

Priority Needs Analysis and Strategies

The basis for assigning the priority given to each category of priority needs comes from the Lancaster County Growth Management Element Update and the Housing Element Update of the Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan. These plans have set out specific, integrated strategies to guide priorities in the next five years and beyond.

The strategies listed in the Growth Management Plan that directly support the priority needs analysis and strategies in Urban Growth Areas. Lancaster County has 44 Growth Areas; 13 Urban Growth Areas and 31 Village Growth Areas.

- The Reinvestment Strategy which focuses on maintaining a vibrant and attractive environment within Lancaster County's existing communities in Core Reinvestment Areas (boroughs) and General Reinvestment Areas for previously developed land in Urban Growth Boundaries located outside the Core Reinvestment Areas.
- The Buildable Lands Strategy within Urban Growth Areas to improve the quality of life in Urban Growth Areas through the provision of housing choice and affordability

The strategy listed in the Growth Management Plan that directly supports the priority needs analysis and strategies in Rural Resource Areas are:

Infrastructure Investments - Prohibit public water and sewer extensions outside of Village Growth Areas and Rural Centers except as necessary for health and safety reasons. Target infrastructure investments (public water supply, limited road improvements, and innovative wastewater treatment and disposal options) to serve Village Growth Areas and Rural Centers on a case-by-case basis, taking into account feasibility, cost and funding sources, environmental impacts, and similar considerations.

The strategies listed in the Housing Element that directly support the priority needs analysis and strategies are:

- Residential Growth - Plan for 85% of new residential growth in Urban Growth Areas and 15% of new housing development in existing developed areas within Rural Centers.
- Inclusionary Zoning – Establish a minimum 15% of all new housing to be designated for low and moderate income families.
- Reuse – Develop a countywide inventory of properties that meet the definition of Brownfields. Include Brownfield properties within Keystone Opportunity Zones to provide additional tax incentives.

- Update - Municipal zoning ordinances to ensure a balanced regional supply of housing for special needs populations and low/moderate income people.
- Design – Promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) within new and existing single family developments to promote inclusionary housing opportunities. ADUs are also known as “granny flats,” where both aging and young adults maintain affordable housing and remain close to family members.
- Incentives – Reward municipalities for supplying affordable housing, greater densities, and innovative development types when applying for County assistance.
- Expand Resources – Target Fannie Mae and the PA Keystone Housing Program to leverage additional dollars toward first-time homebuyers, rental and rural housing. Map all surplus public agencies’ lands and structures that may be available for the development of affordable housing.
- Educate – Policymakers, residents, business leaders, lenders, and nonprofits on inclusionary zoning and related programs through workshops on innovative design charrettes and housing conferences that encourage mixed-use and multi-family development.

Annual Action Plans in the next five years will propose activities in those communities which have the highest percentage of low and moderate income persons. The map contained in a previous section (Map #5) indicates the distribution of low and moderate income persons in the County. Because the County has so few areas where 51% or more of the population is low and moderate income, it determines the fundability of its activities using the "exception criteria" established by HUD. Under this rule, activities located in areas of the County with low and moderate income populations which exceed 43.5% of the total population of the area would generally meet the minimum requirement of principally benefiting low and moderate income persons. The map shows Census Block Groups where the low and moderate income population exceeds 51%, and 43.5% of the total block group population, respectively. The County will continue to focus its Community Development-funded activity in these areas during the next five years.

Lancaster County needs to develop more affordable housing and continue to upgrade its infrastructure for its growing population of residents. Efforts to link public infrastructure, social services, and rental housing activities to achieve greater community impact will be focused on during the 2006 – 2010 plan years.

Chart 13. High Priority Community Development Needs

Community Development Needs	Activities	5-Year Goals (# of projects)
Public Facility Needs		
	Neighborhood Facilities	10
Infrastructure		
	Water Sewer Improvements	15
	Street Improvements	15
Public Service Needs		
	Youth Services	18
	Health Services	12
	Homeless Services	15
Economic Development		
	ED Assistance to For-Profit Businesses	10
	ED Technical Assistance	10
TOTAL		105

Chart 14. High Priority Housing Needs

Housing Needs	Activities	5-Year Goals (# of projects)
Renter		
	Large Related 0-30% MFI	10
	Large Related 31-50% MFI	20
	Large Related 51-80% MFI	25
Owner		
	0-30% MFI	26
	31-50% MFI	41
	51-80% MFI	103
TOTAL		225

Obstacles in meeting underserved needs include:

Housing

- Lack of affordable rental and owner-occupied housing.
- Projected household growth exceeds anticipated growth in supply of housing.
- Rents are increasing at a much higher rate than incomes.
- High cost of owner-occupied housing; rising cost of market rentals.
- High cost of land in Lancaster County.
- Limited availability of federal and state funds for housing.
- Significantly limited availability of funding for rental assistance program such as Section 8.

- Opposition to affordable housing.
- Length of site plan review process.
- High cost of construction.
- Significant level of subsidy needed to serve the lowest income households.
- Need for more accessible housing.
- Poor credit history among lower income households.
- High costs associated with lead based paint abatement.

Community Development

- High cost of construction.
- Limited availability of federal and state funds for housing and community development.
- Number of contaminated wells outpaces the financial ability and capability of local water facilities to provide clean drinking water.
- Number of malfunctioning on-lot sewer systems outpaces the financial ability and capability of local sewer facilities to provide sanitary sewer service; the cost of replacing an on-lot septic system can be prohibitive for a low and moderate income household.
- Difficulty of local governments and nonprofit organizations to raise the required matching funds for projects that could be funded through the County CDBG Program.