

Institutional Structure

The County of Lancaster Planning Commission is the primary entity mandated to carry out the goals, objectives and strategies of the Growth Management Element and the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan. These elements are the primary basis for this Consolidated Plan.

The Redevelopment Authority of Lancaster County is the administrative arm for the Consolidated Plan and supports the same goals of a strong, well-defined and well-developed civic infrastructure. The following action steps proposed in Lancaster County's Policy Plan attest to Lancaster County's commitment to build and support civic infrastructure:

1. Make citizen participation the cornerstone of every planning process.
2. Create interactive community information systems at the County and local levels.
3. Create community indicators and bench-marking programs to measure the success of public and private programs and policies.
4. Strengthen existing public/private partnerships and create new ones to implement programs and deliver services.

The Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority will continue to be involved in interagency efforts to strengthen the institutional structure for housing and economic development, including but not limited to, having a representative serve on:

1. The advisory committee of the Lancaster County Planning Commission's update of several elements of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan (Housing Element Plan, Growth Management Element Plan, Cultural Heritage Plan, Smart Growth Awards Committee);
2. Sovereign Bank's Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Advisory Board;
3. The South Central Assembly for Effective Governance's Predatory Lending Task Force and Housing Committee;
4. The local Economic Development Action Group;
5. The Lancaster County Housing Opportunity Partnership's Suburban Production Committee; and
6. United Way of Lancaster's Housing and Homelessness Leadership Group.

The Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority supports the policies listed in the Lancaster County Policy Plan, ReVisions, to achieve the goal of a strong, well-defined and well-developed infrastructure

Housing

The Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities owns no public housing and currently does not develop assisted housing. Rather, funds are provided to nonprofit and for-profit housing developers to create assisted housing. The weakness in this system is the lack of sufficient developers capable of producing affordable housing to meet the demand. To date, Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority has partnered with Community Basics, Inc and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) in Lancaster County.

Currently, the Redevelopment Authority is providing operations assistance to the Community Basics, one of only two County-designated Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) to develop assisted housing in Lancaster County, outside the City of Lancaster. The other CHDO is Community Action Program (CAP) who completed their second County project in Ephrata Borough. On occasion, other developers have created housing in Lancaster but not on a consistent basis. As a result, additional developers of affordable housing are needed.

The Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership (LHOP), a private-public, community-based partnership, expands affordable housing opportunities throughout Lancaster County to help more families buy homes. LHOP offers two programs that work toward overcoming the identified gaps in the County's affordable housing delivery system; the Development Support Initiative and the Affordable Housing Incentive Program. The Development Support Initiative is a comprehensive package of technical assistance and financial support to enable organizations to expand production of housing affordable to lower income residents in Lancaster County. LHOP provides advice and guidance on how organizations can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their development programs. They also provide development services to help organizations implement specific development activities. This includes assistance with site identification, project planning, financial packaging, and project marketing.

LHOP provides operating support to enable non-profit organizations to expand their capacity to undertake affordable housing development activities. Funding is provided to support staffing levels required to implement strategies to meet specific housing production goals. To support this development activity, LHOP also provides annual operational support to Community Housing Development Corporations (CHDO) to implement various management initiatives to expand their affordable housing production. Services provided by LHOP included participation in strategic planning processes, development consulting services, and organizational and fund raising consulting.

LHOP's Affordable Housing Incentive Program seeks to combine regulatory and financial incentives to encourage the production of housing affordable to families earning entry-level wages. The basic concept is to develop new partnerships between a developer, the local municipality and LHOP to identify alternative land planning or design standards that reduce housing costs and to enable these cost savings to be passed on to housing consumers.

Chart 12. Summary of Affordable Housing Partners

ORGANIZATION	MISSION	KEY PROGRAMS
Spanish American Civic Association (SACA) Development	Provide affordable rental and owner occupied housing. Promote neighborhood revitalization for low and moderate income families in Lancaster County.	Home Ownership Program Neighborhood Rehabilitation Program
Habitat for Humanity	Renovate and build new homes.	Affordable Housing Development
CAP Housing	Assist low income families to become self-sufficient and less dependent upon public assistance	CAP Housing Development
		Energy Conservation Center
LCHRA	Administer programs to carry out housing and homeless assistance activities, community planning, and economic development activities. Fund these and other programs.	Rental Assistance Program Rental Housing Program
Tabor Community Services	Rebuild communities by helping families find housing and financial solutions	Supportive Housing
Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership (LHOP)	Help families access affordable housing needs of households with less than median income through quality development, construction, rental management, maintenance, and supportive services	Development Support Initiative Affordable Housing Incentive Program
Housing Development Corporation (HDC)	To meet the affordable housing needs of households with less than median income through quality development, construction, rental	Affordable Housing Development

ORGANIZATION	MISSION	KEY PROGRAMS
	management, maintenance and supportive services.	
Brethren Village	To provide a continuum of services and Christ-like care to support the aging process and to enhance the spiritual, physical, social, and emotional wholeness of residents, team members, and community.	Affordable housing for the elderly
Community Basics	To undertake affordable housing and community development projects in Lancaster City and County. To serve primarily low and moderate income households by conducting or promoting activities designed to provide safe and adequate housing and related services, and to alleviate housing shortages.	Affordable Housing Development

Homelessness

Much of the institutional structure in the realm of homelessness is being addressed by the Interagency Council for the Homeless and the United Way of Lancaster County’s Homelessness and Affordable Housing Initiative. The Director of the initiative will develop community solutions for the issues identified in United Way’s recent report, “State of Housing and Homelessness” located in the Homelessness section of this report. The Director, an employee of the United Way of Lancaster County, will also work with United Way’s Housing and Homelessness Leadership Group to address the needs for permanent housing, transitional housing for the homeless, and programs and services to prevent homelessness.

A description of the gaps in the service delivery system for the homeless is listed in the “Continuum of Care Plan for the Homeless in Lancaster, 2005,” which is provided in full under the Homelessness section of this document.

Community Development

The term community development is a broad and often all-inclusive term. Our description of the institutional structure will focus on the delivery of federal funds into the community.

The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Lancaster will continue to carry its housing and community development plan through the delivery system comprised of local governments, local municipal authorities (water and sewer authorities), and nonprofit organizations. The Citizen Advisory Council consists of one member appointed from each of the municipalities, and one citizen representative from each of the municipalities that are appointed by the Redevelopment Authority.

The Redevelopment Authority receives CDBG, HOME and ESG funds on an entitlement basis annually for the County of Lancaster. The method of allocating the funds is described extensively in the Citizen Participation Plan. These funds are available to local governments, municipal authorities, and non-profit organizations for activities that support the strategy of the Consolidated Plan.

Frequently, local governments and local authorities will rely upon municipal engineers to assist in the preparation of the grant application for CDBG funds. Once local governments and municipal authorities are allocated funds, they undertake the implementation of the grant, relying on existing staff, contractors or engineers. The Redevelopment Authority's Community Development Department monitors and inspects the progress of the project to ensure adherence to HUD's construction contracting guidelines through completion.

Similarly, nonprofits apply for CDBG funds to carry out the identified community development plan in the Consolidated Plan. If awarded funds, they often work through an architect, contractor or project manager for the implementation of the project. Some nonprofit organizations are more sophisticated than others, and the level of technical assistance provided by the Redevelopment Authority will vary depending on the situation.