

Keeping LANCASTER Current

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Lancaster County Growth Management Issues

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FYI

PROMOTING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES - The challenge to making livable communities a reality lies in convincing policy makers to revamp a complex tax code that encourages sprawl and traffic congestion at the expense of “walkable,” mixed-use development and mass transit. That is the primary conclusion of this [new report](#) issued by the [American Institute of Architects](#) and partnering organizations at the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Financing Forum.

The report details the billions of dollars in tax credits and incentives available to encourage green building construction. However, this tax policy in large part is applied without any appreciation of the location of these buildings. As a result, the tax code has opened the floodgates to sprawl. One example cited by the report is the depreciation deduction, which applies only to new construction. Because of this limitation, new construction is encouraged on new land at the expense of renovating historic properties on existing property. And, this new construction has little incentive to be designed to last significantly longer than the depreciation period.

Livability Principles

1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

Adopted by the Partnership of Livable Communities: Dept. of Transportation, Dept. of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency

REVITALIZING CITIES WITH INNOVATIVE PARKS – (The Dirt) Cities can either create new parks on undeveloped land or transform brownfields into park space. While some parks can be created at the edge of wildland, which really involves a “process of conservation”, new parks more often need to be created out of old sites. Increasingly, cities must buy up cheap land where they can, finding any “useable or affordable spaces,” including rooftops. [To read the article.](#)

FACING THE URBAN CHALLENGE: REIMAGINING LAND USE IN AMERICA’S DISTRESSED OLDER CITIES: THE FEDERAL ROLE Policy – (Brookings) The end of World War II heralded an era of urban disinvestment in the United States. Suburban flight, deindustrialization and automobile-oriented sprawl triggered massive population and job loss in the cities that had driven America’s economic growth for the preceding century. The next few years may be some cities’ last opportunity to begin rebuilding before the cumulative weight of abandonment, poverty, and disinvestment engulfs even their strongest neighborhoods. This, then, is the moment for bold federal action, but this action should reflect a different approach to using federal resources, fostering transformation based on a new vision of the future of these cities. [To read the full paper.](#)

INTERESTING ARTICLES

[Taking Another Look At A Public Square](#) - (*Planning Commissioners Journal*)
A group of planners and designers recently headed out to audit Petrossian Square in Manhattan, carefully observing how people use the space.

[Too Many Stores](#) - (*Art Voice*)
Are there too many stores? Growing evidence says yes, that the retail market is unlikely to spring back and with the shift to internet spending, it's likely that we've already got more retail space than we need.

[Strategies for Translating Facts Into Useful Information](#) – (*ICMA*)
Understanding how to evaluate and use data to show results is becoming an increasingly critical skill set for local managers. Shrinking city budgets have created more competition for limited dollars, even among worthy projects. At the same time, councils and citizens are demanding more transparency in how their money is being spent, and with what result.

[Hard Times Spur Ideas for Change](#) – (*NY Times*) As states around the country gird for another grim budget year, more leaders have begun to talk not of nipping, not of tucking, but, in essence, of turning government upside down and starting over. Ever growing is the list of states, municipalities and agencies with blue ribbon committees aimed at reconsidering what government should be.

**Enabling Informed Growth Management
Decision Making for Lancaster County**

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