

## Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

**Project Name:** *City of Lancaster Comprehensive Plan*

- **Year Complete:** 2023
- **Local Government:** Lancaster, PA
- **Local Foundation:** High Foundation

### **Project Purpose**

---

To conduct robust community engagement to inform core values and priorities and draft policies to ensure that the resulting Comprehensive Plan is inclusive and equitable.

### **Key Lessons Learned**

---

1. Community engagement cannot be rushed. Especially when trying to set values and priorities to develop a comprehensive plan. With additional time there is room to add innovative elements while still completing deliverables.
2. Participants preferred to see more moderate options pursued first, such as improvements to existing bus service or investments in rooftop solar on public buildings. There was skepticism of solutions that would require significant infrastructure investments, including developing a Bus Rapid Transport system or building utility scale solar arrays on outlying farmland.
3. Where public investments are made, many participants would appreciate due diligence from the City and stakeholders in carefully reviewing lessons learned from other cities. Residents may also need help to better understand tradeoffs and justifications for public investments. For instance, while prioritizing rooftop solar and protecting farmland makes practical sense, many residents also wanted to see a major transition to renewable energy. Although a significant amount of electricity can be generated from rooftop solar, meeting local demand for electricity with renewables will likely require some investments in farmland solar and other utility-scale projects.
4. Climate actions that grow public awareness and help to build community participation could have an outsized impact. Participants can be most enthusiastic and unified in support for urban gardens, more tree cover, and more green space within the city. While urban gardens may not have a huge effect on greenhouse gas emissions, programs and policies that catalyze urban gardening could help residents feel optimistic and engaged and support further climate policy

### **Additional Information and Resources**

---

Learn and download Lancaster's Comprehensive Draft Plan and engagement work [here](#).