considerable effort needs to be made to ensure that there is sufficient parking for both visitors and the downtown workforce. A detailed parking study to accomplish this goal should be initiated. Additionally, the possibility of re-establishing an “authentic” steel rail trolley as a functional and experiential transportation alternative between the Lancaster Train Station and a possible Convention Center should be explored.

Lancaster City should also work with the PDCVB to develop tour bus facilities in appropriate and strategic places in the downtown to improve the visitor’s experience and reduce negative impacts.

Encourage Non-Fixed Route Services

The private sector can also actively engage in improving transit services for tourists as well. Apparently, some private vehicle transport service is already available through selected attractions in the County where visitors can request transportation to a particular destination on an ad hoc basis. There may be a larger market for small group transportation around the County via small buses or vans. Such services could be offered through travel agencies and/or the hotels in the areas and coordinated with private businesses that have ample parking facilities. Tailored non-fixed route tours could additionally provide access to more remote destinations in the County, such as the River Towns, thereby extending the Lancaster product and encouraging tourists to move around the County.

Improve Conditions for Non-Motorized Travel

Conditions for non-motorized travel could be improved throughout the County. One option is a “share the road” approach that provides for wider shoulders. This should be a priority for designated Heritage Bicycle and Walking Tour routes. Another option is through separate facilities such as rails-to-trails projects, as well as pedestrian and

bicycle facilities in downtown Lancaster, village centers, and designated Tourism Development Areas. Non-motorized travel safety and comfort is a crucial concern for both residents and tourists and particularly as it relates to Amish buggies.

Expand Parking Facilities

To reduce congestion during the main tourist season (July-October), a number of Park-and-Ride lots should be constructed around the County in appropriate towns and villages and other proposed Tourism Development Areas. If the County provides transportation, it will be able to attract more and different kinds of tourists and create further opportunities. The lots could support both the proposed Shuttle Service and the non-fixed route services offered by businesses. Visitor facilities are needed at these lots, including passenger shelters, information kiosks, restrooms, benches, and lighting.

Subscribing to the idea that many tourists will use alternative modes of transportation if they are convenient, enjoyable, and affordable, these park-and-rides could be authentically themed. The building architecture could incorporate barn, train station, covered bridge, or other local contexts. Fun sculpture could reinforce this concept. Cows you can climb on, giant ears of corn, or Conestoga wagons could help to create a family-friendly setting that would be frequently used by visitors. These facilities would then be an asset to the towns and villages in which they would be located.

Not all towns and villages would have park-and-ride lots, however. In those villages that do not, additional parking might be needed to sustain growth in tourism.

Support Improvements to Rail Facilities and Service in Lancaster County

Nearly one-quarter of a million people pass through Amtrak train stations in Lancaster County. It is crucial, especially with the multi-purpose stadium and a possible Convention Center coming online, that the train service and passenger services be upgraded and modernized. Infrastructure rehabilitation, particularly for rail and tie replacement, is taking place between Lancaster and Harrisburg. Most importantly, four stations serving established or upcoming Tourist Development Areas are being renovated or built: Lancaster, Elizabethtown, Mount Joy and the new station at Paradise. The Amtrak station in Middletown is being moved to the new Harrisburg International Airport terminal and will also be a key stop on

the Corridor One line, which will provide new transportation choices to travelers in the County.

Publish a Facilities and Services Guide for Bus Drivers

Since motorcoach travel is still an important component of the tourism industry in Lancaster County, every effort should be made to help facilitate and enhance this transportation option. A Facilities and Services Guide for bus drivers can be developed that details businesses supportive of motorcoaches and identifies facilities for sanitary disposal, washing, and routine and emergency vehicle maintenance.

GOAL 2:

INCREASE THE QUALITY OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

There are a variety of ways in which a tourism destination can improve the visitor experience. The following recommendations assist in achieving that goal.

Support the Development of Wayfinding Systems

Creating wayfinding programs, for both automobiles and pedestrians, facilitates the ease of movement around the County. Lancaster City already has an existing and successful vehicular wayfinding program and is now in the process of developing a pedestrian system. Priority should also be given to developing these programs within other designated Tourism Development Areas and Corridors. Lancaster and York counties are already preparing a regional wayfinding plan that will lay the foundation for such a program.

Create a County Scenic Byways Program

Another way to enhance the visitor experience would be through the creation of a system of scenic byways. Such a program would not only facilitate an enjoyable means for travel for visitors around the County, but also would stimulate the preservation of important natural, cultural and scenic resources important to residents as well. Roads like PA Routes 340, 772 and 441 all offer great opportunities for such designation and are already recognized in many commercial tourism guides as especially scenic. Other corridors, such as the Strasburg Rail Road, could be considered for designation and heritage corridors.

In addition, the Lincoln Highway - a 3,300 mile long historic roadway - is now under study by the National Park Service for some level of recognition and protection. The highway passes through Lancaster County; the section west of Adams County, to the Pennsylvania/Ohio boundary, is

designated as a State Heritage Corridor. Strong consideration should be given to expanding this designation through York and Lancaster counties as a means for increasing the impact on tourism within the region.

Utilize Context-Sensitive Design in Planning New Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities and roadways should be designed to enhance the natural, cultural and historic features of Lancaster County and contribute to its “sense of place” rather than detract from it. Priority should be given to facilities within and between existing and proposed Tourism Development Areas and Corridors, along scenic byways, and in other appropriate areas in the Rural/Conservation Areas designated in the Tourism Plan.

Improve Transit-Related Information/Create a Car-Free Travel Guide

To improve travel efficiency within the County, linkages between different transportation modes must be improved and more convenient access information about these modal connections must be made available. Intermodal joint ticketing programs should be created to allow a visitor to connect with various modes of transportation (train, bus, taxi) easily and affordably. The PDCVB and Red Rose Transit Authority should also include transit-friendly information on their websites. Kiosks in high tourist traffic areas should also be developed in coordination with efforts already under way with the Lancaster-York Heritage Region.

In addition, a car-free guide to Lancaster County could be created. It could be produced in both written and electronic form, the latter of which would be available on the PDCVB website. An integrated travel information and booking system could be created which would allow the user to enter a home address and an address for the desired destination and then retrieve information about all the options for car-free travel. A travel planner on the site could help the visitor select the best modes of travel. Complete travel information should be available at all Visitor Centers, wayfinding “Lighthouse Attractions,” and transit stations. This would be especially important if a Convention Center is up and running.

Adopt Quality Performance Standards and Assessment Processes

Visitors today are demanding higher quality visitor services when they travel. Lancaster County should consider exploring the adoption of quality performance standards and performance assessment processes as a

means to raise the overall quality for visitor facilities and services within the industry.

Organize a Long-Term Rental Facilities Initiative

Consumer research shows that, while three-quarters of travelers stay in hotels, some do stay in time-share or other rental accommodations, especially for extended stays of more than 3-4 days. In order to encourage longer stays, especially for families, the PDCVB could organize an entrepreneur-based initiative focused on week- or month-long rentals.

Develop Additional Visitor Services in Lancaster City

As the next new tourism product in the County, Lancaster City will also need to support and develop additional high quality visitor services. Adequate public restroom facilities will need to be created in key locations and for special events in the downtown area. Other visitor service improvements include wayfinding programs. Already, the recently implemented vehicular wayfinding system has been working very well within the City limits and should be expanded. A pedestrian wayfinding program is now being developed by the Lancaster Campaign and should be

strongly supported. Additionally, a system of interpretive signs should be considered to create another opportunity for visitors to experience Lancaster City's rich heritage.

Lancaster City also needs to encourage the development of a variety of new accommodations within Downtown. The Ramada/Brunswick Hotel needs to be re-invented and rehabilitated in order to be successful. Other options, including "boutique hotels," bed and breakfast operations, and urban inns, at varying cost levels, need to be available in the downtown area.

And finally, Lancaster City will need to improve the overall streetscapes within its jurisdiction if it is to be attractive to visitors. Initial focus should be on the key corridors identified in the LDR Plan – Prince Street, Central/Prince Street, and South Duke Street. Efforts are already under way to make such improvements as lighting, benches, garbage receptacles, and façade improvements on some of these corridors. A part of making the streets more pedestrian-friendly and "livable" will be to make every effort to improve the routing of existing truck traffic through and around the City.

INFRASTRUCTURE/MOBILITY STRATEGY
MAKE IT EASY FOR THE VISITOR

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1: ENHANCE VISITOR MOBILITY AND ACCESS THROUGH TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
<p>Create a seamless system of motorized and non-motorized linkage routes between designated Tourism Development Areas within Lancaster County</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide seasonal shuttle service between designated Tourism Development Areas/develop Eastern Lancaster County route as a model • Develop access management plans for high priority corridors which link Tourism Development Areas together <p>Create and enhance transportation linkages and facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create easy transit to and from Lancaster Train Station and Downtown • Enhance the existing RRTA shuttle system to be more accommodating to visitors by linking key attractions and visitor services • Ensure a sufficient variety of parking facilities in the Downtown area for visitors and local workforce • Ensure adequate public restroom facilities in key locations and for special events in the downtown area • If a Convention Center is opened, provide appropriate transportation options • Educate trolley/bus operators on visitor needs; provide travel information to conventioners; provide visitor passes as part of lodging package • Develop tour bus facilities and relations in order to prevent negative impact of buses <p>Encourage non-fixed route transportation services (private vehicle transport service provided by attractions and accommodations)</p> <p>Improve conditions for non-motorized travel in Designated Tourism Development Areas and Rural/Conservation Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on roads/walkways identified in the County Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan as a priority and/or designated as Heritage Bicycle and Walking Tour Routes • Support the establishment of the Atglen-Susquehanna Rail Trail and other greenway opportunities <p>Expand parking facilities in designated Tourism Development Areas</p> <p>Support the completion of the Paradise Station and improvements/renovations to the Lancaster, Elizabethtown, and Mount Joy train stations</p> <p>Publish a Facilities and Services Guide for bus drivers</p>	<p>Long-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Long-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Long-Term</p> <p>Long-Term</p> <p>Long-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p>	<p>LCPC/Municipalities/RRTA</p> <p>LCPC/City Partners/RRTA/ City organizations</p> <p>LCPC/Municipalities</p> <p>Municipalities LCPC</p> <p>PDCVB</p>

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners

INFRASTRUCTURE/MOBILITY STRATEGY (continued)

MAKE IT EASY FOR THE VISITOR

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 2: INCREASE THE QUALITY OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Develop pedestrian wayfinding programs in designated Tourism Development Areas	Mid-Term	
Complete wayfinding program within the Lancaster-York Heritage Region and prioritize wayfinding signage in designated Tourism Development Areas and linkages	Short-Term	LCPC/LYHR
Establish and publicize a Countywide Scenic Byways program	Long-Term	LCPC
Utilize “context-sensitive design” elements to plan transportation facilities in designated Tourism Development Areas and Rural/Conservation Areas in the County	Short-Term	LCPC
Create a car-free travel guide	Mid-Term	PDCVB/LCPC
Create an intermodal (train/bus/taxi) joint ticketing program	Short-Term	PDCVB/Partners
Improve transit- and travel-related information on the PA Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau and Red Rose Transit Authority Websites	Short-Term	PDCVB/RRTA
Create visitor information kiosks at high-traffic tourist areas	Mid-Term	LCTDC
Explore the adoption of quality performance standards and tourism product assessment processes within the tourism industry	Long-Term	LCTDC/LCPC/PDCVB
Organize a Long-Term Rental Facilities Initiative	Mid-Term	LCTDC/PDCVB
Develop additional visitor services in Lancaster City		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information services to conventioners • Provide visitor information services within the City of Lancaster on an ongoing basis • Support the development of the Lancaster City Pedestrian Wayfinding Program • Create a system of interpretive signage for attractions • Improve existing and create additional lodging options • Focus on implementation of the key corridors identified in the LDR Plan for streetscape improvements (Prince Street, Downtown/Central Prince Street, South Duke Street) • Improve the routing of trucks through and around Lancaster City 	Long-Term Mid-Term Short-Term Short-Term Long-Term Long-Term Long-Term	PDCVB/City Partners PDCVB/City Partners PDCVB/City Partners PDCVB/City Partners PDCVB/City Partners PDCVB/City Partners PDCVB/City Partners

Measures of Success:

The number of new infrastructure projects supported per year

The number of Designated Tourism Development Areas/Corridors assisted with infrastructure information, plans, projects

MARKETING STRATEGY

FOCUS ON BRAND EQUITY, CONTINUITY, AND PACKAGING

Background

Lancaster has a long and storied history of effective tourism marketing. The ongoing marketing strategy recommended in this Tourism Plan is to build upon the already strong brand equity, ensure continuity of message, and create or expand upon packages that relate to those characteristics of an overnight destination most appealing to travelers. Lancaster can take advantage of many opportunities in the future by building on its already extensive brand awareness and marketing expertise. It is also essential that marketing strategies be supported by appropriate research. Packaging extends the market reach of the individual products so there is a greater return for all. Packaging also makes the product easier for the consumer to purchase, which results in greater sales.

Lessons Learned & Critical Issues

- *Brand awareness of PA Dutch Country in major markets is extraordinarily high, and repeat visitors extend marketing resources and provide credibility for the marketing message. Lancaster can build on what it already has to create many marketing opportunities for the future.*
- *Lancaster County has extraordinary appeal as a cultural heritage destination*
- *Lancaster County is an experienced tourism destination marketer. Promotional materials and resources are available to communicate Lancaster's messages to key markets.*
- *However, if Lancaster does not keep pace with competitors' marketing budgets, tourism will decline. Already the lack of a dedicated budget for research hampers the designated marketing organization.*
- *The inability to attract new audiences is a threat*
- *Lancaster must excel at internet marketing and web site presence*
- *There is insufficient packaging to attract niche markets and insufficient events marketing*

Strategic Goals

GOAL 1:

BUILD ON LANCASTER COUNTY'S EXISTING AND STRONG BRAND AWARENESS AND EQUITY

Lancaster County is well positioned to embark upon strategies that extend the appeal of the County, that appeal to niche markets and new audiences, that communicate the County's strengths as a heritage destination in a variety of ways, and that can serve as enticements for visitors to add to the length of stay and/or increase their spending while visiting. Any and all of these strategies must be based on ongoing market research.

Aggressively Market the Towns and Villages as a Heritage Product

Lancaster County is well recognized for its peaceful agricultural setting. Scattered throughout this landscape, however, are dozens of quiet, authentic and attractive small towns and villages that have the potential to be a great draw, especially for the adult traveler. Lancaster County is one of the few areas in the United States that offers a Tuscan-like variety of towns and villages, each with its own unique character, interesting to see and all located within easy driving distance. The Towns & Villages product has serious tourism potential and is particularly attractive as a heritage product. By using the City of Lancaster as a base, an easy hub-and-spoke touring itinerary of the Towns & Villages product could be established. Since the City and its immediate environs will have a critical mass of accommodations and evening activities, and because individual Towns & Villages most likely will have an insufficient number of these attributes, this hub-and-spoke tourism idea will have great merit.

Take Advantage of Existing and Already-Planned Product and Services for Core Marketing of the City

Until new products are created and there are more evening activities, marketing efforts should focus on what already exists or is well into the planning stage. For example, resources and marketing support are needed to ensure the success of the Quilt & Textile Museum, an experience that is *quiltessentially* Lancaster. The Fulton Opera House, the Lancaster Cultural History Museum, and Central Market already exist and should be the focus of core marketing efforts.

In order, however, for the visitor to appreciate the full extent of the attractions in and near the City, a signed Heritage Trail should be created to connect Rock Ford, downtown

attractions, and Wheatland. These attractions should pursue common programming, perhaps on a seasonal basis, to complement each other, while demonstrating the unique aspects of each.

Additionally, those projects under development or planned in the near future should also receive focused marketing attention. Examples include the new stadium and the emerging LancasterArts concept that conveys a sense of artistic excitement to attract visitors to art venues, galleries, and related shops.

Build on the Five Established Heritage Themes

As part of the establishment of the Lancaster-York Heritage Region in 2001, five heritage-related themes were identified for further development and interpretation in the two-county area. The first of these – Quest for Freedom – has already been developed as a tour and is currently being expanded to become part of a larger regional initiative led by the PDCVB. The fifth theme is Natural Ways: The Susquehanna River and Beyond. Although much of the area concerned is underdeveloped for tourism needs at this time, this theme will become more and more important as other parts of the County develop further and natural landscape becomes scarcer. There is a tremendous opportunity to build on the recently established Susquehanna River Water Trail and develop other eco-tourism based activities.

For the other three themes, we provide specific suggestions to build on the foundations already established. The second theme – Foodways: From Farm to Table – has taken shape as a marketing vehicle called “Growing Traditions,” although that piece focuses on farm produce sold directly to the consumer. (We elaborate on that theme below; see section on creating a Made in Lancaster food tour.)

The third theme – Innovation, Invention & Tradition – has yet to be packaged and marketed. It comprises mills, watchmaking, weavers and other sites. One of the sites, the Ephrata Cloister, is a state museum. We suggest that this theme take shape utilizing the other two state museums in Lancaster County, which also focus, in different ways, on innovation, invention, and tradition: Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and Landis Valley Museum. The existing Museums 4 Fun Pass, which combines these three museums with a tour of Cornwall Furnace, may become a tool in this packaging effort.

The fourth theme – Town & Country: Forging Communities, Cultivating the Land – also has yet to be interpreted. In Lancaster County alone, this theme is already exemplified through the Towns & Villages concept. Certain Towns & Villages need reinvestment to become viable tourism destinations.

Market Separately to Families and Adults

Separate targeting, both in terms of presentation and in content, appears essential to motivating both these groups because of their distinct hierarchies of needs. For both audiences, the positioning already in place will serve well as the basis for selecting the right messages and organizing them in ways that resonate with each audience. For example, the fact that a relaxing, unhurried pace is a known attribute of the Lancaster area would reinforce an adult traveler’s decision to visit if it were tied to the more strongly motivating aspect of scenic beauty. At the same time, younger and older adults are looking for exciting nighttime activities and cultural arts attractions. Lancaster City will hopefully provide the former while countywide there is already a wealth of performing arts product. For families, strong motivating factors are the opportunity to share special experiences with children and to get in touch with personal values and beliefs, two messages that can be easily supported by product throughout Lancaster County. Indeed, with the family market, there is an even greater opportunity to market regionally with Philadelphia, Hershey, and Gettysburg, thereby extending length of stay in the area.

Engage in Niche Marketing for Emerging Markets

There needs to be concentrated effort at niche marketing, which would provide the building blocks for future markets and new audiences. This is especially important with multi-cultural groups, adults traveling alone during non-holiday times, and college students/alumni who attend/have attended local institutions of higher education, and those target audiences with thematic interests such as antiques.

Niche marketing has become relatively easy with the proliferation of PC’s and reliance upon the internet as a source of travel information. Web sites devoted to Lancaster tourism can openly address various niche markets on the site, capture email addresses, and send relevant marketing material electronically to each group. The more interactive the site becomes, the greater the potential to reach new markets.

Conduct Tourism Research on a Continual Basis

There are two types of research that need to be conducted on continual bases, the first for return on investment and the second for consumer preferences in both existing and future product, as well as for satisfaction with visitor services and other infrastructure issues. Research should receive annual dedicated funding.

Further Enhance PDCVB Website

The PDCVB has launched and upgraded an extensive website, and it is critical that the site remains state-of-the-art and user-friendly. Mechanisms must continue to be put in place to effectively harness the power of the internet as a tourism source. The website needs to be applicable to niche audiences, suggest do-it-yourself themed itineraries, promote packages to extend length-of-stay, distribute e-newsletters on particular topics, and make the site interactive in order to engage the visitor. The site should also capture email addresses and other important contact or demographic information, which can be used for future marketing decisions. Since the website is not currently top-of-mind, attract attention by placing ads and articles on other popular travel websites and secure a position at the top of oft-used search engines. To remain competitive, individual attractions need to invest in their websites and promotion through the internet.

GOAL 2:

ENHANCE EXISTING AND CREATE NEW COLLABORATIVE MARKETING INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Develop Marketing Partnerships to Create and Develop New Packages

The product in the County lends itself to several different kinds of packages, such as thematic packages (e.g. performing arts) or geographic packages (e.g. the three state museums as anchors to a north-south tour). Although packaging is product-centered, it is also closely tied to marketing. Marketing takes the existing products and groups them together to be attractive and appealing to tourists. In that way the product can be efficiently marketed and easily purchased. Since this strategy does not call for joint ticketing by the attractions within the package, the packaging concept would be implemented by PDCVB, the tourism destination marketing organization. Although numerous organizations need to consider a wide variety of packaging opportunities, a good place to start is with the PDCVB's membership, who can coordinate packages fairly easily and economically.

Specifically, there could be Towns & Villages packages such as Bed & Breakfast, one attraction and one meal per town, or a two-night theater package with two evening and one matinee performance, accommodations, and dinners at local restaurants located close to the theaters. Packages surrounding special events could be created as well. Additionally, building on Lancaster's unique traits, the three state museums could be packaged as anchors to a tour of the entire County. Consideration should be given to packaging daytime activities with nighttime activities to encourage the day-tripper to extend his/her visit overnight. Existing theme-based efforts, like the regional *Quest for Freedom* product, should receive special attention and focus. To ensure success, it will be critical that the appropriate level of personnel, technical resources, and mechanisms are in place and dedicated to "close the sale" on these proposed packages.

And finally, efforts should be made to collaborate with the County's higher education institutions to market to students to increase their spending within Lancaster County.

Create More and New Tourism Packages that Include Lancaster City

Using best practices from other destinations, Lancaster City should not attempt to emulate the County. Instead, it should focus on enhancing the County visitor's experience by providing different but complementary experiences. To that end, new and exciting packages need to be created that appeal to the diversity of people living in and visiting Lancaster City and County. For example, events in the City could be packaged with tourist draws in the County to encourage discovery of the City. Packages can pair lodging outside of the City with events within the City, bundle attractions in the County with events in the City, or link entertainment offerings in the County and City. Crafts and/or antiques shopping packages linking the County with the City, or heritage tours packaged to include both County and City sites, can be especially attractive to visitors.

Take the Lead in Regional Branding

Lancaster finds itself with a unique opportunity not only to capitalize on its branding of Pennsylvania Dutch Country within the confines of the County but also to extend that branding to surrounding areas. Doing so would position Lancaster County as a leader in tourism marketing within Pennsylvania, clarify and define the State for tourists, and result in additional funding from the state.

Pursue Cooperative Marketing with Transportation Providers

Lancaster has relied too heavily on the individual automotive tourist in the past. While car travel remains the predominant mode of travel into and around the County, there is tremendous opportunity to pursue non-car transportation and travel. Natural partners in this regard would be Amtrak (coming into the train stations and towns within the County) and Red Rose Transit Authority. Amtrak has been a willing marketing partner with destinations along the Eastern Seaboard and would be receptive to discussions with Lancaster tourism marketers.

GOAL 3:

FOCUS ON OVERNIGHT VISITORS FOR THE GREATEST ECONOMIC IMPACT

There is a tremendous opportunity to increase the economic impact of visitors by partnering with other local and regional organizations and agencies to extend the length of visitors' stays in the County. This can be done by creating and marketing new thematic and geographic tour packages. Creating multi-day packages with the Lancaster-York Heritage Region or other surrounding counties would provide visitors with new reasons to stay overnight and longer within the area. Additionally, there is a need for the creation of many new partnerships amongst local attractions. The development of hub-and-spoke itineraries of Towns and Villages for overnight stays is one example of how to increase visitor impact. Designated Lancaster County Heritage sites, services and events have a great opportunity to create heritage and culturally related tour packages that would be very appealing to visitors.

MARKETING STRATEGY

FOCUS ON BRAND EQUITY, CONTINUITY, AND PACKAGING

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1: BUILD ON LANCASTER COUNTY'S EXISTING AND STRONG BRAND AWARENESS AND EQUITY

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Aggressively market the City & Towns and Villages as new and exciting heritage product	Short-Term	PDCVB
Take advantage of existing and already planned product and services for core marketing of the City		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicize new RRTA downtown trolley service Concentrate on Lancaster Central Market; Lancaster Cultural History Museum, Lancaster Quilt & Textile Museum, Fulton Opera House, Convention Center, Multi-Purpose Stadium Create Heritage Trail to connect City and surrounding area attractions 	<p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p>	<p>RRTA</p> <p>LCTDC/City Econ. Dev. Orgs.</p> <p>LCTDC/LCPC</p> <p>PDCVB/LCPC</p>
Build on five established Heritage themes of the Lancaster-York Heritage Region	Short-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Market separately to families and adults	Short-Term	PDCVB
Engage in niche marketing (e.g. young adults)	Mid-Term	PDCVB
Conduct tourism research on a continual basis that focuses on: 1) return on investment; and 2) visitor satisfaction	Short-Term	LCTDC/PDCVB
Further enhance the PDCVB website as a tourism source	Short-Term	PDCVB
Expand group tour marketing to reach new demographics	Mid-Term	PDCVB

GOAL 2: ENHANCE EXISTING AND CREATE NEW COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIPS

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Develop marketing partnerships between the City and the County, between City and Towns/Villages, three state museums, and PDCVB members to create new packages	Short-Term	PDCVB/City Partners/T&V Partners/ PDCVB Membership/State
Create more and new tourism packages that include the City		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with tour operators to expand the "City Tour" concept to include additional creative tours marketed to locals as well as visitors Create new and exciting packages 	<p>Short- and Mid-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p>	<p>PDCVB/City Partners/Tour Operators</p> <p>PDCVB/City Partners</p>
Take the lead in regional marketing to maximize the Pennsylvania Dutch Country brand	Short-Term	PDCVB
Pursue cooperative marketing with transportation providers including Amtrak and our bus operators	Mid-Term	PDCVB/Amtrak/Tour Bus operators
Market already-developed Heritage theme-based regional initiatives, such as the Quest for Freedom product	Short-Term	PDCVB
Support the collaboration of higher education institutions to increase student and visitor spending within Lancaster County	Mid-Term	LCTDC/PDCVB/Educational Institutions

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners

MARKETING STRATEGY (continued)

FOCUS ON BRAND EQUITY, CONTINUITY, AND PACKAGING

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 3: FOCUS ON OVERNIGHT VISITORS FOR THE GREATEST ECONOMIC IMPACT

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Promote Lancaster-York Heritage Region/Pennsylvania Dutch Country as a multi-day getaway	Mid-Term	PDCVB/LYHR
Create regional multi-day packaging opportunities	Mid-Term	PDCVB/Regional Partners
Create, develop and market multi-day thematic and geographic tours	Mid-Term	PDCVB
Create hub-and-spoke itineraries of Towns and Villages for overnight stays/daily excursions	Mid-Term	PDCVB
Engage personnel and technical resources to ensure the appropriate mechanisms are in place to “close the sale” on packages	Short-Term	LCTDC/PDCVB

Measures of Success:

- The number of tour packages connecting Lancaster City with other attractions or services in the County
- The number of “Made in Lancaster” tours created
- The percentage increase of overnight visitors
- The percentage increase of survey responses of high awareness (familiar or very familiar) of Lancaster County among key traveling public (currently 48% in our survey)
- The percentage increase of positive impressions (very favorable) among key traveling public (currently 45%)
- The percentage increase in the likelihood of families in key travel markets visiting Lancaster County (currently 73%)
- The percentage increase in the likelihood of adult travelers in key travel markets visiting Lancaster County (currently 65%)
- The number of workshops and seminars conducted per year to educate and involve residents in the tourism planning process and/or to promote agri-tourism
- The number of “good or excellent” ratings of the PDCVB website from external sources
- The percentage increase of the return on investment of marketing dollars per visitor

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners

OUTREACH/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

EDUCATE & INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN TOURISM PLANNING AND PROMOTION

Background

To achieve the goals of the Lancaster County Strategic Tourism Development Plan, Lancaster County's tourism industry and its partners must succeed in educating the public and community leaders about the substantial positive impact tourism has on the County's economy, employment, and quality of life. Too often communities fail to recognize, or take for granted, the constant flow of tourism dollars that help fuel local economies. It is necessary for support of Lancaster County's tourism industry to be viewed, not as an expense, but as an investment that yields high return to Lancaster's economy, tax base and overall quality of life. There must also be a very clear understanding that there is a direct link between Lancaster County's "smart growth" strategies *and* the protection of the essential characteristics that define the county as a unique and special destination worth visiting. To achieve this understanding and appreciation, it will be essential to develop an internal public relations campaign and an education program that will inform public and private sector leaders, encourage residents to be tourism ambassadors, and support tourism workforce training efforts.

Additionally, ongoing workshops and educational opportunities for tourism entrepreneurs and others should be conducted which could include topics related to product development, marketing, partnerships, funding opportunities, and management.

And most importantly, an ongoing process for engaging the community in the tourism planning process will be essential to its long-term success.

Lessons Learned & Critical Issues

- *Residents are not sufficiently involved in tourism promotion*
- *The County's residents have enormous pride of product and heritage*
- *There is a strong desire to involve more people in tourism who will reflect the cultural diversity of the County*

Strategic Goals

GOAL 1:

INCREASE THE RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM TO THE ECONOMY AND THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN LANCASTER COUNTY

During the research for and preparation of this plan, stakeholder inclusion and feedback was central to the work. Because of the tremendous economic, workforce, and lifestyle impacts that tourism has on the County, it is essential that County residents recognize the importance of tourism to the economy and overall quality of life, are engaged in the tourism planning process, and actively promote the area.

Despite the fact that residents on the whole understand the value and importance of tourism marketing, they are largely uninvolved in tourism promotion. Pride of place and acceptance of tourists are two attributes necessary for residents to become tourism ambassadors. Local tourism ambassadors have proved to be the strongest method of on-site marketing and contribute considerably to tourism by creating favorable impressions of a destination.

To engage the community in these efforts, both an internal public relations campaign and an educational program should be established. The educational program would include workshops and seminars for public and private sector leaders about the positive impact of tourism. For farmers and others involved in agri-tourism, there might be agri-tourism product development, management, and marketing workshops that would cover a variety of topics such as conducting farm tours, management of agri- and nature-tourism operations, assessment of assets to determine the potential of agri-tourism, understanding of the agri-tourist, potential enterprises for agricultural and nature tourism, self-marketing of agri-tourism attractions, and tips for building marketing and community partnerships. The information and training required for an effective tourism ambassador program should also be developed.

The public relations campaign would keep the locals advised of Lancaster's tourism strengths, list the activities and accomplishments growing out of the Plan's recommendations, and act as a cheerleader to keep the residents educated and involved. The campaign would also utilize a variety of public involvement processes to engage the community in ongoing planning for tourism at the regional, county and local levels. Such a campaign would help involve the residents in tourism promotion,

keep them supportive in order to obtain the requisite resources, and most importantly increase the highly effective process of word-of-mouth marketing.

Premier hospitality service is also essential to an exceptional vacation experience. To ensure that visitors to Lancaster County receive a consistently superior experience, investment in education and training programs for the County's travel and hospitality workforce must be made. A well-trained workforce will greatly improve Lancaster County's effectiveness in meeting its goals and objectives. As ambassadors for the County, well-trained industry employees will greatly impact visitors' experience, increasing the likelihood of a return visit. Already, the Harrisburg Area Community College has developed a program in this regard and should be strongly supported. Also, the formation of a Hospitality Center of Excellence to design training programs for new and incumbent workers in the tourism industry would be a tremendous vehicle for achieving this goal in Lancaster County.

GOAL 2:

INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN TOURISM PLANNING

Since it is also recognized that community support for tourism is so critical to its success, it will be necessary to create an effective communication program between the public and the tourism industry and its partners. It is also well recognized that active and enthusiastic support by political leadership is central to the success of tourism initiatives. The fervent support of the County Commissioners, the Mayor, and local municipal officials will make the difference in ensuring success.

As part of the ongoing tourism planning process, a number of methodologies for involving the public and key stakeholders at the regional, county and local levels must be provided. There is also a strong desire to expand this involvement beyond the strong core of dedicated individuals to reflect cultural diversity, address new audiences more effectively, bring fresh viewpoints, and in general expand the tourism universe in Lancaster County.

It will also be essential for local government and economic agencies to make every effort to integrate tourism goals and objectives contained in this Strategic Tourism Development Plan with their own local comprehensive and economic development plans.

OUTREACH/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

EDUCATE & INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN TOURISM PLANNING & PROMOTION

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1: INCREASE RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM TO THE ECONOMY AND THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN LANCASTER COUNTY

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Educate public and private sector leaders about the positive impact of tourism via workshops and seminars	Mid-Term	LCTDC/LCPC/PDCVB
Create product development, management and marketing workshops on issues such as agri-tourism related initiatives	Mid-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Create a local ambassador program to involve residents in tourism promotion	Mid-Term	PDCVB
Launch an internal public relations campaign	Short-Term	LCTDC/LCPC
Support the formation of a Hospitality Center of Excellence to design training programs for new and incumbent workers in the tourism industry	Long-Term	Lanc. Co. Workforce Investment Board
Support the addition of tourism and hospitality programs and new tourism-related curriculum at local educational institutions	Long-Term	Local Educational Institutions

GOAL 2: INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN THE TOURISM PLANNING PROCESS

ACTIONS	TIME FRAME	SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP
Utilize a variety of public involvement processes to engage the community in ongoing planning for tourism at the regional, County and local levels	Mid-Term	LCPC
Ensure that the organizational structure created implements the plan and draws upon the expertise of the community	Short-Term	LCTDC
Coordinate and integrate tourism goals with other countywide, regional and community comprehensive and economic plans and initiatives	Mid-Term	LCPC

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners

ORGANIZATIONAL/COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY

KEEP IT SIMPLE, FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP, IDENTIFY RESOURCES, AND COLLABORATE FOR SUCCESS

Background

It is well recognized today that no single organization, agency, or individual working in isolation accomplishes very much. It is no different with tourism, where building partnerships is essential, not just because they help develop local support, but also because tourism demands resources that no single organization or entity can supply. Its success depends on the active participation of political leaders, business leaders, operators and managers of tourist sites, accommodation operators, and many other people and groups. Lancaster County has many opportunities for improving and developing partnerships that can help local tourism, such as between the public and private sectors, different ethnic attractions, City and County, and with other industries for labor sharing and skills transfer.

In addition to the need for ongoing collaborative efforts, strong leadership will be required for tourism to be successful in the County. To accomplish this goal, Lancaster County needs to create a new countywide tourism development organization whose members are knowledgeable about tourism, are able to contribute sufficient time, and are prepared to lead and make decisions. The proposed organization must possess sufficient authority, government support, and competitive funding. The organizational structure needs to be different from current organizations, must be lean, have a defined mechanism for reporting to government officials, and have a process for incorporating community input and expertise.

There is also a need to develop a creative, collaborative, and results-oriented organizational structure to support tourism development in Lancaster City. Developing Lancaster City into a new and exciting tourist attraction for the region is a substantial undertaking that will take time. It requires the belief that it will benefit the county as well as the City, that the necessary cooperation will happen, and that the leadership and resources necessary to effectively follow through are available.

This same model for a collaborative and results-oriented organizational structure, which involves both the public

and private sectors, should also be applied in the proposed Tourism Development Areas and Corridors designated in this Plan.

Lessons Learned & Critical Issues

- *Considering the volume of attractions in Lancaster County, there is very little collaboration*
- *Lancaster's willingness to enter into partnerships extends the Lancaster brand and broadens market reach*
- *There are a great many individuals and organizations in Lancaster County with considerable tourism expertise, and a strong commitment to tourism*
- *There are tremendous opportunities for enhancing and creating new partnerships to help local tourism*
- *Tourism marketing is being done by a professional organization (PDCVB), and the Lancaster County Planning Commission has been an important catalyst for tourism development*
- *Strong public support from the political leadership is critical to these and other tourism organizations' efforts.*
- *Entrepreneurial spirit is strong in Lancaster, and the county and its residents have enormous pride of product and heritage. Therefore, tourism organizations need to have a mechanism for greater public participation*
- *While there is a growing interest in making the City a destination, there is a lack of consensus on the City's tourism development*
- *The County/City relationship regarding tourism and planning has room for improvement.*

Strategic Goals

GOAL 1:

CREATE A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION THAT WILL USE EXISTING EXPERTISE, AND WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY STRATEGIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

During the course of the stakeholder involvement process, the one frustration other than traffic that seemed most on the minds of the individuals involved in tourism was: What type of organizational improvements can be made to improve the direction and management of tourism planning in Lancaster County?

The general consensus was that:

- *There are too many diverse organizations involved in various aspects of tourism planning and development*

- *Lancaster might benefit from bringing marketing and product development together under one roof*
- *Partnerships among the major players need to be improved*
- *The implementation of ideas is slowed by the lack of one forceful, unifying, powerful tourism organization*
- *Nobody knows who is “in charge” of tourism planning*
- *Each person believed that while his/her own organization is providing quality work, all other organizations were found wanting*
- *Lancaster County and the County’s Towns and Villages need to play a role in the planning and implementation of the County’s tourism future*

Considerable time and thought has been devoted to this subject, and issues discussed ranged from leadership qualities of individuals, to how the regional culture impacts on organizational dynamics, to the realities of the local political scene, to theories of organizational structures.

In order to arrive at a series of recommendations for the organizational approach appropriate to Lancaster, the following issues were addressed:

- *Attributes of successful tourism organizations*
- *Organizational capabilities and responsibilities*
- *Philosophical decisions concerning the organization*
- *Organizational options*

Attributes of Successful Tourism Organizations

From the consultants’ experience and in a study of comparable tourism regions conducted for this report, a list of ingredients and qualities of successful tourism organizations has been compiled:

- *Authority to make decisions, with the power to see that ideas are implemented*
- *Governmental and community support and confidence*
- *Enthusiasm and commitment*
- *Marketing and product development expertise*
- *Qualified staff with tourism experience*
- *Clear delineation of responsibilities*
- *Good communication and cooperation with tourism stakeholders*
- *Continuity of funding allocated exclusively for tourism*
- *Access to sufficient research*

Organizational Capabilities and Responsibilities

In order to be effective at meeting its challenging goals and objectives, the organization envisioned and recommended must have the following capabilities and

responsibilities, which are critical ingredients for Lancaster’s tourism organization:

Leadership

It is important that Lancaster have an energetic, dynamic, and influential tourism development organization. This group must act as a champion and cheerleader for tourism development and promotion and actively convey the value of tourism to the community.

This group should monitor, develop, and help implement tourism action plans that have both short- and long-term goals. In its advocacy role it must encourage long-term planning but also closely scrutinize the progress of short-term projects. It should also effectively convey to the community that continuity and stability, not a quick fix, is the only way a tourism program can succeed.

Continuity and Stability

It is essential that the institutional structure and funding be ongoing. The entity needs to be able to survive the loss of specific individuals. Continuity and stability have been proven time and again to be critical elements of success with respect to both product development and marketing for tourism destinations. Baltimore’s Inner Harbor and the development of Charleston are two examples of how successful tourism development is related to long-term commitment. The importance of continuity and stability is equally important to tourism marketing. “I ♥ NY” and “Virginia is for Lovers” are prime examples.

Marketing and Product Development

For a strategic tourism plan to succeed, there are two essential ingredients. The current product, attractions, and infrastructure must be kept fresh and new product regularly brought on-line, and the destination must be professionally marketed and promoted. One without the other will not work. The responsibility of the organization will be to ensure that these efforts are conducted competently, efficiently, and in tandem.

Coordination

If Lancaster is to move its tourism agenda forward, its various organizations must work together more effectively. One of the key responsibilities of this proposed organization, in its leadership role, will be to act as a catalyst for the coordination and cooperation of tourism organizations, local governments, and individual stakeholders. It must create and help facilitate both formal

and informal networks so that the various tourism organizations not only know what the others are doing, but also find ways to work together. Its objective should be that, with respect to Lancaster tourism, the whole truly becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

Funding

The single most prevalent challenge for tourism organizations is finding adequate funding. There is no one source that will fund 100% of an organization's costs over a period of years. One of the responsibilities of a successful tourism organization is to identify revenue streams that can provide adequate annual funding and the required continuity.

Philosophical Decisions Concerning the Organization

There are five models that Lancaster could adopt for its tourism organization:

- ***One-Stop-Shop*** – In this model all tourism activities, responsibilities, and authority would be found under one roof. A new organization would have responsibility for both product development and marketing and would handle all tourism activities for the county.
- ***Existing Organization*** – Take an existing organization and give it added responsibility and authority, thereby making it the one-stop-shop.
- ***Government*** – Place the tourism responsibilities under the auspices of local government. This would most likely require legislation and would mean creating an Office of Tourism, with the appropriate senior official and staff.
- ***Adapt the Current Situation*** – Currently PDCVB is handling tourism marketing and LCPC has taken a leadership role on product development. Changing little, Lancaster County could develop a regular schedule of meetings between these two organizations (and possibly bring in EDC as a county organization to also work on product development) to ensure coordination, and let them further develop their informal working relationship.
- ***Tourism Development Organization*** – Create a small new organization with appropriate overall authority, but leave the marketing and product development work to the organizations that currently possess that expertise. This tourism development organization would coordinate the efforts of the separate organizations, provide direction, take responsibility for a few tasks that can benefit the tourism effort, and drive the entire process to ensure that the strategic plan programs are implemented.

After a study of the pros and cons of each of the five models in relation to the consultants' analysis of the Lancaster tourism situation, the fifth option, the creation of a new tourism development organization, is recommended as the best for Lancaster County. However, it is proposed that the establishment of the new organization be phased in over a period of two (2) to three (3) years to allow for an appropriate amount of time for the identification of sustainable funding sources and the preparation of the legal documentation and related procedures for the establishment of the new entity.

Keys to Success

Prior to developing the structure for a new Lancaster County tourism organization, it is important to delineate four general rules that are critical for its success:

- ***Clarity of Mission*** – the organization's responsibilities are to monitor the work of the marketing and product development organizations, provide direction, prioritize, bring the County and City together, give voice to the stakeholders, ensure strategic plan implementation, and provide accountability.
- ***The Right People*** – experienced, knowledgeable, hard-working professionals who are able to devote the requisite time to meet the responsibilities of the group
- ***Power and Authority*** – the ability to get things done and to get people and groups to work together
- ***Money*** – sufficient resources to mount an effective, sustained program

The important attributes of the proposed tourism development organization are:

- Ability to overcome perception that current organizations can't do it
- Can be tailor-made to meet specific needs
- Possesses a freshness and energy needed to meet the task
- Enhances image – shows real commitment to tourism
- Not buried in bureaucracy – lean and mean with considerable authority and credibility
- Best chance for coordinating other groups
- Provide continuity and permanence to tourism effort
- Can best facilitate contributions from the private sector
- The board members chosen for this organization should collectively possess the expertise and capabilities necessary to implement and promote Lancaster County's Strategic Tourism Development Plan
- PDCVB should continue to be responsible for tourism marketing

- *LCPC and EDC, together with assistance from the new organization's staff, should be responsible for tourism product development. The combination of LCPC's long-term planning expertise and considerable experience in heritage tourism, the private sector entrepreneurship and development expertise supplied by the EDC, and the direction, initiative, authority, and support of the new organization will successfully move the new tourism product development agenda forward.*
- *This is not "just another organization." The structure is unlike anything now in existence, and possesses the specific attributes necessary to accomplish the tourism goals stated in this plan.*

Format or Structure for the New Proposed Tourism Organization

The process for establishing the proposed new tourism development organization is designed to be a two-step approach, to be carried out over a period of two to three years.

Tourism Development Council – Phase 1

During the first phase of the process, it is recommended that a Lancaster County Tourism Development Council be established which would include seven (7) individuals appointed from participating partnership organizations. Members would include a representative of the PA Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Lancaster County Planning Commission, and the Economic Development Company. The additional four members of the Council would include a representative from the City's private sector, a County private sector person, and two at-large individuals. The Lancaster County Tourism Task Force would appoint the first members of the Council. The role of the Tourism Development Council will be to 1) begin implementation of the Lancaster County Strategic Tourism Development Plan, 2) create the permanent Corporation that will evolve from the Council, and 3) begin identifying initial funding sources for the operations and management of the new entity. The Council will serve as the transition team through the second phase of the organizational process and will ultimately become the initial Board of the proposed Tourism Development Corporation.

Tourism Development Corporation – Phase 2

The purpose and structure of the proposed Tourism Development Corporation will include the following characteristics:

Mission

- *To contribute to the economic, social and cultural progress of Lancaster County and the enrichment of its quality of life by fostering sustainable tourism practices and helping to further develop the tourism product and promote the County as a travel destination.*

Legal Structure: Not-For-Profit Corporation

- *This provides for a quick, efficient, and formal mechanism to be started as soon as possible. It is also a structure that could facilitate contributions from the private sector because of tax deductibility.*

Board Members – Seven-Person Board

- *PA Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau representative*
- *Lancaster County Planning Commission representative*
- *Economic Development Company representative*
- *A City private sector representative*
- *A County private sector representative*
- *Two At-Large Individual representatives*

The seven-member Board would be self-perpetuating and their terms should be three years on a staggered basis.

Staffing

- *Similar to the Board, the staff should be "lean and mean." Overhead should be kept low and bureaucracy avoided.*
- *There should be one professional, an Executive Director, with one support staff person. The Executive Director position should be filled by an individual who not only has tourism experience, but also has political savvy and strong communications skills.*

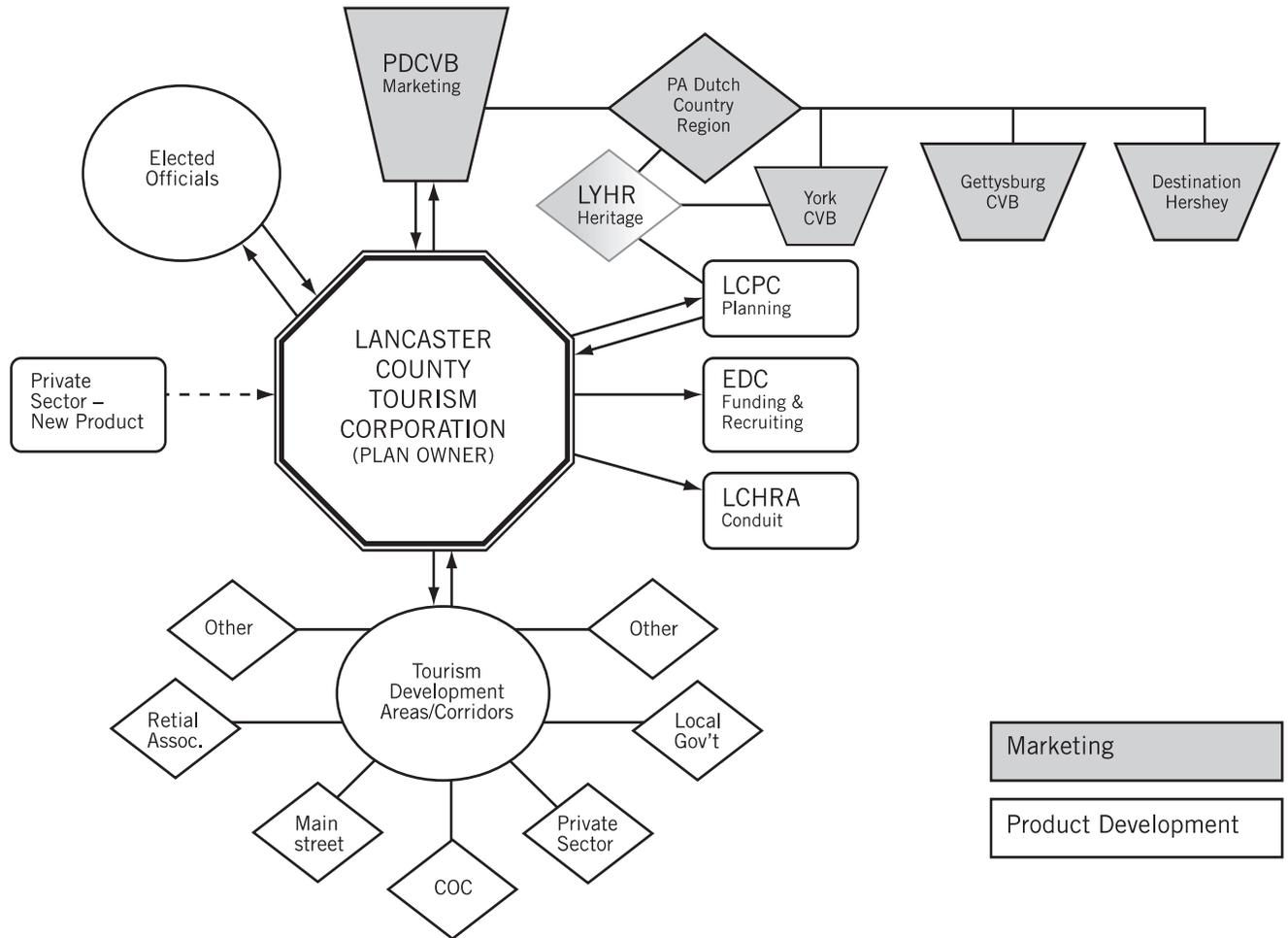
Organization Responsibilities

- *See "Clarity of Mission" (previous page) and the organizational chart that follows.*

Budget

- *Initial funding for the Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation should be \$200,000-\$250,000. This initial funding should be raised from a combination of contributions from the LCPC, PDCVB, EDC, and Lancaster City and County governments together with contributions from local foundations and corporations. Further budgets will be determined by the Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation's success in identifying revenue streams (see "Funding the Plan's Recommendations").*

Lancaster County Tourism Plan



GOAL 2:

ESTABLISH A CREATIVE, COLLABORATIVE, AND RESULTS-ORIENTED PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FOR LANCASTER CITY

In order for the City to accomplish the product and marketing recommendations proposed in this plan, it is essential that a partnership of appropriate organizations and agencies be in place that can help provide expertise, drive the process, and promote a close working relationship with government officials.

The City has many organizations each with a relatively large membership whose activities are partially devoted to tourism issues. The City government, Destination Downtown, Team Lancaster, DID, the Alliance, LancasterArts, current attractions, local foundations, etc.

all grapple with various issues related to tourism and will continue to do so in the coming years. The expertise, vision, commitment, and resources these organizations bring to tourism development and marketing are vital if the City's government and residents are to "buy into" the importance of tourism for the future economic well-being of the City of Lancaster.

If the City is to succeed in implementing its tourism strategy, it needs to draw upon the expertise and energy of these various groups, but at the same time focus and be accountable for achieving specific results. Therefore the Plan recommends that the organization being created for the County, the Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, is the appropriate vehicle for forming and accomplishing the tourism objectives for the City of

Lancaster. It is appropriate because it incorporates the same essential tenets necessary to drive the tourism process. It is appropriate because the City of Lancaster will be well-represented in the organization. It is appropriate because it consolidates the tourism leadership for the entire region. It is appropriate because it becomes the simple, powerful organization that has the full range of talent, the responsibility, and the requisite authority to get things done.

The following tenets, upon which the Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation is based, are the keys to the tourism development and promotion for the City of Lancaster:

- *Collaboration and coordination*
- *Small representative membership will drive the process more successfully*
- *Inclusiveness must be managed, focused, and results-driven*
- *It is impossible to be all things to all people*
- *Agility and results driven*
- *Experience and expertise in tourism-related issues*

A key objective of the countywide Strategic Tourism Development Plan is to encourage the residents, businesses, organizations, and government entities to understand and then foster the interdependency of the City and County when it comes to tourism development and marketing. Above all, active and efficient coordination is essential. Similarly, with the large number of organizations in the City involved in tourism activities, and with the development of the Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, it is not wise to create still another new tourism organization.

The Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation will be developed so as to have a vital City presence. A City private sector tourism representative will have a seat on the Board. To be successful, the LCTDC must coordinate the City's and County's efforts, possess the resources to support the City's activities, effectively and efficiently take advantage of City expertise, ensure stakeholder participation, engage organizations involved in tourism, and have the professional expertise and authority to move the tourism agenda forward for the entire region.

Rather than create a new City tourism organization, the LCTDC should consolidate the tourism leadership for the entire region, drawing on its City representative members to ensure that the appropriate City-related objectives are accomplished.

Promote Coordination among Arts, Culture, and Heritage Venues in the Greater Lancaster City Area

In addition to recognizing the need to coordinate the various public and private organizations in the City around product development and marketing under the auspices of the proposed Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, there is also a need to look at the possibilities of creating greater partnerships or even consolidation of the dozens of arts/cultural/heritage entities in the City.

An inventory of the City revealed 29 galleries, 8 antique galleries, 36 buildings of historic interest, 10 churches or houses of worship, 7 antique stores, 14 entertainment venues, and 12 museums. Many of these can be partnered and consolidated in order to achieve economy of scale, provide meaningful and complete experience for tourists, capitalize on Lancaster's authentic heritage product, and market the City of Lancaster to modern geo-tourists. There is initial discussion, for example, of linking the Shear America Collection of Americana with the existing Quilt and Textile Museum in a common building that would house a Folk Life Center. This is an excellent concept of partnerships that benefit all members and extend the appeal of each to visitors.

GOAL 3:

CREATE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND SYSTEMS TO INCREASE COOPERATION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

On every level of consideration – product, marketing, infrastructure and organization – a strategy of partnering will be required to implement this Strategic Tourism Development Plan, and by doing so will yield the strongest results for Lancaster County. Lancaster's willingness to enter into regional partnerships displays a savvy and understanding of how to extend the brand and broaden reach without straining resources. However, on the local level there are an insufficient number of partnerships among attractions. Attraction operators need to be encouraged (and possibly trained) to enter into additional partnerships. Also, because of tourism's importance to the region, together with its long history, many organizations have at least one tourism-related item on their agendas. Unfortunately, all too often there is insufficient collaboration among these organizations.

Collaboration can mean many things. In terms of marketing, this might involve the creation of regional initiatives. On an entrepreneurial level, this might mean

collaboration among attractions. Lancaster County needs to partner with the City of Lancaster. Local businesses and local municipal government need to collaborate for product development and the provision of appropriate levels of needed infrastructure. Private sector activities will not be successful without the support of their local governments. Conversely, public sector initiatives will not thrive without private sector involvement and investment. This will be especially critical in those areas of the county that the Strategic Tourism Plan proposes to be designated as Tourism Development Areas and Corridors.

Therefore, it is critical for organizations with tourism interests to partner with each other to move the tourism agenda forward.

GOAL 4:

DEVELOP NEW AND STABLE SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, AND MARKETING

To fully implement the vision and goals of the Strategic Tourism Development Plan, a stable, long-term source of financial resources will be required to create new product, improve visitor-related infrastructure, and enhance the existing marketing efforts. Financial resources can come from a variety of sources including government appropriations, hotel taxes, outside grants, loans and tax incentives. The types of funding available come from Federal, state and local governments; private foundations or corporate sponsors, and entrepreneurial revenues.

Currently, the PDCVB's marketing budget (\$5 million) is critical to the effective performance of its job. Greater resources would allow the PDCVB to appeal to two different market segments simultaneously (families and adult travelers), and also appeal to niche markets while remaining competitive with comparable destinations. There is also concern that if the PDCVB's marketing budget does not keep pace with other destinations' budgets, the county will simply not be able to compete.

One of the major recommendations in the Plan to encourage focused product development is to establish a system of Tourism Development Areas and Corridors. The primary focus of these zones would be sustainable tourism development that helps improve local quality of life while earning revenues from visitors. Under this concept, every effort should be made to work with the State legislators to explore new opportunities and incentives that would help facilitate tourism related reinvestment and development in these focused areas.

Unfortunately, at the current time, local attraction and hospitality operators sometimes have difficulty in securing bank financing because the economics of their business operations will not support a full commercial interest rate loan and/or banks are unwilling to provide funding for projects in the tourism industry. Therefore every effort should be made to work with local financial institutions and lenders, like the Community First Fund, Grow Lancaster Fund, and others, to provide these types of opportunities for local tourism entrepreneurs and developers.

Additional funding opportunities and recommendations are included in the Funding Plan Chapter of this Plan.

ORGANIZATIONAL / COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY
EDUCATE & INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN TOURISM PLANNING & PROMOTION

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1: CREATE A TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION THAT WILL USE EXISTING EXPERTISE, AND WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LANCASTER COUNTY STRATEGIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

ACTIONS

Create a process, to be carried out over a two to three year period, that will lead to the creation of a Tourism Development Organization

TIME FRAME **SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP**

Short-Term Tourism Steering Committee

GOAL 2: ESTABLISH A CREATIVE, COLLABORATIVE, AND RESULTS-ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FOR LANCASTER CITY

ACTIONS

Work closely with the City organizations to coordinate tourism issues and opportunities

Utilize the proposed Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation to accomplish marketing and product development goals in Lancaster City

Promote coordination among arts, culture and heritage venues in the Greater Lancaster City area

TIME FRAME **SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP**

Short-Term LCTDC/City organizations

Short-Term LCTDC/PDCVB/LCPC

Short-Term LCTDC

GOAL 3: CREATE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND SYSTEMS TO INCREASE COOPERATION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN TOURISM PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND MARKETING

ACTIONS

Assist in the creation of public/private partnership models in designated Tourism Development Areas and Corridors

TIME FRAME **SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP**

Mid-Term LCPC

GOAL 4: DEVELOP NEW AND STABLE SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, AND MARKETING

ACTIONS

Seek additional federal, state, private sector and foundation funding opportunities for new product development and marketing

Work with state legislators to create incentives to focus financial resources to designated Tourism Development Areas and Corridors

Seek legislative support for agri-tourism

Explore opportunities to work with local financial institutions, like the Community First Fund

Seek programs and financing options for town and city infrastructure improvements

TIME FRAME **SUGGESTED LEADERSHIP**

Short-Term LCTDC

Mid-Term LCTDC/LCPC

Mid-Term LCTDC

Mid-Term LCTDC

Mid-Term LCTDC/LCPC

Measures of Success:

Create tourism development organization, staffing, and start-up funding no later than _____

Identify initial funding sources in the amount of \$_____ that will kick-start the various projects

Develop revenue streams that will continue to serve tourism in the amount of \$_____ annually

Pass _____ legislative initiatives that will benefit tourism

LCTDC = Lancaster County Tourism Development Corporation, LCPC = Lancaster County Planning Commission, PDCVB = Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, RRTA = Red Rose Transit Authority, T&V Partners = Towns & Villages Partners