



## June 1, 2018 FFNF Highlights

### CITY OF LANCASTER PA

Danene Sorace, Mayor

The first 10% of the newly elected mayor's term is now gone - The honeymoon phase is over!

Mayor Sorace has 4 priorities: Strong Neighborhoods, Safety, Security, and Strong Government

#### **Strong neighborhoods equal strong cities.**

- The focus is on problem solving. Lancaster has a strong downtown; now the attention must be turned to neighborhoods, which requires team work. The administration has strong partners on their team such as SoWe, Lancaster City Alliance, LHOP, Neighbors United, Lancaster Jewels, SACA, Southeast Concerned Neighbors.
- Milzy Corasco is the new Director of Neighborhood Engagement. She will serve as a conduit to city resources that can be brought to bear on some of the neighborhood problems. This position will enable the city to do a better job of connecting all city services to city neighborhoods.
- The housing situation must be addressed; people are living with situations such as improper sanitation. Consequently, the city is looking at some of the more problematic landlords. Ordinances are being reviewed and updated such as looking at changing the frequency of how and when systematic inspections are done, as well as creating an outward-focused data base for renters. The city is looking into using the City's Land Bank for residential properties. \$1M will soon be available in the Land Bank. The city will seek to work with partners Tech Centro, SACA, HDC, etc.

#### **Safe Streets: People, bikes, and cars (in that order).**

- The city has a "Complete Streets" policy, e.g. Mulberry Street, and soon Charlotte Street. The challenge is speeding. Pennsylvania is the only state in the country which does not allow police departments to utilize radar. Current legislation is now pending in the State House. The Bill includes a 10 mph cushion.
- The city is planning a pedestrian safety campaign, and has identified 6 areas in the city where pedestrian accidents occur. In Lancaster County there are about 600 pedestrian crashes annually and the majority happens in the City of Lancaster. Better ways to educate pedestrians, drivers and cyclists on safety must be found.
- The City is finalizing an active transportation plan which is a joint project with the Lancaster County Planning Commission. It will look at the city's bicycle network and how it connects out into the County.

#### **Secure Income which is sustainable, equitable and inclusive.**

- Poverty is not just a city issue, but a countywide issue. The Poverty Commission Report – One Good Job states that most poverty is seen in the area south of King Street. The unemployment rate in Lancaster County is 3.3%. There are about 6,000 to 10,000 job openings in the county every month. The goal is to move about 3,000

people out of poverty in Lancaster City.

- Regarding this issue, transportation has come up repeatedly. The Chamber of Commerce is beginning to have conversations with clusters of employers in the Denver/Ephrata area, but since most work there is shift work, transportation to these jobs is desperately needed. They are trying to determine if they can utilize retirement village vans, or church vans to provide transport for people coming out of Lancaster City as well as Reading. Higher education workforce development partners such as the Thaddeus Stevens College, Tech Centro must be engaged. The city needs to think of jobs for tomorrow, not just the immediate need.

#### **Sound Government: Responsible and Responsive**

- There is a bond issue in the works. The City's infrastructure is very antiquated and improvements are sorely needed. The City must prioritize improvements. The most expensive item is the Redundant Water Transmission Line which will cost about \$30 – \$40M. There is currently only one water line bringing water into the city to service the entire city.
- The city hired Scott Little as Chief of the Fire Department. The new Chief of Police is Jarrad Berkhiser who has 25 years of service on the Lancaster City Police force.
- A new strategic plan should be completed soon. The city is rebooting all website and social media. Residents will have more access to city council through "See Through City".
- The city's Economic Development Plan is going very well. Conestoga Plaza on South Duke Street is coming to completion. SACA has secured funding to begin to build 10 of 20 new townhouses on Chesapeake Street behind Fulton Bank on South Duke Street. Other projects: Southern Market Proposals are due June 1<sup>st</sup> at noon, Fulton Theater construction, and the U-shaped area at Lancaster Square, the last piece is the parking area location.
- "Artful intersections" could be created to remind people who are wearing ear buds and playing with their devices, that they are entering a street crossing.
- It costs \$250K to build new housing through SACA; the units will be sold for \$125K. A challenge the city faces is how to create efficiency units with a bathroom/kitchen and shared bedroom and living area in the range of \$400-500 per month. The people who require most services have the least resources. Being poor is expensive! The county needs to have a conversation about county-wide affordable housing.
- Sunnyside peninsula: Community Basics and the City entered into a developer's agreement 8 years ago. They are within 60 days from getting tentative approval of the plan (by August). Community Basics will move to secure financing for the infrastructure. It will be a 300 unit development of urban density with green space.
- An investment by the business community to assist with affordable housing is greatly needed.