

APPLICATION INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME |
STADIUM ROW

AWARD CATEGORY |
GROWING RESPONSIBLY

PARTICIPANT NAMES AND ORGANIZATIONS |

- Benjamin J. Leshner - President & Founder of SDL Devco, LLC
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- RGS Associates, Inc. – Joe Lutz and John D. Hershey
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- Douglas Charles Phillips – Architect
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- Pelger Engineering & Construction – Ned Pelger
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Stadium Row - Lancaster City's first new, market-rate apartment construction in nearly 50 years - helps to address a present housing shortage with its 104 multi-family units located on a narrow, 1.86-acre infill site. The design team maximized rentable building area while still providing residents with two outdoor gathering spaces, on-site parking that includes electric car charging stations, and indoor/outdoor bike storage. Improvements to a formerly suburban-style streetscape now connect new residents to nearby destinations including the Lancaster Amtrak Station, Clipper Magazine Stadium, and other key urban amenities. Stadium Row exemplifies the planning principles of LCPC's *'Growing Responsibly'* award category.

NARRATIVE

Stadium Row demonstrates all applicable *'Growing Responsibly'* award category criteria noted below in bold text. For example, these 104 new homes constructed on a tight, 1.86-acre urban site resulted in a density of nearly 56 units per acre – well above LCPC's targeted, county-wide average **residential development density of 7.5 dwellings per acre**. As such, Stadium Row represents a **very efficient use of remaining buildable land within Lancaster County's Urban Growth Areas**.

With its four-story design, its emphasis on building up rather than out, and its new streetscape connections, Stadium Row exemplifies **compact and efficient development**. With its connections to pre-existing sewer, water, and transportation infrastructure (including Pennsylvania's second busiest train station), Stadium Row also demonstrates other *'Growing Responsibly'* award category criteria including a **focus on Urban Growth Area redevelopment and infill**, incorporation of **infrastructure facilities and services provided prior to redevelopment occurring, and retention of established Urban Growth Areas**. Combined with other smart growth initiatives throughout Lancaster County, Stadium Row assists with LCPC's goal of **at least 85% of new dwellings being constructed with these Urban Growth Areas**.

In addition to meeting *'Growing Responsibly'* award category criteria, Stadium Row effectively incorporates LCPC's identified Planning Leadership Principles – each of which is noted below in bold text. For example, the high public demand for these 104 units – especially its smallest 461 sq. ft. residences – is a clear testament to the first Leadership Principle, **effectiveness**. Stadium Row leasing began on March 1, 2021 and achieved stabilized occupancy by December 2021. The building was two-thirds pre-leased before it opened in August 2021. Satisfying such previously unmet demand for new urban housing choices, Stadium Row advances *places2040* goals and objectives.

NARRATIVE CONT.

Demonstrating the second Leadership Principle, the design team relied upon **innovation** to plan for new housing near an existing ballpark, and to address this site's problematic soil conditions. Freeing some ground-level space for more housing, off-street parking, and a terrace, Stadium Row's rooftop deck provides a second outdoor gathering space and previously unavailable southward views over Clipper Magazine Stadium. Prior to building construction, Stadium Row's soils were determined to be unsuitable for customary building footings. Alternative caissons and pilings were not economically viable solutions. Instead, existing loose and contaminated soils were deeply cut down to good bearing soil before they were mixed with Portland Cement and compacted to form suitable foundations for these redevelopment efforts.

Use of Best Practices at Stadium Row included technologies and techniques applicable to the new building, some of its furnishings, and its surrounding landscape. This new building includes 'smart' locks, energy-efficient appliances, lighted bathroom mirrors with LED technology, and hanging bicycle racks to encourage bike transportation by its residents. Furniture used in Stadium Row's indoor common areas was hand-built by Lancaster County craftspeople using repurposed chestnut lumber from barns demolished by others. This site's green spaces, including those surrounding an outdoor, ground-level terrace, are planted with predominantly native species to provide a seasonal succession of landscape interest while also assisting with ecological initiatives. Stormwater infiltration was not an option for this Brownfield/Act 2 Cleanup Site because contaminated soils had to be safely capped with new paving, the building footprint, and fresh soil for planting areas.

With its **replicability**, the pioneering Stadium Row project has quickly proven that multi-family residential infill development is economically viable in the City of Lancaster. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the recent influx of other developers now planning infill residential or mixed-use projects on underutilized urban sites. As previously noted, Stadium Row is Lancaster City's first new, market-rate apartment construction in nearly 50 years.

When Clipper Magazine Stadium was constructed, a new private street ringed the ballpark and separated it from the present Stadium Row site's former one-story storage sheds. This street, Stadium Drive, lacked typical urban streetscape components such as sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and tree plantings. To create a more walkable connection between Stadium Row and its broader context, such streetscape components were desired, but their implementation and future maintenance responsibilities required **partnership and collaboration** with this private street's owners, the Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authority and the Lancaster Barnstormers. Enclosed photos depict the transformation of a suburban-style corridor to an urban streetscape with greater connectivity to the nearby Lancaster Amtrak Station and other key destinations.

NARRATIVE CONT.

Effective communication and civic engagement, two additional Planning Leadership Principles, were essential for SDL Devco's coordination with other neighboring landowners. Although there are no known residents within areas immediately adjacent to Stadium Row, local businesses do exist on these formerly industrial properties, and some are contemplating future 'highest and best' uses for their properties. SDL Devco's Ben Leshner met with each neighboring owner to confirm that Stadium Row would be a welcomed addition to the local community.

Opportunities for **advocacy** include a website created by Ben Leshner to promote Stadium Row living opportunities among the City of Lancaster's many urban amenities. He and his family are quite familiar with such amenities, having lived and worked in Lancaster City for ten years. In August 2021, Stadium Row was celebrated by members of the regional Urban Land Institute chapter when they viewed the nearly completed building and site transformation.

Demonstrating LCPC's final Planning Leadership Principle, **consistency with earlier planning**, Stadium Row's 104 multi-family units help to advance previously stagnant housing goals of *Building on Strength*, the 2014 economic development planning initiative led by the Lancaster City Alliance. Before Stadium Row, only 18% of this plan's 15-year goal for 2,500 new housing units had been met, while many other plan goals had been exceeded within the first six years of plan implementation. Today, Stadium Row supports this earlier planning effort, while also demonstrating leadership and effectiveness in implementing LCPC's places2040.