

# **Carlisle**

# **Comprehensive**

# **Plan**

## **An Overall Plan for the Development and Preservation of the Borough of Carlisle**

This Plan was Prepared Under the Direction of the Carlisle  
Planning Commission and  
Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

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# CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION .....	1
What is the Comprehensive Plan? .....	1
Regional Location .....	1
How This Plan Was Developed .....	2
Carlisle’s Rich Heritage .....	3
Relationships Between the Components of this Plan .....	5
GOALS: THE MAJOR DIRECTION OF THE PLAN .....	6
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	
Land Use and Housing Plan .....	9
Historic Preservation Plan .....	26
Downtown Plan .....	33
Transportation Plan .....	46
Community Facilities and Services Plan .....	52
Natural Features Plan .....	54
PUTTING THIS PLAN INTO ACTION .....	57
Action Program .....	69
APPENDICES: A Summary of Major Background Study Findings .....	A-1

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **What is the Comprehensive Plan?**

This Comprehensive Plan is intended to establish overall policies for the development and preservation of Carlisle over the next 15 years. This Plan is not by itself a regulation, but is intended to provide the policy direction for changes to the Borough's development regulations.

The Comprehensive Plan includes the following major parts:

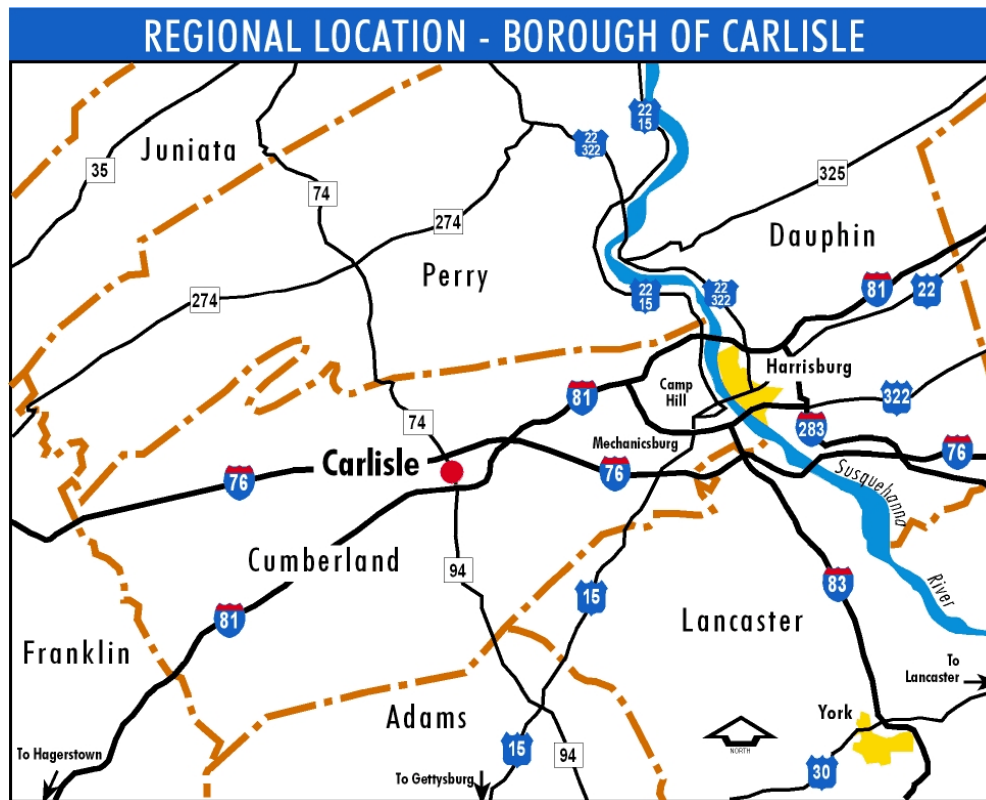
- The Goals of the Plan
- The Land Use and Housing Plan
- The Historic Preservation Plan
- The Downtown Plan
- The Community Facilities and Services Plan
- The Transportation Plan
- The Natural Features Plan
- Putting this Plan into Action

### **Regional Location**

Carlisle comprises 5.5 square miles in the center of the fertile Cumberland Valley in south-central Pennsylvania. The Cumberland Valley has a scenic setting with the Blue Mountains to the north and the South Mountains to the south.

Carlisle has excellent access to expressways - the east-west Pennsylvania Turnpike and Interstate 81, which basically traverses southwest to northeast. A system of other roads, such as U.S. Route 11, Pa. Route 34 and Pa. Route 641 connect Carlisle to other areas of the County. Historically, most major roads in the central part of the County intersected in Carlisle.

The center of Harrisburg is approximately 20 miles to the east. The outer suburbs of Harrisburg on the West Shore of the Susquehanna River begin approximately eight miles east of Carlisle. Other nearby areas include Chambersburg (31 miles), Hershey (38 miles), Gettysburg (27 miles), and York (39 miles). The outer suburbs of Philadelphia are approximately 110 miles to the east, while Baltimore is approximately 80 miles to the south.



### **How this Plan Was Developed**

This Plan was developed under the direction of the Carlisle Planning Commission in conjunction with a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee appointed by Borough Council. This Steering Committee included representatives of Borough Council, Borough staff-persons and representatives of a variety of organizations and perspectives in Carlisle. Urban Research & Development Corporation was selected through a competitive process to assist the Committee.

Extensive field work was then conducted. Interviews were held with a number of key persons, including staff of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and Borough department heads. Discussions were held with staff of the adjacent municipalities. Mapping was completed of existing conditions such as existing land uses and natural features.

The Steering Committee held special meetings to develop a Vision Statement for this Plan. A set of goals were then prepared to provide overall direction for the Plan. Input was provided by persons concerned with preserving the Letort Spring Run, property-owners and residents. Great attention was focused on the proposed Future Land Use Plan Map, which is intended to be the basis of a revised zoning ordinance. The draft Plan was then prepared, and revised.

A public meeting was then held by the Planning Commission, and a review was completed by the County Planning Commission. The Comprehensive Plan continued to evolve through public input. The Plan was then carefully reviewed by Borough Council, which held a public hearing and then adopted the Plan.

## **Carlisle's Rich Heritage**

In the 1720s, James Letort became the first European settler to establish a trading post in the area. The town of Carlisle was laid out as the Cumberland County seat in 1751. The early settlers were Scottish-Irish immigrants. During its earliest period, Carlisle was situated near major Indian hunting grounds and trails. The name "Carlisle" was selected after its namesake, the county seat of Cumberland County in England. In the French and Indian War, British troops regularly passed through Carlisle. Throughout the 1700s, Carlisle was an important staging area for settlers moving west into the Ohio Valley. Carlisle was officially incorporated in 1782. By 1790, Cumberland County had reached a population of over 18,000 persons.

The first grammar school was established in Carlisle in 1773 on land donated by the Penn family. However, classes had to be suspended when the first school master went off to serve at Valley Forge.

During the Revolutionary War, Carlisle provided an unusual number of high ranking officers for the Continental Army, as well as foundries that produced cannons. President Washington visited Carlisle in 1794 to review troops gathered here from three states to quell the Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania. In 1798, President Washington created the nation's first military school, the Carlisle Barracks. It is one of the oldest Army Post in the country.

The Carlisle Gazette in 1785 became the first newspaper printed west of the Susquehanna River. Carlisle was an educational center as early as 1783, when Dickinson College was established with the support of Pennsylvania Governor John Dickinson. The college's first permanent building, Old West, was completed in 1804. It was designed by Benjamin Latrobe, the main architect of the U.S. Capitol.

The Dickinson School of Law (now part of Pennsylvania State University) was founded in 1834 as part of Dickinson College, and became independent in 1890. It is the fifth oldest law school in the nation.

In 1836, Carlisle's school system was organized, including the first public high school in Pennsylvania. In 1879, at the Carlisle Barracks, the Army established the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, which was the period's most significant effort to educate Native Americans. Its most famous graduate was Jim Thorpe, the great Olympic athlete. In 1837, the Cumberland Valley Railroad was built, with tracks built down the center of High Street.

Before the Battle of Gettysburg, in 1863, Confederate forces briefly occupied Carlisle. The Old Courthouse still shows scars from cannonballs.

Many prominent Americans were from Carlisle, including James Wilson, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Marianne Moore the poet, and Mary Hayes who became famous as Molly Pitcher at the Battle of Monmouth during the Revolutionary War.

Carlisle grew as a major industrial center in the early 1900s, including the manufacture of tires and carpeting. Later industries included electronics products and roofing materials. The Army War College moved to Carlisle from Washington in 1951.

Annexation Map

Carlisle has seen many changes, including the removal of railroad tracks that passed in the middle of High Street through the center of town. Trolleys were extended to Carlisle in the early 1900s and then removed in the 1950s. In 1940, the Pennsylvania Turnpike was completed from Western Pennsylvania to Carlisle. In the early 1950s, it was extended to New Jersey. The completion of I-81 around Carlisle in the 1960s helped to shape development in the area, and caused an increase in trucking activities. In the early 1950s, the old market house built in the 1870s in the center of town was replaced by the new Courthouse.

Cumberland County and Carlisle continued to grow through the 1900s. By 1960, Cumberland County had reached a population of almost 125,000, while Carlisle included almost 17,000 persons.

As seen on the Annexations Map, Carlisle continually grew up to 1968 by annexations. In 1968, the State law changed, making annexations much more difficult.

In 2001, Carlisle celebrated the 250th Anniversary of its founding, one year after Cumberland County's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### **Relationships Between the Components of this Plan**

The various components of this Plan have been inter-related with each other. The policies are based upon extensive study of existing conditions and trends. The goals and objectives provide overall policy direction. The recommendations were developed to carry out the goals. The natural features, existing land uses and street patterns were used to help determine areas that were physically suited for different types of development. Compatibility between various land uses is emphasized. The impacts of future land uses on community facilities and transportation needs have been considered. The importance of encouraging economic growth is addressed throughout this Plan, as well as efforts to minimize local government expenses. The Action Program section describes how the recommendations of this Plan should be carried out.

The timing of development is not a critical issue in Carlisle because most of the Borough is already developed. Instead, this Plan emphasizes what would be the most appropriate development or redevelopment of an area - whenever it would occur.

**GOALS: THE MAJOR DIRECTION OF THE PLAN**

The following goals provide overall direction for the Comprehensive Plan.

Vision Statement

The following vision statement was developed by the members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and Planning Commission.

Carlisle: a premier town with a strong sense of community identity and an excellent quality of life, which makes it a superb place to live, learn, work, visit, shop and play.

- A Balanced Community: A small town in spirit and a small city in amenities. The historic and quaint charm of the past centuries, evolving to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Preserving our natural resources while promoting smart growth.
- Forward looking and responsible in community and economic development.
- A caring and engaged community, with unity in diversity.

Overall Mission Statement

*The citizens of Carlisle will continually strive to make Carlisle an even greater place in which to live, work, learn and play. These efforts will emphasize an active downtown, strong neighborhoods, an attractive living environment, preservation of historic buildings, economic growth, high-quality life-long education, a strong sense of community, citizen involvement, regional cooperation, abundant recreation, preserved natural areas, and the celebration of the arts and culture.*

Land Uses and Housing

- Protect and enhance Carlisle’s quality of life as a traditional medium-sized town, with a well-balanced mix of uses.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly “human scale” development that is not overly dense and that includes substantial landscaping.
- Extend the best features of older development into newer development.
- Provide for compatible land use patterns that avoid conflicts between different uses.
- Strengthen the Downtown as the business, entertainment, cultural and civic center for the region.
- Strengthen residential neighborhoods, with an emphasis on encouraging home-ownership, rehabilitating older buildings, and avoiding incompatible development.
- Further enhance the diversity of Carlisle’s population, uniting persons of varying ages, incomes, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.
- Improve the visual attractiveness of Carlisle and the surrounding region, with an emphasis upon major entranceways that create a first impression upon visitors.

- Promote appropriate types of businesses in various areas of the Borough towards controlling truck traffic and minimizing impacts on residential communities.

### Economic Development

- Stress a strong diversified economy that generates stability, sufficient tax revenues and wide employment opportunities.
- Make sure that residents have the practical job skills needed by employers - to help individuals advance and to attract and retain businesses.
- Work to take full advantage of the Army War College, Dickinson College, Dickinson School of Law of the Pennsylvania State University, the Carlisle Area School District and the many other strong institutions in the region.
- Emphasize tourism that is built upon the area's heritage, arts and culture, and recreational assets.
- Encourage redevelopment of existing buildings and properties to take advantage of the increasing growth in technology-related fields.

### Historic Preservation

- Encourage appropriate reuse and historic rehabilitation of older buildings, as well as encouraging new construction that is consistent with historic surroundings.

### Community Facilities and Services

- Provide high-quality community facilities and services in the most cost-efficient manner.
- Provide high-quality municipal facilities, including a renovated community center and improved police facilities.

### Transportation

- Work with PennDOT and adjacent municipalities to make cost-effective improvements to the region's street and highway system - to minimize congestion and improve safety.
- Seek to reduce the amount of truck traffic that passes through the Downtown.
- Promote increased use of public transit, bicycling, walking and carpooling.
- Seek commuter rail service from Carlisle to Center City Harrisburg and other destinations in the region.

### Natural Features

- Protect important natural features, with a special emphasis upon the Letort Spring Run and mature trees.

### Putting this Plan Into Action

- Continually work to put this Plan into action - through a program of updated planning and many short-term actions within a long-range perspective.

- Promote substantial citizen input, including making sure residents are well-informed about community issues and encouraging volunteer efforts to improve the community.
- Provide a leadership role in bringing together governments, groups and interested persons to cooperate on key regional issues.
- Maximize communications, coordination and cooperative efforts between Carlisle, the School District, adjacent townships, the County and other agencies and organizations.

**THE  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

## LAND USE AND HOUSING PLAN

The Land Use and Housing Plan recommends policies concerning residential, business and institutional development and redevelopment. An overriding goal is to minimize conflicts between different land uses - especially conflicts with homes. At the same time, to strengthen Carlisle's economy and the areas's employment choices, we need to spur business investment in appropriate areas. Additional business development will also encourage residents in the region to buy goods and services from local merchants, allowing those dollars to then re-circulate through the local economy.

This section of the Plan is intended to serve the following major goals:

- *Protect and enhance Carlisle's quality of life as a traditional medium-sized town, with a well-balanced mix of uses.*
- *Promote pedestrian-friendly "human scale" development that is not overly dense and that includes substantial landscaping.*
- *Extend the best features of older development into newer development.*
- *Provide for compatible land use patterns that avoid conflicts between different uses.*
- *Strengthen the Downtown as the business, entertainment, cultural and civic center for the region.*
- *Strengthen residential neighborhoods, with an emphasis on encouraging home-ownership, rehabilitating older buildings, and avoiding incompatible development.*
- *Further enhance the diversity of Carlisle's population, uniting persons of varying ages, incomes, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.*
- *Improve the visual attractiveness of Carlisle and the surrounding region, with an emphasis upon major entranceways that create a first impression upon visitors.*
- *Promote appropriate types of businesses in various areas of the Borough towards controlling truck traffic and minimizing impacts on residential communities.*

### LAND USE PLAN CATEGORIES

This section recommends a set of Future Land Use categories for the Comprehensive Plan. Most of these categories are intended to relate to zoning districts. These land use categories are shown on a draft Future Land Use Plan Map on the following page. The Future Land Use Plan builds upon the Existing Land Uses, which is also mapped in this report.

Because most of Carlisle is already developed, the Land Use Plan does not recommend revolutionary changes from the land use policies that already exist. This Plan concentrates its attention on those portions of the Borough that are most subject to change - where there is potential for new development or redevelopment. One goal is to separate areas of the Borough that should be preserved the way they are, versus other areas of the Borough where the Borough would be willing to accept or encourage major changes.

**Existing Land Uses Map and**

**Land Use Plan Map**

**In a Folder**

**Major Buffers** - The Land Use Plan uses a tree-pattern to highlight certain locations where major buffers of landscaped green space should be provided. Examples include between the proposed light industrial areas and the Valley Meadows housing development south of the Ritner Highway and between the Carlisle Fairgrounds and the homes to the west. A heavily landscaped buffer area should also be provided between new houses and the Turnpike. In addition, a heavily landscaped buffer area should be provided between the Chesterfield and Highlands residential developments in Carlisle and any new business development in adjacent areas of North Middleton Township.

**Parks and Open Space** - This category mainly includes existing Borough parks. This category also includes the proposed 200 feet wide linear park between Valley Meadows and Nottingham and the proposed industrial development in adjacent parts of South Middleton (the “Royer” tract). The developer of the industrial buildings agreed to dedicate this linear park and build a landscaped earth berm within it.

- This category also includes the preservation of a green corridor along the length of the Letort Spring Run and part of the Molly Grub. The intent is to maintain natural vegetation along these streams to help filter pollutants from stormwater runoff before they enter the stream. This natural vegetation is also important to maintain the proper temperatures and ecology for high-quality fishing habitats. This green corridor can be maintained in public, semi-public or private ownership. However, new or expanded buildings, paving, stone surfaces and outdoor storage should not be allowed to intrude into this stream corridor. The Borough zoning ordinance currently requires 75 feet setbacks from the bank of the Letort Spring Run. State funding should be sought to make additional improvements to return the stream corridor to its natural state and to make improvements to avoid erosion.
- The former Thornwald Mansion is in the middle of Thornwald Park. This large historic building has been vacant for years and needs extensive rehabilitation. Provisions in the zoning ordinance should allow the use of an existing major building within the Open Space zoning district for a limited range of uses, such as a hotel or senior housing, with approval by the Zoning Hearing Board. This would allow reuse of the existing building, without opening the door to a wide range of uses that may not be appropriate in the middle of a major park.

**Major Trails** - The Land Use Plan recommends recreation trails along the linear park in the West End, as well as a trail connecting Dickinson Park with Valley Meadows Park. The Land Use Plan shows proposed connections to this trail through the Dickinson Greene development to the east, and westward along Route 11. This trail could then eventually connect via an unused railroad right-of-way with the existing Cumberland Valley “rails-to-trails” line that exists in the Shippensburg area.

- In addition, the completion of a trail along the Letort Spring Run is endorsed, which connects to a “rails-to-trails” line to Mount Holly Springs and the Appalachian Trail.
- A recreation pathway (such as a asphalt bike trail along the road) should also be sought connecting the Army Heritage Center in Middlesex to Carlisle).
- The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has also recommended improving the shoulders of Waggoner’s Gap Road northwest of Carlisle, Route 34 south of Carlisle and Route 641 east of Carlisle to provide safer bicycle and pedestrian access in the region.

**Major Community Facilities/Institutional** - This category includes areas that are currently zoned “Institutional.” The Institutional district mainly includes buildings that are occupied by Dickinson College and Dickinson Law School for educational purposes.

- The main Carlisle Hospital building site should be changed from the Institutional zoning district to the Traditional Neighborhood zoning district. The intent is to demolish the existing main hospital building and replace it with new housing.
- In addition, this land use category shows the locations of major community facilities, such as the larger places of worship (such as churches), fire stations, public schools and other public buildings. In most cases, these scattered community facilities are proposed to remain within a residential district, where these uses would continue to be allowed.
- A major renovation is needed of the Carlisle Community Center, which occupies a former school.
- New facilities are needed for the Police Department, which currently operates from cramped facilities in the basement of Borough Hall.

**Low Density Residential (R-1 Zoning)** - These areas are mainly intended to continue to provide for single family detached houses on approximately 1/4 acre (10,000 square feet) lots. Most of these areas are already zoned R-1.

- An existing undeveloped R-1 zone exists south of the Turnpike west of the Wilson Middle School and east of Meeting House Road. In this area, cluster single family development is encouraged. This could, for example, allow the reduction in the minimum lot size from 10,000 to 8,000 square feet if a minimum of 20 percent of the land area was permanently preserved in open space. This method is commonly known as “cluster housing” because it allows homes to be placed on the most suitable portions of the site on slightly smaller lots than would otherwise be required, while other portions of the tract are preserved. The goal is to have a heavily landscaped buffer between new homes and the Turnpike that will increase the desirability of this area for new housing.
- Likewise, an undeveloped R-1 zone exists adjacent to proposed industrial development in South Middleton. This tract is north of the Nottingham development and west of the Walnut Court development. Through the cluster option, it would be possible to provide a wider buffer between new homes and the future industrial development.
- One policy question is whether the Borough wishes to allow the possibility of moderate density townhouse development in these areas. If so, it would be possible to achieve much higher percentages of open space and much larger buffers - without increasing the total number of homes per acre. It also would be possible to require that only single family detached houses or open space be provided immediately adjacent to existing single family detached houses.

**Medium Density Residential (R-2 zoning)** - This category is mainly intended to primarily provide for single family detached houses, side-by-side twin houses, townhouses and apartments at a density of 5 to 10 homes per acre. A question is whether new apartment developments should continue to be allowed.

- Currently, in R-2 districts, a developer can usually build almost twice as many apartments or townhouses on an area of land as single family detached houses. The minimum lot size for single family detached houses should be reduced from 7,200 to 5,500 square feet so there is a less of a disincentive to build detached houses. For this reason, it would also be desirable to reduce the side

- yard setbacks for detached houses from 10 feet to 8 feet. These changes would also reduce the number of nonconforming existing lots and make it easier for residents to expand existing houses.
- The Land Use Plan Map recommends that several existing undeveloped High Density Residential areas be changed to Medium Density Residential. This is to carry out our goals of maintaining a moderate density that is consistent with existing older neighborhoods and seeking to increase the rate of homeownership in Carlisle.
  - There is an undeveloped area east of Frog Switch, north of E. High Street, south of the railroad tracks, west of the Army War College Golf Course and along the North Middleton border. This land is currently zoned Heavy Industrial in Carlisle, but is zoned Low Density Residential in North Middleton. This Plan recommends changing the land immediately east of Spruce Street along the North Middleton border to Medium Density Residential.
  - There is industrially-zoned land east of the Letort Spring Run and north of the Biddle Mission Park (which is along the north side of E. North Street). This land should be rezoned Medium Density Residential.

**High Density Residential (R-3 zoning)** - These areas are intended to provide opportunities for a full range of housing at a density of 6 to 14 homes per acre. Most of these areas are already occupied by existing apartment developments.

- To avoid discouraging single family detached housing as opposed to other types of housing, this Plan recommends reducing the minimum lot size for singles from 6,000 to 4,000 square feet, and the minimum side yards from 10 feet each to 6 feet each. Otherwise, developers may find they can achieve a much higher density by building attached housing.

**Town Center Residential (R-4 zoning)** - These areas mainly include older neighborhoods that have a mix of housing types, including many rowhouse neighborhoods. The goal is to maintain the character of these areas, which is helped by the fact that many of these areas are protected by the Borough's Historic District Ordinance. Intrusions of new non-residential development into stable residential neighborhoods should be avoided, particularly if they will involve large-scale demolition.

- These areas already include a number of corner stores and shops that are important to provide everyday needs of residents without having to drive. This Plan recommends that these commercial sites continue to be allowed through the nonconforming use process. If a major change is proposed in the type of use, then a special exception hearing and approval should continue to be required before the Zoning Hearing Board, where the neighbors can comment. This process allows the Board to place reasonable conditions upon a use. However, if there is a minor change from one retail store to another retail store that is similar in nature, without any longer hours of business, then Zoning Hearing Board approval should not be required.

**Traditional Residential (proposed new R-5 zoning)** - This category is proposed to encourage the redevelopment of the site of the main Carlisle Hospital buildings for new housing that will be consistent with the surrounding Mooreland neighborhood. It also would enhance the character of existing older neighborhoods, by making sure that any new "infill" development is compatible with adjacent homes. For example, front porches, street trees and landscaped front yards should be required. Parking and garages should be accessed from rear alleys. If an alley cannot be provided, then a narrow driveway should pass along the side of a home front the street to a rear garage. These areas should mainly provide for single family detached houses with minimum lot sizes of approximately 7,000 square feet.

Where most of the buildings on a block have the same setback, any new building should be required to have a similar setback. In other cases, approximately 25 feet front yards should be provided, which could be partly occupied by front porches.

Non-residential uses should be limited to only a few types, such as places of worship. Most of these uses (such as a bed and breakfast inn) should only be allowed in sensitively restored historic buildings. This will help to create a strong market to pay to proper historic rehabilitation.

Similarly, this zoning district should be used to protect the historic character of the entryway into Carlisle along N. Hanover Street north of the railroad. It also should be used where there are concentrations of historically significant architecture in residential districts that are not protected by the Borough's Historic District Ordinance. These areas include parts of South Hanover Street and an area along E. Ridge St. west of the Letort Spring Run and north of Lamberton School.

**Central Business (C-1 zoning)** - The downtown should continue to provide for a balanced mix of residential, retail, service, restaurant, governmental, office, institutional and other compatible uses. The goal is to maintain a historic pedestrian-orientation. Commercial uses that are most likely to spur demolition should continue to be prohibited, such as drive-through restaurants, gas stations, auto sales and auto repair.

**Shopping Center Commercial (C-2 zoning)** - This category includes the Carlisle Plaza Mall and MJ Carlisle Mall. Despite their locations along I-81, both of these shopping center sites are underutilized. A large part of the MJ Mall is being redeveloped, including a new Walmart. The goal is to encourage intensified reuse or redevelopment of these sites, mainly for commercial development. The emphasis should be upon making sure that traffic access from the site is properly managed, and that traffic access within the site is well thought-out, particularly to minimize conflicts between motorists and pedestrians.

**General Commercial (C-3 zoning)** - This category mainly applies to highway-oriented commercial areas, where a wide range of commercial uses would be appropriate. This should include provisions for heavier commercial uses, such as gas stations and auto repair. In most cases, these areas are not immediately adjacent to historic residential neighborhoods.

**Neighborhood Commercial (C-4 zoning)** - This category mainly includes commercial areas that are closer to residential neighborhoods and historic areas. These areas should provide for most types of commercial uses, but not the heaviest uses such as gas stations and auto repair.

**Entryway Business (C-5 zoning)** - With the opening of the Army Heritage Museum, Army Heritage Drive (formerly Claremont Road) and E. North Street have the potential of becoming a major link for tourists to the Downtown. This new zoning district is intended to help serve the needs of visitors, while improving the attractiveness of this entryway into the Borough. This area is intended to provide for a mix of commercial (including retail and restaurants), office and light industrial uses (such as assembly, printing and publishing). Most of this land is currently zoned Industrial.

- A well-landscaped area should be required adjacent to public streets. An emphasis should be placed upon making sure that any outdoor industrial storage and activities are well-screened by landscaping from Army Heritage Drive.

- This category would also include the Minerva Mills and old Ribbon Mill at Spring Garden and E. Louthier Streets. An option could allow the conversion of existing buildings into apartments (such as the Ribbon Mill) if they are immediately adjacent to a residential zoning district.

**Office/Residential (OR zoning)** - This zoning district was created to address a difficult situation where existing homes along the west side of Allen Road north of the Ritner Highway where across the street from new industrial development. The current zoning allows the conversion of the existing homes into small offices. This could be expanded to allow additional commercial uses - provided that a developer purchased 3 or more adjacent lots, merged them together and provided coordinated traffic access. This is to avoid a situation where each lot has an intense commercial use with its own driveway onto Allen Road.

**General Industrial (I-1 zoning)** - This category is intended to provide opportunities for a wide range of industrial uses, such as manufacturing, offices and warehousing. The heavier industrial uses should need Zoning Hearing Board approval and large setbacks. Under Pennsylvania law, every municipality must provide opportunities for every land use, unless that municipality can prove that there are absolutely no sites within its borders that could be suitable for the use. This requirement will mainly be met in this area.

**Light Industrial (I-2 zoning)** - This Plan recommends an overall goal of encouraging business development in the West End of Carlisle in an attractive campus-style type of development. This should include a mix of light industrial and office park development, with limited commercial development that is designed to primarily serve employees. The emphasis should be upon extensive landscaping and green space, particularly highly visible green space along main roads.

- New development that is most likely to generate high volumes of tractor-trailer truck traffic should be avoided, particularly in areas south of Ritner Highway. Large warehouse/distribution uses and truck terminals should be limited to the General Industrial zoning district. Great attention is needed to ensure compatibility between business and residential areas, including setbacks and landscaped earth berms.
- One objective is to establish a high-quality environment that will help attract new employers to the area. Many businesses with on-site sales activities want an attractive setting, and want to know that if they invest in a quality building, the next lot will not be occupied by an unattractive use.
- Because municipalities cannot control architecture of industrial buildings, landscaping becomes the most important standard to impact the appearance of development. Shade trees should be required along streets and within parking lots. In addition, at least 30 feet of the front yards along streets should be required to be maintained in landscaped green space. This typically allows some parking in front of buildings, but discourages overly prominent parking in the fronts of buildings.
- Truck parking and truck loading docks should be screened by landscaping from view from streets. This helps to encourage the placement of loading docks and truck parking to the rears of lots.
- Subdividers should be encouraged to place deed restrictions upon each lot in their subdivision. For example, a minimum of 50 percent of the front building face should be glass or masonry. This allows metal buildings - as long as the front has the appearance of brick or decorative block. The sides and rears of buildings can be metal or cinderblock.
- Most new commercial development should be directed to the Downtown and existing commercial areas of the Borough. However, a certain amount of commercial development is beneficial within

or next to an industrial/office development to avoid the need for employees to travel long distances for lunch and daily necessities. Having some commercial businesses nearby can actually minimize the amount of traffic. Some commercial uses can also be complementary to businesses, such as exercise clubs and hotels.

- Driveways of uses should first enter onto an internal road, before the traffic enters onto a main road. The internal road should be coordinated among adjacent tracts and should enter a main road at a carefully chosen location, preferably with a traffic signal. This matter is typically controlled by requiring a minimum tract size for a development, as opposed to having each individual lot subdivided one-at-a-time in a piecemeal fashion.

**Urban Industrial** (proposed new I-3 zoning) - This new district is proposed to address smaller industrial sites that are surrounded by homes. The goal is to make sure that any new uses of these buildings do not cause significant nuisances or hazards for the surrounding residents.

- These areas should provide for a range of light industrial uses, but with special exception approval required from the Zoning Hearing Board. This special exception approval will still allow industrial uses, but will provide for careful review of potential nuisances (such as noise and late night operations) and hazards (particularly from hazardous substances). This district could also include smaller setbacks between businesses and higher lot coverages than are proposed in the Light Industrial district.

**Light Industrial/Commercial** (I/C zoning) - This existing zoning district would continue to apply to land along Carlisle's western border south of the Ritner Highway and west of Allen Road/Route 465. This area is intended to provide for the type of development described in the Light Industrial district. In addition, these areas should provide for limited types of commercial development that are mainly intended to serve motorists traveling along I-81 and employees of businesses in the West End. The goal is to avoid the need for nearby employees to have to travel long distances for a sandwich or everyday convenience items - which can help to reduce traffic congestion.

- A great amount of attention is needed to make sure that driveways enter onto an interior road system, as opposed to individual driveways entering directly onto Allen Road and the Ritner Highway. This "access management" is important to avoid traffic safety and congestion hazards. At best, a traffic signal would be located along Allen Road north of I-81 that could provide safe access to development on both sides of Allen Road.

**GOAL: Work to Extend the Best Features of Older Development Into Newer Development.**

This Plan strongly encourages forms of "traditional neighborhood development." This involves extending the best features of the older areas of the Borough into new neighborhoods. This concept also involves making sure that development or redevelopment of lots within older neighborhoods occurs in a way that fits within the "urban fabric." This concept is illustrated on the sketch on the following page. Traditional neighborhood development primarily involves the following:

- Street trees should be planted to eventually provide a canopy of shade over streets. Studies show that mature street trees can increase the value of homes up to 10 percent.

- Sidewalks should be provided. There should be an orientation to pedestrians, with an ability to walk or bicycle to stores, schools and parks.
- A modest density should be encouraged that is similar to the typical development that occurred during the 1930s through 1940s. This density (such as 5 to 8 homes per acre) will make best use of available land, while avoiding overly dense development and parking problems.
- Whenever practical, parking should be located to the rear or side of buildings, so that the front yard can be landscaped. At best, parking and garages would be placed to the rear of lots, with access using alleys. This design avoids conflicts between sidewalks and vehicles backing into the street, and allows the entire curbside to be available for on-street parking.
  - Care is needed to discourage new twin and townhouse development that has numerous driveways entering directly onto a street from the front. Garage doors should not be an overly prominent part of the views of housing from the front. Where garages and parking cannot be avoided in the front yard, larger lot widths should be required to make sure that there is green space in the front yard. Regulations are needed to make sure that the majority of the front yards of housing developments are not covered by paving.
  - Where garages cannot be accessed from alleys, narrow driveways should be encouraged along a side of a home to reach a garage back behind the home. In this way, driveways can widen out closer to the garage.
- Buildings should be placed relatively close to the street, with front porches, to encourage interaction among neighbors. If residents spend time on their front porch, they can help oversee the neighborhood and report suspicious activity to the police.

A density bonus should be provided if a development incorporates the features of a “Traditional Neighborhood,” particularly in the R-2 zoning district.

**Continue to Work With Adjacent Municipalities and PennDOT to Carry Out the Route 465/I-81 Land Use and Traffic Impact Study**

The “Exit 12 Study” is discussed in the Transportation Plan section.

**Emphasize Compatibility in Land Uses with Adjacent Municipalities.**

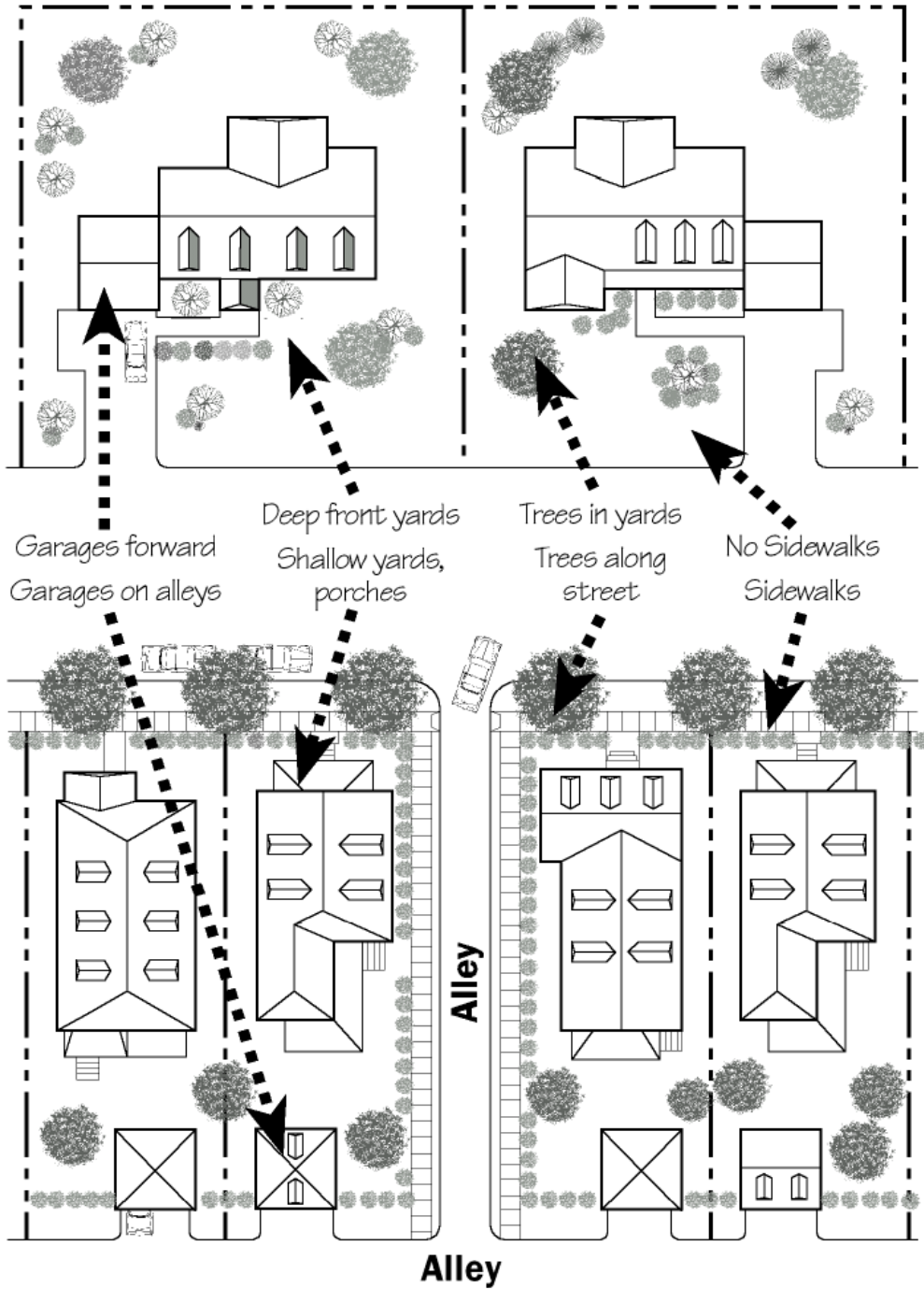
Development and traffic patterns and community facilities and services need to be coordinated across municipal borders. This Plan has been developed in coordination with the Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances of neighboring townships.

For the most part, the zoning and development policies of Carlisle and adjacent townships are compatible across their borders. Approximately half of the land immediately adjacent to Carlisle is already developed. Particular attention should be paid to the following areas along Carlisle’s borders:

- Where new warehousing and distribution development is planned in South Middleton west of the Nottingham development and south of Valley Meadows. Large setbacks, landscaped earth berms and a linear park are being planned to help provide an acceptable buffer in this area.

# Suburban vs. Neotraditional Design

## Suburban Design



## Neotraditional Design

- An area in North Middleton west of the Chesterfield and Meeting House Heights residential developments in Carlisle along Meeting House Springs Road and McClures Gap Road which is zoned for intense industrial development. Large setbacks and landscaped earth berms should be provided as a buffer. Carlisle should encourage North Middleton Township to only allow lower intensity business uses in areas close to the existing homes.

**Work to Coordinate Carlisle’s Policies with Policies of Cumberland County.**

The Cumberland County Planning Commission is charged with coordinating development, preservation and transportation policies across municipal borders throughout the County. The County is currently working through the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) Staff to develop a new County Comprehensive Plan.

**GOAL: Strengthen residential neighborhoods, with an emphasis on encouraging home-ownership, rehabilitating older buildings, and avoiding incompatible development.**

**Continually Work to Attract and Retain Middle-income Households in New Construction and Existing Homes.**

To maintain its economic health, the Borough needs to continually work to attract and retain middle-income households in new construction and existing homes. A single blighted property can severely discourage new investment on an entire block and can cause responsible residents to move out.

**Continually Work to Improve Existing Older Neighborhoods and Avoid Blight.**

Carlisle must continue to emphasize enforcement of the basic property maintenance codes to require property-owners to: a) properly maintain their buildings or b) sell the buildings to another party who will make the needed improvements. A single problem property can become a cancer in a neighborhood that discourages investment by neighbors and drives away prospective homebuyers.

The goal in code enforcement must be to intervene before buildings deteriorate to the point where it is no longer cost effective to repair them. If property-owners are forced to complete basic maintenance and repairs in a timely manner, severe deterioration can be avoided.

Carlisle works with the County Redevelopment Authority to maintain a Vacant Property Review system to address problem buildings. Properties that are vacant are reviewed by the Authority Staff and Planning Commission to determine whether they are blighted. If a property is blighted, the Planning Commission can authorize use of special condemnation powers granted by the State. The Authority then determines whether to make the property available for rehabilitation or to demolish it. Property-owners are given the option of consenting to a demolition. In that case, a lien is placed on the property to attempt to eventually recoup the costs of the demolition.

**Enhancement of Existing Rental Housing.**

Carlisle should attempt to achieve a workable program which will enhance the quality and code compliance of rental housing units.

**Continue to Emphasize Housing Rehabilitation.**

The County Redevelopment Authority's housing efforts primarily involve low-interest loans to rehabilitate homes owned by households with low or moderate incomes. Expanded marketing efforts are needed to make sure that eligible owners of properties in need of rehabilitation are aware of the financing programs that are available. Particular attention needs to be paid to low-income resident owners of property who need to make improvements to comply with Borough codes.

Buyers of older homes should be encouraged to take advantage of the Federal Housing Administration's 203(k) program. This allows a homebuyer to receive a single loan to purchase a home and to complete a major rehabilitation of it. The County Redevelopment Authority could provide assistance in completing some of the paperwork associated with the rehabilitation work.

Cooperative efforts are needed with the State Historical and Museum Commission to avoid delays and high administrative expenses when the Borough is seeking approval to use Federal funds to rehabilitate older buildings. Unfortunately, if the State review becomes too burdensome, there is an incentive to not improve the exterior of buildings. Exterior improvements are important to encourage neighboring owners to improve their properties. For historic tax credits for commercial properties, it may be advisable for the Borough to have a local review by a person with historic preservation credentials, which can avoid the need for certain types of State review.

**Continue to Carry Out the Hope Station Comprehensive Services Program.**

The Hope Station Program is a 10-year program to help improve physical, social and economic conditions in the Memorial Park area of Carlisle. This program builds upon the Pitt Street Pride Program, which increased homeownership and improved housing conditions in the area. The Memorial Park neighborhood of 4,700 residents has concerns with crime, low-incomes, insufficient job skills, underemployment and blight. The Hope Station Program is a comprehensive approach to neighborhood revitalization that is intended to:

- Improve housing opportunities,
- Enhance education levels and job readiness skills,
- Raise neighborhood pride, responsibility and volunteerism, and
- Provide job training and referral services.

The initial proposed activities include acquiring and rehabilitating 10 vacant homes on North Pitt Street and West North Street. A building at 60 West Penn Street was bought and renovated into a Computer Resource Center, which will be named Cyberspace. A neighborhood grocery store is also planned. The Program is being overseen by a Neighborhood Council and a neighborhood-based coordinator. The program is primarily being funded through donations from Allfirst Bank, which is receiving "Neighborhood Assistance Program" State income tax credits. These tax credits are intended to support revitalization and housing efforts of local non-profit organizations.

**Work to Combine Job Training Funding with Housing Rehabilitation Programs.**

The Federal Government has provided greater flexibility to use Federal job training dollars in ways that address local needs. Local non-profit housing organizations should work with job training agencies

to design programs to meet mutual needs. Residents can learn useful job skills, while the job training programs help provide funding for needed housing rehabilitation.

**Utilize Affordable Housing Tax Credits.**

In recent years, most subsidized housing across the nation has been built using Federal Affordable Housing Tax Credits. In many cases under this program, a local housing organization builds new apartments or rehabilitates an older building into apartments. The housing is limited to persons of moderate income, which includes much higher incomes than the “very low income” limits that applied in previous years to housing authority projects. The organization then obtains private investors for the project, who receive credits against their Federal income taxes.

**Work to Increase Home Ownership**

Carlisle needs to encourage types of housing that will encourage home ownership. This particularly includes singles, side-by-side twins and townhouses with each home on its own lot.

Many households could afford the monthly costs of owning a home, but do not have sufficient savings for the closing costs and downpayment.

These households need to be linked with available programs, and area financial institutions need to continue to participate. This type of assistance helps lenders meet their obligations under the Federal Community Reinvestment Act. Programs exist to spur homeownership through the County Redevelopment Authority, including a program that allows households to lease a home until they are able to build upon strong enough credit to be eligible for a mortgage to purchase it. Also, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency offers a Closing Cost Assistance Program for lower-income homebuyers.

Cumberland County has an active program to provide funding for local housing programs, such as incentives for homeownership. Such local funds are especially valuable to meet requirements to provide matching funds for other funding sources. This program was funded by an increase in recording fees for increasing recording fees for mortgages and deeds, under the State Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act.

However, care is needed to avoid placing very low-income households in subsidized home-ownership. In too many cases, these households do not have the funds to pay for repairs that are periodically needed in an older home. If they have no equity in the home, they may be tempted to walk away from the mortgage. As a result, a property can stand vacant for months until foreclosure occurs and the property is resold. During this time, the property can deteriorate and/or be vandalized.

**Provide Incentives to De-convert Apartments in Dense Neighborhoods.**

In dense neighborhoods, financial incentives should be provided to encourage people to reconvert homes that had been converted into apartments back into an owner-occupied single family dwelling. Incentives are needed because these homes are often in worse physical condition than single family housing and because the person completing the de-conversion is typically reducing the market value of their property. De-conversions can help increase the stability of a neighborhood and reduce parking shortages.

Where the Borough or Redevelopment Authority gains control of properties and resells them, consideration should be given to de-converting multi-unit buildings prior to the sale, or at least removing any undersized units.

**Assist in Providing Housing for Persons with Special Needs Throughout the County.**

Many persons in the region have special housing needs. These include persons with disabilities who need assistance with their daily living activities. Also, persons are homeless or threatened with homelessness. A major emergency shelter is located in Downtown Carlisle. Some women and children need to escape abusive situations. Housing is needed that is accessible to persons in wheelchairs or who have other disabilities. The Housing Authority provides subsidized housing for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and low-income persons.

Human service and counseling programs are important to help persons avoid and overcome homelessness. Substance abuse and mental health treatment programs can also help avoid homelessness.

Carlisle has more subsidized housing than any other municipality in the County. Therefore, care is needed to make sure that Carlisle is not overburdened by more than its fair share of the region's needs for subsidized housing and human services. While these services are important, some types of specialized housing can create difficulties and unusually large expenses for the police department and the school system, and nuisances for the surrounding neighborhood.

**Consider Tax Abatements in Limited Geographic Areas.**

Two different State laws provide municipalities the option of reducing real estate taxes on new improvements. The LERTA law addresses businesses, and are discussed in the Economic Development section. A second State law allows similar tax abatements for new homes and major improvements to existing homes. Consideration should be given to providing these tax incentives within distressed sections of the Borough. For instance, if a person completed a major renovation of a home, there might be a five-year phase-in of any new taxes on the value of the renovation. In the first year, no new taxes would be required on the renovation. In the second year, the value of the improvements would be taxed at 20 percent. This could increase 20 percent per year, until the property is fully taxable after 5th years. This program would not decrease the taxes that are currently paid on an property - only minimize *increases* in taxes. To be effective, the County Government and School District should participate with the Borough.

**GOAL: Improve the Attractiveness of Carlisle and the Surrounding Region, with an Emphasis Upon Major Entrances that Create a First Impression Upon Visitors.**

First impressions matter. Particular attention should be paid towards “gateways” that are major entrances to the Borough and the Carlisle Region.

Particular attention should be paid to views of development from I-81, which is how most visitors see the area. There also needs to be attention upon the appearance of Route 34 north of Carlisle, Route 34 south of Carlisle, York Road, Trindle Road and Route 11. Continued efforts are needed with adjacent municipalities and PennDOT to add landscaping at all interchanges of I-81 in the region. Federal “transportation enhancement” funding is available to install this landscaping.

Carlisle has an active program to plant and oversee street trees. Street trees should be required to be planted as part of construction of new buildings. Most problems with street trees are avoided through the Borough’s careful selection of sites and species. Street trees can greatly soften the feeling of density.

Landscaping should continue to be emphasized in all new and expanded parking lots. This should primarily include shade trees. Evergreen plants should continue to be emphasized as a buffer between parking and loading areas and any adjacent homes. In the Downtown, a low hedge and/or brick wall should provide an attractive separation between parked vehicles and sidewalks.

**GOAL: Make sure that Borough Residents have the Practical Job Skills Needed by Current and Potential Employers to help Individuals Advance and to Attract and Retain Businesses.**

The Borough needs to continue to support the Region’s important job training programs. Residents need to continually keep their job skills up-to-date because of technological changes and international trends. The Federal Government makes millions of dollars available each year for local job training programs. Close communications are needed between job training programs and area businesses so that training programs can respond to their needs.

In addition, the Borough should see that job training programs be combined with the County’s need for housing rehabilitation. Residents can learn valuable trades, while the job training funding helps to minimize the expense of the improvements.

**GOAL: Stress a strong diversified economy that generates stability, sufficient tax revenues and wide employment opportunities.**

**Emphasize New Jobs that Provide Sufficient Income and Benefits to Support Families.**

Economic development efforts should be targeted towards types of businesses that will provide sufficient income and benefits to employees so that they can support a family. This requires that the jobs involve higher levels of skills and/or education - which stresses the need for job training programs. Towards this end, the Borough supports promoting new skilled jobs, while placing less emphasis on

attracting additional warehousing and distribution jobs. The new Cumberland County Economic Development Strategy Plan recommends targeting certain types of economic activity that are most likely to generate “family-sustaining” jobs.

**Work to Retain Existing Businesses and Encourage their Expansion.**

It is essential to maintain good communications with employers to understand their needs. The State-sponsored Team Pennsylvania Calling Program works to maintain regular contacts with major employers, and to quickly respond to any reported needs. Most business location decisions and closings are beyond local control. However, in some cases, it is possible for the Borough or other government agencies to act to resolve a problem that may cause a business to move from the Borough or that may inhibit an expansion.

**Support Local Entrepreneurship and “Home grown” Businesses.**

Studies show that the vast majority of a region’s employment growth typically result from growth of local small businesses. The goal is to nurture entrepreneurial spirit, and helping link small business-persons with technical assistance. A major component is to provide training to small business-persons. For some persons, they need training in business skills such as accounting, marketing and compliance with government regulations. Other businesses could benefit from training on how to obtain government contracts, increase sales through the internet, or expand overseas sales.

Business incubators can be helpful in this regard. An Incubator provides certain support services to new businesses until they can grow and become more self-sufficient. For example, an Incubator may have a pool of support personnel or temporary workers who can be called upon as needed. The companies then reimburse the Incubator for the time. An Incubator may provide a shared receptionist, office equipment and conference room.

The Murata Business Center in the 400 block of Lincoln Street is a great example of a successful incubator that should continue to be encouraged. It offers support services and cost-efficient space for manufacturing and business service enterprises that are less than three years old. The Center also assists start-up businesses that choose other locations in the area. There is a need to make sure that affordable building space is available for businesses that “graduate” from this incubator, including businesses that need to leave after three years and companies that need larger amounts of space.

**Make Sure that Local Regulations and Permit Processes are as Streamlined as is Reasonable.**

Some types of business activity need quick approvals, or they may go to another site that is ready to be occupied.

Carlisle needs to make sure that its regulations and procedures target the important issues - while avoiding unnecessary delays or expenses.

The Borough's Zoning Ordinance is being updated. One of the goals of the update is to streamline regulations that might inhibit desirable types of business development in appropriate locations, while ensuring that no adverse impacts are experienced by adjacent residential districts. Most types of desirable development should be able to occur without needing zoning variances, which can be time-consuming and costly.

For example, if it is found that side yard zoning variances are commonly needed for building expansions within certain districts, then consideration should be given to reducing the side yard width requirement, except for areas adjacent to residential districts. By avoiding overly strict dimensional requirements in the zoning ordinance, we can encourage both businesses and homeowners to expand their buildings within the Borough, instead of causing them to move to other municipalities, while still protecting the interests of adjacent property owners.

**Continue to Emphasize Cooperative Economic Development Efforts throughout the Region.**

Carlisle benefits from business development in North Middleton and Dickinson Townships because it helps keep Carlisle Area School District tax rates reasonable. Carlisle residents also benefit from business development throughout the County because it widens their employment choices and helps keep County tax rates reasonable.

Carlisle should continue to engage in regional economic development efforts in cooperation with the County Office of Economic Development, the Capital Region Economic Development Corporation and the Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce. These regional efforts should build upon the new Cumberland County Economic Development Strategic Plan.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN**

### **GOAL: Encourage Appropriate Reuse and Historic Rehabilitation of Older Buildings and New Construction that is Compatible with Historic Surroundings.**

Carlisle has a rich heritage, as evidenced by its collection of high quality historic architecture. This architecture provides a distinctive character to the town and links to Carlisle's past. Historic architecture helps to: maintain strong neighborhoods with committed homeowners, generate a market for new stores and residents, spur investment in older buildings, create a very positive image for the community, and attract tourism.

The economic development potential of historic rehabilitation must be fully appreciated. Money spent on rehabilitation typically generates much more local employment than the same money spent on new construction.

The Historic Resources Map shows the existing Historic District and other important historic buildings identified by the County Historical Society. While the largest concentration of historically significant architecture is in the Downtown, other major concentrations are along North and South Hanover Streets and other areas of the Borough. The existing Historic District is shown on the Historic Resources Map.

Within the historic district, the appearance of new construction, additions and changes to the outside of buildings is controlled by ordinance. The regulations only apply to what is visible from a public street. Also, demolition of historic architecture is generally prohibited, except in exceptional circumstances.

An "Historic District" is designated by the State Historical and Museum Commission based upon national standards. Most Historic Districts, including Carlisle's, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. An applicant for a Historic District must submit research concerning the historic buildings. A Historic District does not by itself involve any regulations upon a private property owner. However, once a Historic District has been designated by the State, then the Borough has the option of adopting their own Historic District regulations.

Once a Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, persons who complete appropriate rehabilitation of income-producing properties in the District can be eligible for certain Federal income tax benefits. Additional tax benefits are also proposed at the Federal and State levels. Historic districts also can spur public interest in an area.

There are two regulatory methods available to protect historic buildings and areas: 1) under a Historic District Ordinance, which is currently used in the Downtown or 2) under the Zoning Ordinance. Provisions in a zoning ordinance do not typically involve the same detailed approval of architecture as a Historic District.

**Historic Resources Map**

Carlisle's Historic District Ordinance involves Borough Council appointing an Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB), which is an advisory board of residents. Any exterior change, demolition or new construction visible from a public street or sidewalk needs review by the HARB. A main job of the HARB is to work with owners to make sure that important historic features are preserved for future generations. The HARB then recommends to Borough Council whether Council should approve or deny an application for a change (which is called a "Certificate of Appropriateness").

**Continue the Existing Historic District Regulations and Consider Opportunities for Limited Expansions if There is Grass-Roots Support.**

A 1987 report by the County Historical Society recommended that the Historic District be expanded in several locations - primarily to the northwest towards Lincoln Street, towards the northeast along N. Bedford Street, along the west to College Street, and along the east to the Letort Spring Run. While many of these blocks have important historic buildings, this Plan recommends targeting any preservation regulations to those blocks that have the most significant architecture. For example, this could involve seeking an extension of the Historic District primarily along North Hanover Street, parts of North Bedford Street and west to College Street.

An Historic District extension should only be considered if there is grass-roots support among a large percentage of the affected residents. This would require a public education campaign to make residents aware of the benefits of historic district controls and the dangers of not having any control on architecture.

In addition to continuing the existing Historic District, this Plan recommends a new Traditional Residential zoning district that would reinforce and protect the character of the largest concentrations of historic buildings that are not within the existing Historic District. This zoning district is described in the Land Use and Housing section.

**Seek Cost-Effective Ways of Preserving Historic Buildings.**

To simplify the historic district process, consideration should be given to allowing the Borough Staff to approve certain common types of changes to buildings. This allows an applicant to instantly get a permit if they follow certain pre-approved standards, instead of having to wait for HARB and Council approval. This process is widely used in Reading and other communities.

In many cases, a HARB can recommend inexpensive ways to preserve their building and still meet their goals. The Borough needs to continue to maintain a balanced approach that preserves historic features in ways that are reasonable and cost-effective to owners.

Additional adjustments should be sought to target the historic regulations to the most important matters. For example, the historic district regulations should not apply to sides of buildings that are not visible from a public street (such as in the middle of blocks along rear alleys). This would make it easier for property-owners to make routine changes to the backs of the buildings when those backs are only visible from alleys (other than the alleys around the Courthouse Square). The backs of the buildings are usually the best locations for any modern features such as skylights or sunrooms.

The HARB should continue to collect and provide information that is helpful to building owners in rehabilitating their buildings, including compiling information on experienced contractors and suppliers of specialized types of materials.

**Consider Carefully Targeted Zoning Provisions and Incentives to Help Protect Major Concentrations of Historic Buildings that are Outside of the Historic District.**

A few kinds of zoning provisions should be added to help protect important historic buildings that are not currently protected by the Historic District Ordinance. These provisions should be designed primarily to control and discourage demolition and make sure that new development fits into historic areas. These zoning provisions are not intended to involve detailed review and approval of architecture or changes to existing buildings.

These zoning provisions should include:

- 1) zoning incentives to encourage the rehabilitation of historic buildings, such as allowing bed and breakfast inns within carefully restored historic buildings,
- 2) an 80 day delay on any proposed demolition of a historic building,
- 3) requirements that any application for a proposed subdivision, land development, conditional use or special exception use must include a full description of any historic building on the property and how the application may adversely affect the building,
- 4) a zoning provision requiring the consideration of historic building impacts as part of any special exception or condition use application, and
- 5) zoning provisions that require a new building in older areas to be placed at a setback from the street that is similar to existing buildings on the same block.

In addition, as described in the Land Use and Housing section, a new “Traditional Neighborhood” zoning district is recommended. This would require new housing in key areas to be built with a site design similar to existing homes, including having garages and driveways accessed from an alley.

Similar provisions could apply throughout all of the older residential areas of the town as an “overlay” district. For example, a new home in an older area of town could be required to use an alley for any driveway or garage access if an alley exists. There should also be a maximum building setback in older areas and limits on new parking between a main street and a new principal building.

The “delay of demolition” provisions in the Zoning Ordinance should apply to a list of the addresses of the most important historic buildings in Carlisle. Then, the Zoning Ordinance would provide that if there was an application for a demolition permit for one of these buildings, it could not be issued until 80 days have passed. The goal is to avoid demolition that occurs quickly and is not well thought-out. This delay is intended to provide time for activists to convince the building owner that there are other alternatives to demolition. For example, an owner may be convinced that the building could be rehabilitated for the new use desired by the owner, or a new buyer may be found. Or, the owner may be convinced that he could develop his new use at an alternative site. In some cases, when a building has little value, an owner can be convinced to donate the money they intended to spend for demolition to a group to rehabilitate the building.

Note- An exception would apply for immediate threats to public safety. The State Municipalities Planning Code allows zoning to be used to preserve historic buildings (even if they are not within a historic district). A separate State law provides that a permit for allowed activity must be issued within 90 days.

If a designated building is preserved and rehabilitated in a sensitive manner, it could be able to be used for certain additional uses beyond those uses that are normally allowed under zoning. Therefore, for example, an historic building in a non-commercial zoning district could be allowed to be used as a bed and breakfast inn, office, day care center or similar light commercial use. This should help create a stronger market to encourage investment in the restoration of these buildings. These uses would only be allowed within existing buildings (plus minor building additions). The applicant would need to submit plans prepared by a registered architect showing that the important features of the building that are visible from a public street will be preserved and rehabilitated.

In addition, the Zoning Hearing Board could be allowed greater discretion in approving modifications to lot and dimensional requirements (as a special exception use”) if the modification would help to reuse a historic building.

It may be appropriate to also control selected additional matters in a zoning ordinance, such as controlling demolition, changes in rooflines, removal of porches and covering of historic materials with siding.

**Encourage Use of Easements to Preserve Historic buildings.**

Owners of historic buildings should be encouraged to donate a “preservation easement” in return for Federal income tax benefits. A preservation easement requires that the historic exterior features of a building be preserved and be properly maintained. The building would still be owned and maintained by the property owner, and could be sold to others. The use could change and the interior could be modified, as long as the exterior was preserved. The easement would be held by an incorporated non-profit organization.

**In Funding Programs, Give Priority to the Rehabilitation of Buildings with the Most Visible and Significant Architecture.**

Limited amounts of grants and low-interest loans are available to rehabilitate buildings. A certain amount of priority should be available to buildings with significant historic architecture. Also, funding should be targeted towards buildings in the most visible locations - especially along heavily traveled streets. This will generate the greatest amount of improvement in the Borough’s image, because large numbers of people will see the improvements. Once people see positive improvements, they are more likely to want to invest in the area. Highly visible corner buildings are often key anchors within the Historic District that help preserve the character of integrity of the entire block.

**Prepare More Detailed Historic District Standards and a Design Guidebook.**

A more detailed set of standards and guidelines would be helpful to provide greater guidance to the HARB and Council in making decisions and in defending their decisions if challenged. These standards would also be helpful to applicants, so they can understand what is expected before they appear before the HARB for review. State grants are available to help fund the preparation of standards by professionals.

These standards could be prepared in a well-illustrated “Design Guide” booklet that could also spur interest in historic preservation. This Design Guide should illustrate sensitive and insensitive ways of rehabilitating buildings. For example, owners need to understand the dangers of harsh chemical treatments and sandblasting to historic masonry. The durable outer coating of masonry can be destroyed, allowing the weak interior to severely deteriorate.

**Encourage Property-Owners to Follow Proper Standards in Making Changes to Older Buildings.**

It is important to make property-owners aware of appropriate ways that old buildings can be modernized or rehabilitated in ways that retain their historic appearance as viewed from a street. Within the Historic District, the HARB maintains a set of guidelines for reviewing proposed changes.

Under programs using Federal funds or Federal income tax benefits, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation need to be followed. Such standards are intended to take into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

**Promote Increased Interest in Historic Architecture, and Additional Identification of Historic Buildings.**

Increased public interest in historic buildings can help spur interest in persons buying, rehabilitating and wanting to live within historic buildings. Several efforts are underway to help residents and property-owners better appreciate historic architecture. These include walking tours, brochures, speeches, special events and other activities. The County Historical Society is the lead historic organization in the County. The Society completed a detailed professional inventory of historic buildings in the County in the mid-1980s. Local historic groups include the Old Neighborhoods League, Historic Carlisle Partners and the Carlisle Preservation Alliance.

Local historic groups should continue to research and apply for additional historic markers from the State Historical and Museum Commission. Local historic markers can also be installed without needing State approval.

Efforts should be considered to list additional buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Listing on the Register does not by itself involve any additional regulations upon a private property owner. It does offer public recognition of the importance of a building, and can provide limited Federal income tax benefits as part of a major historic rehabilitation of an investment property. Listing on the National Register provides protection against actions involving Federal or State funds in ways that would adversely affect the building.

**Consider Revisions to the Building Code to Encourage Reuse of Older Buildings.**

Carlisle uses a standard nationwide building code. The Borough should support adjustments by the State in this building code to make it easier to rehabilitate old buildings for new uses. Too often, building code requirements are written with new construction in mind, and do not fully take into account the difficulties and expenses of rehabilitating existing buildings. The State of New Jersey recently adopted a comprehensive code specifically for the rehabilitation of existing buildings. Similar provisions are being considered by Maryland. Portions of New Jersey's code may serve as a model for Carlisle, particularly sections regarding historic buildings. In addition, the Borough's Board of Appeals for construction codes needs to continue to include knowledgeable persons willing to be reasonably flexible in rehabilitation of older buildings.

## **DOWNTOWN PLAN**

**GOAL: Strengthen the Downtown as the business, entertainment, cultural and civic center for the region.**

This section builds upon the Carlisle Mainstreets Plan, prepared in 2000 with the involvement of Downtown merchants and the County Redevelopment Authority.

On the whole, Downtown Carlisle is an extremely attractive, healthy and vibrant place. It has a great mix of retail, service, restaurant, arts, entertainment, service, office and residential uses. Dickinson College, the County offices, the County Historical Society, the Carlisle Arts Learning Center, the Comfort Suites Hotel and the Carlisle Theater serve as anchors. One of the most prominent features of Downtown Carlisle is its large amount of restored owner-occupied housing. Downtown Carlisle also has developed a strong restaurant trade that attracts customers from throughout the area. The “urban fabric” of historic buildings along the streets is remarkably intact. Most other towns have experienced demolitions and intrusions of incompatible modern construction, such as gas stations/convenience stores.

As described in the Historic Preservation section, the historic architecture of the Downtown is protected by the Borough’s Historic District Ordinance. Also, most buildings are in the hands of owners who respect and treasure the architecture.

The Downtown has attractive streetscape features, including brick sidewalks and historic style lighting in many places. This creates an environment that makes people want to walk and look for new attractions. Much of the overhead wiring that intrudes through other towns has been placed underground.

Because the Downtown is so historically significant and relatively healthy, this Plan does not recommend major redevelopment. In many ways, a goal is to preserve the physical nature of the Downtown, instead of seeking or allowing major changes.

However, there are valid concerns with the Downtown. There are problems with conditions of some buildings. Most of those problems have involved a single uncooperative property owner. The Borough Government and County Redevelopment Authority has expended years of complex and frustrating legal efforts to try to address those problems. Poorly maintained buildings limit the space that can be offered to desirable types of new businesses and that is available for market rate apartments. Loitering around the Center Square can make customers of Downtown businesses feel uncomfortable.

Also, some offices have moved out of the Downtown, particularly in search of more convenient parking for employees and customers. There will always naturally be some turnover of retail businesses, meaning that new businesses need to continually be recruited to replace failing businesses or businesses that need larger sites.

**Downtown Opportunities Map**

**Downtown Existing Land Uses Map**

No single strategy will achieve success. The revitalization of downtown Carlisle will require a fully coordinated set of short-term and long-term efforts involving:

- a) further improving the appearance of the Downtown,
- b) providing sufficient amounts of parking, and manage the use of parking,
- c) financial incentives,
- d) encouraging a balanced mix of uses,
- e) aggressively market the Downtown to customers, new businesses and investors, including an emphasis on special events, and
- f) actively organizing all of key persons, businesses and groups to carry out these efforts.

**Stress Key Markets for the Downtown.**

- People who work Downtown, particularly government and bank workers, especially over lunch-time and immediately after work
- People who work and learn nearby, particularly Law School and College students and staff, and possibly Lear Company workers
- People who live nearby, including residents of upper story apartments and persons living in adjacent neighborhoods and the West Penn senior housing
- Visitors to the region, including parents visiting the College, visitors to the Army Heritage Museum, and persons attending Fairgrounds activities
- Persons who are already visiting another business in the Downtown, and might be encouraged to visit additional businesses
- Older persons who have strong emotional attachments to the Downtown, and might be encouraged to visit for nostalgia based programs (such as programs connected into reunions)
- Persons attending programs at the Carlisle Theater or cultural programs at Dickinson College who might be encouraged to enjoy dinner or visit shops before programs
- Lastly, persons who are encouraged to make a special visit to the Downtown, particularly for special events, or who are looking for a pleasant and interesting experience, or who desire items or services they cannot easily obtain elsewhere.

Different markets support different types of businesses. These include:

- weekday lunch-time trade, which is more geared to quick affordable lunches and convenience items,
- evening and weekend trade geared towards entertainment type activities and pleasant uses of leisure time, such as interesting restaurants, antique shops, cultural events and special events, and
- everyday goods and services needed by nearby residents and students.

To take advantage of these markets, the following are needed:

- programs and special events designed to welcome College and Law School students and their parents and Army War College attendees to town, and let them know about downtown offerings;
- joint promotions among downtown businesses and attractions, and

- evening activities for persons attending car shows, and activities aimed towards wives and children of persons attending car shows, which should be publicized in cooperation with area motels, and which should involve a trolley service.

There needs to be more coordination of hours among Downtown businesses. It is frustrating for a customer to try to visit a business and find it is closed at a time when most businesses are open. It is frustrating for a customer of one business to see another business that interests them and find that it is closed.

Too many Downtown businesses are not open during the hours when most working persons have time to visit businesses. Even Downtown workers may not have the time to visit businesses during these limited hours. Standardized business hours are important so customers can have a reasonable expectation that the businesses they want to visit will be open. While it is impractical to expect most family owned businesses to be open until 9 p.m. every night, they should be open until 8 p.m. on Thursday nights. If a business can only be open limited hours, it is better to be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. than from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Every business should be open until 5:30 or 6 p.m. on weekdays - to serve customers on their way home from work. All shops should be open a full day on Saturday to take advantage of the time when most customers have time to shop. A larger number of shops should also remain open later during special events.

**Aggressively Market the Downtown to Businesses and Customers.**

The Downtown also offers much lower rents than are available at shopping malls, and a potential for merchants to own their building. These advantages need to be marketed.

Most customers will not visit the Downtown to shop at only one particular store. Instead, their needs to be a combination of attractions to bring them Downtown. Therefore, cooperative efforts among Downtown stores should be expanded, including joint advertisements and flyers, joint sales and joint coupon circulars. A group of businesses could organize to jointly offer services for weddings, for example. Merchants should encourage their customers to visit other Downtown businesses. For example, businesses should distribute and display each other's handouts, menus and coupons. Coordinated marketing is especially important because of the high cost of advertising. Complementary types of businesses should locate next to each other, particularly retail stores that need to attract customer foot-traffic.

A few vacancies in the Downtown are actually desirable. Otherwise, if all space is occupied, an opportunity to attract a highly desirable business might be lost.

**Promote a Balanced Mix of Uses in the Downtown.**

The Downtown needs a mix of retail, office, service, governmental, institutional, cultural, educational and residential uses. The most likely types of successful commercial businesses in the Downtown will be: a) specialty retail and service businesses that emphasize personal service, b) businesses that cater towards nearby residents and occupants of nearby offices, and c) businesses that take advantage of special events, tourism and an evening and weekend entertainment market.

Downtown retailing needs to be within “market niches” where they do not have to compete head-on with mass-market discount retailers. For example, Downtown stores should sell gift items that cannot be found within chain stores.

Too many employees of Downtown businesses never leave their buildings over lunch and leave the area immediately after work. Continued special events are needed to get more office workers outdoors during lunch and after work. Benches in carefully located areas could encourage Downtown employees to eat their lunch outdoors. Major employers should be encouraged to schedule lunch times that are long enough for employees to visit a restaurant or another business in the Downtown. In-house cafeterias should be discouraged in favor of encouraging people to visit nearby restaurants. Portable food carts should be prohibited because they discourage people from opening additional restaurants that would be open longer hours and pay taxes.

The Main Streets Plan recommends the following major projects:

- working to attract a major retail anchor, such as a major national clothing retailer;
- the establishment of a local non-profit development corporation to take a leadership role in downtown development projects, in partnership with private investors;
- the development of 20,000 square feet of Class A office space above high-quality first floor retail space;
- the development of 25 market rate upper story apartments, targeted towards young professionals and older persons;
- working with property-owners to improve the front facades of the limited number of buildings that have not yet been restored;
- adding additional landscaping along the streets and parking lots, and making sure that public areas remain clean and well-maintained;
- improving the appearance and feeling of safety along the walkways between the rear parking lots and the streets; and
- adding public displays of art, particularly interesting outdoor exhibits that periodically change to attract interest.

The County Redevelopment Authority’s plans to extensively renovate the Molly Pitcher Hotel for senior citizen apartments is a major step forward in strengthening the Downtown.

**Locate as Many Government Offices in the Downtown as Possible.**

Government offices are vital anchors for the Downtown, by providing rent for Downtown businesses, parking revenue and customers for Downtown stores. This Plan strongly recommends that as many Federal, State, County, Borough and other government offices and services as possible be located within the Downtown. The Borough needs to work with these agencies as soon as possible in their site selection process to help them find suitable sites. Work is needed with the State Department of General Services to make sure that bid specifications for space are not written to prevent a Downtown location. The Federal Government has reactivated a policy that requires Federal agencies to consider Downtown locations. Pennsylvania has enacted a new law that requires that State agencies give first preference to older commercial areas when considering locations for facilities.

**Properly Manage Parking to Serve Different Needs.**

All downtowns face a similar problem. Most Americans have become much more auto-dependent in recent years. Most people have become “spoiled” in having parking spaces within eyesight of their destination, and are not in the habit of walking 2 or 3 blocks from a parking space to a store. This trend is most pronounced in the growth of drive-through restaurants, banks and pharmacies.

Downtown Carlisle must not try to replicate suburban parking or it will destroy the historic character and streetscape that makes Carlisle special. However, there may be additional opportunities over time to provide additional parking, particularly by demolishing accessory buildings and underused rear extensions of buildings in the inside of blocks. This is a method to increase parking supply without harming the “face” of the downtown along streets.

In 1992, a major study was completed of parking in the Downtown. While a number of years have passed since this study was completed and a 225 public parking deck was subsequently built, it still provides some relevant analysis of parking trends. The study made the following conclusions:

- There was plentiful parking that was unoccupied in almost all areas of the Downtown during almost all periods of the week. However, it was not always within eye-sight of the destinations, and some persons would feel that it was not convenient because spaces were not close enough to the destination.
- There was much more excess parking on the weekends than during weekdays.
- The highest parking demand by far was in the area around the County Courthouse. The on-street parking spaces around the Square were often 100% occupied during weekday mornings and afternoons.
- The blocks with the least amount of available unoccupied on-street and off-street parking were along the first block of E. High Street and the first two blocks of W. High Street.
- The two municipal parking lots with the highest percent of occupied parking spaces were northwest (by the Post Office) and northeast of the Center Square.
- The streets with the largest number of available on-street parking spaces during weekday mornings and afternoons were West, Pitt, North and Louthier Streets.

The key in downtown parking is not to only provide sufficient amounts of parking, but to make sure it is properly managed. This involves making sure that the most convenient parking spaces are available for high-turnover by customers. This is mainly achieved through time limits and enforcement. As unpopular as parking tickets can be, they are essential to avoid use of the best parking spaces by a single car for an entire day. If this is routinely allowed to happen, persons wishing to visit a downtown business for a quick trip will turn away and not return.

Carlisle has recognized this need to manage parking for many years. Most parking in the heart of the downtown has 2 hour limits with meters. There will always be a need to make sure that people do not continually feed meters and stay longer than 2 hours in prime spots. Public education and time limit enforcement programs are important to discourage the feeding of meters. The Borough has purposefully used 10 hour limits with meters on blocks where there are fewer businesses - to encourage employees to park at these spaces, as opposed to the prime on-street spaces. Other blocks that are primarily residential have no meters and no time limits. It may be desirable to consider a few additional scattered short-term on-street and off-street parking meters, such as 15 or 30 minutes, where there are businesses such as fast-food restaurants that have quick "in and out" traffic.

Owners of private parking areas in the rears of buildings should be encouraged to coordinate and share their rear parking lots. This will result in a greater total number of spaces and more efficient use of the spaces because different businesses have different peak times of demand.

There has been some discussion about a need for residential parking permit systems on downtown residential blocks closer to the College and the Law School. Residential parking permit systems typically involve issuing stickers to all persons who live in a block. If a vehicle does not have a sticker, then there is a two-hour time limit. These systems are typically only established if a majority of the property-owners on a block sign a petition asking for it. This system may be appropriate on blocks such as W. Pomfret St. near West Street and Parker and Conway Streets near the College.

- However, care is needed that it does not result in most parking spaces remaining empty during weekday mornings and afternoons when most residents are at work and there is the greatest demand for parking for downtown businesses. One option would be to only have the residential parking limit in effect during late evening and nighttime hours - when there is the most demand for parking for residents. One goal is to make sure that students park in their assigned parking lots, instead of on-street spaces in the neighborhood that may be more convenient.
- Dickinson College is working on efforts to make sure that students park in their assigned spaces, and to make sure that freshman do not bring cars into town.

The Pomfret Street parking deck has helped increase the supply of parking, particularly by attracting longer-term employee parking to this off-street location. The deck is convenient to serve the County offices, which are by far the large generators of weekday parking demand. It also serves the Comfort Inn, banks, the Carlisle Theater and other nearby businesses. However, parking rates in the parking deck are slightly more than the rates for parking meters. Consideration should be given to slightly increasing the cost of meter parking in the most desirable spaces to encourage greater use of the spaces in the deck and greater turnover of the metered spaces.

There needs to be greater efforts to publicize the locations of the public parking. This is particularly true because so much of the public parking is not in visible locations. Merchants could be provided with signs to place in their windows showing the best parking locations near their stores.

**Encourage the Institutions to Provide Additional Parking.**

Consideration should be given by major institutions in Carlisle to develop a parking structure. This should be proposed at a location that is central enough to serve the College and the Law School. Any deck should be placed in a location that is adjacent to few homes and that is not highly visible, such as the center of a block.

**Organize all of the Key Persons and Businesses in the Downtown to carry out these Recommendations.**

Downtown revitalization requires the involvement of many persons, and good communications among many persons and groups. The Downtown Carlisle Association is a key part of the strength of the Downtown. They organize many special events and promotions. However, they have limited funding available for marketing, promotion and recruitment.

There has been some discussion in the past about forming a Downtown Improvement District. This system is allowed under State law, and is used in Downtown Lancaster, Downtown Allentown and many other communities. The District assesses property owners an annual fee based upon the real estate assessment. The fee is then used by the District to carry out programs beyond those that can reasonably be funded by the Borough. Some downtown districts fund daily sidewalk cleaning and snow shoveling cleanup programs. The intent is to make sure that all businesses that benefit from downtown programs pay their fair share, as opposed to purely voluntary donations. This type of District is run by a Board that mainly includes persons elected by the businesses that pay the fee, in addition to government officials.

**Create and Continue Financial Incentive Programs to Attract Private Investment into the Downtown.**

Financial incentives and marketing dollars need to be carefully targeted to where they can best attract new business development. The key is to design programs so they do not subsidize business activity that would have occurred anyway within Carlisle.

The pros and cons of tax abatement need to be carefully considered. A “LERTA” tax abatement program could allow a business to avoid increased real estate taxes resulting from their investment for up to 10 years. Therefore, for example, if a building is expanded or rehabilitated, additional taxes would not be charged for the value of the improvements. Instead, the owner would continue to pay taxes based upon the assessed value before the improvement was made. The key is to limit the eligibility requirements and the geographic area so that the benefits only apply to areas that really need incentives and for types of activity that not otherwise occur.

Government financial incentives should emphasize permanent physical improvements to buildings, as opposed to operating assistance. Because the failure rate of small businesses across the nation is so high, there is too much risk that operating assistance may not have long-term results. However, if a building is improved, it will be available for use by future businesses, even if the initial business closes. For example, financial assistance should emphasize historic rehabilitation of the fronts of buildings and improvements in fire safety that allow new uses in old buildings.

The relative health of the Downtown should make private financing for businesses and building renovations reasonably available. Low interest loans and grants are particularly valuable for improvements that are appearance-oriented, such as rehabilitation of historic facades. Most buildings are already restored. The main buildings that remain unrestored are enmeshed in a legal dispute that hopefully will result in their ownership by persons who are more interested in proper maintenance and rehabilitation.

Financing programs can be valuable to spur intensified use of upper story spaces. This is because large expenses can be needed to meet fire safety requirements if the use of upper story space is changed. For example, if storage space is proposed to be converted to apartments, then a second fire-safe stairwell and fire-resistant wall and ceiling separations are often needed. In some cases, it may be possible for adjoining property-owners to share a new fire-safe stairwell. Upper stories might also be opened up between buildings so that uses stretch between more than one building. This coordination of upper story space is particularly valuable when there is a desire to accommodate larger uses.

The general rule in government sponsored financing is to avoid funding operating expenses. This is because many businesses naturally have a high rate of failure. However, if financing is provided for physical improvements to buildings, those improvements will remain available for whatever businesses many occupy the building into the future.

A combination of financing programs are typically needed to make a larger project work. These could include historic rehabilitation tax credits, low-interest loans and State grants.

**Emphasize a Feeling of Security in the Downtown.**

The Downtown does not face the severe crime problems of many other communities. This means that people feel safe working, visiting and living in the Downtown. However, evening security lighting is still particularly important to create a feeling of security within parking lots and the pedestrian routes that connect parking to businesses. While the Police Department has not been able to routinely free an officer for foot patrols in the Downtown, they have made great use of bicycle patrols, particularly during special events. These patrols should be increased on Friday and Saturday evenings in the Downtown.

The Police also need to regularly enforce noise regulations, particularly against loud vehicles and motorcycles. This noise is a nuisance to persons living downtown.

There are public concerns about the amount of loitering around the center square. Alternatives should be considered to attract visitors and tourists to the square and to discourage loitering.

**Improve Pedestrian Safety in the Downtown.**

Fortunately, the most heavily traveled intersections in the Downtown have “Walk” signals. There needs to be a greater emphasis on making it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross downtown streets. As part of any future street reconstruction, additional crosswalks should be constructed with patterned concrete that has a texture and a color that makes them much more prominent. These crosswalks can also be constructed so that they form a slightly raised “speed table” to encourages vehicles to slow down. These speed tables are recommended in a recent PennDOT “Traffic Calming” report.

Additional intersections should have “bulb-outs.” This involves extending the curb outward at corners so that pedestrians have a reduced width of street cartway to cross. One of the first cross-walks in the State with lights built into the pavement has been installed adjacent to Dickinson College.

**Balance the Need for Attractive Signs with the Need for Visibility for Businesses.**

Signs have been a controversial subject in Downtown Carlisle in recent years. A balance is needed between maintaining the attractiveness of the area and making sure that businesses have sufficient visibility. In any case, the appearance of all new signs in the Downtown needs approval from the Borough, based upon review by the Historical Architectural Review Board.

The current sign regulations in the Downtown primarily restrict signs to those mounted flat along the wall of a building. The Borough should consider changing the zoning ordinance to allow small unlit signs to extend over the sidewalk to improve the visibility of Downtown businesses.

**Further Improve the Appearance of the Downtown - to Attract New Customers, Businesses, Residents and Investors.**

The exterior of buildings can often be improved in appearance through low-cost improvements. These include replacing outdated signs, adding canopies, carefully choosing paint color combinations, and removing materials that cover cornices and other historic features. These improvements not only make a building more attractive, they can make it more inviting to customers and tenants.

There should be a program of providing free basic design assistance to owners of Downtown buildings and buildings in other older commercial areas. An architect or other designer would recommend low-cost measures of improving the appearance of the outside of buildings.

Additional attention should be paid to improving the rears of businesses that face onto parking areas. At best, stores would open rear entrances and make the rear of their building more inviting with canopies and attractive colors and signs. Additional landscaping would be desirable within the interior of blocks, including around parking areas. Shade trees can often be located where they will not result in the loss of any parking spaces.

**Use Special Events to Attract Visitors, Customers and Businesses.**

Festivals and special events provide a reason for people to visit the Downtown. Festivals and other special events are particularly beneficial to attract people Downtown so they see what stores and services are available. Even if they do not buy much on the day of the festival, they are more likely to come back another day to shop. Too many residents of the area have “gotten out of the habit” of going Downtown, and need to be reacquainted with the positive changes that have occurred.

Special events add a feeling of excitement to the Downtown. Special events involving performances by local youth are particularly useful to attract their relatives to the Downtown.

Kids-oriented festivals should be held, as well as crafts, music, historic car and arts-oriented events. On the days of festivals, churches and other historic buildings should be open for tours. This not only can attract visitors, but can provide churches with an opportunity to attract new members.

On one or more Thursday evenings per month (such as “the First Thursday” of the month) during warmer months major efforts should be made to encourage Downtown workers to stay Downtown for dinner and entertainment, and to invite their family and friends to meet them. On this night, restaurants and stores should agree to stay open later, and special events should be scheduled, such as at the Carlisle Theater. Joint theater and restaurant discounts should be offered.

The students at Dickinson College and Dickinson Law School represent a market that is not fully tapped by Downtown businesses. Soon after students start at the campus, free bus service should be offered on a Saturday to bring them Downtown to see what is available. Student-oriented sales and activities should be stressed on that day.

**GOAL: Emphasize Tourism Throughout the Region, Built Primarily upon the Area’s Heritage, Arts and Culture, and Recreational Assets.**

It is essential to market different attractions in a coordinated manner to attract larger numbers of visitors and to convince visitors to spend longer periods of time in the area. This includes marketing packages of attractions, such as bicycling tours, built around different themes. Through these efforts, joint ticket sales should continue be available to related attractions. Through these ticket sales, a person can visit several attractions for one discounted price. These packages can convince visitors to spend more time in the area, stay in local motels and thereby spend more money locally. These joint ticket sales can also help attract additional bus tours.

The easiest persons to market towards are those persons who are already traveling through the area on their way to another destination, and those persons who are in the Carlisle region for another event.

“Heritage tourism” involves attracting visitors to the area to visit historic sites, historic areas, museums, places and events based on different ethnic backgrounds, and related special events. Heritage tourism is one of the fastest growing types of tourism in the Northeast. In 1997, twelve percent of visitors to Pennsylvania were traveling primarily for heritage-based tourism. Most current visitors to Pennsylvania attractions come from within Pennsylvania and adjacent states. A major 1999 study showed that heritage-based visitors in Pennsylvania were primarily interested in attractions that combined “educational,” “scenic” and “fun.” The study found that the major need to attract additional heritage tourism to Pennsylvania was to increase awareness of the attractions through brochures and other advertising campaigns. Many heritage-based visitors are middle- or upper-middle-income families with children or retired persons. Many of these retired persons travel in groups, including commercial bus tours.

Local clubs, organizations, churches and other places of worship should also get involved in offering activities that build upon Carlisle’s ethnic heritage. For example, it may be desirable to have an Ethnic Pride Weekend in which a series of ethnic festivals and activities are held throughout the Region - to attract visitors and build greater ethnic pride among local residents.

Local arts and cultural groups need to work together to share facilities, talents and marketing dollars. Joint marketing efforts are needed to make local residents and visitors aware of everything that is being offered. For example, one central website (linked into the tourism websites) should provide detailed, regularly updated information on all of the arts and cultural offerings. One of the existing organizations could take the lead in handling ticket sales for other organizations, in return for a commission on sales. The website could also include a description of rooms that different organizations have available to rent for programs.

**Find Ways to Bring the Region’s Visitors into the Downtown.**

There is a real danger that large numbers of persons will visit attractions in the region, such as the Army Heritage Museum and the Carlisle Fairgrounds without ever visiting the Downtown. Downtown attractions need to be emphasized in all efforts to promote the region for tourism. Moreover, consideration should also be given to shuttles between attractions or hotels and the Downtown, and joint promotions should be sponsored between the Downtown Association and other attractions.

Likewise, promotional efforts are needed to attract parents of college students into the Downtown - particularly at the start and end of semesters and on weekends.

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

**GOAL: Work with PA. DOT to Make Cost-Effective Improvements to the Region’s Street System to Avoid Congestion Problems and Improve Traffic Safety.**

Carlisle has excellent highway access to the entire Northeast region. Advance planning is being done to widen Interstate 81 to six lanes, building upon planning that is underway in Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland.

Streets can be classified into four major categories:

- expressways, which provide limited access travel between metropolitan areas,
- arterial streets, which carry the majority of traffic, typically at moderate speeds along commercial areas,
- collector streets, which carry moderate amounts of traffic and connect local streets to arterial streets, and
- local streets, which provide travel over shorter-distances, typically through residential areas.

**Where Practical, Work to Resolve Traffic Congestion Bottlenecks.**

The worst traffic congestion problem in the Borough is around the intersection of York Road and E. High Street. The Future Land Use Plan Map shows two alternatives that could reduce some of these problems. One would be to construct a new road link on the east side of the Frog Switch plant from E. High Street to Army Heritage Drive (formerly Claremont Road). A second alternative would be to build a one-way northbound street from the York Road/High Street intersection to E. Louthier Street. Most of that route follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way. In addition, South Middleton has asked developers of land east of I-81 to build a new road that would connect Trindle Road with York Road. This road link is important because there are only partial interchanges of I-81 at High Street and York Road, which causes truck traffic to pass along residential streets. Improved signage may also help to better direct truck traffic in the area, and help it avoid the E. High Street bottleneck.

Another major traffic congestion point is along Walnut Bottom Road. Fortunately, South Middleton has required developers to build an extension of Marsh Road west to Walnut Bottom Road, which should allow some traffic to avoid the most congested part of Walnut Bottom Road.

The large events at the Carlisle Fairgrounds also generate significant traffic congestion. Consideration should be given to working with the Turnpike Commission, the Fairgrounds and North Middleton to seek a ramp from the Turnpike directly into the Fairgrounds property. This ramp would only be open during the special events, which would minimize the staffing costs to the Turnpike Commission. This ramp should not allow truck traffic, which would allow a design that would minimize the amount of land that is needed. It may be possible to construct the ramp on excess property of the National Guard, which could avoid the need for expensive condemnation. The traffic could be directed onto the Cavalry Road bridge in order to avoid the high expense of building a new bridge.

Another major congestion location is around the intersection of N. Orange and W. High Streets. That intersection also includes a low railroad bridge and is adjacent to an awkward intersection at N. Orange Street and Newville Road. This area cannot be easily resolved because of the difficulty of replacing a railroad bridge and the stormwater problems in the area.

### **Work to Improve Accident-Prone Intersections**

Attention needs to be paid to the most accident-prone intersections in the Borough. Based upon statistics compiled by the Borough, these include: Spring Garden/High Streets, Allen Road/Ritner Highway, N. Hanover/North Streets, East/High Streets, High Street/York Road, High/Spruce Streets/Carlisle Plaza Mall entrance, Clay/N. Hanover Streets, and Walnut Bottom Road at the ramps on the north side of I-81.

In most cases, the streets are owned by PennDOT. It would be advisable for the Borough to identify potential improvements, and then seek approval and funding from PennDOT for the improvements. Improvements are much more likely to occur in a timely manner if the Borough is able to obtain needed right-of-way from adjacent property-owners and/or if the Borough can obtain partial funding from nearby developers. At present, the only road improvements in the Carlisle area that are on PennDOT's official 12 Year Plan are around the Route 465 interchange of I-81.

However, in most cases, the accident-prone locations do not have obvious problems that can be resolved with realignments, traffic signals, widening or other physical improvements. In most cases, the numbers of accidents appear to result from extremely heavy traffic volumes and carelessness. Most of the accident-prone intersections are served by traffic signals and have good sight distance. Therefore, in some cases, the best response is police enforcement against vehicles running red lights.

An improvement to a State road is much more likely to receive State funds in a timely manner if a portion of the costs are raised locally. It is especially valuable for localities to raise the money needed for initial engineering in order to "get a head start" and increase the likelihood of State funding. If landowners are willing to donate the needed right-of-way, the value of that right-of-way can also be counted as a local share of funding.

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission provides the staff for the Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS) organization. HATS has a lead role in recommending which transportation improvements should receive State and Federal funding.

### **GOAL: Minimize the Adverse Impacts of Traffic upon Residential Neighborhoods, Particularly Higher-speed Traffic and Heavy Truck Traffic.**

Street connections should be avoided between industrial areas and residential neighborhoods. Heavy truck traffic should be prohibited along residential streets where an acceptable alternative exists. Traffic controls should be used to avoid high speeds along residential streets. These methods are sometimes referred to as "traffic calming." A particularly effective method to reduce traffic speeds along major roads involves signal timing. Under this method, all traffic signals along a route are coordinated so that it is extremely difficult to travel faster than a certain speed (such as 35 miles per hour). If a person travels faster than this speed, they will face one or more red lights. This method works best when signs identify the intended speed. Federal funding is widely available for these types of signal improvements.

Moreover, Carlisle should support proposals in the State Legislature to allow local police to use radar or laser technology to enforce speed limits.

**Examine Ways to Reduce Truck Traffic Through the Downtown.**

The amount of truck traffic in the Downtown causes congestion, reduces its attractiveness for homes, and discourages activities such as outdoor cafes. The origin and destination points of these trucks should be studied to examine whether a reasonable alternative route could be provided. However, most alternative routes would negatively impact residential areas.

**Continue to Work With Adjacent Municipalities and PennDOT to Carry Out the Route 465/I-81 Land Use and Traffic Impact Study**

The Cumberland County Task Force recommended ways to coordinate future development and transportation improvements around the Route 465 (former Exit 12) interchange of Route 81. The task force included members from the Tri-County Planning Commission, Capital Region Economic Development Council, the County, four townships and Carlisle Borough.

The goals of the study were to:

- Identify a desirable future land use pattern for the study area,
- Suggest zoning changes to better guide warehousing and distribution activities in the study area,
- Recommend improvements to roads, bridges, traffic signals, and exit ramps that will serve anticipated development, and
- Recommend ways to accommodate appropriate growth in a manner that can be handled by the road system and that protects the environment.

The study area included the entire western part of Carlisle, plus the northwestern corner of South Middleton, including: a) areas north of Walnut Bottom Road (including Alexander Spring Road) and b) undeveloped land west of the Nottingham section of Carlisle and north of I-81. The study area also includes the southwestern corner of North Middleton along Newville Road, and the portions of Dickinson and West Pennsboro Townships that are closest to the interchange. Most of the study area is industrially zoned, except for office and commercial zoning along much of Alexander Spring Road and Walnut Bottom Road.

Three of these six intersections in the immediate area around the exit now operate at Level of Service F (the worst ranking in a range of A through F) during either a.m. or p.m. peak hours. Without improvements, five of the six will rank Level of Service F by 2019. Of the traffic using the I-81 ramps at Route 465, 35 to 45 percent involves trucks - which need a larger opening in traffic and more time to enter a road than cars.

The study found that if all land in the study area would be developed to its maximum potential under current zoning, it could result in 39 million square feet of industrial/warehouse/office development, one million square feet of retail development and 260 housing units. The study estimated that \$80 to \$100 million of road improvements would be needed to handle the resulting traffic. The study then considered an alternative with modest differences in the mixes of types of development and found that a similar amount of road improvements would be needed under that alternative.

The study recommended zoning changes to moderate the total amount of development in the study area and encourage a wider mix of land uses. The study recommended delaying the development of portions of the area until road improvements are in place and by delaying water and sewage extensions.

Under the Study's recommended land use pattern, 333 new housing units and 24 million square feet of business building floor area would still be possible.

The study recommended that the Allen Road/Route 465 corridor is a logical location within the region for substantial industrial development, provided that the road improvements are in place. This is because truck traffic using the Route 465 exit would have much less impact upon homes than if other exits would be used. The study recommends avoiding truck stops that would cause trucks to use the Route 465 exit that otherwise would not use the exit. Instead, truck stops should be directed to other exits of I-81 to the west that are less congested.

The study recommended reducing the amount of land that can be covered by business buildings to moderate the total intensity of development. Landscaping is also recommended to limit the intensity of development and make it more attractive.

To serve the recommended land use plan, the study reports a need for \$12 million in road improvements, including the following:

- Make Route 465 four lanes wide between I-81 and Newville Road
- Reconstruct Route 465 with wider lanes between I-81 and Walnut Bottom Road
- Intersection of Route 641 & 465 - Add westbound and eastbound turn lanes and install a traffic signal
- Intersection of US 11 and Route 465 - Add turn lanes at all four approaches
- I-81 at Route 465 - Reconstruct I-81 bridges at Route 465 to increase height clearance
- I-81 Southbound Ramps at Route 465 - Add a turn lane to I-81 southbound ramp; Add a northbound turn lane; Reconstruct southbound right turn lane; Install traffic signals.
- I-81 Northbound Ramps at Route 465 - Add a turn lane to I-81 southbound ramp; Add a northbound through lane; Reconstruct northbound right turn lane; Install traffic signals.
- Alexander Spring Road at Route 465 - Add south bound, westbound and northbound turn lanes; Install traffic signals.
- Walnut Bottom Road at Route 465 - Add a southbound turn lane; Install traffic signals.

Substantial improvements to the Route 465 exit are planned for funded in PennDOT's official 12 Year Plan.

**Seek Improvements to the Carlisle Airport.**

Local air transportation can be important to retain existing businesses and attract new businesses. The Carlisle Airport on Petersburg Road in South Middleton primarily serves private aircraft, and not scheduled service. The Borough should support efforts to improve the airport, particularly to support business travel, including serving visiting corporate jets. However, the Airport is relatively land-locked, which prevents a major expansion.

**GOAL: Promote use of Public Transit, Bicycling and Walking, Particularly to Minimize Increases in Traffic and to Serve Persons Unable to Drive or to Afford their Own Vehicle.**

**Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Access.**

The Borough has required construction and repair of sidewalks throughout almost all neighborhoods. Improvements are needed to allow safer bicycling throughout the Borough. In the western part of the Borough, an asphalt bikepath may be more valuable than sidewalks. Where sidewalks and bikepaths are not required, flat grass areas suitable for walking should be emphasized along streets. These grass areas avoid the need for pedestrians to walk within the street.

There is little potential to create an entirely new system of bicycle lanes throughout the Borough. Therefore, the best way to provide for bicycle travel is to work with PennDOT to develop wide smooth shoulders along key streets. These shoulders should be clearly separated from travel lanes by white lines, such as along Trindle Road from Carlisle to the West Shore. A separate bicycle trail should loop around Valley Meadows Park, along the proposed linear park on the South Middleton border and then to the west along Route 11 to Allen Road.

Proposed recreation trails are described and mapped in the Land Use Plan section.

**Encourage Greater Use of Public Transit.**

Public transportation is an important factor in the economic health and quality of life of the region. Public transportation also can reduce traffic congestion, parking problems, air pollution and energy consumption. Public transportation is particularly important for persons who are not able to drive, including persons with disabilities, some elderly persons and young people. Public transit is also valuable for households who do not have a car, or who cannot afford to maintain two cars. Public transit can be especially attractive to persons who work Downtown, because they can avoid the need to pay for parking.

A current Capital Area Transit (CAT) bus line connects the MJ Mall, Hanover Street and Downtown Carlisle to Harrisburg. This current service is primarily oriented towards bringing Carlisle residents to work in the Harrisburg area during business days. The bus system includes local service along Route 11 and express service during rush hours on I-81.

In 1985, a study was undertaken by CATS and TCRPC of the potential of providing direct bus service between Carlisle and the Mechanicsburg area. The study found that the most cost-effective service change would be to detour the Route 11 bus route to serve the Mechanicsburg Navy Depot.

A second study was accomplished in 1985 to study the potential of providing bus service within Carlisle. A telephone survey concluded that the major desired destinations were the two malls and the downtown. Two new alternative routes were studied but neither was found to be cost-effective. However, this study was not able to study all of the possible alternatives. The region should consider a new feasibility study to investigate a loop bus service around the Carlisle area to connect neighborhoods to the Downtown, shopping opportunities and local major employers.

The County also provides flexible door-to-door “paratransit” for persons who cannot use the fixed route system. Many of these persons have disabilities or live far from the bus routes.

Public transit also has a strong role during special events. This involves bringing large numbers of people to central locations during a few times of the year. This system works best when remote parking lots can be made available, such as school parking lots on a weekend.

It may be practical for some larger employers in the Downtown to subsidize monthly public transit passes by their employees. These subsidies can be valuable to avoid the need for employers to provide large parking lots or to pay for parking by their employees. Recent changes in Federal tax law have made these types of subsidies more attractive to employers.

Many households cannot afford to maintain a vehicle for each person who wishes to hold a job. Public transit allows these persons to reach larger numbers of jobs - which widens their opportunities. Therefore, the public transit routes need to be regularly updated to make sure that they provide access to new concentrations of employment. This service is important to connect areas such as Carlisle where there are many persons in need of employment with outlying areas where there are increasing numbers of jobs.

### **Seek Commuter Rail Service to Harrisburg.**

Studies have been underway for several years to utilize a the rail corridor that runs east-west through Carlisle for a commuter rail line to Harrisburg. Several lines are being studied, and the Carlisle-Harrisburg route is not the first priority. This rail service would be particularly valuable to reduce commuter traffic along I-81. This rail service could also help support office development in Downtown Carlisle because the offices would have a quick link to Center City Harrisburg.

It would be desirable to have a commuter rail stop near the Downtown. However, care would be needed to avoid parking problems on neighboring streets. One or more major rail stops with large parking lots should also be located towards the edge of town to intercept commuter vehicles. One possible location would be near the intersection of Allen Road with the rail line along the Carlisle-North Middleton Borough. A stop east of Carlisle would also be desirable, with access from I-81.

The State has periodically considered constructing a very high speed rail system between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia that would utilize new technologies. A commuter rail link to Harrisburg would connect into this system, as well as into the existing rail service that runs across the State and the AMTRAK service along the Northeast Corridor.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN**

**GOAL: Provide Sufficient Community Facilities and Services Throughout all areas of Carlisle, in a Cost-efficient Manner.**

**Improve Existing Parks and Playgrounds to meet a Wide Variety of Recreational Needs.**

Carlisle Borough provides a tremendous system of public parks, playgrounds and recreation programs. The School District provides use of many of its facilities for community programs during times when they are not needed for school programs. In many areas of the Borough, the public elementary schools are well-situated to serve as public playgrounds (outside of school hours) for the surrounding neighborhoods.

Because Carlisle has a well-distributed public park system with a wide variety of facilities, this Plan recommends concentrating upon improving existing parks instead of developing new parks. The one exception is a 200 feet wide linear park with a recreation trail that is proposed along the Carlisle-South Middleton border. This land is being provided by the developer of an adjacent industrial development to provide a buffer along the Valley Meadows and Nottingham developments.

The Borough has a continual program of improving existing parks, including replacing outdated playgrounds with safer facilities. A major renovation is planned of the Borough's Community Center, which includes a gymnasium and a variety of rooms for recreation programs.

**Continue to Emphasize High-Quality Police, Emergency Medical and Fire Protection to Protect Public Safety.**

Carlisle's highly professional Police Department, Fire Companies and emergency medical services provide some of the greatest advantages of living within Carlisle. The Borough is investigating alternative sites for a new police headquarters to replace the current cramped facilities in the basement of Borough Hall.

Emergency service providers need to be fully coordinated across municipal borders. Cooperative efforts are particularly important to allow personnel to be more highly trained for specialized matters and to provide specialized equipment without unnecessary duplication. All of the region's firefighters should continue to train together so that they can efficiently operate in case of a major event.

Emergency medical services are provided in a regional manner through the Carlisle Community Ambulance Company, which is affiliated with the Cumberland-Goodwill Fire Company.

**Seek to Expand Police Staff Levels and Improve Police Facilities.**

As funding allows, additional police officers are needed, particularly to provide concentrated efforts in problem areas.

Concentrated police protection is important to encourage investment in areas threatened with blight. A full range of measures are needed to reduce illegal drug use, alcohol abuse and related crimes. A continued emphasis is needed upon community-based policing, bicycle patrols and neighborhood watch programs. Community-based policing involves assigning an officer to bicycle or foot patrols in an area where they can develop strong relationships with citizens to encourage their involvement. Community-based policing and school-based policing can be particularly useful to allow officers to build trust with young persons in order to discourage delinquency. The existing bicycle patrols by police are particularly important to promote interaction between officers and the public.

The Police Department needs to be moved from its cramped facilities in the basement of Borough Hall. A new modern police headquarters is needed in a centralized location.

**Continually Explore Ways to Minimize Government Expenses and Increase Revenues, Including Maximizing Use of Federal and State Funding Sources.**

To take advantage of grant funds, at least one person in the Borough government should have the primary responsibility to keep up to date regarding all grant programs and application deadlines that are relevant to all Borough operations. However, in some cases, small grants may require so much administrative time and delays in spending money that they are not worthwhile.

At the same time, the Borough Government will continue to search for ways to provide services in a manner that minimizes expenses. For some types of expenses, it may be valuable to request a few hours of volunteer assistance by local residents who have expertise in certain areas to recommend ways to reduce expenses.

**Continue to Provide Excellent Water and Sewage Services, with Regular Investments to Provide Reliable Service.**

One of the major advantages that Carlisle offers to developers is the availability of public water and sewage services, with plentiful capacities. The large excess capacity in the water and sewage systems also should be used to attract industries (such as food and beverage manufacturers) that need this capacity.

**NATURAL FEATURES PLAN**

**GOAL: Protect important natural features, with a special emphasis upon the Letort Spring Run and mature trees.**

The Carlisle area’s natural features must be respected to preserve the area’s natural beauty, maintain natural balances and avoid problems of erosion and increased flooding. Land varies greatly in its ability to support development.

**Continually Work to Avoid and Address Stormwater Problems.**

Most of Carlisle and adjacent areas were developed before modern stormwater engineering were required. Careful reviews of new development are essential to make sure that stormwater drainage is properly engineered. The percent of land covered by paving should be held to a reasonable minimum. This will allow stormwater runoff to recharge into the groundwater, and thereby minimize stormwater runoff.

**Continue to Control Development in Flood-prone Areas.**

Carlisle, like all other municipalities in Pennsylvania, has regulations that limit development in flood-prone areas. These regulations generally limit construction within the “100 year floodplain,” which is the area expected to be flooded during the worst storm in an average 100 year period. The Natural Features Map shows these flood-prone areas.

**Work with Neighboring Municipalities, State Agencies and Volunteer Organizations to Preserve Important Natural Areas Around Carlisle.**

There are many natural areas around Carlisle that provide important environmental and scenic resources to the region. These areas are important to attract visitors to the area, maintain high quality fishing in streams, recharge the groundwater and protect the quality of the Borough’s water supply. This particularly includes lands along the Conodiguinet Stream, the Letort Spring Run, the Blue Mountain and South Mountain.

Special attention is needed to the Letort Spring Run (and the Molly Grub which drains into it in the Borough) because of its importance as an exceptional quality native trout stream. The Conodiguinet is worthy of special attention because it is the primary source of drinking water for the Carlisle area.

In areas that are not in public ownership, the townships should consider zoning that would prohibit overly intense development of these scenic areas - particularly very steeply sloped areas that are not suitable for development. Particular attention is needed to control mining, concentrated livestock operations, major regrading and dense housing in the most scenic and environmentally sensitive areas.

Where a private property-owner does not wish to sell important natural lands, then they should be encouraged to donate a conservation easement. Under a conservation easement, the land remains privately owned and can be sold, but it cannot be developed. A conservation easement typically does

not allow any use by the public. A property-owner can receive important Federal income tax deductions if they donate a conservation easement to a conservation organization.

**Maintain and Plant Thick Natural Vegetation Along Streams.**

The Letort is an extremely important native trout stream. While stocked trout can tolerate some water pollution and sediment, a very high water quality needs to be maintained to support the native trout.

A corridor of thick natural vegetation should be planted and maintained along the length of the Letort Spring Run and adjacent parts of the Molly Grub. This natural vegetation is important to filter pollutants from stormwater runoff before the runoff enters the stream. This natural vegetation is also important to maintain the proper temperatures and ecology for high-quality fishing habitats. While grass is better than paving, thicker and taller vegetation is much better than mowed grass. This green corridor can be maintained in public, semi-public or private ownership.

State funding should be sought to make additional improvements to return the stream corridor to its natural state and to avoid erosion. This should include participation by private property-owners, the Army War College and the Borough to plant thicker vegetation and additional trees along the sections of the Letort that they control.

Regional cooperation is needed to protect the Letort. These efforts are coordinated by the Letort Regional Authority. One goal is to complete a recreation trail along the Letort from E. Pomfret Street southward to Lamberton Middle School. The trail then connects to a trail on a former railroad right-of-way that extends to Mt. Holly Springs and then to the Appalachian Trail.

**Work to Protect the Water Quality of the Letort Spring Run.**

In addition to the planting and preservation of existing vegetation along the Letort, the following measures should be put into effect to protect the stream's water quality:

- The Borough should investigate ways to improve the water quality of stormwater runoff from storm sewers. Like many municipalities, Carlisle will face a requirement from the Federal Government in the near future to address this issue.
- The Borough should consider requiring more restrictive limits on the percentage of a lot that is covered by buildings, paving and other "impervious" surfaces in areas near the Letort.
- New or expanded buildings, paving, stone surfaces and outdoor storage should be prohibited within a certain distance of the Letort. This distance could vary by lot size so that the requirement is not burdensome upon small lots in the center of town. Where space allows, a buffer of up to 150 feet from the bank of the creek should be encouraged.
- Provisions should be added to the development regulations of Carlisle and adjacent municipalities to require "Best Management Practices" to filter out pollutants from stormwater runoff from new development. This should include measures that will remove up to 90 percent of the water pollutants (including those suspended and dissolved) and will avoid increases in water temperatures. One method is to build stormwater facilities that detain the "first flush" of runoff from parking lots (which includes most of the pollutants) until the pollutants can settle from the runoff. Measures are also needed to separate oils from runoff.

**Natural Features Map**

**PUTTING THIS PLAN INTO ACTION**

**GOAL: Continually Work to Put this Plan into Action Through a Program of Updated Planning and Many Short-term Actions Within a Long-range Perspective.**

Planning is an on-going process. The Comprehensive Plan should be implemented through a continuous process of follow-up planning and action. The most immediate action will be a comprehensive updating of Carlisle's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

Maximize communications, coordination and cooperative efforts between the Borough of Carlisle, the School District, adjacent townships, the County and other agencies and organizations.

To be effective, community development efforts need wide participation. A close working relationship is needed with Federal, State and County agencies and adjacent municipalities.

The Borough Government cannot implement this Comprehensive Plan alone. Involvement is needed by residents, neighborhood organizations, civic groups, businesses, institutions, property-owners and many other groups.

This Comprehensive Plan should be consistently used as an overall guide for land use and transportation decisions. In addition, the Plan needs to be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, updated to reflect changing trends.

**Use a Full Set of Tools to Implement this Plan**

This Comprehensive Plan establishes overall policies for guiding the future development and preservation of Carlisle. However, this Plan is not a regulation. The following major tools are available to help implement this Plan:

- Citizen involvement,
- the Borough Zoning Ordinance,
- the Borough Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance,
- the Borough Construction Codes,
- an Official Map,
- computerized mapping,
- Capital Improvements Planning,
- the Borough's annual spending, and

- use of Federal Community Development Block Grant funds and the seeking of additional grant funds.

### Citizen Involvement

The volunteer efforts of neighborhood and civic organizations and individuals are essential to further improve Carlisle and to carry out this Plan. The objective is to strengthen community pride and emphasize volunteer efforts for residents and property-owners to improve their surroundings.

It is essential to keep citizens informed and provide opportunities for meaningful citizen input, while making use of new technologies for communication.

The Borough's internet site should be regularly updated with information that will help spur public interest, enthusiasm and involvement. Opportunities for citizen involvement should also be highlighted through the newspaper and other media.

### Zoning Ordinance

The Borough's Zoning Ordinance is the primary legal tool to regulate the uses of land and buildings. The Zoning Ordinance includes a Zoning Map that divides the Borough into different zoning districts. Each district permits a set of activities and establishes a maximum density of development. The Zoning Ordinance and Map is currently being updated to carry out the Land Use Policies of this Plan and to be consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

In addition to regulating land uses and densities, zoning also controls the following:

- the heights of buildings,
- the percentage of a lot that may be covered by buildings and paving,
- the minimum distances that buildings may be placed from streets and property lines,
- the minimum size of lots,
- the maximum sizes and heights of signs, and
- the protection of important natural features.

### Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

The Borough has a modern Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. This Ordinance mainly regulates the creation of new lots, the construction of new streets by developers, and the site engineering of new commercial, industrial and institutional buildings.

### Construction Codes

Carlisle enforces a modern set of construction codes, using model ordinances prepared by national organizations. These codes are particularly important to minimize fire hazards. The Historic Preservation Plan section discusses possible adjustments to some of these codes to spur renovation of older buildings. The Borough's Property Maintenance Code is an essential part of controlling blight.

### Official Map

The State Municipalities Planning Code grants municipalities the authority to adopt an "Official Map." An Official Map can designate proposed locations of new streets, street widenings, intersection improvements, municipal uses and parks. The Map may cover the entire Borough, or only certain areas. The proposed locations do not need to be exact surveyed boundaries. This process may be particularly useful, for example, to reserve right-of-way for a future street widening.

Once an Official Map is officially adopted by Borough Council, then the Borough is provided with a limited amount of authority to reserve land for the projects on the map. If the land affected by the proposed project is proposed for development, then the Borough would have one year to either purchase the land for its fair market value or decide not to go forward with the project. This one year period is intended to provide time to raise funds to acquire the land, and avoid lost opportunities. If this one year period is not in effect, a person could obtain a building permit almost immediately in many cases and construct a building that could obstruct an important project. An Official Map also serves to provide notice to property-owners about the Borough's future plans.

### Computerized Mapping

The County operates a modern computerized mapping/ "Geographic Information System ("GIS"). This system has been used for the maps in the Plan. Increased efforts are needed to fully integrate this system with operations of Borough agencies. For example, mapping of patterns in crime can help to target police resources.

### Capital Improvements Planning

Carlisle Borough has a highly professional system in place to continually plan and budget for major capital expenditures. "Capital" improvements are projects involving a substantial expense for the construction or improvement of major public facilities that have a long life span and that are not annual operating expenses. Examples of capital projects include major street improvements, acquisition of parkland, major storm sewer construction projects and new bridges.

The Borough's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) can help identify projects that will be needed, prioritize the projects, identify possible funding sources and then budget for their completion. A typical CIP looks five years in the future. A CIP should identify major street reconstruction projects that will be needed, which can help coordinate the reconstruction with underground projects by utilities. The CIP can help a community minimize the total number of bond issues that are needed, which will minimize borrowing expenses. It also can allow the Borough to carefully time any bond issues to take advantage of the lowest interest rates.

Other Implementation Tools

Many other tools are available to carry out the Comprehensive Plan, including the following:

- priorities decided as part of the Borough’s annual budget, particularly including decisions regarding use of Federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds,
- the annual setting of tax rates, which affect decisions of businesses and residents on whether to remain or move into the Borough, and
- aggressively seeking Federal and State grants to reduce the burden upon local taxpayers.

The Route 465/I-81 “Exit 12” Study was intended to establish a framework for cooperative ventures among the municipalities in the Carlisle area.

**Funding Sources**

There are hundreds of funding sources available from federal government, state government, private organizations and foundations, for a variety of activities. The following list summarizes the most commonly used funding sources, including grants and loans, that can help fund community development, economic development, recreation, housing, water and sewer, and stormwater management and other activities.

**FUNDING SOURCES**

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Offers grants for a wide variety of activities, provided the applicant proves by survey or census that the project will benefit 51% low and moderate income persons or handicapped persons or eliminate "blighted" conditions in officially designated areas. For example, funds can be used for water and sewage improvements, storm drainage, handicapped accessibility, housing rehabilitation, parks and recreation, street and sidewalk improvements, code enforcement, community planning, and historic rehabilitation.	Cumberland County
Conservation Corps, PA.	Provides funding for work crews for community projects, such as trail improvements.	PA DCNR
Communities of Opportunity	Provides grants to municipalities, redevelopment authorities and housing authorities for community revitalization, economic development, and low-income housing development and rehabilitation.	PA DCED
Community Development Bank, PA.	Provides capital and capaborough building grants to "Community Development Financial Institutions" (CDFIs). The CDFIs are then allowed to assist with small scale business expansions, new business starts, non-profit facilities and very small businesses.	PA DCED
Community Facilities Loan Program, Federal	Offers low-interest loans to construct, enlarge or improve essential community facilities for public use in rural areas and towns with population less than 50,000. Also offers guarantees of loans by private lenders.	U.S. Dept. of Ag. Rural Housing Service
Community Revitalization Program	Very broad grant program. Officially intended to promote community stability, increase tax bases and improve quality of life. Applications may be made by municipalities, authorities, economic development organizations and non-profit corporations. Public/non-profit/profit partnerships are encouraged. Generally can be used for infrastructure, community revitalization, building rehabilitation, demolition of blighted structures, public safety, and crime prevention.	PA DCED & Governor's Office

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>General Description of Program</b>	<b>Administering Agency</b>
Customized Job Training	Provides grants to businesses (other than retail) to train new employees, and retrain and upgrade existing employees. Up to 100% of eligible costs may be paid for new job creations, and up to 70% for other eligible training.	PA DCED Businesses apply through a State-licensed Educ. Agency.
Downtown Pennsylvania Program	Offers full-time management to organize and implement a Business District Authority, that provides financing for additional services in a commercial area. The Commercial Revitalization program funds physical improvement projects that are consistent with an action plan. Projects may include site improvements, facade renovations and adaptive reuse of downtown buildings. See also "Main Street Program" in this table.	PA DCED
Economic Development Administration Loan Guarantees	Guarantees business loans made through private lenders. Available for up to 80% of project cost. Primarily intended for manufacturers, but commercial businesses may qualify. A equity contribution is required by business. Must show job creation.	U.S. EDA Philadelphia Office
Economic Development Administration Public Works Grants	Offers grants to distressed municipalities to assist in attracting new industries and encourage business expansion. Projects typically involve water and sewage improvements primarily serving industries, industrial access roads, and business incubators. A 50% local match is typically required.	U.S. EDA Philadelphia Office
Economic Development Administration Economic Adjustment Grants	Provides grants to design and implement strategies to adjust to serious job losses to a local economy, such as natural disasters and defense spending reductions.	U.S. EDA Philadelphia Office
Environmental Protection Agency Brown-fields Program	Grants for a very limited number of pilot demonstration projects for cleanup of contaminated underused industrial sites.	U.S. EPA Philadelphia Office
Emergency Services Loan Program	Provides low-interest loans to fire and ambulance companies to acquire vehicles, or to renovate or acquire buildings to house vehicles.	PA Emergency Management Agency
Keystone Opportunity Zone	State program provides a range of benefits to locally-nominated, State-designated areas that are financially distressed. One major benefit involves greatly reduced local real estate taxes for an initial set of years.	PA DCED
Enterprise Zone Program, PA	Encourages investment in "enterprise zones" that are distressed areas designated by the State. The main benefits include: low-interest loan pools (mainly for building acquisition, construction, renovation and machinery), local technical assistance in connecting with financing and technical resources, and preferences in certain State grant and loan programs. A priority is placed upon assistance to industrial businesses. Grants are also available for the initial planning of proposed enterprise zones, and for program administration. See also "E.Z. Tax Credits" below. (This program is completely separate from the Federal Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program.)	PA DCED
Enterprise Zone Tax Credits	Provides State tax credits to businesses located within State-designated Enterprise Zones for new building construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings.	PA DCED

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Flood Control - Army Corps and NRCS Watershed Programs	Various types of projects to manage flooding. Typically, the Army Corps is involved in larger watersheds, while NRCS has primary responsibility for smaller watersheds.	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	Provides 75% funding to relieve imminent hazards from flooding, such as voluntary buy-outs and demolitions of highly flood-prone properties.	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Flood Protection Program, PA	Offers design and construction of flood protection projects. The project must be deemed economically justifiable under the state capital budget process.	PA DEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering
Historic Preservation Tax Credits	Offers Federal income tax credits for a percentage of the qualified capital costs to rehabilitate a certified historic buildings, provided the exterior is restored. The program is generally limited to income-producing properties.	National Park Service
Historic Preservation - Certified Local Government Grants	Provides modest-sized matching grants to provide technical assistance to municipalities that have official historic districts and meet other criteria to be "certified."	Federal, administered by PA Historical and Museum Commission
Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Grants	Matching grants for historic surveys, historic preservation planning and National Register nominations. Available to municipalities and non-profit organizations. Cannot be used for construction.	Federal, administered by PA Historical and Museum Commission
Heritage Parks Program	Provides grants up to 75% of costs for projects within State-designated "Heritage Parks" to preserve and interpret the significant contribution that certain areas made upon the industrial heritage of the state and nation. Funds may be used for four types of projects: Feasibility studies, a Management Action Plan, Special purpose studies, and Implementation projects. Projects are intended to conserve natural, historic and recreational resources relating to industrial heritage to stimulate regional tourism.	PA DCNR
Housing Programs - mainly including Federal HOME Program (Home Investment Partnerships Program)	Provides grants, low-interest loans and loan guarantees to for-profits and non-profits for the construction or rehabilitation of housing for low and/or moderate income persons. Most cities receive HOME funds that they then allocate among eligible applicants. Funds are also provided to local community-based housing development organizations to develop housing. Funds are also provided through private lenders to assist with down payment and closing costs for low income and disabled persons to purchase a home for their own occupancy. The HOPE Homeownership Program subsidizes home ownership of public housing, multi-family units and single family units. Funding can be used for rehab of owner-occupied and rental housing. Other Federally funded housing programs include: Emergency Shelter Grants, Supportive Housing for the Elderly (Section 202), Single Room Occupancy Housing Program, Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities, and Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS. See also HOME Partnerships below.	PA Housing Finance Agency and PA DCED

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Housing Closing Cost Assistance Program	Provides loans to income-eligible, first-time homebuyers for assistance with closing costs. Loans may not exceed 4% of the home's acquisition cost. The loans are at no interest and repayable when the subject home is resold. The home must be located in York County.	York County Community Development Office
HOME Investment Partnership	Provides grants for expanding the supply of housing for low-income persons, including new construction, acquisition and rehabilitation. Local governments may apply, which may be on behalf of public agencies or for-profit or non-profit developers. PHFA administers Federal HOME funds for financing 5 or more units. These projects are usually coordinated with Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits.	Federal HOME funds, administered by PA DCED and PA Housing Finance Agency
PA Industrial Development Authority Financing (PIDA)	Provides low interest loans for construction, renovation and site preparation of buildings for new employers. Primarily funds industrial projects.	PIDA and PA DCED
Industrial Sites Reuse Program, PA ("Brownfields")	Provides grants of up to 75% and low interest loans for assessment of environmental contamination and remediation work at former industrial sites. Available to private companies, non-profit economic development agencies or authorities that own the land. Mainly targeted towards cities. Financing is not available to the company that caused the contamination.	PA DCED in cooperation with PA DEP
Infrastructure Development Program, PA. (replaced BID Program)	Provides grants and low interest loans for public and private infrastructure improvements needed for a business to locate or expand at a specific site. Financing is also available for infrastructure to redevelop industrial sites that have been idle more than 6 months, such as acquisition and demolition. Primarily available for industries, research facilities, company headquarters and business park developments. A 2:1 private to public match is typically required. A commitment is required to create jobs as a condition of funding. Generally applicants must be municipalities or economic development organizations.	PA DCED
TEA 21 Transportation Enhancements Program (Part of Federal Transportation Efficiency Act)	Provides grants of up to 80% for: facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, development of scenic or historic route programs, landscaping and other scenic beautification along highways, historic preservation, restoration of historic transportation facilities (such as canals), preservation of rail corridors (particularly for bicycle/walking routes), control and removal of outdoor advertising, archeological research, and mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff. All projects must have a direct relationship to transportation.	U.S. DOT funds administered by PennDOT
Intermunicipal Projects Grants	Promotes cooperation between neighboring municipalities so as to foster increased efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of municipal services at the local level.	PA DCED
Job Creation Tax Credits, PA	Provides State tax credits to businesses that commit to create new jobs in PA within the next 3 years. Must create 25 new jobs or 20% of the existing work force. The jobs must pay over a certain minimum income. The business must explain how it exhibits leadership in technological applications.	PA DCED
Keystone Historic Preservation Funds	Provides 50% matching grants to fund analysis, acquisition or rehabilitation of historic sites. The site must be on the National Register of Historic Places, or officially determined to be eligible for listing. The site must be accessible to the public after funding. The grants can be made to public agencies or non-profit organizations.	PA Historical and Museum Commission
Keystone Rec., Park & Cons. Program - Land Trust Grants	Grants to well-established non-profit land trusts and conservancies to plan for and acquire critical natural areas. Land that is acquired must be open to the public.	PA DCNR

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Keystone Rec., Park & Cons. Program - Community Grants	Provides 50% matching grants to municipalities to fund: overall planning for park and recreation, master plans for individual parks, acquisition of parkland and nature preserves, countywide natural area inventories, and rehabilitation and improvements to public recreation areas. Grants up to \$20,000, without a local match, are available for material and design costs in small municipalities.	PA DCNR Regional Offices
Local Government Capital Projects Loan Program	Provides low interest loans to municipalities with populations of 12,000 or less for the purchase of equipment and the purchase, construction, renovation or rehabilitation of municipal facilities. Priorities are given to projects that are necessary for public health and safety or involve intergovernmental cooperation.	PA DCED
Low Income Housing Tax Credit, Federal	Offers Federal income tax credits to non-profit and for-profit developers of housing for low-income persons. Non-profits can then sell their credits to investors.	PA Housing Finance Agency
Main Street Program (now "New Communities Program")	In the downtowns of designated "Main Street Communities," provides initial planning grants and administrative grants over a 3 year period to pay a large share of the costs of a professional manager to coordinate downtown revitalization efforts. May receive matching grants for facade restoration and other design improvements. Usually limited to municipalities of 5,000 to 50,000 persons.	PA DCED
Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund	Provides low-interest loans to acquire or upgrade machinery and equipment and related engineering and installation for industrial, agricultural, processing and mining businesses. The business must agree to create or preserve jobs as a condition of the financing.	PA DCED
Minority Business Development Authority, PA	Provides low-interest loans for businesses owned and operated by minorities. Can generally be used for industrial, international trade, franchise, retail and commercial uses. Can be used for site acquisition, building construction and renovation, machinery and working capital.	PA Minority Business Development Authority & PA DCED
Municipalities Financial Recovery Act, PA	Provides technical advice and grants for special purposes (such as studies to improve service efficiency) within municipalities that have been officially designated as financially distressed. After application and designation, the municipality must follow a Financial Recovery Plan.	PA DCED
Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit Program	Authorizes State corporate income tax credits to private companies to donate funds for services to low-income persons or impoverished neighborhoods. The services typically include neighborhood revitalization, job training, education, social programs to reduce welfare dependency or crime prevention. The tax credit usually equals 50 to 70% of the eligible donation. Partnerships are required between the business and a neighborhood organization.	PA DCED
National Recreational Trails Funding (Symms NRTA)	Provides grants for the acquisition and development of recreation trails (which may include trails for motorized vehicles). A 50% local match is required. Applications may be made by Federal, State or local government agencies or organizations.	Federal, administered by PA DCNR
On-Lot Septic System Program	Offers low-interest loans to limited income households to repair failing on-lot septic systems.	PennVest and PA Housing Finance Agency
Opportunity Grant Program (replaced Sunny Day Fund)	Offers grants to create or preserve very substantial numbers of jobs. May be used for job training, infrastructure, land and building improvements, machinery and equipment, working capital, or environmental assessment and cleanup.	Can only be applied for through the Governors Action Team

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>General Description of Program</b>	<b>Administering Agency</b>
PEDFA Financing	Provides low-interest rate financing of business growth. Projects that can be funded with bonds that are exempt from Federal income tax have a lower interest rate than other types of projects. The lower rate financing is limited to activities such as site acquisition, building construction and rehabilitation and new equipment - for manufacturing and certain transportation and utility uses. The higher rate is available to a broader range of businesses and a much wider variety of expenditures.	PA Economic Financing Authority-- Applications are made through a local Industrial Development Corp. or Authority
PennCAP	Provides a guarantee of loans to businesses made by participating banks.	DCED-- Apply through a participating bank
PENNVEST	Offers low interest loans for construction and improvement of drinking water and wastewater systems. Outright grants may be available for highly distressed communities. Mainly intended for public systems, but some private systems may be approved. Water projects are funded through the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund. Sewage projects are funded through the Clean Water Revolving Fund. In addition, PennVest is authorized to provide loans for projects to control existing stormwater problems, such as separating stormwater from sanitary sewage. The "Advance Funding Program" provides low-interest loans for feasibility studies and engineering of systems if the utility cannot fund such work itself.	PA Infrastructure Investment Authority and PA DEP Bureau of Water Supply Management-- Involves both U.S. EPA and State funds
PIDA - PA Industrial Development Authority (PIDA) Programs	Makes available low-interest financing to businesses and industrial development agencies to create or retain business jobs. Can be used for industrial, research, agricultural processing and major office uses. Can be used for site acquisition, building construction or renovation, multi-tenant spec buildings and industrial park development. A lower interest rate is available for advanced technology projects and in enterprise zones and areas of high unemployment.	PIDA and PA DCED Applications are typically made through a local Industrial Development Corp. or Authority
Nutrient Management Plan Development Incentive Program	Grants of \$4 per acre are available to farmers to cover up to 75% of the cost of preparing nutrient management plans. Low interest loans are also available through the State to assist in implementing nutrient management-related best management practices.	York County Conservation District
Rails to Trails, PA	Provides grants for feasibility studies, master site plans, acquisition and improvement of former railroad lines for recreation trails. A 50% local match is required. Open to municipalities, authorities and non-profits.	PA DCNR Field Offices

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Rural Economic and Community Development Programs, U.S.	<p>Federal programs available in rural areas:</p> <p>Business &amp; Industrial Guaranteed Loan Program - Provides partial guarantees of loans by lenders for working capital, machinery, buildings, land and certain types of debt refinancing. Loans can be made to businesses, municipalities or non-profit organizations.</p> <p>Intermediary Re-lending Loans - provides very low-interest loans to non-profit organizations to reloan for businesses and community development projects.</p> <p>Rural Business Enterprise Grants (former Ind. Dev. Grants) - provides grants for acquisition of land and construction of buildings and utilities to facilitate development of small businesses.</p> <p>Home Ownership Loans - aid low- and moderate-income rural residents or buy, build or repair their dwelling.</p> <p>Rural Rental Housing Loans - assist individuals or organizations to build or rehab rental units for low-income and moderate-income residents in rural areas.</p> <p>Home Improvement and Repair Loans and Grants - assist very low-income rural homeowners to remove health and safety hazards in their homes or to improve handicap accessibility.</p> <p>Rural Housing Site Loans - assist in purchasing sites for housing development by private, public or non-profit organizations.</p> <p>Housing Preservation Grants - assist non-profits and public agencies with grant funds to assist low-income owner-occupants and owners of low-income apartments with repairing homes in rural areas.</p>	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Rural Development Administration (former Farmers Home Admin.)
Recycling Market Development Loan Fund	Provides low-interest loans to businesses to purchase recycling source-separating equipment.	PA DEP Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management
Recycling Grants (under Act 101 of 1988)	Grants for up to 90% of municipal costs to develop and implement recycling programs, such as the purchase of recycling bins and composting equipment. Grants are also available to counties for a recycling coordinator, waste management plans and pollution prevention education.	PA DEP Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management
Rivers Conservation Program, PA	Offers 50% grants to conserve and enhance river resources. Typically, funding is first provided for a conservation plan for a waterway. Then after the plan is approved, grants are possible to carry out the plan. Available to municipalities, authorities and non-profits.	PA DCNR
Rural Utilities Service Financing	Offers low-interest loans for drinking water and sewage projects for rural areas and small towns. The "Water and Water Disposal Loan Program" provides loans for water supply, wastewater disposal, solid waste disposal and stormwater management systems for rural areas and towns with a population less than 10,000 persons. Available to municipalities, authorities and non-profit corps. Grants up to 75% of project costs may be available for highly distressed areas. Also guarantee loans by private lenders. Also provides grants to non-profit organs. to provide technical assistance to rural communities or for a circuit rider to serve several rural water systems. Also offers emergency grants to communities that have experienced a significant decline in quantity or quality of drinking water.	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service
Shared Municipal Services	Provides modest-sized 50/50 matching grants to promote cooperation among municipalities, in order to increase the efficiency of public services. Two or more municipalities may apply, or a council of governments.	PA DCED

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

<b>Name of Program</b>	<b>General Description of Program</b>	<b>Administering Agency</b>
Small Business First	Provides low-interest loans for projects by businesses that generally have less than 100 employees. Generally, the funding can be used for site acquisition, building construction, machinery, working capital, environmental compliance, defense-cutback impacts, recycling, technology, export and computer activities. This is also one of the few sources of funding that can be used for restaurants, hotels and motels. The recipient must agree to create or preserve jobs.	PA DCED An application can be made through an "Area Loan Organization"
Small Business Incubator Program	Provides loans and grants for facilities in which a number of new businesses operate under one roof with affordable rents, sharing services and equipment and having equal access to a wide range of professional, technical, and financial programs.	PA DCED
SBA Financing	Offers low-interest financing for smaller businesses, including: - microloans and microenterprise grants - Section 7(a) Guaranteed Business Loans - Section 504 Loans to allow certified development organizations to make long-term loans for real estate and other fixed assets	U.S. Small Business Administration
Sewage Facility Planning Grants	Grants to pay up to 50% of the costs to prepare a new sewage facilities plan or update an existing plan, under State Act 537 of 1966.	PA DEP
Small Communities Planning Assistance Program (SCPAP)	Provides grants up to 100% of the costs to eligible municipalities to prepare comprehensive plans, development regulations and special strategies for development. Generally, 51% of the municipality's residents must be low or moderate income, according to the census or a survey. Limited to municipalities under 10,000 population.	Federal CDBG administered by PA DCED
Small Water System Regionalization Grants	Provides grants for feasibility studies concerning the merger of small drinking water systems.	PA DEP Bureau of Water Supply
Solid Waste Facility Programs	Programs provide grants for municipalities to review proposed solid waste facilities within their borders. Programs also provide funding for municipal inspectors of facilities and for host fees from operators.	PA DEP Bureau Land Recycling and Waste Management
State Planning Assistance Grant Program (SPAG)/World Class Communities	Assists local governments and counties to prepare comprehensive plans, downtown plans, special community development studies and development regulations. Typically provides 50% of the eligible costs. Is being supplemented with a new program called "World Class Communities".	PA DCED
Stormwater Management Grants (Under State Act 167 of 1978)	Grants for cooperative efforts at the watershed level among municipalities for stormwater planning and ordinances. Grants are typically made to counties, but may be made to municipalities.	PA DEP Bureau of Watershed Conservation
Stream Improvement Program	Provides design and construction assistance to eliminate imminent threats to flooding and streambank erosion.	PA DEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

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Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Tire Pile Cleanup Grant	Grants to municipalities to provide reimbursement for costs of cleaning up large piles of used tires.	PA DEP Bureau of Land Recycling & Waste Management
Urban Forestry Grants	Provides grants for tree planting projects. Is also a Federal "America the Beautiful" grant program for tree planting.	PA DCNR
Water Supply Plan & Well-Head Protection Grants	Provides grants to counties to plan for water supplies at the county level and to implement programs to protect the wellheads of public wells.	PA DEP Bureau of Water Supply

Sources: Publications and internet sites of various agencies, in addition to Pennsylvanian magazine.

Abbreviations: DCED = PA. Dept. of Community and Economic Development  
 HUD = U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development  
 NRCS = U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service  
 DCNR = PA. Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources  
 DEP = PA. Dept. of Environmental Protection

**ACTION PROGRAM**

The following table summarizes the major recommendations of this Plan. Certain items are recommended as high priorities. The timing of each recommendation is listed, as well which agencies should have the primary responsibility to carry out the recommendation.

**LAND USE AND HOUSING PLAN**

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations at end of this table)
Provide compatible land use patterns that avoid nuisances between uses and traffic conflicts, particularly across municipal borders. - Update the Borough's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to carry out the Land Use Plan.	✓	Short-range	Council, PC, Adj. Mun.
- Emphasize major landscaped buffers, earth berms and large setback between incompatible development, including across municipal borders.	✓	Continuous	Council, PC, Adj. Mun.
- Preserve a green corridor along the Letort Spring Run and adjacent parts of the Molly Grub creek.	✓	Continuous	Council, PC, Adj. Mun., Letort Auth., Property-owners
- Promote a new use of the Thornwald Mansion that will involve sensitive rehabilitation of the building and a use compatible with the surrounding Thornwald Park and adjacent homes.		Short-range	Council, PC, ZHB
- Develop a system of recreation trails throughout the area, including a connection from Dickinson Park to Valley Meadows Park along Ritner Highway to the unused railroad corridor. Provide a trail from the Army Heritage Center into Carlisle. Improve the shoulders of Waggoner's Gap Road, Route 34 south and Route 641 east for use as bicycle routes.		Continuous	Council, PC, Adj. Mun., Letort Auth., Property-owners, TCRPC
- Encourage redevelopment of the main Carlisle Hospital site into a residential development that is similar in character to the surrounding neighborhood.	✓	Short-range	Council, PC, Hospital Foundation Board
- Make sure that new development in older neighborhoods occurs in a manner that is compatible with adjacent homes, including limiting front yard parking and front garage doors. Extend the best features of older development into new areas.	✓	Continuous	Council, PC

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations at end of this table)
- Promote clustering of homes with permanent preservation of open space to provide a large buffer next to the Turnpike and adjacent industrial zoning districts.		Short-range	Council, PC
- Promote a medium density in most residential areas, while encouraging singles, side-by-side twins and townhouses that are most likely to involve owner-occupied housing. Avoid new high density apartment development.	✓	Short-range	Council, PC
- Encourage intensified reuse or redevelopment of the Carlisle Plaza Mall and MJ Carlisle Mall, mainly for commercial development.	✓	Short-range	Council, PC, property-owners
- Work to improve the attractiveness of the Army Heritage Drive (formerly Claremont Road) corridor as a visitor link between the Army Heritage Center and the Downtown. Attract uses to this area that will serve visitors.		Mid-range	Council, PC, property-owners
- Encourage merger of existing lots along the west side of Allen Road north of Ritner Highway to allow new commercial development with good traffic access.		Mid-range	Council, PC, property-owners
- Promote high-quality light industrial, research and office development in the western part of Carlisle, with a campus-like setting that helps to attract new employers.	✓	Short-range	Council, PC, property-owners
- Carefully control the types of industrial uses on smaller sites that are surrounded by homes.	✓	Continuous	Council, PC, ZHB
- Manage and coordinate traffic access from new development in the western part of Carlisle to avoid traffic congestion and safety problems.		Continuous	Council, PC, PennDOT
- Work with adjacent municipalities to provide more compatible development, particularly west of the Meeting House Heights development and south of Valley Meadows.		Short-range	Council, PC, Adj. Mun.
Emphasize code enforcement to avoid blight in neighborhoods.	✓	Continuous	Council
Carry out the Hope Station Comprehensive Services Program in the Memorial Park area, including housing rehabilitation, job training, and volunteer involvement.	✓	Short-range	Council, Neighborhood Council

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations at end of this table)
Work to combine job training funding with housing rehabilitation programs.		Continuous	Co. Redev., Job Training Organizations
Work to increase home ownership, including expanding programs to help persons afford closing costs of home purchases. Provide incentives to de-convert apartments in dense neighborhoods in reduce parking problems and improve neighborhood stability.	✓	Continuous	Co. Redev., financial institutions, PHFA.
Assist in providing housing for persons with specialized needs, while avoiding the overburdening of the Borough with more than its fair share of subsidized housing and social services.		Continuous	Co. Redev., housing organizations
Consider tax abatements for new construction for a number of years in a limited geographic areas to promote new investment.		Short-range	Council, Co. Econ. Dev.
Improve the attractiveness of major entranceways to Carlisle and the surrounding region.		Continuous	Council, PC, Adj. Mun., Business owners
Make sure that Borough residents have the practical job skills needed by employers.		Continuous	Job training organizations, School District
Emphasize attracting new jobs that provide sufficient income and benefits to support families.	✓	Continuous	Co. Econ. Dev., job training organizations
Make sure that local regulations and permit processes are as streamlined as is reasonable.		Short-range	Council, PC, ZHB, Borough Staff

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Continue the existing historic district regulations and consider opportunities for limited expansions if there is grass-roots support.	✓	Continuous	Council, HARB, Historic organizations
Seek cost-effective ways of preserving historic buildings, including providing information and advice to property-owners.		Continuous	HARB, Borough Staff, Historic organizations
Consider carefully targeted zoning provisions and incentives to help protect historic buildings that are outside of the Historic District. This should include an 80 day waiting period before significant buildings can be demolished.		Short-range	Council, PC, HARB
Prepare more detailed historic district standards and a Design Guidebook to illustrate proper rehabilitation methods.		Short-range	HARB, PHMC

DOWNTOWN PLAN

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Strengthen the Downtown as the business, entertainment, cultural and civic center for the region. - Stress key markets for Downtown businesses, including persons who work, live or go to college nearby, and persons attending cultural and theater programs in the area.	✓	Continuous	DCA, Council, Co. Redev.
- Stress greater coordination in hours of Downtown businesses. Encourage longer evening business hours - especially to at least 6 p.m.		Continuous	DCA
- Aggressive market the Downtown to businesses and customers.		Continuous	DCA
- Promote a balanced mix of uses in the Downtown. Develop additional high quality upper story office space and market-rate upper story apartments.	✓	Continuous	DCA, Council, PC, Redev. Auth.

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
- Improve the appearance of the fronts of buildings that have not yet been restored. Add additional landscaping in rear parking areas, and improve the appearance and feeling of safety of walkways between parking areas and businesses.		Continuous	Council, PC, Property-owners, DCA, Redev. Auth.
- Locate as many government offices as possible in the Downtown.		Continuous	County, State and Federal agencies.
- Properly manage parking to serve different needs, with an emphasis upon making sure the most convenient spaces are available for high turnover by customers parking for less than 2 hours.		Continuous	Borough Staff
- Consider a residential parking permit system on residential blocks that are close to the College and Law School, particularly during hours when a parking shortage is present. Encourage institutions to provide additional parking.		Short-range	Council, neighborhood organizations, Dickinson College, Law School
- Provide financial incentive programs to attract private investment into the Downtown, such as tax abatement and low-interest funding for facade and fire safety improvements.		Continuous	Council, Co. Redev. Auth., Co. Econ. Dev.
- Emphasize a feeling of security in the Downtown, including continued bicycle patrols and controls on disruptive loitering.		Continuous	Council, Police
- Improve pedestrian safety in the Downtown, including additional extensions of curbs at intersections and more prominent cross-walks.	✓	Continuous	Council, Police, Borough Staff
- Use special events to attract visitors, customers and businesses. Find ways to attract persons who are visiting other parts of the region into the Downtown.		Continuous	DCA, Non-Profit Organs., Regional Tourism Organ.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Work with PennDOT to resolve traffic congestion bottlenecks and traffic safety problems, such as encouraging new road links around trouble-spots (as described in plan text). Seek funding through the 12 Year Plan to resolve traffic problems in the region.	✓	Continuous	PennDOT, TCRPC, Borough Council, Adj. Mun.
Minimize traffic through residential neighborhoods, and seek to reduce truck traffic through the Downtown.		Continuous	PennDOT, TCRPC, Borough Council, Adj. Mun.
Work to carry out the Route 465/I-81 Land Use and Traffic Impact Study, including making sure that needed improvements are made to the interchange and Allen Road/Route 465.		Continuous	PennDOT, TCRPC, Borough Council, Adj. Mun.
Seek improvements to the Carlisle Airport.		Continuous	PennDOT, FAA, TCRPC
Improve pedestrian and bicycle access and encourage greater use of public transit, including providing additional park and ride lots. Study the potential of expanded public transit service in the region. Seek commuter rail service to Harrisburg.		Continuous	PennDOT, CAT, TCRPC, Borough Council, Adj. Mun.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Improve existing parks and playgrounds to meet a wide variety of recreational needs. Develop a new linear park between the Nottingham and Valley Meadows developments and adjacent proposed industrial development. Complete the major renovation of the Borough's Community Center.		Continuous	Borough Council, Borough Parks and Recreation

*Borough of Carlisle Comprehensive Plan*

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Emphasize high-quality police, emergency medical and fire protection services. Promote continued cooperation between providers, including those in adjacent municipalities. Provide new facilities for the Police Department. Concentrate upon community-based policing.	✓	Continuous	Emergency providers, Borough Council, Adj. Mun.
Continually explore ways to minimize Borough government expenses and increase revenues, including use of grants.	✓	Continuous	Borough Council, Borough Staff
Continue to provide excellent water and sewage services, with regular investments to provide reliable services.		Continuous	Borough Staff

NATURAL FEATURES PLAN

Recommended Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Protect important natural features, with a special emphasis upon the Letort Spring Run and mature trees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continually work to avoid and address stormwater problems.</li> <li>- Continue to limit development in flood-prone areas.</li> <li>- Work with neighboring municipalities, State agencies and volunteer organizations to preserve important natural areas around Carlisle.</li> <li>- Maintain and plant thick vegetation along streams to protect water quality and fishing habitats.</li> </ul>	✓	Continuous	PC, ZHB, Borough Council, Letort Auth., Property-owners, Adj. Mun.

Abbreviations of Responsible Agencies/Groups:

- Council = Carlisle Borough Council
- PC = Carlisle Borough Planning Commission
- ZHB = Carlisle Zoning Hearing Board
- Adj. Mun. = Adjacent Municipalities
- DCA = Downtown Carlisle Association
- Letort Auth. = Letort Regional Authority
- Co. Ec. Dev. = Cumberland County Economic Development Office
- Co. Redev. = Cumberland County Redevelopment Authority
- TCRPC = Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and the Cumberland County Planning Commission
- PennDOT = Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- PHFA = Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
- HARB = Borough Historic Architectural Review Board
- PHMC = Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

