

# H HOURGLASS QUARTERLY

WINTER 2023



*Lancaster's Community Health Needs*

*Lancaster City's Comprehensive Plan*

*Building a 21st Century Library*

*Lancaster's Treatment Courts*

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Hourglass community,

Someone recently remarked that **“in Lancaster County, we’re all barnraisers.”**

The term conjures an image of our Plain Sect neighbors pitching in to help rebuild after a fire—**an act of hard work, love, faith, and community.** But it says something else about Lancastrians. We don’t wait around for someone to solve our problems. We roll up our sleeves and get it done, often from grassroots efforts and a bottom-up approach.

This fall Hourglass celebrated our 25th anniversary. Hourglass was established in 1997 with a similar vision. In a rapidly changing world, we cannot count on effective problem solving from national or state governments. **Lancaster, our community, needs to take ownership of its own future, imagining better paths and relentlessly pursuing solutions that take advantage of reliable information and innovative ideas.**

In this issue of the Hourglass Quarterly you’ll read about some of our recent efforts to keep you informed about Lancaster’s community health needs, Lancaster City’s comprehensive plan, Lancaster’s new public library, and local efforts around criminal justice reform and eco-tourism. Over the past 25 years, while the projects and players have changed, Hourglass has remained focused on ensuring Lancaster County has the highest Quality of Life possible.

**Thank you for being a barnraiser.** Your support creates awareness of emerging issues and inspires our community to work together on the best possible solutions.

Respectfully,  
Diana Martin



***Save the Date!***



**Our annual community forum will be held Wednesday, April 12, 5 PM at the Ware Center with Strong Towns founder and president Chuck Marohn. If you are concerned about ensuring every community in Lancaster County is thriving, you won’t want to miss it!**



# Lancaster's Community Health Needs

Every three years a nonprofit hospital must complete a Community Health Needs Assessment and Improvement Plan for their service area. At our August First Friday Forum Hourglass heard from Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health and WellSpan Health about their recent joint assessment for Lancaster County and their corresponding plans to improve our health locally.

## The Needs Assessment

To complete the 179-page needs assessment, the health institutions gathered a wide spectrum of local health data, issued a community survey and conducted key stakeholder interviews. The needs assessment found that Lancaster County ranks in the top 25% of counties in Pennsylvania for health outcomes and has an average life expectancy that is two years longer than the state overall. It also identified the county's highest priority community health needs as a healthy environment, healthcare access and quality, and mental health.

## Healthy Environment Findings:

- Lancaster County receives a failing grade for air quality from the American Lung Association due to the number of days when particulate matter exceeds healthy standards.
- Our tree canopy covers 14.9% of our land area, lower than the state (25%) and the U.S. (20.5%), and trees are unevenly distributed across communities.
- A total of 15.2% of Lancaster County households experience one or more serious housing

challenges: severe cost burden, lacking kitchen facilities or plumbing, and overcrowding.

- A total of 117,314 homes (55.6% of the homes in Lancaster County) may be at risk for having lead paint contamination.
- The bicycle and pedestrian network is fragmented, and many roads are unsafe and uncomfortable for walking and bicycling.

## Healthcare Access & Quality Findings:

- The percentage of uninsured adults in Lancaster County is 12%, higher than the state overall (7%).
- Lancaster has fewer primary care providers, dentists, and mental health providers per capita than the state overall.
- In their community survey, the top 3 recommendations to improve access to care were to reduce the cost of care, help people understand and navigate services, and improve health insurance coverage.
- Increasing the diversity and cultural competence of health care providers was rated as a top priority by Black, Hispanic/Latino, and LGBTQ+ participants in the survey.

### Mental Health Findings:

- Deaths from suicide and drug overdose have been trending higher in Lancaster County in recent years.
- More than 1 in 3 adolescents report feeling sad or depressed most days in the last year.
- Nearly 1 in 4 adults (23%) in Lancaster County have been told they have a depressive disorder, and 31% of adults have had at least one poor mental health day in the past 30 days.
- Mental health conditions were rated as the #1 health issue affecting our community by 71.9% of the participants in the survey.

### Lancaster County Top Causes of Death (2020): *Death Rate Per 100,000*

|                               |              |                              |             |
|-------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| <i>Heart Disease</i>          | <i>225.0</i> | <i>Diabetes</i>              | <i>30.9</i> |
| <i>Cancer</i>                 | <i>209.6</i> | <i>Kidney Disease</i>        | <i>26.0</i> |
| <i>COVID-19</i>               | <i>136.9</i> | <i>Parkinson's Disease</i>   | <i>14.3</i> |
| <i>Stroke</i>                 | <i>70.5</i>  | <i>Septicemia</i>            | <i>13.0</i> |
| <i>Unintentional Injuries</i> | <i>63.7</i>  | <i>Suicide</i>               | <i>10.6</i> |
| <i>Alzheimer's Disease</i>    | <i>45.0</i>  | <i>Chronic Liver Disease</i> | <i>10.3</i> |
| <i>COPD</i>                   | <i>43.8</i>  | <i>Influenza / Pneumonia</i> | <i>9.5</i>  |

### Health Improvement Plans

Moving forward, Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health plans to use the U.S. News and World Report Healthiest Communities ratings to measure its progress in making Lancaster County the healthiest community in the country. The health system has established goals that correspond with each priority area including improving access to healthy food through food security programs, reducing lead hazards through its Lead-Free Families program, increasing mental health screenings in primary care visits, and reducing overdose deaths in Lancaster County. LG Health is also constructing a bicycle-pedestrian trailhead at the Suburban Outpatient Pavilion for the Greater Lancaster Heritage Pathway among other initiatives.

WellSpan Health, which works in northern Lancaster County, identified its top priorities as Care for All, Mental Well-Being, Social Determinants of Health (including food and housing insecurity), and Healthy Communities. These Health Improvement Plans will be executed from 2023-2025.

*To watch the forum on Lancaster's Community Health Needs, or to view their powerpoint slides, please visit [HourglassLancaster.org/resources/first-Friday-forums](https://www.hourglasslancaster.org/resources/first-friday-forums). Community health dashboards, Lancaster's Community Health Needs Assessment and LGH's Improvement Plan can be found at [lghealth.org/countyhealthdata](https://www.lghealth.org/countyhealthdata). WellSpan's Community Health Improvement Plan can be found at [wellspan.org/about/wellspan-in-the-community](https://www.wellspan.org/about/wellspan-in-the-community).*



# Lancaster City's Comprehensive Plan

For our December First Friday Forum Hourglass was joined by Chris Delfs, Director of Community Planning & Economic Development for the City of Lancaster, and Douglas Smith, Bureau Chief of Lancaster City Planning, for a conversation about the city's first comprehensive plan since 1993. This plan will guide the city's growth and development for the next 20 years.

The plan's development has been underway since mid-2021 and a final plan is expected to be adopted by Lancaster City Council this summer. The plan will cover policy related to areas such as housing, transportation, economic development, parks and public spaces, historic preservation, arts & culture, community facilities and other infrastructure.

## The Work So Far

The past year-and-a-half have primarily focused on community engagement and data collection. So far the city has engaged 4,700+ individuals through public events, survey responses, stakeholder interviews, and innovative strategies such as public art. The themes arising from residents? While they love Lancaster's small businesses, walkability, diversity, and green spaces, they believe the city needs more affordable housing options, safer streets, better infrastructure such as clean water and broadband, and improved access to services.

## What the Data Says

As part of the planning process, in November the city released "Lancaster Today," a 164-page report on the existing conditions in Lancaster City. A few noteworthy trends include:



*Hourglass executive director Diana Martin is pictured with Douglas Smith (left) and Chris Delfs (right)*

- **Changing Demographics:** Lancaster City has a young population, however the population over 65 is expected to increase in the next 5 years. In fact, since 2010 there has been a 30% increase in those over 55.
- **Housing Stock:** There is a demand for smaller housing units in Lancaster City. 64% of households have up to 2 people while 52% of housing in Lancaster City is 3+ bedrooms.

- **Housing Pipeline:** Planned residential projects may relieve some of the housing mismatch and demand in the city. There are about 2,240 housing units in the pipeline with 300 units considered affordable at 80% of the Area Median Income.
- **Housing Market:** Meanwhile Lancaster City home prices, while lower than the rest of the county, are rapidly increasing. There was a 15% increase in median home value from 2020 to 2021.
- **Neighborhood Change:** Looking at data from 2000 to 2019, the Northeast quadrant of the city was most at risk for “neighborhood change” or gentrification. However, recently the greatest # of building permits have been issued in the city’s Southwest.
- **Strengthening our competitive advantages as the nature of work changes:** including using our high quality of life and proximity to regional economic centers to attract remote workers
- **Expanding transportation options:** while creating safe walkable environments
- **Addressing complex, evolving challenges:** such as climate change, mental and physical health, inequity, and age-friendly planning.

The city will continue its policy development this spring before ultimately presenting a draft of the new Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission with a goal of having a final plan adopted by the Lancaster City Council this summer. The final plan will also include a Future Land Use Map.

## Policy Implications & Next Steps:

Our presenters shared a few policy directions that are rising to the forefront as the plan takes shape. Those include:

- **The Conestoga River as a hidden asset:** the city sees opportunities to increase recreation, environmental and community health, and economic development on the riverfront
- **The development of the city’s commercial gateways:** particularly at the Train Station and Engleside areas
- **The design and integration of key infill areas:** such as the current County Prison site on E. King Street and the Northwest Gateway

*To watch the forum on the City’s Comprehensive Plan, or view their powerpoint slides, please visit [HourglassLancaster.org/resources/first-Friday-forums](https://HourglassLancaster.org/resources/first-Friday-forums). For additional information on the City’s Comprehensive Plan, including access to an engagement report and the Lancaster Today report, please visit [ourfuturelancaster.com](https://ourfuturelancaster.com).*



## Highlights From Recent First Friday Forums

September 9, 2022

### *Building a 21st Century Library*



***In addition to our First Friday Forums on Lancaster's Community Health Needs and Lancaster City's comprehensive plan, detailed in the previous pages, other recent forums include:***

***Presenters: Lissa Holland, Executive Director, and Aaron Sherman, Board President, Lancaster Public Library***

Hourglass members got a hard hat tour of the new Lancaster Public Library slated to open in Ewell Plaza in downtown Lancaster later this spring. The new location is made possible by a \$10 million campaign to fund the construction and establish an endowment for library programs & services. The new library will be fully ADA accessible, will house both a Children's and Teen section, and will include study rooms, outside lockers for picking up books after hours, community rooms with state-of-the-art AV equipment, an outdoor terrace, stroller parking and more.

October 7, 2022

### *Lancaster's Treatment Courts*



***Presenter: President Judge David Ashworth***

As our community progresses on building a new county jail we heard from President Judge Ashworth about Lancaster's three treatment courts: Adult Drug Court, Mental Health Court, and Veteran's Court. Treatment Courts identify non-violent offenders and place them under ongoing judicial monitoring coupled with long-term treatment services such as substance abuse and mental health treatment, drug testing, trauma/PTSD and family therapy, and job skills training. Since 2006, Lancaster's drug court alone has had 238 graduates, 68 healthy babies born, and has recovered \$168,000 in restitution. Treatment courts are voluntary programs. While incarceration can cost \$40,000/year, treatment courts cost around \$3-5,000.



Watch previous forum recordings at **HourglassLancaster.org** or on our Youtube channel. To receive invitations to all of our events become an Hourglass member at **HourglassLancaster.org/membership**.

***Presenter: Mark Platts, President***

Lancaster and York counties were designated as the Susquehanna National Heritage Area, America's 55th National Heritage Area, in 2019. Heritage areas enhance a region's "sense of place" and strengthen regional economies. The SHNA will develop a new visitor center, known as the Susquehanna Discovery Center, on the historic 90-acre Mifflin House and Farm (pictured) just outside of Wrightsville in York County. The site will include trails, an Underground Railroad Learning Center, river lookouts, special exhibits and meeting space. The SNHA sees 10+ million visitors each year. According to Platts, if 5% of those visitors spend one more day experiencing the river it would generate \$100 million in added economic impact annually.

***Panelists: Lancaster County Commissioners Ray D'Agostino, Josh Parsons and John Trescott***

The Lancaster County Commissioners joined Hourglass for our annual "Ask the Commissioners" forum. Each commissioner shared reflections on their greatest accomplishments from 2022 and what keeps them up at night as we transition into a new year. They also shared information about the county's remaining American Rescue Plan Act funds, the approach to the new Lancaster County Correctional Facility, changes to recruit and retain county employees, and about the county's homelessness coalition moving from Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health to the Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority. The commissioners also took audience questions on topics ranging from the county's role in immigration to climate change.

*Thank you to our First Friday Forum sponsor:*

**Rodgers & Associates**  
WEALTH ADVISERS

November 4, 2022

***Susquehanna National Heritage Area***



January 6, 2023

***Ask the Commissioners***





## Celebrating 25 Years

This fall Hourglass celebrated our 25th anniversary. Hourglass was formed in 1997 by a group of engaged citizens who were concerned about Lancaster County's future. They wanted to look holistically at Lancaster, across broad fields of interest and municipal boundaries—to ensure the greatest quality of life for our community far into the future.

**This important milestone was recognized by a citation from the Senate of Pennsylvania.**

Thank you to all who have contributed to our rich history. You'll find a special publication about our 25 years of history, ranging from our early Quality of Life surveys and juvenile justice work to forums with names like Thomas Friedman, at [HourglassLancaster.org/Anniversary](https://HourglassLancaster.org/Anniversary).





## Lancaster In One Room

Hourglass is thrilled to announce that we've been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Lancaster County Community Foundation's Bridge Builders Program to host a "deliberative mini-public" in 2023. The project, in partnership with Franklin & Marshall College, will bring a randomly selected, representative group of Lancaster County residents together to deliberate solutions to some of the most pressing issues facing our community. We look forward to keeping you updated on this work as it progresses later this year.



## Save the Date: Community Forum, April 12

Please mark your calendars to join us on the evening of April 12 at the Ware Center for our annual community forum. Our speaker will be Chuck Marohn, founder and president of Strong Towns. He will be speaking about how we can make every town in Lancaster County safe, livable and financially resilient. Marohn is the author of *Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity*, and *Confessions of a Recovering Engineer: Transportation for a Strong Town*. Planetizen named him one of the 10 Most Influential Urbanists of all time.





922 N Queen St.  
Lancaster, PA 17603



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