

A Major Destination

Lancaster County is a major destination for visitors and a magnet for visitor-related attractions, facilities and services. Our rural atmosphere and scenic countryside attract millions of visitors every year, generate billions in annual revenue, and play an integral role in the County's economic health.

Yet tourism in Lancaster County is at a crossroads.

Lancaster County must address the many changes taking place within and outside of the County. If we are to remain competitive in the tourism arena, the Strategic Tourism Development Plan, as an element of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan, is both timely and necessary.

Guiding Principles

The Strategic Tourism Development Planning process was based on four guiding principles:



- **Stakeholder Involvement** - Continue the County's long tradition of including the public in all of its planning efforts.
- **Sustainability** - Support the strong preservation and stewardship efforts that Lancaster County already has under way to protect its outstanding natural, cultural, and historic resources.
- **Integration Of Supporting Studies and Reports** - Integrate and build on the many relevant and quality studies, reports, and plans created in the past decade in Lancaster County, rather than "starting from scratch" or "reinventing the wheel."
- **Achievable Recommendations** - Ensure that the plan is concise and straightforward and results in "doable" or achievable recommendations.

Strategic Recommendations

Taking into account the vision, the vast stakeholder involvement, and the extensive research, studies and analyses, five key strategies and corresponding goals were crafted:

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Build on Lancaster County's Strength as a Tourism Destination

GOALS:

- 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
- Focus resources on prioritized areas and corridors that have the greatest potential for tourism development
- Establish the City of Lancaster as a new and exciting tourism product for the County

INFRASTRUCTURE AND MOBILITY STRATEGY

Make it Easy for the Visitor

GOALS:

- Enhance visitor mobility and access through transportation improvements
- Increase the quality of the visitor experience

MARKETING STRATEGY

Focus on Brand Equity, Continuity, and Packaging

GOALS:

- Build on Lancaster County's existing and strong brand awareness and equity
- Enhance existing and create new collaborative marketing initiatives and partnerships
- Focus on overnight visitors for the greatest economic impact

OUTREACH AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

Educate and Involve the Community in Tourism Planning and Promotion

GOALS:

- Increase recognition of tourism's importance to the economy and to the overall quality of life in Lancaster County
- Involve the community in the tourism planning process



ORGANIZATIONAL/COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY

Keep it Simple, Focus on Leadership, Identify Resources, and Collaborate for Success

GOALS:

- 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
- Establish a creative, collaborative, and results-oriented organizational structure to support tourism development for Lancaster City
- Create strong partnerships and systems to increase cooperation of the public and private sectors in tourism planning and development
- Develop new and stable sources of funding for product development, infrastructure improvements, and marketing



*Complete copies of the Lancaster County Strategic Tourism Development Plan and a more detailed Executive Summary can be viewed and downloaded online at www.co.lancaster.pa.us/planning -- type "Tourism" in the Keyword Search. Limited hard copies are available through the Lancaster County Planning Commission, 717-299-8333.

Strategic Vision and Objective

The vision for Lancaster County is to:

Build upon the area's historic commitment to tourism, enhance existing and develop new sustainable and authentic tourism products that appeal to both current and new market audiences, and create linkages to satisfy tourist needs while enhancing the quality of life for the local residents.

The overall objective of long-term tourism planning for Lancaster County is to:

Increase the economic, social and environmental benefits of tourism in Lancaster County.



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Enhance visitor mobility and access through transportation improvements between proposed Tourism Development Areas

MARKETING

- Engage in segmented (adults/family) and niche marketing (young adults) to increase the number of visitors and to attract more overnight visitors
- Develop marketing partnerships to create and develop new packages

OUTREACH/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Involve the community in tourism planning and development

ORGANIZATION

- 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
- Develop new and stable sources of funding for product development, infrastructure improvements, and marketing

Catalytic Recommendations

Numerous initiatives and programs noted in the Plan will benefit Lancaster County. The following focused recommendations will serve as a catalyst to further tourism initiatives:

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Establish the City of Lancaster as a new and exciting tourism product for the County
- Create connections between county and city products by providing complementary but different experiences
- Create thematic tours centered on "Made in Lancaster County" and related special events based on attributes and products for which the area is known
- Focus resources on prioritized areas and corridors that have the greatest potential for tourism development



Tourism



HIGHLIGHTS OF
THE STRATEGIC TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

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The Comprehensive Plan for
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania