

*Lancaster Crime  
Commission*

Final Report to  
The People of Lancaster

February 2003

## Dedication

*"I'm so glad the Crime Commission exists and is looking into Lancaster's problems, but I'm afraid it might be an exercise in futility. I'm afraid your reports will just fill a shelf somewhere and get dusty. We hear a lot of talk in Lancaster, but I don't see a lot of action and I don't have much faith when a city can't even come up with a trash-hauling plan. Some of us feel like we're the good kid in the family and the parents have to spend so much time with our juvenile delinquent brother, they have no time for us. Please don't forget us. We live here, too."*

*Maria Coole  
630 Third Street  
Lancaster, PA*

Testimony at the Lancaster Crime Commission Community Meeting  
St. Joseph's Church  
November 13, 2002

The Final Report of the Lancaster Crime Commission is dedicated to Maria Coole and all of the other citizens of the great city of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who require this city's and county's leadership to act respectfully, responsibly and expediently to restore order and reduce crime.

# Lancaster Crime Commission Final Report to the People of Lancaster February 2003

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### Exhibits

- Lancaster Crime Commission Initial Report  
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- Lancaster Crime Commission Housing,  
Real Estate and Quality of Life Report  
[www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- Lancaster Crime Commission Research  
Report -- Lancaster Neighborhoods:  
Perceptions of Disorder, Crime and  
Community Life  
[www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- The Mayor's Code Enforcement Task Force Report  
[www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)

- The Mayor's Police Reorganization Task Force Report
  - [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
  - The Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force Report
- [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)

## Introduction

Despite all of its many strengths, the city of Lancaster is teetering on the edge of an abyss. A serious choice must be made.

We can elect to pull back from the brink, to recreate a city of mutual respect, civility and order. Or, we can yield Lancaster to insolence and contempt; to drugs, crime and street gangs.

The choice could not be more clear-cut or more urgent.

Make no mistake that the quality of life in Lancaster is declining for all of its citizens. As the city diminishes, so too does the county. No wall of ignorance or disregard can be built tall enough around the city to protect the county from deterioration, apathy and the effects of drugs and poverty.

Lancaster is, after all, the county's financial, legal, cultural, historic and governmental center.

Most significantly, Lancaster is home to 56,500 people. We are the county's most densely populated municipality and its poorest. Our people come from all walks of life, with every imaginable aspiration. Many Lancaster families have lived in the same neighborhood, even at the same address, for generations. Some of our people arrived only last week.

More than ever before in its 285-year history, Lancaster is an American melting pot. Its racial, ethnic and religious makeup mirrors our nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Individuals and families from virtually every demographic strata and substrata populate our town.

A walk up Lancaster's North Queen Street on most any day provides a snapshot of a city steeped in diversity. Young Hispanic mothers push children in strollers. A black businessman and his white colleague catch a quick lunch at historic Central Market. An Asian American college student window shops while people of every age and description board an RRTA bus bound for home, school or work.

Lancaster today is a mainstream small American city, and is in every respect the "All American City" it was not long ago recognized as being by the National Civic League.

Taken broadly in 2003, that is a characterization carrying both virtues and vices.

By many measurements, Lancaster remains a good place to live, work and raise a family. The traits most Lancastrians share -- demands for safety, dignity and justice, respect for others, hard work, fair play, independence, love of family -- form indivisible bonds far more durable than our differences.

Despite those common attachments, our city is in trouble.

As strong as we are, and as resilient as we try to be, incessant criminal activity breeds fear and resentment as it erodes the quality of life in virtually every city neighborhood.

Our resolve to live in this city is being severely tested by a comparatively small number of thoughtless, selfish people indifferent to the consequences of their actions or inaction.

The perseverance of the many is being strained to the breaking point by the few who are directly responsible for the continuing deterioration of the quality of life in Lancaster.

### **Mounting Criminal Activity**

Lancaster has significant crime problems, typified by the following reports on serious criminal activity:

- A 2002 report by the Lancaster Bureau of Police shows that juvenile crime has skyrocketed in the city, and the trend is continuing. Since 1972, total serious offenses committed by youth 17 years of age and under are up a staggering 122%, including a 312% increase in drug offenses, and a 1,000% leap in robberies.
- The FBI's 2001 Uniform Crime Report, released in October 2002, notes that crimes against property in Lancaster, such as burglary, theft, vehicle theft and arson, continue at alarmingly high levels. On the bright side, the FBI reports that, contrary to a national upsurge, violent crime (murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) declined in the same time period. For the 2001 - 2002 period, Lancaster Police Chief William M. Heim's Crime Summary reflects the FBI's findings. According to Chief Heim, violent crime dropped 6% from 2001 levels, and 23% from 2000 levels. However, compared to 2001, the city in 2002 experienced a significant increase in property crime, including a 13.9% increase in burglary and a 8.2% increase in theft.
- Intelligence sources have pinpointed the presence of national drug gangs in specific Lancaster neighborhoods at specific addresses. In late October 2002, federal agents arrested four alleged Lancaster drug distributors dealing in heroin, cocaine and ecstasy. All are said to have ties to local chapters of Chicago-based gangs.

It is as inarguable as it is obvious that serious criminal activity makes life difficult in virtually every Lancaster neighborhood. In some areas, residents report with conviction that control of the streets has been relinquished to criminals.

In certain areas of the city, law-abiding residents are sporadically forced to witness from their doorsteps drug dealing, prostitution, shootings and acts of apparent random violence. All too often those residents and their neighbors are the innocent victims of robberies and thefts.

What drains away hope is to see the same law-breakers perpetrate these crimes over and over again, with apparent impunity.

An editorial in the October 31, 2002 "Lancaster New Era" accurately summarized the crime situation in Lancaster City. While acknowledging that our city and county are on the right track in terms of running counter to the 2001 national upswing in crime rates, the editorial declared a warning:

*"The victimized individual is not much interested in knowing whether the FBI rates Lancaster County as the safest or 119<sup>th</sup> safest place to live in the country. For the individual resident victimized by crime, Lancaster is not safe."*

### **Following the Downward Spiral**

Individual anecdotes of serious crime in Lancaster over the years could fill volumes. Suffice it is to say that when one considers life in a modern urban environment, Lancaster is not immune to the downward spiral affecting many American cities of similar size and composition.

However, with drug dealing, theft and criminal violence near daily front-page occurrences, it is surprising to some that those are not the crimes Lancaster residents find the most distressing.

Rather, it is what some believe are "nuisance" crimes, combined with neighborhood social and physical disorder, that seem to make city living excruciating. That is a belief supported by fact.

The landmark survey of Lancaster residents, "Lancaster Neighborhoods: Perceptions of Disorder, Crime, and Community Life," was published under the auspices of the Lancaster Crime Commission in August 2002, twenty-four months after being initially appointed by Mayor Charlie Smithgall.

It revealed that, while serious offenses cause concern among city residents, perceived disorder at the neighborhood level causes the highest levels of dissatisfaction with life in Lancaster. Loud cars, litter, vandalism, loitering, and noisy neighbors were seen as the "top five" most maddening and pervasive aspects of urban life, more so than crimes ordinarily considered "serious." Similar findings were echoed by the 2002 report of the Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force, and reinforced by the public comments of ordinary citizens speaking during Crime Commission sponsored community meetings.

Call them minor crimes. Call them petty irritants. Call them trivial. But as these aggravations accumulate, city residents ultimately reach a saturation point. Then, we can all call them the key reasons why good people who are able choose to leave this city.

It is axiomatic that the more people are unsatisfied with their neighborhoods, the more likely they are to move out of the city. The survey found that almost 75% of people who are very unsatisfied with their Lancaster neighborhood are likely to move.

When they move, they take pack up their talents and their taxes. They leave behind a city of broken windows, and take with them the future of Lancaster.

### **Fixing Broken Windows**

The disorder -- or perception of disorder -- which plagues Lancaster residents will not go away if ignored. Unaddressed, disorder and crime in Lancaster will grow in both kind and quantity as it has in other urban areas.

In its Initial Report of March 2001, the Crime Commission first publicly advocated what would become the keystone of its future work. It affirmed the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy for fighting and preventing crime and disorder as offering the best hope for success in Lancaster.

Kelling and Cole's ground-breaking *Fixing Broken Windows: Restoring Order and Reducing Crime in Our Communities* (1996) argues that physical neglect and non-violent quality of life offenses increase fear of crime, and empty neighborhoods of people who have a choice of where to live. Ultimately, space is ceded to increasingly predatory individuals who perpetrate more dangerous crimes against property and people.

*Fixing Broken Windows* empowers the people of a community to make neighborhoods safe by focusing all crime fighting efforts on a combination of:

- Aggressive prosecution of crime and disorder
- An emphasis on personal as well as collective responsibility
- Coordination of policing and prevention at the neighborhood level
- The active collaboration of all public and private institutions in a comprehensive crime fighting effort

Findings of the August 2002 Crime Commission survey support the *Fixing Broken Windows* model. "Dealing with disorder should be a top priority not merely to keep the lid on crime, but to make Lancaster a place where people feel safe and secure in orderly neighborhoods," is a major conclusion of the survey.

### **Strategic Initiative Task Forces**

Beginning in early summer 2002, more than 40 Lancaster area business, academic, legal, religious and community leaders enlisted as members of the Crime Commission's Strategic Initiative Task Forces.

An arm of the Crime Commission's Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Committee, the task forces were charged with investigating and issuing recommendations to the Crime Commission at large on:

- Quality of Life Issues in Lancaster's Neighborhoods
- Community Policing and Law Enforcement Organization
- Law Enforcement Response and Reaction
- Prosecution and Judicial System Relationship and Readiness
- Juvenile Justice Issues

The hallmark of the Strategic Initiative Task Forces work was a series of ten public hearings in the fall. The purpose of the hearings was for the members to become better informed by gathering first-hand testimony from invited witnesses. Sixty-three local, regional and national law enforcement, legal, judicial and crime prevention experts and officials offered statements -- candid, occasionally contentious, and always valuable.

Perhaps more important, the Strategic Initiative Task Forces also sponsored a series of four Community Meetings throughout the city. The purpose was to listen and learn straight from the people who live in the neighborhoods about the quality of life in Lancaster. A combined audience of more than 700 citizens heard testimony from 73 voluntary witnesses.

In the words of "Lancaster Intelligencer Journal" columnist Jeff Hawkes, the community meetings "*...tapped into the public's deepest anxieties, whether they be fear of criminals in the shadows or of a power structure that relegates some to society's margins.*" Community members from the most prosperous to the poorest areas of the city took seriously the opportunities to voice grave concerns about criminal activity, law enforcement and the quality of life in Lancaster.

Significantly, community members also provided an abundance of suggested solutions for improvements.

### **Prescription for Future Community Action**

The Crime Commission's Final Report to the people of Lancaster is a union of several efforts, including:

- A reaffirmation of the findings and recommendations of the Crime Commission's Initial Report
- The conclusions and recommendations of the Strategic Initiative Task Forces, representing the final report to the community of the Crime Commission's Law Enforcement and Justice Committee

- The Crime Commission's Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations report
- Crime Commission's Resolutions for Future Action

If it were necessary to select the most vital part of this Final Report, it would be the courses advocated by the Crime Commission's Resolutions for Future Action. These 17 essential steps, adopted individually by vote of Crime Commission members, represent the collective wisdom of the group. If this community is to effectively fight crime and improve the quality of life for its citizens, these collective resolutions are a "prescription for future action" that must be taken seriously by all concerned.

Our recommendations suggest lines of attack for elected and appointed governmental officials, law enforcement officers, business, civic and religious leaders and social services providers. This is an action list, not a wish list. And paramount is citizen participation. For just as the future benefits of a safer city accrue to all, the burden of implementing these improvements falls on the collective shoulders of all, city and county residents alike. It is not free of sacrifice, nor is it free of cost.

In our Initial Report of March 2001, it was our hope to stimulate thought, comment and action. Since then there has been thought. We have heard comment. We have witnessed too little action. Now, nearly two years later, the expectations we first expressed are punctuated by an alarm. The danger signals surround us and demand that immediate steps be taken to save our city.

Author David Rusk is a noted international writer, speaker, and consultant on urban policy. In 2002 Lancaster was placed on his Rusk Report "Watch List" of distressed American cities. Criminal activity plays a major factor in his determinations. Lancaster's listing is a clear warning. It is an admonition to all Lancastrians -- not just the leadership of our city and county -- that soon it may be too late to act; that Lancaster is fast approaching the point of no return.

With this Final Report to the people of Lancaster, the Crime Commission issues a call to all people of good will to rescue our city from the brink.

## The Lancaster Crime Commission Chronicled

Mayor Charles Smithgall created the Lancaster Crime Commission in August 2000 to unite the greater Lancaster community behind a comprehensive crime control and prevention effort.

It was chartered as an independent citizen's initiative free of any political or governmental influence.

The Crime Commission represents an approach to urban crime fighting and neighborhood revitalization unique in Lancaster's history. For the first time, a broadly based citizens' commission publicly worked hand-in-hand with community members, elected and appointed public servants, law enforcement officials, and others to improve the quality of life for all.

Mayor Smithgall challenged the leadership and members of the Crime Commission to mount "a public attack on the druglords, ganglords and slumlords of our community."

We pursue that challenge, first with a reaffirmation of the key findings and recommendations of our March 2001 Initial Report, followed by a chronology of accomplishments, and synopses of major Crime Commission reports to the community.

### Key Findings of the Initial Report

- **The *Fixing Broken Windows*** strategy for fighting and preventing crime and disorder offers the best hope for success in Lancaster.
- **The Neighborhood/Community Policing District** formulation offers the most logical management structure and organizing principle of crime fighting and prevention delivery systems.
- **Housing and Neighborhood Development** is critical to the quality of life in Lancaster, from individual and community safety and health issues to upgrading and maintaining the quality of housing stock and our commercial properties.
- **Positive Public Perception** of public safety, not only in the city central business district but also in all city neighborhoods, is crucial to the future economic success of the city and the county.
- **Comprehensive Data Base.** The community must acquire the ability to collect, analyze and track data to underpin the deployment of crime fighting and prevention resources.

- **Race and Cultural Diversity.** If we expect to achieve the common goal of creating a safer community, we are going to have deal with becoming more culturally competent as a community and as law enforcement officials.
- **Values, Personal Responsibility.** It is clear that no crime prevention effort will succeed until we address the very real breakdown in the community's ability to teach values, particularly to juveniles and young adults.
- **Organization of Crime Fighting Assets.** The Lancaster Bureau of Police and the Lancaster City government must be restructured, staffed and equipped to manage and execute a genuine community policing-driven, *Fixing Broken Windows* approach.
- **Comprehensive Funding and Execution.** Funding and execution of successful solutions are, and will remain, beyond the long-term means of the city government, or even the combined city and county governments. Financial support, and leadership, must come from all levels of both the government and private sector.
- **Mutual Co-operation and Responsibility.** Implementing needed solutions will require the will to accept radical change, a capacity for collaboration, and a willingness to recognize a very bleak reality on the part of the greater Lancaster community and its leadership.

#### **Initial Report Recommended Preliminary Actions**

- **Lancaster Bureau of Police Restructuring.** The comprehensive reorganization and restructuring of the Lancaster Bureau of Police to empower it to execute the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy, employ newly available crime fighting/public safety technologies and take advantage of modern police management regimens.
- **Lancaster City Housing and Neighborhood Development Restructuring.** The comprehensive reorganization and restructuring of the city's system of health, housing and building code enforcement, with the aim of creating a modern, technologically-equipped code policing force simultaneously functioning as a contributing component of our public safety delivery system.
- **Comprehensive Data and Information Base.** The development of a comprehensive data and information base for use by all law enforcement and prevention professionals and organizations in the community.
- **Street Level Public Safety System.** The assumption of responsibility for development, management and funding of a comprehensive street level public

safety system in the central business district by a voluntary cooperative of the businesses and institutions operating within that district.

- **Faith-based Leadership.** The creation of a proactive coalition of Lancaster City and Lancaster County religious leaders, charged with the development of a specific plan for harnessing spiritual resources in the fight to retrieve the next generation of city young people from the culture of drugs, gangs and violence.
- **Drug Trade Disruption and Civil Disorder Elimination.** Lancaster County law enforcement should temper the emphasis on arrests and convictions with an emphasis on sustained disruption of the drug trade and elimination of civil disorder.
- **Increased County Anti-Crime Activities.** The Lancaster County District Attorney's Office and the Lancaster County Commissioners should assume responsibility for the management and funding of specific policing and investigative functions on a county wide basis.
- **Community Policing District Structure.** The adoption of the Community Policing District Structure as the organizing principle for delivery of services, and decision-making by all institutions, with regard to crime fighting, crime prevention and neighborhood revitalization efforts.
- **Operation Clean Sweep.** The immediate adoption of the city's most drug and violence plagued district as the target for an intensive, anti-crime and crime prevention campaign which will utilize all possible resources of crime control in the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy. Repeat of the operation in other high crime districts should be executed as soon as possible.

### **Lancaster Crime Commission And Community Accomplishments**

During the nearly two years since our initial report, the Crime Commission continued working with the community to promote action on the March 2001 recommendations. Many individuals, institutions and organizations joined us, and we garnered ideas from successful programs in other cities. In fact, we discovered some programs here in Lancaster of which we were unaware.

Many of the county's political, law enforcement, religious, and civic leaders responded. Here are the highlights of the collaborative efforts by the Crime Commission and its community partners:

- **"Our Children – How Do We Keep Them Safe?"** This community dialogue took place the month after our initial report. The Crime Commission's Prevention and Youth Actions Committee partnered with Lancaster Healthy Communities to

sponsor the event, which brought together families, community organizations, and civic leaders to air concerns and share ideas.

- **Operation Clean Sweep.** In April of 2001, Mayor Smithgall appointed Police Lt. John Flemming (now Captain Flemming) to the post of coordinator of Operation Clean Sweep. Its goal was to target a specific at-risk neighborhood with a coordinated effort by many agencies—not just the police—to bring about lasting revitalization.
- **“Police – Community Relations: Looking Forward Together.”** The Neighborhood, Community Policing, and Community Relations Committee partnered with Lancaster Healthy Communities in April and November 2001 to sponsor this forum. It focused on developing strategies to foster closer relationships between the community and the police.
- **Police Reorganization Task Force.** Also in April 2001, the Mayor and Police Chief Heim announced a task force associated with the Crime Commission to assist the police department in accessing the latest technologies and best practices and introducing new tools and regimens into the everyday operation of the department.
- **Code Enforcement Task Force.** In May 2001, the Mayor appointed this Crime Commission-recommended task force to explore restructuring the city offices of Housing and Neighborhood Development. After vigorous encouragement by the Crime Commission via a team led by Chris McMurtrie, a Lancaster business leader, the city has made a commitment to reforming its housing inspection and code enforcement along the lines recommended by the Report of the Mayor's Task Force on Code Enforcement. See [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- **Landlord Training Program.** Also in May 2001, the Crime Commission assisted Chief Heim in conducting a certification program, which the Chief had created, to assist landlords and property managers in their ongoing efforts to maintain drug-free properties. The seminar taught landlords how to fairly screen prospective tenants, identify drug activity, and use other tools of successful management. The program was repeated that October.
- **Enterprise Foundation Revitalization Programs.** In May 2001 and again in January 2002, the Crime Commission's Housing, Real Estate, and Quality of Life Committee hosted the Enterprise Foundation to discuss neighborhood revitalization and community development programs around the country, and how the Foundation might help Lancaster in its own revitalization.
- **The Initial phase of Operation Clean Sweep** took place in July 2001, targeting one of Lancaster’s most blighted neighborhoods. Partially funded by a state Weed and Seed grant, the intensive three-day effort involved police, city housing

and structural inspectors, social service agencies, and the Quality of Life Task Force. The mission was to “weed” out the criminals and “seed” positive, lasting changes in the neighborhood. The police roundup was far more effective than the social service follow-up, due primarily to the lack of coordination among the various agencies.

- **Research Committee** of the Crime Commission conducted four surveys measuring residents’ satisfaction with police, perceptions of crime in Lancaster, and ideas regarding neighborhood connectivity. The committee conducted an initial test survey, two surveys of the Operation Clean Sweep neighborhood, and a comprehensive face-to-face citywide survey (September - October 2001) of 2,200 households.
- **Intergovernmental Council on Crime** first met in October 2001, again in January 2002, bringing together city and county government and criminal justice system officials. At this point the Crime Commission realized that cooperation and collaboration are imperative; everyone involved public safety must pull together for the common good; no agency or branch of government can be exempt. This insight led to many of the findings and recommendations in this report.
- **Social Service Conferences.** In October and November 2001, the Quality of Life Task Force partnered with Lancaster Healthy Communities to bring together all the social service agencies serving Lancaster. These conferences began planning how to effectively deliver all the services necessary to assist residents in the Operation Clean Sweep neighborhood. Discussions centered on convening neighbors, accountability of landlords/tenants, issues around displacing residents because of housing condemnations. Recommendations were made regarding the structure, goals and objectives for several kinds of neighborhood revitalization initiatives. Lancaster Healthy Communities is currently working with neighborhood residents, police and churches and institutions in the Clean Sweep neighborhood.
- **Broom Day.** In October 2001, the Crime Commission and the Quality of Life Task Force partnered with the newly formed West King Street Clean Sweep Association to conduct the first “Broom Day.” The mission is to keep sidewalks, curbs, and gutters free of debris and litter and to make businesses more appealing to customers in the Operation Clean Sweep neighborhood.
- **Quality of Life Newsletter.** The Quality of Life Task Force began publishing a quarterly newsletter containing information regarding common nuisances residents face such as litter, abandoned cars, graffiti, excessive noise.
- **The Grime Busters Committee** of the Quality of Life Task Force met with City Council President Stephen Diamantoni, supporter of Keep America Beautiful. Since the two groups had similar objectives, it was agreed to merge them into one

group, which became the Keep Lancaster Beautiful Campaign under the guidance of the Lancaster Campaign.

- **The Public Safety Coalition Formed.** In cooperation with members of the Crime Commission and Police Chief Heim, the Lancaster Alliance spearheaded the April 2002 creation of the Lancaster Public Safety Coalition. Its purpose is to explore the creation of and deployment of a citywide, privately operated, cooperative video surveillance system and other technologically or environmentally driven crime prevention tools.
- **Strategic Initiative Task Force Formed.** Business, government, academic, and religious leaders volunteered in April 2002 to help the Crime Commission examine a variety of law enforcement, criminal justice, and quality of life issues. These leaders formed four Strategic Initiative teams and worked together throughout the balance of the year to gather facts, evaluate findings, hold public hearings, sponsor neighborhood meetings, and finally propose solutions for restoring order and reducing crime.
- **Lancaster County Chiefs of Police Association** joined the Strategic Initiative teams as liaisons in July 2002.
- **Crime Commission Reports On-line.** As of July 2002, the community could now go to [www.LancasterOnline.com](http://www.LancasterOnline.com) to read any report released by the Crime Commission. [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- **Ten Public Hearings.** In the fall of 2002, the Crime Commission's Strategic Initiative Task Forces held a series of ten public hearings, all held in the City Council Chambers in the Southern Market building. The purpose was to gather more information, clarify the issues, listen to differing points of view, and, in the end, gain greater understanding of the severity, scope, and nature of the crime and disorder problems facing the community. The panel also invited suggestions for solutions from its various witnesses, who were called to testify from the police, the District Attorney's office, the judiciary, and various other governmental and law enforcement agencies. Private sector specialists and authorities in fields related to public safety also appeared as expert witnesses.
- **Four Community Meetings.** After the fall 2002 public hearings, we realized that although we had heard from many public officials we needed to hear directly from the public. Four evening meetings were held during November in the four basic quadrants of the city. As many as 200 people attended each meeting, and dozens of residents, from business owners to pastors to block captains, stepped to the podium to speak about the quality of life issues affecting them most.
- **Pro Bono Law Firm.** Noisy bars with drunk patrons who spill out into peaceful neighborhoods can be tough to close or even rein in based on their criminal conduct. One new strategy: file a civil suit against them. Working with District

Attorney Donald Totaro, the Crime Commission formed a team of volunteer attorneys headed by Christopher Mattson of Barley and Snyder. This Pro Bono Law Firm is now pursuing nuisance bars, crack houses, other disorderly establishments and problem properties that threaten the quality of life in city neighborhoods. In December 2002 the attorneys took El Neuvo Deportivo (formerly Rockne's) to court and many nearby residents testified, providing graphic evidence against them. In January 2003 the judge lifted the restaurant's liquor license for a year, prohibited "brown-bagging," but allowed food to be served under a \$50,000 bond to assure compliance with the alcohol ban.

### **Previously Issued Lancaster Crime Commission Community Action Reports**

- **Lancaster Crime Commission Initial Report.** Issued March 2001. A groundbreaking debut of the *Fixing Broken Windows* model of law enforcement and crime prevention. Report warned, "Today the city is in dire jeopardy...caused by the ravages of drug cultures, gang infestation and random violence." Recommended key strategic and tactical steps to improve the quality of life for all citizens. Visit [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- **Report of the Lancaster Crime Commission Housing, Real Estate and Quality of Life Committee.** Issued August 2002. Advocated strong measures to deal with problem properties, code enforcement, public and Section 8 housing, and the "cycle of neglect" in rental properties. Visit [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission) to read the complete report.
- **Report of the Lancaster Crime Commission Research Committee:** "Lancaster Neighborhoods: Perceptions of Disorder, Crime and Community Life." Issued August 2002. Revealing in-depth study gauges city residents' perceptions of major problems, crime concerns, police performance and overall neighborhood satisfaction. Visit [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- **Report of the Mayor's Task Force on Code Enforcement.** Issued March 2002. Examined residential and commercial code enforcement as one tool in a comprehensive neighborhood-based crime reduction strategy. Visit [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)
- **Report of the Mayor's Police Reorganization Task Force.** Issued March 2002. Promotes a restructuring of Lancaster's Bureau of Police to embrace and implement neighborhood policing strategies as advised in *Fixing Broken Windows*. Visit [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)

- **Report of the Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force Report.** Issued August 2002. Contends that "...living in a city free of decay and disorder is not a bonus but a right," and recommends that the Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force become a permanent part of the community. Visit [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)

## **Strategic Initiatives -- Citizen-advocated Recommendations for Immediate Action**

With the publishing of the Crime Commission's Initial Report in March 2001, followed by other committee and task force reports, the city was offered a comprehensive plan aimed at controlling crime, reducing violence and stemming disorder.

While those reports and actions triggered some positive changes by city and county officials over the ensuing 12 months, progress was slow, with the improvements marginal and piecemeal.

Early in 2002, it became clear to Crime Commission leadership that if the sweeping changes in attitude and action needed to save this city were ever to happen, a catalyst was required. That catalyst became known as the Crime Commission Strategic Initiative program.

In May 2002, a broadly-based coalition of more than 40 city and county residents stepped forward to volunteer for the four Strategic Initiative Task Forces, subsets of the Crime Commission's Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Committee.

The citizen group reflected the cultural, social, professional and economic diversity of Lancaster. Liaison members from the Crime Commission, Crime Commission professional staff, county prosecutors, and officers from the Lancaster Bureau of Police and the Lancaster Bureau of Fire supported the task force groups.

The groups were charged with producing community recommendations focusing on Lancaster law enforcement, criminal justice and quality of life. In reaching conclusions and ultimate recommendations, the groups consulted experts and principals in the various fields investigated, and conducted a series of highly visible, occasionally contentious, public hearings. They also looked at the work and recommendations of the Crime Commission, its committees and associated task forces.

These hearings included first-hand testimony from local, regional and national law enforcement and crime prevention experts. Equally important, the general public was invited to voice its views, and offer its solutions, on issues such as community policing, prosecution, social services, code enforcement and other quality of life issues. Hundreds of public officials and private citizens participated in these events.

Collectively, the Strategic Initiative task forces identified five major topics on which to focus joint efforts and offer recommendations:

- The Quality of Life in Lancaster's Neighborhoods

- Community Policing and Law Enforcement Organization
- Law Enforcement Response and Reaction
- Prosecution and Judicial System Relationship and Readiness
- Juvenile Justice

What follows are the Strategic Initiative Task Forces' findings and recommendations on those five major topics, as endorsed by the Crime Commission.

## **I. The Quality of Life in Lancaster's Neighborhoods**

It's the big things that make the headlines, but it's lesser things that make city residents head for new homes in the suburbs.

Crime Commission citywide research and first-hand testimony at community meetings show that irritants such as chronic noise ordinance violations, thoughtless neighbors, public drunkenness, abandoned cars, speeding on city streets, vagrancy, and deteriorating housing take a tally on people over time.

The cumulative effect is an indisputable decline in the quality of life. For some, the fight becomes more effort than it is worth. Urban flight is the inevitable result.

What's equally alarming is that declining quality of life issues have repeatedly been shown to be a harbinger of worse things to come.

In *Fixing Broken Windows*, authors Kelling and Coles use the image of broken windows to explain how neighborhoods decay into disorder and crime if no one attends to them faithfully.

We can begin to fix our broken windows through a coordinated three-front attack on nuisance crimes, deteriorating private and public housing, and a social services establishment currently unable to efficiently and effectively care for those most in need.

### **Nuisance Crimes**

"Nuisance crimes" are a growing problem for residents, police, prosecutors and the judicial system. The prevalence of nuisance crimes in Lancaster creates an atmosphere of disorder that many find as threatening as the actual incidence of major crime.

Rightly or wrongly, the perception exists that there is little punishment for minor crimes in the city of Lancaster and, as a result, their incidence grows. Some of the factors contributing to the perceived and real growth of nuisance crime include:

- The Lancaster Bureau of Police not being staffed to answer non-emergency calls. Consequently, minor crimes (especially ones where the perpetrator has fled) slip to the bottom of the call priority list. Complainants frequently wait hours for an officer to arrive at the scene to investigate and file a report.

- As a result, many residents believe that minor crimes receive little, if any subsequent attention from police. Thus, no matter what the actual rate of closure, residents believe that reports of petty crimes will not result in an arrest unless the perpetrator is caught in the act. Frustrated people stop reporting crimes, further enabling disorder to go unaddressed.
- Most nuisance crimes are ordinance or summary violations. For reasons of manpower and other logistical obstacles, the Lancaster County District Attorney does not represent the city or any other of the county's nearly 60 municipalities in the prosecution of municipal ordinance violations or summary offenses. At considerable expense to taxpayers, civil complaints and prosecutions are handled by the city solicitor. Consequently, when a nuisance crime arrest is made in the city, it is handled at the District Justice level. Hearings have historically been conducted by the police officer who issued the citation, with a verdict rendered by a District Justice at the conclusion of the hearing.

It is our finding that no parties within the criminal or civil law enforcement community have been particularly energetic in the enforcement, prosecution or adjudication of nuisance crimes. Though we may understand that such a commitment has not historically been a community priority, now it must be.

Accordingly, nuisance crimes must be made easier to report. They must receive greater investigative/enforcement attention, they should be prosecuted more frequently and vigorously, and a greater effort must be directed at preventing them.

To reduce the incidence of nuisance crime in the city, the Crime Commission recommends the following measures:

### **Recommendations -- Nuisance Crime Reduction**

**A. *Fixing Broken Windows.*** The full and immediate implementation by the Lancaster Bureau of Police, Lancaster Bureau of Fire, Lancaster Parks and Recreation Department, and the Lancaster City Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development of the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy. The result will be better managed public safety, improvements in the quality of life in all of the neighborhoods, and the provision for 24-7 citywide community policing coverage.

**B. *Ordinance Enforcement.*** The development by the Lancaster Bureau of Police, the Lancaster Bureau of Fire, the Lancaster City Housing and Neighborhood Development Department of a coordinated and aggressive action plan for consistent enforcement of the full range of quality of life ordinances in all neighborhoods of the city.

**C. *Code and Zoning Review.*** The systematic review of all city ordinances, including zoning, should be undertaken by the Bureau of Planning and City Council to guarantee the

consistent and aggressive setting of high standards for the quality of life and public safety of residents.

**D. Aggressive Prosecution and Adjudication.** The public and formal commitment by the Lancaster Bureau of Police, the office of the Lancaster County District Attorney and the individual District Justices of the City of Lancaster to the aggressive prosecution and adjudication of ordinance and summary offense quality of life crimes.

**E. Simpler Complaint Procedure.** The development of a streamlined and simple complaint procedure for citizens reporting quality of life crimes that will be implemented and can be expanded by the Lancaster Bureau of Police and the Lancaster County District Attorney's Office.

**F. 911-311-211 Telephone System.** The creation of a new countywide telephone dispatching system which includes provision for emergency calls (911), calls for non-emergency municipal services (311), and calls for social services (211).

**G. 211 Clearing House.** The development of a clearing house/referral service to support the establishment of 211 social service telephone dispatch system.

**H. Pro Bono Prosecution Program.** The expansion of the existing pro bono prosecution program of the District Attorney's office to supplement DA staff in the prosecution of nuisance crime. Similarly, the abilities of the Lancaster City Solicitor's Office should be expanded in a pro bono manner to handle an expected increased load of civil offense litigation. The Lancaster Bar Association is encouraged to become the leading partner taking on the responsibility for the recruitment of attorneys to serve in the aforementioned pro bono programs. Participating attorneys are afforded unique opportunities to serve their city and county, while receiving invaluable legal experience.

**I. Crime Mapping System.** The creation of a crime and disorder incident mapping system and database that is secure, operates in real time and is able to provide all law enforcement, code enforcement, education and social service professionals with the current information they need to coordinate their quality of life improvement efforts.

### **Deteriorating Private and Public Housing**

The quality of life in Lancaster's neighborhoods, and our city's ability to build a strong financial future, is inextricably tied to the quality of its housing stock.

Combating Lancaster's problem properties -- found mostly among ill-managed private rentals owned by absentee landlords and Section 8 public housing -- makes up our second front in the battle to improve the quality of life in Lancaster.

Here are a few Lancaster housing statistics that should cause alarm:

- The number of vacant housing units has increased 63% (to 2,091) since 1990.

- Code enforcement complaints have increased 40% (to 4,618) since June 20, 1997.
- Condemned properties have increased 246% (to 64) since 1997.
- The number of systematic inspections has declined 90% (from 1,429 in 1997 to 142 in 2001 due to increase in complaints and a reduction in department workforce.
- Owner-occupied housing stock is being supplanted by properties owned by non-resident landlords.

### **Code Enforcement**

We find that the primary reason behind these alarming statistics is ineffective, inefficient code enforcement -- code enforcement that is mainly complaint-based and that does not result in inspections of entire properties.

A historic comparison with peer cities (Reading, Allentown, York, Harrisburg):

- All are computerized (Lancaster is not).
- All have substantially higher fees. (Only Harrisburg has less fee income).
- All have more code enforcement officials, adjusted for population or not.

Independent investigations by the Crime Commission have documented a number of additional quality of life conditions that need to be addressed by code enforcement activities, including abandoned cars, graffiti, noise, dangerous animals, trash, etc.

We are gratified to say that, as of fall 2002 the city is taking long overdue steps to create a professionally run, effective housing inspection and code enforcement program.

Lancaster businessman Chris McMurtrie summarized the overshadowing importance of effective code enforcement:

*"Without it crime will increase in this city. Without it, our tax base will decline. Without it, the demand for services for people from fire, police, and medical services will increase. Without it, the demands on our housing division for more and more expense and effort and time needed to board up properties, to do all of the things that are done, we will be locked in the iron jaws of the declining housing market which serves neither this city, the landlords nor anyone."*

To achieve regular, professional code enforcement and stem the cycle of neglect found recurrently within Lancaster's housing stock, the city must keep its commitment to the following recommendations.

### **Recommendation -- Code Enforcement**

**A. Computerization...**of the Housing and Neighborhood Development department.

**B. More Officers.** Net Addition of five new professionally trained code enforcement officers.

**C. Minimum Residential Leases.** The codification of minimum residential lease requirements for all city properties.

**D. Higher Fees.** Increase in fees and fines to liquidate additional costs.

**E. Property Inspections.** Inspections of properties every four years (minimum).

**F. Accountability for Repeat Offenders.** The city should regularly publish the names of our most recalcitrant landlords, and inform insurers and mortgage holders when repeated offenses occur.

### **Section 8 Scattered Site Housing**

The idea behind the Federal Government's Section 8 Scattered site housing strategy seemed sound: To enlist private owners who agree to rent existing quality housing to eligible tenants in exchange for "market rate" rents that would be subsidized by the government. Tenants would pay 25% (later increased to 30%) of their adjusted gross income and the subsidy, typically paid directly to the owner, would make up the difference.

After significant research and interviews with officials from comparable cities, the Crime Commission concluded that Lancaster's scattered-site housing properties involved in the Federal Section 8 housing subsidy program were disproportionately represented among our problem properties.

For Section 8 developments, the theory is that construction incentives and subsidized rents will support profitability, which in turn will reinforce property owners' incentive to maintain the property. The reality, however, seems to attract property owners who are willing to sacrifice longer-term maintenance for maximum shorter-term profits.

And while proper maintenance is essential, it is only part of the story. Successful projects elsewhere have the following attributes:

- Extremely rigorous site management
- Inflexible eviction guidelines
- Stringent tenant screening, including credit and criminal histories
- Home visits with prospective tenants

We believe that the major problems with Lancaster's Section 8 housing are directly related to poor maintenance and poor management. Poor management means a failure to conform to U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) expectations for tenant screening and eviction, an acceptance of anti-social and criminal behavior, and the ceding

of neighborhoods to people and activities that encourage respectable residents to abandon the neighborhood.

The Crime Commission found that professional staffs for the housing assistance agencies do good jobs in aggressively recruiting minority families for placement into middle-class and lower-middle-class neighborhoods to break barriers of ethnicity or color. But with in even initially successful placements, these organizations normally do little to support the placed families in the adjustment to the new surroundings, neighborhood norms, and the responsibilities of good tenants. Conflict is inevitable.

The Crime Commission found that an appropriate level of training and monitoring of both tenant and landlord for rule compliance would improve the tenant's likelihood of success, positive integration into the neighborhood, and the overall impact on the surrounding area. Accordingly, we make the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations -- Section 8 Housing**

**A. Rigorous HUD Enforcement.** The rigorous enforcement by the Lancaster City Housing Authority of all HUD tenant screening guidelines.

**B. Section 8 Housing Supervision.** The development and implementation by the Lancaster City Housing Authority of a rigorous supervision program for all Section 8 participants (tenants and landlords). Such a program should require

- Monitoring of all police and code enforcement activity on site
- Monitoring criminal activity by participants
- Monitoring quality of life crime and disorder complaints
- Maintaining a record of the identity of all site residents, and providing the Lancaster Bureau of Police, Lancaster Bureau of Fire and the Lancaster City Housing and Neighborhood Development Department with current monthly lists of all city Section 8 program properties.

**C. Living Conditions Monitoring and Social Service Access.** The development by the Lancaster City Housing Authority of a program that insures that the living and economic conditions of all Section 8 tenants, and their impact on neighborhoods, are being monitored and that they are provided access to the appropriate range of social services.

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### **Social Services Agency Coordination**

Experts note that a significant portion of the so-called quality of life issues – especially those involving the homeless – revolve around unresolved mental health and substance abuse issues. Unfortunately, society's efforts to address mental health and substance abuse issues have been fragmented among a variety of social service agencies -- agencies

which do not share information, or turf, willingly. Some insist they are legally enjoined from doing so.

Nevertheless, law enforcement agencies have long noted the inability of social service systems to proactively address problems like child abuse, truancy, drug dependence, domestic abuse, mental illness in the community, before they involve criminal infractions. Many troubled citizens and families deal with many different agencies, and receive the full attention of none. Some of the woes are related to funding coming from too many sources with differing financial and social qualifiers for the same family.

Through the Crime Commission, the Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force has recommended a number of different approaches to deal with this issue, and has worked to develop better coordination and cooperation among the social service agencies serving the City of Lancaster. To assure effective and organized planning and enforcement, the Quality of Life Task Force should be made a permanent organization, with paid staff and offices in city government.

It is time that the widely ranging assemblage of Lancaster social services agencies recognizes that cooperation and coordination of information and effort serves all. To that end, we recommend:

### **Recommendations -- Social Services Coordination**

**A. Community-wide Council.** The creation of a permanent council of representatives of city social service, criminal justice and law enforcement agencies with the goal of providing better coordination, greater information sharing and cooperation between agencies, community policing officers and residents of the city's neighborhoods.

**B. Social Service Delivery Organization.** The adoption of a system of organizing the delivery of services of all human service agencies and institutions around the geographic structure of the neighborhood-based Lancaster City Community Policing District system. (including but not limited to MHMR, Probation and Parole, Children and Youth, SDL, CAP, Neighborhood Services, the department of Housing and Neighborhood Development and the United Way Agencies).

## **II. Community Policing and Law Enforcement Organization**

The linchpin for executing the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy is community policing. It is an idea that has gained national attention by putting officers back on the streets 24-hours a day, back in the neighborhoods to the point of origin of most crimes and disorder.

Community policing allows police to focus on crime prevention and restoration of order by employing beat officers on foot and on bikes. The officers become part of the fabric of the neighborhood, as a constant, known, dependable presence, instead of racing around the city in patrol cars, reacting to crimes that have already happened.

The shift to community policing is a radical departure from the traditional, reactive model of policing. With that method of law enforcement, police are isolated from the community, shielded by their patrol cars, often with different officers responding to the same, repetitive complaints. Officers are unable to see patterns or links, unequipped to see the next trends or to identify interconnections between certain people and groups and activities. The police never become part of the neighborhood, or ever really know its people, its problems, and its potential. It fosters an "us" and "them" mentality.

Community policing, on the other hand, recognizes that the neighborhood is the point of coordination for all revitalization programs, including youth services, crime prevention, order restoration, fear reduction, and social services. And it further recognizes that although the police are there to support the citizens, it is the people who live in the neighborhoods who sets the standards for those neighborhoods, who must act to take back their own streets and rescue their own children. The police help citizens solve problems and, together, they move into a "we" pattern of thinking.

Community policing has been proven dramatically effective in cities as diverse as Boston, New York, and San Diego. But similar results for Lancaster cannot come without a profound shift in thinking, among public officials as well as residents and police. With this shift in thinking must come new priorities and a corresponding reorganization of resources, including the reorganization of the police department.

Most cities our size have one officer for every 200-250 residents. Lancaster City has authorized 168 officers, but only 160 are on the payroll now, and 13 of those cover Lancaster Township. That leaves just 147 officers for a population of 56,500, a ratio of one to 384. Lancaster is scandalously under-policed.

Chief William Heim has developed a comprehensive plan for restructuring his department to increase its focus on community policing. His plan makes the most of his too-limited resources.

The Chief's plan, which was implemented in January 2003, divides the city into 12 neighborhoods; to each, one or two Neighborhood Police Officers (NPO) are already assigned. Testimony from the neighborhood meetings conducted by the Crime Commission in November 2002 and the information gathered in the citywide survey attests to the popularity of the NPO initiative. But, to now, an NPO might be in the neighborhood only 40 hours a week, which, as Chief Heim has pointed out, leaves 128 hours a week with no NPO around. The people of Lancaster, understandably, are clamoring for 24/7 service.

What difference will additional officers make now? To know the results, the city must be able to measure the results. Only then can the city manage for results. As citizens, we must insist on verification that the plan is working and our money is being well spent. And we should demand the same verification from any important program run by any city or county department, not just the police.

At the same time, we recognize that new expectations will accompany a new model of policing. We believe it's vital that the community set those new standards. What, for example, would constitute the revitalization of a particular neighborhood? It's equally important to monitor the progress toward attaining specific goals, with built-in safeguards as suggested by Professor David Cole among others, to give the public a transparent look at sensitive issues—for example, who gets arrested, and for what?

We enthusiastically endorse the concept of the Lancaster Bureau of Police's commitment to Community Policing and, to that end, make the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations -- Community Policing**

**A. Acceleration and Accountability.** The acceleration of the adoption and implementation of Lancaster City's proposed plan for community policing, and the adoption of an internal measurement standard of individual and collective performance based on the safety and the quality of life of the individual neighborhoods of the city.

**B. More Police on the Street.** The expansion of the authorized complement of sworn officers of the Lancaster Bureau of Police by 24 before the end of 2004. In addition, the planned quota for sworn officers in each district should be brought up to full complement as quickly as possible.

**C. Non-Uniformed Assistance.** The expansion of the complement of non-uniformed professional administrative staff members of the Lancaster Bureau of Police by 12 before the end of 2004.

**D. Officer Retention.** The adoption of the principle of maintaining parity in pay, overtime and benefits of uniformed officers as the core of the ongoing effort to retain current and recruit future community policing officers. It is important that the city stop losing its officers to neighboring communities and that it be able to recruit the best officers of other departments to staff its new community policing system.

**E. Computerized Tracking System.** The creation of a computerized, internal crime tracking and accountability system similar to the COMPSTAT system used successfully in New York City. The COMPSTAT model provides for immediate sharing of intelligence among districts, rapid and coordinated deployment during peak crime times at likely crime locations, relentless follow-up of all recommendations, and accountability and evaluation of each officer's performance.

**F. Independent Assessment.** The creation of an independent assessment entity to establish objective criteria for determining success that includes, yet goes beyond, crime statistics. Such an entity would determine what data should be routinely gathered, compared and analyzed to track exactly how the police are performing, and would establish a process for the regular distribution of this information to police and city managers, to community groups, to the media and to the general public.

**G. Police-Community Relations.** The creation of a formal, continuing police-community relations education and information program to be conducted by the Lancaster Bureau of Police and the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development aimed at:

- Informing individual residents how community policing and community police officers will work in their neighborhoods and how they and their neighbors may assist the community police officers in improving the safety and quality of life of their neighborhoods;
- Informing (training) the individual citizens of the city how they can most effectively access police and other city services in emergency and non-emergency situations, outlining the kinds of responses that can be expected from calls for service and communicating the parameters of a citizen complaint procedure; and
- Establishing a formal ongoing dialogue between the assigned community policing officers and the individuals and groups of each policing district which will allow the officers to better understand their assigned neighborhoods and allow the residents to learn to better trust their assigned community officers.

### **III. Law Enforcement Response and Reaction**

Lancaster City Police agreed in 1994 to have emergency calls dispatched by Lancaster County Wide Communications (LCWC). Since then there have been numerous concerns raised by both police and citizens alike involving delays in police officers being dispatched.

Lancaster Bureau of Police officials contend that the delays result from:

- Insufficient resources are devoted to city dispatching requirements, despite the fact that LCWC receives \$800,000 annually from Act 78 fees paid by the city and Lancaster Township.
- Erroneous instructions or questionable ranking of call priorities by inexperienced dispatchers who are not familiar with the geography of the city, and cannot cope with the ethnic, cultural, and language barriers that might be encountered.
- Significant on-air congestion, due to the large number of available units competing for airtime.

In addition, city police contend that LCWC's software package is not compatible with the data software required by the county, and thus data must be reentered at considerable delay and expense. And they believe 800 trunking would allow additional bandwidth.

LCWC says most delays result from a lack of city police manpower to answer calls, and that ordering of call priorities was established by (and can only be changed by) the city police liaison to LCWC.

Lancaster Bureau of Police Chief William Heim believes the service provided by LCWC generally meets department needs, while noting that lack of experienced operators is a frequent source of conflict between police and 911 personnel. The chief strongly advises that LCWC put a substation in the new police headquarters.

LCWC Director Mike Weaver said the major drawbacks to the Chief's request would be the inefficiencies resulting from having to operate a second facility, including equipment, staff time, supervision, and so on. He feels that with a consolidated facility for the county, operators assigned to non-city jurisdictions are available, should the need arise.

Weaver also notes that some of the technical problems with radio "bandwidth" will be addressed by the new "enhanced 911" system scheduled for completion in December 2004. Weaver says that the process of obtaining permits to place radio towers was the factor most severely limiting more rapid implementation of the system.

Despite the best efforts of all concerned, the emergency response system in Lancaster city is not meeting the expectations of the police, the citizens, and LCWC staff, in terms of response times, appropriateness of response and professional handling of a culturally diverse populace. We recommend that the following measures be adopted:

### **Recommendations -- Law Enforcement Reaction**

**A. Enhanced 911.** Immediate implementation of the "enhanced 911."

**B. Police 911 Substation.** The deployment of a 911 substation for the city of Lancaster located within the new police headquarters.

**C. New Countywide Telephone Dispatching System.** The creation of a new countywide telephone dispatching system that includes provision for emergency calls (911), calls for social services (211) and calls for non-emergency municipal services (311).

**D. 911-311 Management.** The development and staffing of a new administrative unit of the police department which would manage the new 911-311 system as it impacts municipal services as well as manages the handling of non-emergency police calls. Special emphasis would be placed on calls and complaints regarding quality of life crimes.

## **Non-emergency Telephone Dispatching**

Currently, Lancaster County has a myriad of social agencies, both public and private, providing services to its residents. By all accounts, the delivery of these services is not coordinated, and represents a confusing array of options, both for residents seeking services and police or community organizers looking for a way to assist persons who need help.

Significant amounts of police time are consumed by these issues, time that could be better spent in the types of community policing efforts envisioned in the new organization plan for the Lancaster Bureau of Police.

Communities in 17 states have employed 211 phone systems as a point of entry to governmental and social service agencies, and the goal is to create a nationwide system, involving half the country, by 2005. More than 32 million people live in the three dozen communities – including Atlanta, Tampa, Palm Beach, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and New Orleans – currently offering 211 service.

Among the nation's leading authorities on non-emergency telephone service is John Cohen, President of PSComm, Rockville, MD, a Strategic Initiative Public Hearing witness. Cohen says that 911 is a "tremendous tool for public safety and the people who work in the 911 centers do a job that is very stressful, very difficult. But when people are using it for non-emergency calls they're moving away from their core competency."

One of the alternatives is to use 211 or 311 numbers that are easy to remember, easy to use, and provide the public access to non-emergency city services, non-emergency, social or community services. "These ...and other types of telecommunications solutions aren't meant to be competitive with 911 but are meant to work synergistically with 911," PSComm's Cohen says.

According to Susan Eckert from Lancaster County United Way, the Lancaster Information Center (LINC) is working with state officials to implement a regional 211 telephone service within five years. LINC is a comprehensive countywide information and referral service and provides a single point-of-entry for social service callers.

The 911 service as administered by Lancaster County Wide Communications (LCWC) is overly utilized and unable to meet expectations. One way to correct our 911 service problems is to decrease the load on the system by diverting non-emergency calls. We recommend that the city and the county adopt the following measure:

### **Recommendations -- Non-Emergency Phone System**

**A. 911/211/311 Public Information Campaign.** The development and execution by the county of an aggressive, long term marketing and informational campaign. Such a program would be designed to acquaint the public with the new 911/211/311 system, to help the residents of all of the communities of the county to understand the difference

between emergency and non-emergency reporting, and to educate the public about expected response times.

#### **IV. Prosecution and Judicial System Relationship and Readiness**

##### **Reorganization of the Judicial System**

When President Judge Michael A. Georgelis took office in August of 1999, he implemented a series of broad and long overdue reforms aimed at increasing the efficiency of Lancaster County Courts.

The Judge told us in 2002 that, with those reforms, "...enormous improvements resulted in the operation of our criminal court system and enormous efficiencies have been achieved." He added that, "...I believe that our current criminal court system more than adequately and very efficiently handles all of the matters placed into it. I am aware of no evidence that the available resources are insufficient."

With all due respect, we believe that efficiency is one thing, and effectiveness quite another. As Northwest Lancaster resident Naomi Weaver asserted, "If a company operated the way the criminal justice system operated here, it would be out of business in no time"

Recidivism is severely corroding public confidence that justice is being served. Citizens are continually frustrated by the knowledge that the same offenders come before the court time and time again and are returned to the streets. We have heard experts and other officials attribute this to plea bargaining and inconsistent sentencing decisions. These may be tools that clear the dockets, but we believe they thwart the public's confidence that justice is being done. They undercut community standards by encouraging criminals to believe they will get a "pass," as they often do. The public perception is also that minor offenses are not sufficiently prosecuted, and that the drug problem is out of control because dealers are often given light sentences

District Attorney Donald R. Totaro has told us that his office has 17 attorneys to prosecute over 5,000 cases per year in the Court of Common Pleas, and that most of those attorneys average over 100 cases on their individual case list at any given time. They also average between 5 to 10 cases listed for trial during each month's one-week court term.

Given current prosecutorial staffing, that is a heavy load. In fact, *Fixing Broken Windows* co-author George Kelling is of the professional opinion that the Lancaster County District Attorney's office should be staffed at double its present level.

We are not convinced, however, that a heavy workload -- or overtaxing the judicial system -- is sufficient justification for the District Attorney's non-enforcement of all measures of the state's Drug Free School Zone codes. Presently, the District Attorney prosecutes only cases in which the offense actually occurred on school property, the defendant was in possession of a firearm, or the defendant had a prior felony conviction

for drugs. In felony drug cases, the District Attorney's office has taken the position that it will not plea bargain these cases, a position we support.

However, Pennsylvania's Drug Free School Zone regulations call for mandatory sentences of two years incarceration for any drug dealer who possessed with intent to deliver or delivered a controlled substance within 1,000 feet of a school (public, private, parochial, college, or university), or within 250 feet of a recreation center or playground or on a school bus. Obviously, our police do not aggressively pursue such cases when they know that the District Attorney will not prosecute them.

We discount the District Attorney's notion that "...a decision to invoke the school zone mandatory in all city drug cases would effectively bring the court system to a grinding halt." The law enforcement system will adapt, and the defense system will adjust. Drug dealers and users will quickly learn that Lancaster is no longer a haven.

Whether overburdened by nuisance crime arrests or drug prosecutions, a strained court system should not be alleviated by less than forceful prosecution of the law. In fact, we have been given assurance by Judge Georgelis that the judiciary will rise to the task. The Judge has told us, "If the efforts of the city police result in greater prosecutions and we have to take steps, which would even include asking our legislators for additional judges and other resources, I'm prepared to make those requests."

We believe that our police force and District Attorney's office are understaffed, and that it is a never-ending challenge for the police and District Attorney's office to retain experienced personnel due to salary restraints. One certainty is this: In the short term, the workloads for police, prosecutors and judiciary are not going to be lightened.

A full implementation of Pennsylvania's Drug Free School Zone regulations and the *Fixing Broken Windows* concept will result in more prosecutions for major violations and minor nuisance crimes. This will result in more burdens placed on the police, district justices, and the rest of the judicial system. Changes in the current system will need to be implemented to properly handle this greater caseload. The system must be strengthened to succeed, not weakened to adjust.

Other communities, both in and out of Pennsylvania, have restructured their judicial systems to achieve greater efficiencies and to adjust to growing caseloads. These changes require the cooperation of all agencies involved—including the police, district justices, sheriffs, the district attorney, the city solicitor, and the judges.

Inefficiencies exist in the current system that reduces the time available for the police to be present on the streets. Full implementation of community policing will require a significant amount of time be spent by the officers in their assigned neighborhoods. Time spent by an officer attending hearings, especially those scheduled for the convenience of lawyers or other parties, will significantly reduce the amount of time the officer can be available to his district, resulting in inefficiencies and costing the city and

county additional overtime. Left unchecked, our present overcrowded system will either stagnate or completely break down.

To implement the *Fixing Broken Windows* model of law enforcement and crime prevention, we encourage the District Attorney to fully prosecute all provisions of the Pennsylvania Drug Free School Zone code, and strongly support community policing. To those ends, we recommend:

### **Recommendations -- Judicial System Reorganization**

**A. Drug Court.** The creation of a Drug Court to handle certain kinds of drug offenses. The idea is to find alternatives to incarceration as punishment for drug users, as opposed to drug dealers.

**B. Night Court.** The creation of a Night Court at which District Justices are routinely available after normal court hours.

**C. Community Court.** The creation of a Community Court with one Common Pleas judge dedicated to accelerating the adjudication of quality of life prosecutions and civil complaints related to quality of life offenses.

**D. "Rocket Docket."** The application of the accelerated docket system in Lancaster County civil and criminal courts.

**E. Drug-related Prosecution and Sentencing Laws** The countywide insistence that the police and the District Attorney's office aggressively and consistently enforce all of the drug related enhanced prosecution and sentencing laws. These laws include, but are not limited to: The Drug Free School Zone Law; the Federal Gun and Drug Laws, and former Pennsylvania House Bill 417 as it becomes law.

**F. More County Prosecutors.** The staff and budget of the office of District Attorney should be expanded to handle the new strategies of energetic enforcement of quality of life laws and enhanced prosecution and sentencing laws. Eight new prosecutors should be added and trained before January 2004.

### **Probation Issues**

Probation is a contract, through the court, between the convicted and the community. The objective is to strike a balance between the positive results of rehabilitation and the necessity to reduce recidivism by those violating their probation.

Both the police and the citizens of the community expressed frustration with the ineffectiveness of the current system to prevent or retard repeat offenders. In the city of Lancaster, violation of probation is a common occurrence.

An idea repeatedly advanced to stem county probation and state parole violations is the concept of Probation/Parole officers "riding along" with police to ensure that probationers and parolees are living within the guidelines of their release by visiting them in their homes, workplace or school at any hour. President Judge Georgelis rejects this concept saying, "I will not put probation officers in danger. They are not trained to deal with that," adding, "As long as I'm PJ, it's dead. Don't even think about it. Don't put it in your recommendation. It will not happen."

Lancaster Bureau of Police's Chief Heim takes a different position on the ride-along controversy. He counters by saying, "The judge said that they (probation and parole officers) already do home visits. They already go out of the office on occasion and meet with these people. What we're saying is when they do this type of thing, they will be with a police officer who is trained and can react to any kind of situation they encounter. I think that would enhance their safety while their checking on probation and parolees rather than put them (probation and parole officers) at risk."

Judge Georgelis concedes that if there is a middle ground, he is willing to talk. Talking is fine, but it is time for action.

Funding to address this issue is available through various state and federal programs including the federal Weed & Seed Program. However, in order to obtain funding, certain requirements must be met by the agencies requesting the funding. Other nearby cities have reportedly made the required changes and received significant funding.

It is our belief that many areas, including New York and Philadelphia, have achieved improved results in their crime statistics at the expense of communities such as Lancaster. In other words, criminals from those large cities and others are operating in and around Lancaster instead of on their home turfs. Many of those criminals are now appearing in Lancaster's judicial system.

To enhance the effectiveness of the current probation system, the following steps should be taken:

### **Recommendations -- Probation System**

**A. Weed & Seed.** Lancaster City's participation in the federally funded Weed & Seed Program should be aggressively pursued and driven by the *Fixing Broken Windows*, community policing, neighborhood quality of life enhancement strategies for crime control and prevention espoused in the initial and subsequent reports of the Crime Commission.

**B. Probation/Parole Officer-Community Police Officer Cooperative Program.** The office of Probation and Parole should institute a 12-month pilot Probation/Parole Officer-Community Police Officer Cooperative Program. The pilot program should be limited to a targeted policing district geography, use only volunteer probation and parole officers and community policemen and be designed to address the training, safety, manpower,

mission conflict and jurisdictional concerns raised by the President Judge in reviewing the programs operating successfully in other cities. The goals of the program would be to:

- Develop ways that community police officers and probation/parole officers can work together to enhance the safety of the neighborhoods of Lancaster City
- Insure that the terms of the sentences of the court are abided to by the convicted felons who continue to live in the city, and to
- Provide those sentenced to probation or parole the highest possible likelihood of reform

**C. Probationers and Parolees List.** The Office of Probation and Parole should adopt the policy of supplying local police departments with a current listing of the addresses of all probationers and parolees and a description of their status in the system.

### **Central Booking and Warrant Servicing**

During our public hearings, President Judge Georgelis prohibited any court-related personnel from offering testimony. His instructions to court employees were, in effect, a gag order.

Nonetheless, we were able to interview numerous parties prior to the actual hearings. These interviews and subsequent testimony pointed to the large number of outstanding warrants issued but not served.

Warrants are issued by several sources including the district justices and the judges. Depending on the type of warrant the serving of the warrant is processed by various people including the police, constables, or the sheriff's office. The coordination and sharing of information between these offices breaks down for many reasons, including the lack of a standardized computer system.

The inefficiencies caused by the lack of coordination result in time wasted, missed opportunities to serve multiple warrants to the same individual, and a lack of prosecution opportunities. Much of the cost of serving the warrants is actually paid by the person being served so increased servicing does not necessarily mean greater costs for the County.

The structure of the District Justices' office does not lead to the most efficient operation of the judicial system. Scheduling hearings and arraignments around the current hours results in many hours of lost police time, overtime pay and scheduling problems for all involved in the process.

Other areas of the country have adjusted their systems and hours to achieve overall efficiencies. To that end, the following recommendation are made:

## Recommendations -- Warrant and Booking

**A. Central Warrant Service.** A countywide, county-funded central warrant service force should be established within the Sheriff's Department and charged with serving warrants on behalf of all county police agencies.

**B. Central Booking System.** The Lancaster County court system should institute a countywide central booking system equipped with video arraignment capability.

### V. Juvenile Justice Issues

Early on the Crime Commission reported that "Our drug, violence, and gang problems are largely juvenile and young adult crime problems. Young people in Lancaster County buy, sell and use the majority of the illegal drugs and guns. All future enforcement and prevention efforts must recognize that bias."

Perhaps no area of the criminal justice system is cause for greater concern than is juvenile justice. Failure to deal appropriately with young offenders virtually guarantees manifold problems both in the present and the future. A variety of studies, and most experts, agree that failure to "reach" the young people who first become involved with the legal system simply predisposes them to further criminal activity, and, perhaps, even a lifetime of crime.

For generations, some local experts contend, Lancaster County's leaders could get by with under-funding programs to heal abused children and support juvenile crime initiatives in hope that the offenders would just "grow out of it." That approach has never worked, and today we are paying the human and financial price for it. Teen pregnancy, young sexual offenders, increasingly brutal acts by teens, drug dealing and gun toting youth gangs are the costly results of inadequate attention.

The cost to investigate and prosecute crimes committed by juveniles, and then to counsel, supervise, and/or incarcerate the most serious offenders is staggering in its scope. Prevention is a bargain.

We feel there are some compelling alternatives that can both lower the cost of the current system while improving results. There are significant savings to be achieved by treating delinquent youth in our community. More importantly, we feel that involving volunteers in treatment alternatives is good for offenders, volunteers, and our community at large.

We address these problems from two different fronts: First, by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the juvenile justice system. And second, by looking at proactive, early intervention, mediation, and treatment of juveniles when they become involved in delinquent activity for the first time. We view that as an extension of the *Fixing Broken Windows* philosophy.

## Juvenile Court

In producing this report, it would have been good to have obtained the unique perspectives of Lancaster County juvenile court and juvenile probation representatives. President Judge Georgelis prohibited us from doing so.

Nonetheless, other evidence leads us to believe that Lancaster County's juvenile justice system has not adjusted to the increasing number and severity of crime committed by those who are under the age of 18.

For example, according to police, the system confines the working hours of youth probation officers to a conventional 9-to-5 schedule. The system does not allow for individual probation officers to be on hand weekends or holidays when criminal activity is at its peak, or even at night for spot curfew checks. We do not offer those observations as criticism of individual, hardworking probation officers, just as a critique of the system.

More significantly, there has been little progress in expanding placement alternatives between simple probation and placement at the state's Youth Development Centers. Juveniles receiving probation can quickly learn how meaningless their disposition can be, or how little substantive counseling an overburdened probation officer can offer. Some of those who are adjudicated delinquent and sent to residential placement can quickly get post-graduate training in a life of crime.

Juvenile Probation needs to be significantly restructured if it is to deal effectively with the challenges of treating today's youth. At a minimum, we recommend the following changes in the overall approach to providing juvenile probation services:

### Recommendations -- Juvenile Court

**A. Broadened Hours, Curfew Calls and Home Visits.** The office of Juvenile Probation should institute sweeping changes in when and how juvenile probation officers deal with their probationers, including:

- Creating work shifts that cover the 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. period daily
- Adding routine "curfew calls" to the prescribed supervision procedure
- Mandatory once-a-month in-home visits, as well as mandatory parent/family contact.

We also believe that Lancaster County's Juvenile Justice system is not making the most effective use of available resources, often relying on full-scale residential placement programs, which are extremely expensive (\$150-220 per day) and achieve very disappointing results with recidivism rates of 70 percent and higher. These youth are therefore consuming most of the resources available at precisely a time in their lives when it is too late – and the "help" will do the least good.

We strongly recommend the use of alternatives to provide certain youthful offenders opportunities for treatment before they are deeply enmeshed in the juvenile justice system, when the chance of saving them is diminished. Such efforts will reduce cost, increase effectiveness, and make our community safer. Specific recommendations include:

**B. Electronic Monitoring.** The county should expand the use of electronic monitoring as an alternative to more expensive and less effective juvenile offender supervision.

**C. "Boot Camp"** The Boot Camp program should be eliminated.

**D. Juvenile Detention Center.** A utilization and review study should be undertaken concerning current and potential uses of the Juvenile Detention Center. We do not believe, however, that the present practice of using the facility as a temporary shelter for child welfare cases is appropriate.

We recognize that the county is interested in improving the occupancy rate, in part to justify its investment in the Juvenile Detention Center. However, we would point out that if the detention center were in full operation (100% occupancy) with only Lancaster County residents, the cost would be staggering.

### **Early-Intervention And Treatment Programs**

Extending the *Fixing Broken Windows* approach to juvenile delinquency necessarily requires focusing attention on the quality of life issues that accompany juvenile crime.

It requires creating a system that proactively identifies and treats troubled youth arrested for minor crimes like curfew violations and truancy. This approach should be based on appropriate intervention to keep youth from becoming involved with the juvenile justice system, with significant cost savings and greater effectiveness.

Dispositions should involve more community service projects designed to enhance the offender's appreciation of and relationship with the total community. And, perhaps, vice versa. The key, it seems to us, is constructively engaging the community in the resolution of these issues, through mediation and volunteer efforts aimed at building stronger ties between troubled youth and their communities.

Early intervention to stem the incidence of juvenile delinquency will require:

### **Recommendations -- Early Intervention**

**A. Greater Investment.** The greater Lancaster community must invest more heavily in early intervention and treatment programs for at-risk youth. Interventions should include providing:

- Expanded mental health services for pre-adjudicated juveniles
- Mental health counseling for dysfunctional families

- An expansion of school outreach programs to identify at-risk youth and families and link them to prevention programs

**B. Youth Screening.** The County of Lancaster should require that all adjudicated youth receive mental health, drug and alcohol, and learning disabilities screening.

**C. Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers.** County government, the courts and the social service community should work together to extensively expand the capacity and effectiveness of Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers. This would help insure that all drug or alcohol dependent juvenile offenders, with adjudications including dependency treatment, have a program immediately available to them.

**D. Curfew Center.** The City of Lancaster should establish at least one continually operating Curfew center to hold juvenile curfew and truancy violators until their parents or guardians can assume responsibility for them. Ideally such a center should be operated under contract by one of the youth agencies of the city, and would be staffed by early intervention social service professionals. A Curfew Center could serve as an entry point into the county social service system and educational support services system.

**E. School Resource Officers.** The Bureau of Police and the School District of Lancaster should cooperate on the occasional placement of uniformed community police officers in city middle and high schools. These School Resource Officers will allow the police to better understand the youth of the community and provide students a view of police in a non-adversarial situation. The Team Program currently in operation with the police should continue and grow.

**F. Dropout and Truancy Prevention.** The Lancaster School District Dropout and Truancy Prevention programs should be dramatically expanded to enlist the aid and participation of all youth serving agencies, organizations and institutions in the city as well as the police department and the business community.

**G. Alternative Punishment Programs.** Restorative justice programs such as LAVORP (Lancaster Area Victim Offender Reconciliation Program) and Youth Aid Panels should be established in the neighborhoods of the city as alternatives to traditional adjudication of minor juvenile offenses such as truancy and quality of life crimes. Juvenile probation and the minor judiciary should be encouraged to divert minor offences into these alternative programs.

**H. A More Open Court System.** Lancaster County courts -- juvenile and adult -- should explore ways to allow greater openness and more routine citizen involvement in its activities. Inviting public scrutiny and sharing with the public the measures the court uses to evaluate the success of the components of the Lancaster County judicial system would engage the community more fully in the responsibility for improving and maintaining public safety and justice.

## **Lancaster Crime Commission Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations Report**

With the adoption of the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy as the keystone of its efforts to combat crime and restore order in the city, Lancaster Crime Commission members understood correctly, and early on, that a "buy in" by all parties would be essential to its success.

Those participants -- particularly the police and residents in all quadrants of Lancaster -- would have to fully understand the features and the benefits of *Fixing Broken Windows* for it to be successful. Chiefly, the concepts of community policing and the philosophy of crime interdiction would have to be explained and accepted.

Accordingly, the Crime Commission's Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations Committee was charged with recommending the means to accomplish:

- **Police Training.** The goal was to foster an understanding of the principles of neighborhood policing as it works in a diverse community, serving to prevent and suppress, rather than simply react to crime.
- **Police-Community Relations.** A series of lectures, workshops, and community dialogues to focus on Police-Community Relations, ethics, and community values. Specifically, these activities will focus on the need for the police to value the public trust and their oath. Similarly, citizens are charged to understand the problems facing police officers, while accepting their civic responsibility to support the efforts of all our community peacekeepers.
- **Community Association Relationships.** The Crime Commission is committed to working with the Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods, Crime Watch organizations, other interested groups, and the Lancaster Bureau of Police to find additional ways that the *Fixing Broken Windows* concept of increased neighborhood governance can be expanded to make neighborhoods safer. The idea is to build on the community association concept to empower residents to play active roles in solving safety problems.

All of these efforts have the collective purpose of nurturing a collaborative attitude and spirit of partnership between the Lancaster Bureau of Police and all facets of our community. The outcome of this process was intended to be the development of training components for community groups and police. It is hoped such training will prevent incidents that have occasionally created antagonism, while enhancing the police-community partnership necessary to solve problems.

## **A Collaborative Foundation between Protectors and Protected**

*Fixing Broken Windows* authors Kelling and Coles tell us that, while community police sometimes requires police to take the lead by acting on behalf of citizens, successful programs are built on a collaborative foundation between protectors and protected:

*"Community policing ...acknowledges the reliance of police on citizens, in multiple senses: for authority to police neighborhoods; for information about the nature of neighborhood problems, and for collaboration in solving problems."*

For such a collaboration to work, it must originate with mutual trust and respect.

Restructuring of the Lancaster Bureau of Police to reflect the *Fixing Broken Windows* strategy of community policing was an important first step toward establishing strong relations between the police department and the people it serves. It demonstrated a commitment toward working hand-in-hand with the community to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

Success of community policing relies not only on the appropriate staffing numbers of sworn officers and support personnel; it requires philosophical subscribing by all parties -- staff, officers and residents. They must visibly embody that philosophy to the greater community they serve, or to which they belong.

To that end, the Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations Committee recommends the following measures aimed at assisting the Lancaster Bureau of Police and the community it serves to forge strong community-police relationships.

### **Recommendations -- Community-Police Relationships**

**A. Ongoing Cultural Diversity Training.** We recommend that compulsory, ongoing Cultural Diversity Training be provided police officers and all other Lancaster Bureau of Police Staff. We suggest that such training be a line item in the police department budget in order to earmark sufficient funds for the purpose.

**B. Periodic Community-Police Meetings.** We recommend that the Lancaster Bureau of Police continue to hold meetings conducted on an intimate scale within the neighborhood policing districts. Invitations to those meetings should be extended to all neighborhood residents as well as those civic organizations working to better community police relations and to improve the quality of life for city residents.

**C. A Formal Citizen Education Program.** We recommend that law enforcement authorities develop a citizen education program to help residents better understand policing procedures and techniques. The result will be a lessening of tension during interactions between police and the community.

**D. Creation of a Formal REACT Team.** Lancaster City and County should jointly create a Police Community Relations “REACT” Team with the purpose of responding immediately when any event or series of events begins to strain relations between the police and any identifiable segment of the community or a neighborhood.

Such a team would serve as an early intervention group, and would be coordinated by the Lancaster County Human Relations Commission. It would be comprised of representatives of the community, the specific neighborhood involved, the police, pastors and lay leaders of community churches, leaders of Lancaster's racial and/or ethnic communities and others as appropriate.

**E. Upgrade the Lancaster Bureau of Police Web Site.** The current Lancaster Bureau of Police web site should be revamped to provide a means for residents to contact the department as well as individual Neighborhood Police Officers in non-emergency situations.

It should also make available information about and explanations of current and ongoing police initiatives, access through COMPSTAT to current, non-confidential, city and neighborhood crime statistics. The site should also be linked to other city and county departments and organizations that relate to the work of the department.

**F. Community Relations/Communications Staffing.** The Lancaster Bureau of Police should assign a single staff member the responsibility for overseeing all public communications for the department, the coordination of ongoing community relations programs, dialogues and activities as well as the handling of media relations and oversight of the content of the web site.

## **Beyond the Lancaster Crime Commission -- The Commission's Advice for a Safer Future**

As an advisory group, the Lancaster Crime Commission has relied solely on the moral strength of its ideas to persuade others – elected and appointed officials, law enforcement officers, social services agencies, faith-based and public service organizations, and ordinary citizens – to become the actual and long-term agents of change.

Clearly, much change needs to occur to ensure a safer future for Lancaster and its surrounding communities; the work to reduce crime and restore order is unending.

In this Final Report of the Crime Commission, we offer a series of resolutions adopted at the concluding meeting of the Commission. They are intended as initial steps in the next phase of change.

### **The Initial Report of the Lancaster Crime Commission**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission reaffirms the key findings and recommendations of the following reports which are attached: The Commission's March 2001 Initial Report, Police Reorganization Task Force, Code Enforcement Task Force, Quality of Life Task Force, Perceptions of Disorder, Crime and Community Life Research, Housing, Real Estate, and Quality of Life, Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations Committee, and the Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Committee's Strategic Initiative Task Forces.*

As we reexamine our March 2001 Initial Report and subsequent reports of the Crime Commission and associated task forces, we continue to have full faith in the key findings and recommendations of those documents. We therefore reaffirm them. Synopses of most reports can be found under "Lancaster Crime Commission Chronicled" in this report, and the complete manuscripts are provided at [www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission](http://www.lanccounty.com/community/lancastercrimecommission)

### **De-politicization of the Debate on Public Safety**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission issues a plea for geographic, bureaucratic, and partisan de-politicization of the debate on public safety issues faced by the greater Lancaster community.*

This is a plea for common sense and common decency. Partisan political wrangling between and among city and countywide leadership has no place in this issue. Unfortunately, and predictably, the normal patterns of partisan politics continue to hamper improvements.

We encourage principled debate leading to workable solutions. But that's not what our community is getting. Instead, continual public partisan posturing -- not from principle, but to secure political advantage -- works to prevent the community at large from coming to grips with the crime problems confronting us.

It is disappointing that some of our leadership seem more interested in appearing to do something -- and doing it cheaply -- than actually accomplishing good. In addition, geographic, ethnic and racial rivalries abound in our city, to the benefit of no one. Combine such mischief with bureaucratic inertia, timidity, turf protection, and general defensiveness, and one finds the real enemies of progress in this city.

Politics as usual must end. The need to implement a comprehensive city and countywide crime fighting strategy demands it. The successes of the Crime Commission as a non-partisan engine for public safety demonstrate the potential for non-political action in this community.

### **Support for the Lancaster Public Safety Research Institute**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission fully supports the Lancaster Public Safety Research Institute, housed at Franklin & Marshall College. The Public Safety Research Institute is an independent collaborative effort by members of the Franklin and Marshall College, Millersville University and Elizabethtown College faculty and student body, Lancaster Healthy Communities and community leaders. A community and academic board of directors will direct its efforts. The Institute serves as a public policy research and educational resource to those in the public and private sectors who continue to be involved in the drive to make the greater Lancaster Community safer.*

The Crime Commission voices its unqualified support for this newly forming, locally based public policy research and educational resource.

As a permanent successor to the Crime Commission's Research Committee, the work of the Lancaster Public Safety Research Institute will be available to those in the academic, public and private sectors involved in the drive to make the greater Lancaster community safer.

Startup funding should come from the academic and business communities. Non-profit status will be obtained in order to insure the independent nature of the Lancaster Public Safety Research Institute, and to enable it to acquire funds for project and staff development.

### **Creation of the Lancaster Committee of 100**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission advocates the creation of "The Lancaster Committee of 100," an independent, political and Community action organization responsible for the advocacy of full implementation of the "Fixing Broken Windows" strategy of public safety enhancement and quality of life improvement. The*

*organization would be charged with the advocacy, performance evaluation, measurement, issue advancement, public education to encourage citizen participation and leadership development. The committee will not hesitate to engage in political action in pursuit of a safer greater Lancaster community that all citizens will find is a better place to live.*

Nothing happens without leadership. The championing of *Fixing Broken Windows* and other improvements the Crime Commission are recommending are so comprehensive, and the structural changes so sweeping, that the cause must be captained. The very interlocking nature of its components to the political, public safety and social service hierarchies demands constant and consistent management.

In a very real sense, the "Lancaster Committee of 100" would carry on the mission of the Crime Commission as an independent, political and community action organization.

We believe we have before us today a once-in-a-generation opportunity to change the course of Lancaster's history. The "Lancaster Committee of 100" can take up that challenge by enabling the people of this community to participate in the public safety reform process.

### **Public Safety Coalition**

*Resolved that the Lancaster Crime Commission encourages that the mission of the Lancaster Public Safety Coalition be broadened to become the focal point of all private sector actions aimed at directly improving public safety through employment of projects and programs supporting the Fixing Broken Windows vision for the community. Those projects and programs should include a video monitoring system, crime prevention through environmental design, real estate interventions to ensure public health and safety, community participation in neighborhood safety projects, and cooperative supplemental street security programs.*

The Public Safety Coalition is an entity of the Lancaster Alliance, and was formed at the recommendation of the Crime Commission in cooperation with Police Chief Heim.

The group is currently the prime mover in an effort to position video surveillance systems in certain high crime areas within the city. We encourage the current group to expand its mandate to become the core organization to investigate and implement innovative public safety programs and technologies within our community.

### **Neighborhood Improvement District**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission believes the Neighborhood Improvement District concept should be championed as exemplified by the James Street Corridor District being sponsored by Franklin & Marshall College and Lancaster General Hospital. Accordingly, the Crime Commission recommends the creation of the "King Street Corridor" Neighborhood Improvement District as a second collaborative effort*

*this one sponsored by the major institutions of the center city area and the neighborhoods directly to its south. Like the James Street Corridor District, the King Street Corridor District would provide leadership and financing for “clean & safe” efforts, home and streetscape improvement, and encouragement of home ownership and neighborhood business development in the targeted neighborhood. In time these projects should be replicated throughout the city as the basis of a thoroughgoing neighborhood development effort.*

The Crime Commission is strong in its advocacy of the Neighborhood Improvement District concept.

The James Street Corridor District represents a comprehensive series of strategies aimed at reinvigorating the housing market, reducing crime, and re-igniting a sense of community pride and participation. All with private funds, free of governmental restrictions and red tape, directed at meeting the following goals:

- More homeownership by stable homebuyers
- Higher standards of property improvement and maintenance
- Elimination of eyesores and problem properties
- Improved community pride and self-help efforts
- Increased marketing of neighborhoods
- Expanded civic participation
- Improved neighborhood commercial activity

Accordingly, the Crime Commission recommends the creation of the "King Street Corridor" Neighborhood Improvement District as a second collaborative effort. Like its neighbor in the Northwest end of town it would be sponsored privately, this time by the major institutions of the center city area and the neighborhoods directly to its south. We would expect the proposed Convention Center to be a major sponsor.

As with the James Street Corridor District, the King Street Corridor Neighborhood Improvement District would provide leadership and financing for “clean & safe” efforts, home and streetscape improvement, and encouragement of home ownership and neighborhood business development in the targeted neighborhood.

In time these projects should be replicated throughout the city as the basis of a thorough neighborhood development effort.

### **Faith-based Partnerships**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission strongly advocates the fostering of a permanent, formal working partnership among greater Lancaster city, suburban and rural churches, synagogues, mosques and other faith-based groups, to create a dynamic for neighborhood Improvement & community development. We believe such relationships will foster an understanding of shared values and vision of community, family and healthy lifestyles. This will take us beyond the word tolerance to a world where we can embrace our diversity. Such a partnership can be more powerful than any governmentally mandated or controlled program.*

Our views on Faith-based Partnerships are in part based on the success of a November 2002 Crime Commission-sponsored conference titled "Partnering to Build Just Communities: The Greatest Antidote for Crime." Over 60 religious leaders and committed lay leaders attended the conference to learn how faith-based partnerships have worked to improve the quality of life and sense of community in other cities large and small.

These partnerships work well in other places and they can work well in Lancaster as an integral part of the overall, multifaceted effort to rebuild our community.

### **Lancaster Quality of Life Task Force**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission supports the continuation of the Quality of Life Task Force, its mission and its goals, particularly the creation of a permanent council of criminal justice, law enforcement and social service agency representation as recommended in the August 2002 Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force Annual Report. To coordinate this effort, a permanent staff should be hired and funded by the City of Lancaster.*

In August of 2002, the First Annual Report of the Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force was released with much fanfare, applause and promises of support from City Hall. To date, and to the best of our knowledge, none of the major recommendations in the report have been seriously considered, let alone implemented.

Such inaction is positive proof that the primary recommendation -- namely, that the Quality of Life Task Force, its mission and its goals, be continued under the auspices of city government -- needs immediate implementation.

### **Lancaster Police Foundation**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission advocates that members of the greater Lancaster business community form a Lancaster Police Foundation that will directly assist the Bureau of Police and its management organization through public advocacy of key needs, advice and counsel on key issues as well as the development of funding for special one time needs, capital and non-capital.*

This is envisioned as an organization that helps the Lancaster Bureau of Police. As a funding entity, it would offer several advantages:

- A conduit for soliciting and receiving grants from foundations. Grantors regularly reject requests from municipal governments because they do not wish to supplant regular governmental services supported by taxes.
- The ability to offer private contributors the assurance that funds will be specifically earmarked for a special project, such as improving technology capabilities, training, or special projects.
- Freedom from bidding and procurement procedures imposed on local government.
- A channel for programs already underway, such as fund raising for the canine and equestrian units.

The ability to attract contributions from people and businesses with significant financial means, particularly outside of the city limits.

### **Countywide Police Cooperation**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission endorses the continuation, expansion and formalization of the cooperative crime fighting partnership between and among the Lancaster County Chiefs of Police Association and the Lancaster Bureau of Police.*

### **Hotel and Convention Center Means More Police Officers**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission believes the Lancaster Bureau of Police must maintain its full complement of community policing officers and prepare itself to support the development and completion of the convention center/hotel complex and the revitalization of the entire downtown area. Such preparation will require the permanent expansion of its present authorized complement of sworn officers by an additional 12 officers before the end 2005, all assigned specifically to cover the D.I.D. This recommendation is in addition to the Strategic Initiative recommendations (for) the addition of 24 (sworn) officers, and the addition of 12 non-uniformed professional administrative staff by the end of 2004*

Lancaster's downtown hotel and convention center is coming. Along with it will come people. Lots of people, with estimates varying from between 500,000 and 1,000,000 visitors to downtown annually.

But as every businessperson understands, the key to any successful venture is *a return customer*. If the visitors to the hotel and convention center brings to town feel in any way unsafe or threatened they will not come back. And they will advise others to stay away.

Such a multitude of visitors will mandate additional traffic and pedestrian control measures.

This means more police. *More police above and beyond* the 24 additional sworn officers and 12 non-uniformed associates recommended for 2004 by the Crime Commission's Strategic Initiative Task Force for successful community policing.

### **Minority Public Safety Recruiting**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission encourages the City, using private funds, to contract with an independent specialized consulting firm, for the search, recruitment and creation of a pool of African-American and Hispanic-American candidates to fill positions within Lancaster Bureau of Police, Lancaster Fire Department and other components of the public safety, community development and social service system.*

As highlighted in the Commission's Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations Committee report, *Fixing Broken Windows* authors declare that "Community policing ...acknowledges the reliance of police on citizens, in multiple senses: for authority to police neighborhoods; for information about the nature of neighborhood problems, and for collaboration in solving problems."

For a collaboration like community policing to work, it must originate with mutual trust and respect between protectors and protected. Establishing such relationships is made more difficult in communities such as Lancaster, where a wide range of cultures exists side-by-side and occasionally clash.

We believe it is essential to remove as many roadblocks as possible in an effort to make community policing work in all neighborhoods of the city, particularly as this effort is getting underway. Accordingly, we believe it is desirable that the public safety officials in the neighborhoods reflect the cultural and ethnic composition of those neighborhoods.

### **Community Policing Skills Formal Training**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission recommends that by February 2005, all current sworn officers of the Lancaster Police Department are required to successfully complete a formal 100-hour comprehensive community policing skills training program. Integration of the same 100- hour course should be included in the recruit training regimen for all future officers. Furthermore, that all employees of the public safety, community development and social service system receive annual training in cultural, ethnic and race sensitivity.*

The successful implementation of community policing is too important to be left to on-the-job training. Formal, comprehensive community policing skills training is essential.

An indispensable part of that training is instruction in cultural, ethnic and race sensitivity. The importance of such cultural diversity training was affirmed in the Crime Commission's Neighborhood, Community Policing and Community Relations Committee report.

### **City Concentration of the Poor, the Under-employed and Non-profits**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission urges the appropriate City and County public and human service officials, to develop and adopt a plan and policy to reverse the concentration of poverty and the locations of non-profit and tax-exempt institutions.*

We must reverse the concentration of poor people and non-profit institutions in Lancaster City. Currently, the burden on the city for providing services, and housing, to the county's poor and under-employed falls disproportionately on the city and its citizens. This concentration of poverty principally places uncompensated strain on city police, the courts and our educational institutions. Equally important, the concentration of a poor, transient, under employed population in the neighborhoods of the city makes it difficult for those neighborhoods to effectively address crime and quality of life issues. That is unfair. People of the county, the other municipalities of the county and county government, must assume their shares of the obligation.

It is not our purpose to criticize the needed works of human services and social services organizations; their contributions are many and good. Nor are we critical of the people who truly require these services. We are critical, however, of the apparent automatic assumption by the community that these services must be housed in the city and that all of the poor should reside in its neighborhoods.

Additionally, it is estimated by Lancaster officials that 21% of all property in the city is deeded to non-profit institutions. Those properties are, by Pennsylvania law, exempt from paying property taxes. A handful of these organizations provide contributions in lieu of taxes, but the overall positive impact on city revenues by those payments is small. Non-profit, tax-exempt institutions represent a net annual revenue loss to the city of \$3,856,000.

### **\$10 Million Up Front, \$5 Million Per Year**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission recognizes that the cost of managing, handling, and accepting responsibility for the safety and quality of life problems outlined in the Commission recommendations will be significant. This will likely mean a one time capital investment in excess of \$10 million by County and City institutions, and an increase in annual operating costs in excess of \$5 million. It is recognized that since the entire County benefits from these problem-solving efforts, the entire Lancaster County community, public and private, should share in accepting the responsibility for these increased investments and costs.*

While we believe that a conscientious community-wide commitment to adopting and implementing aggressive new crime fighting strategies is paramount, close behind in importance is appropriate funding.

Managing, handling, and accepting responsibility for the safety and quality of life problems we've outlined will likely mean a one time capital investment in excess of \$10 million by county and city institutions, and increased annual operating costs exceeding \$5 million. Those are very basic estimates; costs could be significantly higher.

However, we view these expenditures as investments made to yield a return. In short order, decreased crime can mean increased real estate values, higher employment opportunities, a broadened tax base, less fiscal strain on publicly and privately supported social service institutions, decreased court, prosecution and other law enforcement costs, and overall increased tax revenues.

Nonetheless, the city cannot -- in fact, should not -- handle these initial and operational costs alone. Lancaster is not an island floating alone in a county sea. We believe that since the entire county benefits from these problem-solving efforts, the entire Lancaster County community -- public and private -- must share in accepting responsibility for these increased investments and costs.

### **Offices of Planning and Financial Development**

*Resolved that the Lancaster Crime Commission advocates that both the Lancaster Bureau of Police and the Lancaster County Office of the District Attorney each create and staff an internal "Office of Planning and Financial Development." These offices will develop non-traditional funding sources in order to implement innovative strategies for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of policing and prosecution systems.*

We believe that the need for additional resources is so great, and the nature of the solutions to the communities crime and quality of life problems so broad, it is important that both the police department and the district attorney's office should formally and aggressively pursue non-traditional strategies and funding sources. Adding on-staff professional planning and grant writing capability would not only be an effective tactic but likely a self funding one as well.

# **The Municipal Finance Reform Initiative**

## **Providing Resources for Fighting Crime, Restoring Order, and Improving the Quality of Life**

*Resolved, that the Lancaster Crime Commission advocates a joining of the major public and private institutions of greater Lancaster to launch a formal "Municipal Finance Reform Initiative." It will recommend fiscally responsible public safety and municipal service delivery and finance system reforms to meet the unique needs of Lancaster City and the Greater Lancaster Community.*

In formulating the recommendations presented in this Final Report, our first considerations were: What would work *best*, what would work *now*, what would work *persistently*. Reducing crime, restoring order, and improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods remain the primary and urgent goals. For the purposes of this report, all other considerations are secondary -- including cost and the structure of the delivery of municipal services.

And yet, after putting first things first, we recognized the hard truth behind the full enactment of our recommendations. It's going to take serious money. Even if we assume that new private, state and federal sources of revenue exist for some of our proposals, the cost will be far more than what the city of Lancaster can possibly pay without driving its poorer citizens to despair and its richer ones to flight. And we haven't even directly addressed the broader questions of the need for added drug treatment and corrections facilities that will represent equally significant costs.

Critics and skeptics may say, "Great proposals. But where will the money come from?"

Our answer is this: If this great city can find \$30 million for a midtown carousel and \$10 million for a baseball stadium, surely it can find the money to take back the neighborhoods from the "druglords, slumlords, and ganglords." If the Lancaster community is willing to create a "world class" hotel and convention center complex, a museum to house a nationally renowned quilt collection, and a music academy to attract international attention as the engines of its revitalization, surely we can make our neighborhoods safe. Safe so that revitalization has a real chance to succeed.

We believe that if we fail to "fix the broken windows" of the city, and make all of its neighborhoods more secure, *all* of these other investments will be fruitless.

Therefore, although proposing financial solutions and broader structural changes was not part of our original mandate, we can't just say "Not our job," publish a lengthy report, and pat ourselves on the back. Members of the Crime Commission devoted part of the closing months of their service to exploring just these questions.

The Crime Commission formed an ad hoc financial advisory team to spawning ideas that will help generate or save money. The team included specialists in developing financial plans for government agencies across the county, and creating ideas like those that follow.

These ideas are *not* recommendations. They are the untested ideas of the Crime Commission members and civic leaders we asked to think about financial solutions. They're intended to spark debate, prompt other ideas, and lead to new models. We ask that the community and policy makers to think of them as the seeds of ideas.

The primary idea to surface in this process was recognizing the need to formally continue this search for potential reform. That idea took the form of the above resolution suggesting that private and public leaders of the greater Lancaster community sponsor, support and participate in a "Municipal Finance Reform Initiative."

We believe this initiative should be comprised of a committee of volunteers, supported by academic advisors and a professional staff. It should be charged with identifying ways and means of raising and investing municipal dollars to secure public safety. It should explore the broadest possible range of reforms without the bias of politics or the inertia of the status quo.

It is our hope that the scope and range of the ideas presented here will indicate the sweeping nature of the solutions we believe will be required. Again, the following are *not* recommendations. They are *ideas* we believe should be explored by this community as it continues to find solutions to its public safety and quality of life problems.

### **Potential Reform Ideas**

- **Develop a Supplemental Municipal Funding Program.** Perhaps we could develop a Supplemental Municipal Funding Program or system requiring that county government pay to the city a proportionate share of the real estate tax revenue lost due to the concentration in the city of county-owned tax exempt property. The county contribution would be determined by the valuation of city non-profit property.
- **Intergovernmental Municipal Transfer System.** Shouldn't we develop a system, or at least arrive at a mutual agreement among local municipal and county governments and agencies, to make payments to one another in lieu of taxes? Why should these large property owners and public service users not pay their own way? The idea would be to equalize the impact of the concentration of government services in particular areas, like the city. If all local governments and government agencies paid a portion (33% for instance) of potential tax bills on the real estate they owned, the areas with the highest concentration of tax exempt properties would find substantial relief.

- **Neighborhood Impact Fee.** The collecting of a formal public safety or quality of life “impact fee” from all non-profits in lieu of taxes might make sense. Such a fee would compensate the each local government for their use of services. The voluntary contributions from tax-exempt entities could be based on a portion of real estate assessments.
- **Service Sharing.** It seems reasonable that the city and county should invite non-profit agencies and organizations to make in-kind gifts in lieu of taxes to offset the negative impact they have on city and county finances. Examples would be: Free medical services from the hospital, free staffing of after school programs from private social service agencies and churches, and free staff and technical support for neighborhood security and policing from the Convention Center Authority, the Parking Authority and the private schools and colleges would make sense.
- **Pressure for Support.** Shouldn’t we be asking citizens of the city and leaders of civic organizations to encourage the boards of all non-profit institutions owning real estate to voluntarily make substantial payments in lieu of taxes? That would include payments to the city, the Lancaster School District, the county and other local municipalities to offset their impact on the cost of governmental services. Wouldn’t it be wise for the city, the county and the United Way to make participation in a Neighborhood Impact Fee-in-lieu-taxes Program a requirement for all non-profit vendors and grant recipients?
- **An Amusement Admissions Tax.** Maybe the adoption of a city event admissions tax on attendance at newly developed venues like the convention center, the ballpark, the museums, the music academy, and the carousel make sense? These new developments will be attracting new visitors to the city, but adding public safety expenses as well. Such a levy could be made on attendance at newly developed attractions as they come on-stream or could be extended countywide to include existing enterprises. Even 10-cents per admission could generate significant public safety revenues.
- **A Community Impact Surcharge.** Since the people who live in the immediate suburban ring around the city benefit the most from city services and from the concentration of tax exempt property in the city, perhaps it would make sense to apply a “community impact surcharge” to their water and sewer bills.
- **Implementation of a City or County Sales Tax.** According to Pennsylvania statutes 6902 and 6908, local governments may adopt local option sales taxes up to 2%. Allegheny County (Pittsburgh area) has a one-percent sales tax to fund civic and sports facilities. Ours could fund crime-reduction and neighborhood-improvement strategies.

- **Place a Surcharge on Traffic Tickets and Citations.** There is precedent; other places are doing this to defray the cost of law enforcement. For example: Deland, FL, motorists cited for a moving violation pay an extra \$2 surcharge to help pay for low-income law-enforcement candidates to attend the police academy. And, Wayne County (Detroit) is considering a surcharge from \$25 - \$50 on each traffic ticket issued to offset county budget deficits.
- **Charge a Public Safety Service Fee** or tax on those who work in the city.
- **Institute a County-wide 5 mill “Public Safety Assessment”** to pay for or a county-wide public safety surcharge of \$10 per person per year for each resident to make our community safer.
- **Enhancement of City Real Estate Values.** Isn't it time we develop a proactive program of planned enhancement of city real estate values? Such a program would use tools such a zoning, targeted gentrification, commercial development and real estate intervention to improve homes, commercial buildings and neighborhoods specifically to increase the tax base of the city.
- **Create a Revolving Mortgage Fund.** Wouldn't it make sense to create a private fund aimed at creating more home ownership opportunities by targeting city rental properties for conversion, and creating lower cost homeownership options countywide?
- **Issue City or County Revenue Bonds or General Obligation Bonds** for capital projects aimed at improving public safety and neighborhood revitalization. These tax-free bonds would enable the community to pay for public safety improvement over an extended period. Revenues for bond payment would be generated by increased property values resulting from the success of our neighborhood improvement measures.
- **Levy on Non-Profits.** Perhaps charging an annual fee for services provided to each city non-profit, non-taxable, or 501C(3) organization with physical operations or a legal presence in the city would be the most direct way of compensating for the concentration of non profits in the city.
- **Community Investment Corporation.** Should we consider forming an entity similar to Delaware CIC to acquire property through banks and financial institutions to develop new incentive programs for middle-income housing?
- **Increase Fines for Nuisance Crime Offenses.** Might we increase fines or attach a surcharge specifically for the city's public safety costs so that those found guilty will assume more of the financial burden for their offenses? Could this be extended to parking and traffic violations?

- **A "Greater Lancaster" Public Safety Authority.** Would it be reasonable to create a regional authority to receive some of these new revenues? Such an authority could be charged with ensuring that these funds, coming from sources beyond city limits, would be used widely and effectively to enhance the public safety and quality of life of the city and the greater Lancaster Area ...and not simply be used to reduce city taxes. It could also be charged with developing new methods of coordination and cooperation among city and county agencies.
- **A Public Safety Endowment.** Should we create a permanent endowment with public and private funds to generate a continued flow of revenue for public safety expenses? Other communities are trying to attract private contributions to offset public costs. A public safety endowment might be a useful vehicle to attract those dollars.
- **Disposal of Public Property.** Is it time the city and county consider disposing of some assets to fund our ongoing public safety problems? Revenues from selling public real estate, buildings and even the city water company could be the basis for the Public Safety Endowment.
- **Alternative Revenue Development Agency.** Wouldn't it make sense for the city and the county to join together to form a single consolidated organization to pursue all alternative revenue sources in an energetic, coordinated way? One agency with a single staff could be charged with aggressively pursuing state, federal and private foundation revenue sources for a public safety endowment, for city public safety programs, and for county public safety programs.
- **Conduct an Independent Internal Review** of government agency infrastructures; study the services, processes, and procedures. Determine appropriate staffing levels, department reorganization needs, value-added vs. non-value-added services. Investigate outsourcing opportunities (private sector bidding) where those services can be provided in a more efficient and less expensive manner.
- **Possible Amicable Annexation.** Is it time for the legal realignment of municipal boundaries of the city and its contiguous of suburbs? We recognize that the anticipated controversy over this idea, coupled with Pennsylvania's constitutional restraints, may make this difficult to achieve. However, the reality is that the physical growth of a city is the most successful community revitalization strategy in metropolitan areas nationwide.
- **Redistribution of Municipal Responsibilities.** Without the legal expansion of city limits, perhaps the answer lies in a redistribution of municipal responsibilities with the creation of a formal cooperative relationship between the city and its near

suburbs. One commission member has envisioned such a relationship, and explains it accordingly:

*"The creation of a formal "Greater Lancaster" might significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of law enforcement and other government operations through an equitable redistribution of responsibilities.*

*"Since there is already a strong affinity between the city and its surrounding areas, it's often hard to tell where city homes stop and the contiguous township homes begin. In fact, many of these people live in what is actually Greater Lancaster. It could become far, far Greater if all these contiguous townships worked together for the common good.*

*"They could share the responsibilities as well as the opportunities of living in such proximity, reorganize their governments to act with greater cohesion, cooperate in law enforcement, and enjoy the financial benefits of streamlining diverse service organizations into single coordinated departments.*

*"This core of common interests and geographic affinity could include Lancaster City and these townships: Lancaster, Mannheim, East Lampeter, West Lampeter, Manor, and East Hempfield. By uniting them into a seamless urban and suburban community, it would coalesce individual strengths into a stronger whole.*

*"Outlying areas would be affected little by this concentration of resources and people around the city. Life would go on as before in the farm areas and in towns like Ephrata, Manheim, Elizabethtown, Marietta, Mount Joy, Columbia, New Holland, Lititz, and Quarryville. But within the suburban and urban center, the idea is to balance the unbalanced. For example: To straighten out the 911 controversies and competitions; To recognize differences and competition between county and city crime; To compensate for the city's loss of tax base and revenues; To support the county seat of government, law enforcement, the courts, and the city's burden of social agencies; To more equitably address issues from poverty to drug dealing; And to quit pretending that the city's problems stop at the city limits.*

*"The area could combine township chiefs and their departments with the city police to balance the training and experience of all. Many more resources could be quickly marshaled against specific problems. Equalized salary structures would reduce the competition among outlying municipalities for the highly trained and experienced Lancaster city*

*police officers. The efficiency of combining resources could cut costs dramatically.*

*“As part of Greater Lancaster, the residents of the contiguous townships would also have a greater stake in the success of the new convention center, new hotels, and rebuilt downtown retail district.*

*“Two distinct public safety authorities could be established by the county government, one for County Lancaster and one for Greater Lancaster. Each would endeavor to balance police forces and revenues, share training as well as expensive technology and equipment, jointly plan and combine ideas concerning issues such as quality of life, reducing crime, restoring order, and community policing. Greater Lancaster’s public safety authority could facilitate a sharing of suburban and city law enforcement talent, technology, and experience.”*

The point of including these ideas for reform in the concluding pages of this Final Report of the Crime Commission is not to specifically advocate the adoption of any of them. Rather it is to indicate that we believe the effort to remake this city and its neighborhoods has only just begun.

That mission won’t be concluded until we find new ways to fix our broken windows, and new sources of revenue to pay the bills. That can happen when the entire Lancaster City and County communities become committed to making this a better place for all.

## **The Lancaster Crime Commission, a Historic, Community-wide Effort**

The Lancaster Crime Commission is a group of people working toward the common goal of ensuring that Lancaster's best years are yet to come.

Since its chartering in August 2000, nearly 500 people and organizations directly participated in the work and mission of the Crime Commission. People from all walks of life, from every area of the city and county, and many from far outside the greater Lancaster area, lent their time and expertise.

While the ranks of participants counted criminologists, attorneys, pastors, business leaders, physicians, elected officials, law professors, police, former FBI agents, judges, an eminent author and television commentator, the majority was made up of ordinary citizens. All were important, none more so than another.

It is our belief that never in the history of Lancaster have so many people demonstrated love of this city, and a mutual faith in democratic principles. They were joined in the solid conviction that an individual, working in concert with his or her neighbors, can make a difference.

Lancastrians present, and Lancastrians of future generations, owe a collective debt of gratitude to:

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Chief Casey Kraus, Mount Joy Township  
Lampeter-Strasburg High School  
Lancaster Alliance  
Lancaster Bar Association  
Lancaster Business 2 Business  
Lancaster Campaign  
Lancaster City Fire Department  
Lancaster City Police Department  
Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods  
Lancaster County Detectives Office  
Lancaster County Drug Task Force  
Lancaster County GIS Department  
Lancaster County Police Chiefs Association  
Lancaster County Sheriff's Office  
Lancaster County-Wide Communications  
Lancaster General Hospital  
Lancaster Newspapers  
Lancaster Theological Seminary  
Lancaster Trophy House  
Chief Dennis Landvater, Elizabethtown Borough  
Charles Lardner, Lancaster Newspapers  
Christopher Larson, ADA  
Phil Lehman, Manos House  
Chief William Leighty, Clay Township  
John Levitski, Lancaster Alliance  
W. Kirk Liddell, Lancaster Alliance  
Rev. Charles Lisse, Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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Tony Narr, Police Executive Research Forum, DC  
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Francis M. Newhams, City of York, Permits of Health License  
Carmen & Perfecto Nieves, West King St. Association  
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Captain Donald Palmer, LCPD  
Randy Patterson, Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority  
David Payne, Hotel Brunswick (Ramada)  
Michael A. Peck, Micro Precision Corp.  
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Pennsylvania State Police, Troup J  
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Nancy Perkins, Bethel AME Church  
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Vicki L. Phillips, Lancaster City School District  
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Michael Sand Associates  
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Gary Schick, Schick Development Co.  
Karen Schloer, Boys and Girls Club of Lancaster  
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Ray Shaw, Lancaster Newspapers  
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Rev. Gerald Simmons, Arbor Place  
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Chief Edward Sprecher, New Holland Borough

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John Stauffer, American Red Cross  
Chief Charles Steiner, Ephrata Township  
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Harry S. Stoltzfus, CitiFinancial  
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Joel Walker, Lampeter-Strasburg High School  
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Our deepest apologies and regrets to those who may have been inadvertently overlooked during the compilation of this list.