

# Lancaster County Strategic Plan

Lancaster County has undertaken a strategic planning process to chart a course for its future. The County Council members and executive staff reviewed input from staff and citizens, and discussed a vision for the future. In order to reach this vision, the County Council identified seven strategic priorities, goals and broad strategies. Once adopted by Council, this strategic plan will serve as a roadmap for all of the Council and staff decisions.

## Lancaster County Vision Statement

The vision for Lancaster County is to be a great place to live, learn, work, worship, play, and raise a family.

## Lancaster County Mission Statement

Lancaster County government facilitates this vision by providing a safe community with responsible growth and economic opportunity. The mission of Lancaster County government is to continuously strive to provide progressive quality public services in a timely fashion and in a cost effective manner.

## Lancaster County Values

*Teamwork* – The long-term success of county government depends on loyal, dedicated public servants. We place great emphasis on cooperation within and between departments. Working together, we will realize our shared mission of delivering high quality services to our citizens.

*Integrity* – Standards of honesty, objectivity and ethical behavior guide all that we do. We will have the courage to conduct our business and make decisions consistently in the best interest of the citizens.

*Fairness* - We treat all employees, citizens, and business partners in a fair and impartial manner. We strive to treat others as we expect to be treated.

*Sense of Community* – We encourage our citizens to be informed and have a voice in government and community affairs. We will work to instill a sense of ownership and pride in the county on the part of our citizens and employees.

*Professionalism* – We conduct our business in a dependable and courteous manner. We communicate effectively with our citizens and with each other. Our Council and employees are prepared, knowledgeable and practice continuous learning.

*Innovation* - We strive to continuously improve the operation and services of Lancaster County.

*Diversity* - We believe in the individual worth and dignity of our citizens and employees. We value and celebrate the different talents and perspectives of all persons.

### ***Strategic Priority I: Economic Development***

This issue is seen as a key to the well-being of Lancaster County citizens. The County has experienced some success in its economic development efforts, but those successes have not resulted in enough jobs for Lancaster County residents as the County's rate is still in the top 10 among counties in the State. And the increased tax base from all of the new development is delayed until the end of incentives.

#### ***Goals:***

1. Reduce the unemployment rate
2. Increase tax base
3. Increase the services available to the public
4. Have a documented and transparent economic development process
5. Create better job opportunities for citizens

#### ***Strategies***

- A. Conduct a retroactive cost-benefit analysis to determine the actual performance of past economic development efforts
- B. Work with other governments on economic development efforts
- C. Revise the economic development process and organization in Lancaster County
- D. Focus on service and retail businesses that are needed in the County that will hire County residents
- E. Ensure there is an interdepartmental evaluation of proposals before decisions are made

### ***Strategic Priority II: Strategic Planning***

Council realizes the importance of having and updating a strategic plan to guide its policy and budgetary decisions. The strategic plan should ultimately be aligned with departmental strategic plans and the strategic plans of other governments and agencies in Lancaster County.

#### ***Goals:***

1. Implement the plan
2. Align the plan with the budget and departmental priorities

#### ***Strategies:***

- A. Review and adjust the strategic plan annually
- B. Measure goal progress on a dashboard and publicize it
- C. Encourage strategic planning among departments and other agencies
- D. Implement a Capital Improvement Plan

### ***Strategic Priority III: Communication***

Effective communication, both internally and externally, is a key element to the success of Lancaster County government.

#### ***Goals:***

1. Council makes informed decisions
2. All council members have all information in a timely manner
3. Increase citizen satisfaction on communication
4. Improve internet IQ of citizens
5. Improve the functionality of the County's website for employees and public

***Strategies:***

- A. Use consistent communication method to ensure accurate communication (email) on some issues
- B. Provide Council members detailed information with background and alternatives, along with an executive overview to ensure quality decisions
- C. Implement a new Council member orientation on-boarding process
- D. Create a quarterly newsletter for the public
- E. Record telephone updates on issues for the public
- F. Put more information on the County's website
- G. Develop separate intranets for Council and employees
- H. Establish a Public Information Officer function
- I. Work with other organizations to distribute the newsletter
- J. Establish a speakers bureau
- K. Conduct state of the County presentations and town hall meetings with citizens

***Strategic Priority IV: County Infrastructure***

Economic development, citizen satisfaction and employee engagement are all somewhat dependent upon good infrastructure (roads, bridges, water and sewer, and county buildings and equipment). Road improvements were a top issue in the citizens' survey and county facilities were a critical weakness cited by department heads.

***Goals:***

- 1. Improve roads
- 2. Extend sewer lines to areas currently not served
- 3. Increase broadband coverage
- 4. Ensure all public facilities are up to current standards/code

***Strategies:***

- A. Develop a dedicated funding source for road improvement
- B. Prioritize road improvement needs
- C. Improve transparency of CTC process of road improvements
- D. Acquire right-of-way for future expansions
- E. Require new developments to pay their share of future infrastructure improvements
- F. Create broadband strategy
- G. Prioritize county building maintenance needs
- H. Look into outsourcing of building maintenance
- I. Implement equipment replacement schedules

***Strategic Priority V: Growth Management***

Lancaster County has experienced significant growth in the "panhandle" area of the County adjacent to the Charlotte metropolitan area. This has caused an increase in the demand for County services and the service level expectations. Urban area concerns such as traffic congestion also have increased.

***Goals:***

- 1. Growth is responsible
- 2. Future growth is anticipated

***Strategies:***

- A. Revise and periodically review UDO for long-term growth and periodically review
- B. Evaluate business and residential growth in the County
- C. Consider all factors in evaluating future development
- D. Consider impact fee or rooftop fees
- E. Update the comprehensive plan on a regular basis (<10 years) and follow it
- F. Encourage developments set back from the road
- G. Develop/implement a transportation plan
- H. Implement the 521 Corridor Study

***Strategic Priority VI: Employee Engagement***

While its employees are one of Lancaster County's strengths, there is concern that pay, working conditions and inconsistent management may cause undesirable turnover once the economy recovers and more jobs become available.

***Goals:***

- 1. Increase County employee satisfaction
- 2. Ensure a well trained, informed, productive and motivated workforce
- 3. Increase workforce safety

***Strategies:***

- A. Implement a performance measurement system
- B. Implement an employee survey
- C. Implement an employee performance management system with goals
- D. Increase training
- E. Pursue accreditation where available
- F. Fully implement the Archer study
- G. Provide career incentive
- H. Consider performance based pay

***Strategic Priority VII: Financial Stability***

While Lancaster County has fared better than other local governments since the economic downturn, growth in the County and mounting infrastructure needs will require financial resources to address.

***Goals:***

- 1. Attain an A bond rating
- 2. Maintain a 6-month reserve
- 3. Maintain a positive cash flow
- 4. Have an unqualified audit
- 5. Increase the tax base

***Strategies:***

- A. Begin the budgeting process for Council sooner
- B. Maintain good checks and balances in the financial system
- C. Change the economic development process to enhance economic security
- D. Consider changes in the form of government
- E. Consider business registration
- F. Re-evaluate existing economic development agreements
- G. Develop an incremental incentive/reward system