Place-Based Tourism in Lancaster County:
Creating a Great Place to Live and Visit
Place-Based Tourism in Lancaster County

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Lancaster County Planning Commission
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Place-Based Tourism in Lancaster County

1. Preserving Our Spirit of Place
   What Is Sustainable Tourism?

2. City Stories
   Lancaster City’s
   Museum without Walls

3. Laboratory
   Downtown Lancaster
Preserving Our Spirit of Place
Amish & Plain Sects and Agricultural Landscape
City and Boroughs

Spirit of Place
Lower Susquehanna River Gorge

Spirit of Place
Spirit of Place

Tangible Resources

- Natural
- Cultural
- Historic

People & Places
Spirit of Place

Intangible Resources

Customs & Traditions

• Food
• Dance
• Music
• Storytelling
a great place to live makes a great place to visit
Heritage Destinations

Tourism does not go to a city that has lost its soul.

– Arthur Frommer
But . . .
Is there trouble in Paradise?

We face two kinds of challenges.
Unmanaged Growth and Change

Rural Landscape
Unmanaged Growth and Change

Urban Landscape
In the 1990s, Lancaster County was listed as one of:

- The Nation’s 11 Most Endangered Places (National Trust)
- The World’s 100 Most Endangered Sites (World Monuments Watch)
Lancaster County’s image as a mature tourism destination
Economic Impact of Tourism in Lancaster County

- 11 million visitors annually
- $2 billion spent on visitor goods and services
- Contributes over $800 million in direct economic impact
- Generates $460 million in tax revenue

Courtesy PA Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau
Spirit of Place

Quality-of-Life Benefits of Tourism in Lancaster County

- Community pride
- More places to eat, sleep, and have fun
- Environmental and cultural heritage preservation
- Improved facilities and services
The Broadway show *Plain and Fancy* (1955) first made the county a tourism destination.
Tourist Area Cycle of Evolution

Rejuvenation, Stagnation, or Decline?

Spirit of Place
Placemaking and sustainable tourism development are the keys to creating a great place to live and a great place to visit.
In keeping with this philosophy, we believe that successful and sustainable tourism development is:

- **Civic** – working collaboratively to find the fit between the community and tourism
- **Place-Based** – preserving and protecting resources
- **Experiential** – making destinations come alive
Sustainable Tourism
Is
Civic
Civic Tourism

Cultural Sector

+ Tourism Industry

+ General Public

= Civic Tourism
Civic Tourism

Goal: Managing growth while preserving the county’s heritage resources and unique sense of place
Civic Tourism

Comp Plan Elements

Heritage Plan:
- Conserve tangible and intangible cultural and historic resources

Greenscapes Plan:
- Conserve natural resources and open space
Civic Tourism

Tourism Plan:

- Calls on local stakeholders to preserve and enhance the county’s authentic heritage resources and sense of place as the foundation for future tourism development
- Identifies which of these resources are appropriate to share with visitors
Civic Tourism

Public Engagement in Tourism Plan

- Advisory Committee
- Regional Municipal Meetings
- Public Forums
- Surveys
  - Residents (through newspaper)
  - Municipalities
  - Agencies & Organizations
  - Visitors
## Civic Tourism

### Tourism Survey Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Amish / Plain Sects</td>
<td>• Unmanaged growth and sprawl</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rural landscape</td>
<td>• Loss of authenticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Farm markets and roadside stands</td>
<td>• Traffic congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Historic towns and villages</td>
<td>• Limited reinvestment in existing attractions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Antiques and crafts</td>
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The Plan’s Vision for Tourism

- Enhance existing and develop new sustainable and authentic tourism products and experiences
- Improve the visitor experience while enhancing local residents’ quality of life
- Establish Lancaster City as a new and exciting tourism product
Sustainable Tourism Is Place-Based
Place is becoming the central organizing unit of our economy and society.

Richard Florida
Place-based tourism sustains and enhances:

- the geographical character of a place
- the well-being of its residents
A place-based approach to tourism is consistent with a major paradigm shift in the travel world.

**Old Way of Thinking**
- Marketing and promotional campaigns
- Focus on individual attractions

**New Way of Thinking**
- Authentic experiences and quality visitor services
- Focus on places
Place-Based Tourism

While mass tourism dominated the market in the early 1990s . . .

Recent rapid growth in
- ecotourism,
- geotourism
- cultural tourism, and
- heritage tourism
indicates a new direction for tourism development in the 21st century.
The tourism plan calls on local stakeholders to:

- Focus on areas with the greatest potential for tourism, called Tourism Development Areas (TDAs)
- Create a management structure in each of these areas
- Establish a countywide tourism council to coordinate tourism development on a countywide basis
Urban TDAs

- Located within the county’s designated urban or village growth areas
- Have a critical mass of attractions, services, and infrastructure – or the potential to develop them in the future
- Have the support of local officials and residents
Place-Based Tourism

Urban Tourism Development Areas (TDAs)

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
Place-Based Tourism

Rural TDAs

- Large, rural agricultural and/or natural landscapes
- Have the potential for sustainable forms of agritourism and ecotourism
- Towns and villages within these areas serve as gateways and centers for interpretation and visitor service
Rural Tourism Development Areas (TDAs)

Place-Based Tourism

Highlands

Susquehanna River

Eastern Lancaster County

Primary

Secondary
The tourism plan calls for each TDA to create a management structure involving the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, with representatives from:

- Municipal government
- Local Main Street organization or chamber of commerce
- Local residents, businesses, and institutions (schools, etc.)
Lincoln Highway TDA
Management Structure

Place-Based Tourism

Tourism Advisory Committee

501(c)6 Business Association

Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
Place-Based Tourism

Purpose

Develop and inventory of resources and complete a plan that outlines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within each TDA.

Examples

- City of Lancaster Tourism Strategic Plan
- Lincoln Highway Gateway Improvement Plan
Coordination among TDAs and countywide organizations

Place-Based Tourism

Lancaster County Tourism Council

Other Countywide Orgs.

PA Dutch CVB


TDA

TDA

TDA
Place-Based Tourism

Other Placemaking Tools

- Model design guidelines
- Context-sensitive design
- Model template for facade improvement programs
- Historic preservation guidelines
- Wayfinding programs
Place-Based Tourism

Enhancing agritourism and ecotourism opportunities

- Agritourism guidelines
- Susquehanna Water Trail guide
- Greenways: Northwest River Trail
Sustainable Tourism Is Experiential
Experiential Tourism
Goods and services are no longer enough.

A product is what you *buy* – but an experience is what you *remember*. 

### The Experience Economy

- **Agrarian Economy**
- **Industrial Economy**
- **Service Economy**
Experiential tourism is:

Travel that engages visitors in a series of memorable events that are:

• revealed over time;
• inherently personal;
• involve the senses; and
• make a connection on an emotional, physical, spiritual, or intellectual level.
Experiential Tourism

A new creative class of travelers:

• Experience culture not as spectators, but as participants

• Enjoy street-level experiences like cafes, music, bars, galleries, bistros

• Seek opportunities for self-improvement
This program highlights natural, cultural, and historic resources that authentically reflect the county’s heritage.

It’s managed by Lancaster County Planning Commission staff with input from an Advisory Committee.
Experiential Tourism

Heritage Resource Criteria

Authenticity

Demonstrating a link to the county’s heritage

Interpretation

Sharing the “story” of that heritage with the public

Visitor Readiness

Having high standards of appearance and operation
## Types of Heritage Resources

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<th>Attractions</th>
<th>Sites</th>
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<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Lodging Dining</td>
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<td>Craftsmanship</td>
<td>Events Tours</td>
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<td>Routes</td>
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<td>Communities</td>
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<td>Landscapes</td>
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Pennsylvania Redware Pottery

Although Native Americans made pottery for centuries before Europeans arrived in America, Europeans brought their own pottery traditions with them. Redware pottery, named for its distinctive color, was easily adapted to the colonists’ needs. People lived in Pennsylvania. Here, settlers made redware pottery that reflected both European and British influences.

Traditional redware pottery had utilitarian function, but it was often decorated with slip (liquid clay) or sgraffito (literally “scratched” by engraving through the glaze). Often the objects were given an iron-red glaze that lent the pieces a rich yellow color.

Lancaster County Heritage Crafts

These works are genuine expressions of the cultural heritage. Each official Heritage Craft is formally designated by the Lancaster County Planning Commission and is vetted to ensure degrees of authenticity and craftsmanship. When you hold a Heritage Craft, you hold an authentic Lancaster County.

Ned Foltz
Foltz Pottery

Ned's lifelong fascination with redware pottery began in Lititz, Lancaster County. He attended the Philadelphia College of Art, and taught high school art for 18 years – but he's always worked as a potter. Early in his career, Ned dug his own clay from local deposits, but today, suppliers often dig and mix the clay for him. Each piece is handcrafted at Ned's workshop, an historic one-room schoolhouse.

Techniques and Materials

All Foltz pottery is made using the same traditional methods that have been practiced in Lancaster County for over three centuries. The only difference is that the glazes used today are non-toxic and lead free. While early pieces of redware primarily used a white glaze, Ned selects glazes from across the spectrum.
Experiential Tourism

Heritage Byways
Experiential Tourism

Towns & Villages Website

Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church

Located in Lancaster City

450-512 E. Strawbery St.
Lancaster, PA 17602

This church, founded in 1817, served as a station on the Underground Railroad and a center of spiritual renewal for free African-Americans who lived in the Lancaster community. Today, Bethel is also the site of “Living the Experience,” an interactive spiritual journey back to the time of the Underground Railroad. This historical reenactment performance ends with a traditional dinner.

HERITAGE THEMES

These five themes are the “big stories” that characterize the natural, historic, and cultural heritage of Lancaster County. They’re designed to help you connect the dots between individual resources and the region’s heritage as a whole. To learn more...
Experiential Tourism

Publications

Program Manual

Style Guide

Interpretation Manual
Experiential Tourism

Promotional Materials

Metal signs

Hang tags for Heritage Crafts

Vinyl banners
What Have We Learned?
As leaders in placemaking, planners play a critical role in helping communities become great places to live and great places to visit.
Civic
- Community involvement and partnerships are essential to successful tourism development

Place-Based
- Growth management and destination management are inextricably linked

Experiential
- Engaging and authentic heritage products enhance community pride and sense of place
How can this model of civic, place-based, and experiential tourism be applied in a community context?

We examined how it might work in the City of Lancaster.
City Stories:
Lancaster’s Museum without Walls
The Lancaster County Tourism Plan and the City of Lancaster Tourism Plan:

• Emphasize the importance of product development

• Call for the city to become “the next new tourism destination for Lancaster County”
Working with a consulting firm, the Lancaster County Planning Commission:

- Convened a meeting of public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders
- Discussed the stories the city can tell, and how different attractions can cooperate in telling them
- Surveyed potential visitors about these stories
What Did We Learn?

The city is full of interesting stories, but . . .

- Visitors have to work to discover what the city offers – they have to “design their own experience”
- They hear bits and pieces of stories, but are never introduced to the big picture

How can we address this?
Imagine Lancaster City as a museum without walls – not a stuffy place, but dynamic and experiential.

- What amenities do visitors expect from large museums?
- How are they organized and managed?
- Can we apply this model to the city?
How Museums Are Organized

Visitor Services
- Information desk, shop, dining

Marketing and Promotion
- Data collection, advertising, events

Interpretation
- Orientation to the collections

Museum Services
- Exhibitions, publications

Facilities
- Cleanliness, safety
How is Lancaster Like a Museum?

Its neighborhoods are like galleries . . .
... and its heritage sites, arts and entertainment venues, and streets are like exhibits.
What do visitors expect from major museums?

- Orientation to the collections
- Exhibitions and publications
- Events and activities
- Shopping and dining opportunities
- Well-maintained restrooms
Most importantly, the city needs an orientation center that goes beyond the traditional information desk. What we need is an interpretive “experience” that:

• Introduces visitors to the broad themes of the city’s heritage

• Gets them excited to go out and do some exploring
HistoryQuest in Annapolis exemplifies this kind of center. It:

- Has an orientation film
- Interprets the city’s most significant stories
- Highlights the full range of what the city offers to visitors
- Emphasizes diversity and sustainability
- Includes a “museum shop” to offset operational costs
What Makes Lancaster Significant?

The City of Lancaster:

- Reflects William Penn’s vision for religious tolerance
- Has been a refuge for immigrants
- Has fostered creativity and ingenuity in the arts and industry
- Played a vital role in the civil rights movement of the 19th and 20th centuries
Themes and Stories

- **Bounty** – food, farmers’ markets
- **Ingenuity** – “made in Lancaster,” the arts
- **Freedom** – colonial era, wars, underground railroad, civil rights
- **Towns & Countryside** – architecture, neighborhoods, diversity
- **Natural Wonders** – parks, gardens
How can we deliver our stories to visitors?

1970s model: bricks in the ground
- Boston Freedom Trail

Today: new technologies
- Cell phones, GPS, multi-media
Best Practices

Asheville Urban Trail

City Stories
Best Practices
Philadelphia and Washington

City Stories
How can we improve the visitor experience in Lancaster?

- Develop new products like the Heritage Center’s Walking Tour, the Freedom of Religion brochures, and Towns & Villages website
- Provide visitors with interpretation experiences that utilize new technologies
- Create a system of joint ticket sales
One organizational model:

The Freedom Trail Foundation
Boston, Massachusetts

- Develops educational programs in cooperation with 16 sites and 20 organizations
- Provides guides, brochures, and an audio tour
- Offers programs in local schools
Rather than creating a new organization, our approach draws on existing resources and talents in the community.
Implementing the City Stories concept will help us make Lancaster City the county’s next new tourism destination.
For More Information

Lancaster County Heritage
www.lancastercountyheritage.com

Lancaster County Planning Commission
www.co.lancaster.pa.us/planning
Laboratory: Downtown Lancaster
Laboratory: Downtown Lancaster

Leaders

Marshall Snively  Vice President
James Street Improvement District
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Wendy Nagle  Executive Director
Heritage Center Museums
at Market Square
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Creating a Great Place to Live: Downtown Revitalization

Marshall Snively  Vice President
James Street Improvement District (JSID)
Downtown Revitalization

James Street Improvement District (JSID)
Since 2006 . . .
Lancaster City has seen more than $2 billion in projects completed, under construction, or planned.
Downtown Lancaster, PA Development Activity
(As of September 2010)
Downtown Lancaster, PA Development Activity
(As of September 2010)
Creating a Great Place to Visit: Tourism Development

Wendy Nagle   Executive Director
Heritage Center Museums at Market Square
Tourism Development

Heritage Center Museums at Market Square
Heritage Center Museum
Tourism Development

Heritage Center Museums at Market Square
Lancaster Quilt & Textile Museum
Tourism Development

Strategic Focus Areas

• Market the city as a visitor destination

• Package existing attractions and sites

• Address visitor infrastructure needs

• Create a dynamic mix of tourism-relevant businesses to serve visitors
Tourism Development
Lab Route

Downtown Lancaster, PA

East on King St.
North on Queen St.
West on James St.
South on Prince St.