

Keeping LANCASTER Current

AN HOURGLASS PUBLICATION

Lancaster County Growth Management Issues

June 24, 2009

FYI

Joe Riley, meet Chris Leinberger, meet Fred Kent

In the past few years the Hourglass has given Lancaster the opportunity to hear from three of the nation's most knowledgeable and best-respected experts on how to revitalize downtowns, making them more exciting places to live, work, and visit. They remind us that **what we do defines who we are, what we value, and how we want to be perceived.** While we may not agree with every recommendation they have made to us, **there is great wisdom and consistency in what they had to say.** [To read the Paper.](#)

COUNTIES WANT TO RAISE SALES TAX TO INCREASE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVENUES, PROPERTY TAX RELIEF - The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) reports **county commissioners from across Pennsylvania are continuing to urge state lawmakers to grant counties the ability to raise sales taxes locally by 1 percentage point.** Commissioners are advocating for [legislation](#), sponsored by state Rep. Mike Sturla, D-Lancaster, that would **allow individual counties to levy an additional 1 percent sales tax, with 60 percent of the tax revenues to be used for lowering property taxes.** Currently the state's sales tax is 6 percent; however two counties - Philadelphia and Allegheny - have already been given legislative approval to levy an additional 1 percentage point of sales tax.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND STREET DESIGN -The [Congress for the New Urbanism](#) (CNU), [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA), and fire marshals from across the country have partnered together on an Emergency Response & Street Design Initiative. **This initiative is aimed at reconciling the growing desire for appropriately sized and connected streets with emergency responders' access needs.** [To read the report.](#)

CHARRETTES ARE KEY TO EARLY ENGAGEMENT - Local government managers know that **communities benefit when citizens participate in planning for growth and development**, particularly when a developer proposes a large-scale project that has the potential to transform a neighborhood. Yet **conventional planning processes typically attract limited public participation.** Often, citizens don't hear about—or have time to attend—the various public meetings in which details are reviewed and discussed. Instead, they show up at the final public hearing where elected officials are set to vote on the project. And if the proposed development is controversial, as many large-scale projects are, residents might complain that they never had a chance to shape the plans. **One solution is the charrette**, an intensive planning process in which **community members and decision makers meet to map out a detailed vision and plans** for growth in a given area. Learn more about charrettes with a new tool from the [National Charrette Institute](#) (NCI). NCI created a DVD titled “NCI Charrette System: Stories of Community Transformation” that places viewers inside a seven-day charrette in which residents and charrette teams create a community vision and develop a feasible plan for realizing it. The DVD's 34-minute documentary tells three stories of community transformation—in East Fort Myers, Florida; Providence, R.I.; and Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Funding support provided by the [National Endowment for the Arts](#). For more information go to this [link](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Cost of Sprawl & What it means to Our Community - Tuesday, September 29, 2009, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Farm and Home Center – Fourth Annual Smart Growth Summit sponsored by The [Coalition for Smart Growth](#). Keynote speaker Joanne Denworth, Senior Policy Manager for the PA Governor's Office and Founder of [10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania](#). The summit will address ways to manage the costs of sprawl through smart growth practices. The program content will feature industry leaders who will **focus on the positive financial implications of implementing the principles of Smart Growth** in such areas as sewer, water, transportation, mass transit, education, parks and public safety services.

INTERESTING ARTICLES / REPORTS

[Government Benefits Comparison Tool](#)

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence and the Government Finance Officers Association have partnered on a **new free tool that provides detailed health care and pension data on the typical benefits cities and counties offer their retirees**, and how they pay or plan to pay for these benefits. **The tool allows the user to search by population size, state, and geographic region, and by size of the general fund revenue.** [Learn more and try the tool.](#)

[A 60-YEAR PERSPECTIVE ON PENNSYLVANIA'S RURAL POPULATION](#)

- A 60-year analysis of population data and population projections by the [Center for Rural Pennsylvania](#) revealed that **Pennsylvania's rural population is likely to grow slowly and unevenly, and that the average age of its residents will increase.**

Enabling Informed Growth Management
Decision Making for Lancaster County

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