10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania is the leading advocate in Pennsylvania for creating great communities. Our vision is to have a positive impact on the built and natural environment through responsible and efficient land use.

Founded in Southeastern Pennsylvania in 1998, 10,000 Friends has aligned and supported organizations and individuals from across the state committed to land use policies and actions that enable Pennsylvania to strengthen its diverse urban, suburban, and rural communities and reduce irresponsible and inefficient land consumption.

What is Smart Growth?
Smart growth is an urban planning and transportation practice that concentrates growth in compact pedestrian-friendly communities. The purpose of the practice is to avoid inefficient land use and advocate compact, transit-oriented, walkable, bicycle-friendly land use, including neighborhood schools, complete streets, and mixed-use development with a range of housing choices.

Part of a larger national network
10,000 Friends is a partner of Smart Growth America, a growing coalition of national, state and local organizations working to improve the ways citizens, organizations and public officials plan and build the communities in which we live.

Why Create a Strategic Plan Now?
In 2007, 10,000 Friends completed a strategic plan to guide operations from 2007-2011. Internal organizational transitions, coupled with changes to the external policy and legislative environment, provide a critical opportunity for 10,000 Friends to engage in strategic planning. After a competitive RFP process, the Pittsburgh-based firm of Jackson/Clark Partners was selected to work with 10,000 Friends to guide our staff and board through a comprehensive strategic planning process.

What We Learned
The organization’s work is timely and needed today because efficient land use decisions are fiscally responsible, and conserve precious natural and scarce financial resources while saving taxpayers’ money. We consider the next three years a time to further refine our focus, and bring clarity to our efforts to bring more choices of great places for Pennsylvanians to live, work, and enjoy a better quality of life.

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Where We Are  AN OVERVIEW OF OUR ORGANIZATION

OUR CURRENT STRUCTURE
10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania has an annual operating budget of $650,000 and operates under the direction of a 16 person board of directors, including a 5 person executive committee. Staff consists of 4 full-time and 1 part-time positions, operating out of an organizational headquarters office in Harrisburg and regional field offices in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Board capacity is augmented by a 15 person Advisory Board, and a 27 person Policy Council provides additional organizational resources related to public policy.

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSITIONS
The organization has followed a similar course as many non profits in the adolescent phases of organizational existence. Beginning with its founding in Southeastern Pennsylvania, 10,000 Friends experienced positive growth and expansion in its early years. Following a series of legislative victories and completion of accredited research that helped to build the audience and constituency of the organization, expanding beyond Southeastern Pennsylvania was a natural move.

The opening of two regional offices in 2003 (Harrisburg) and 2004 (Pittsburgh), followed by development of the Campaign to Renew Pennsylvania (a programmatic response to the widely consumed Brookings Institute Report – Back to Prosperity) provided a statewide geographic footprint and increased staff capacity in the two major metropolitan areas and the state’s capital.

However, the conclusion of the Renew PA Campaign, a tightening economy and significant turnover in senior staff in recent years has created the need to refocus an expansive set of activities and realign many of our internal operating systems.

OUR 2011–2014 STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Tighten our external focus to align with the realities of current capacity.

2. Focus internally to clarify our mission within the larger umbrella of land use policy.

CAPACITY
10,000 Friends is operating with diminished level of staff capacity compared to past years. A broad program and policy agenda has pressured the organization to attempt to maintain a level of activity more appropriate for previous, larger staff levels. Recent additions to the board have expanded capacity in critical areas; however both the Policy Council and the Advisory Board are under-utilized as strategic resources. 10,000 Friends has a legacy of significant legislative and policy successes in spite of modest organizational capacity levels. However, the challenge of connecting direct outcomes from the ambitious Campaign to Renew PA and previous staffing levels makes it essential for the organization to leverage existing resources, focus its efforts and again demonstrate its ability to have a relevant impact.

More than 30 individuals were interviewed as a part of our Strategic Planning process, both from within the organization as well as external partners and supporters. Interviewees were given an opportunity to speak openly and candidly about their experience with 10,000 Friends, and provided a comprehensive overview of where we’ve been, where we are and opportunities for moving forward.

Compiled, the contents of the interview outcomes covered topics including:

- MISSION & VISION
- LEADERSHIP & OPERATIONS
- POLICY
- PROGRAMMING
- PARTNERS & NETWORKS
- IDENTITY & BRAND
- SUSTAINING THE ORGANIZATION
Where We Are

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

MISSION & VISION

10,000 Friends is perceived as an umbrella organization for smart growth in Pennsylvania, providing a unique opportunity to connect local leaders and a growing cadre of regional smart growth and regional improvement organizations in the Commonwealth. At the core of smart growth issues is land use policy. 10,000 Friends is the only state-wide organization doing work in the area of land use and is perceived as reasonable and well-balanced in its policy positions. The organization is viewed as solutions oriented and credible.

LEADERSHIP & OPERATIONS

10,000 Friends has an experienced and knowledgeable staff that understands the issues and are able to access networks of civic, government and private sector leaders. Having offices in three key geographic locations affirms the organization’s statewide presence and demonstrates that it is neither “Harrisburg centric” nor favoring one region over another. The organization has a well-established board with a range of assets, connections and strong ties to the organization.

POLICY

10,000 Friends’ core strength is in transportation, regional planning, urban core and land use policy. The organization has a ten-year record of legislative successes. These successes, coupled with a long-standing, diverse Policy Council positions the organization to proactively address land use issues and their relationship to increasing energy prices, impacts of natural resource extraction on communities and economic growth potential associated with compact development.

PROGRAMMING

The organization has had a series of significant program successes. From Planning Beyond Boundaries (the municipalities guide to multi-municipal planning) and promotion of research such as Back to Prosperity; to policy design and advocacy related to PennDOT’s Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI), 10,000 Friends has made significant contributions to the ability of Pennsylvania’s communities to grow and develop responsibly.

PARTNERS & NETWORKS

10,000 Friends is perceived to be a qualified convener of organizations. Through the quarterly meetings of its Policy Council, or its regional outreach and education using the Brookings Institution work they’ve demonstrated the ability to build positive partnership experiences. Similarly, they are acknowledged builders of local networks and relationships throughout various areas of the state. The range of relationships that they’ve brokered includes decision makers at state, regional and local levels. Their ability to build networks stretches across gubernatorial administrations and within both political parties.

IDENTITY & BRAND

Recognized mostly for early successes in land use planning policy and stimulating research that demonstrated the inefficiency of land use and investment decision making processes, 10,000 Friends has built a reputation as a valuable resource for policy makers and local government leaders. Through a decade of existence they have gained the perception as reasonable, pragmatic and generally non-partisan organization in a hyper-partisan environment.

SUSTAINING THE ORGANIZATION

Strong levels of previous foundation investment have bolstered the organization through its history. This has enabled the establishment of a broad network of partners and key contacts across the state. Likewise the combination of capacity and credibility has enabled the recent ability to attract fee-for-service revenue on discrete projects.
Where We Are  EXTERNAL CONDITIONS

The current Pennsylvania policy climate is impacted significantly by three key factors: 1) the transition from the previous Rendell administration to the new Corbett administration; 2) the lingering financial impact of the current economic downturn; and 3) continued market momentum for development based on smart growth principles.

CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION
The new Corbett administration has yet to indicate it will support the responsible land use agenda in any regard similar to the close partnership relationship that signified the Rendell administration’s working relationship with 10,000 Friends. Combined with significant state budget challenges, today’s political and governmental climate limits opportunities for passing the kind of landmark legislation that has previously been the organization’s hallmark of success and objective.

Given these challenges at the state level, the organization has the opportunity to have much greater impact through a project-based vision for 10,000 Friends that engages a growing assembly of regional and local entities (where decision-making authority on our issues resides in current law) and private sector businesses (who can be successful supporting projects consistent with our goals), all with the aim of working with market forces.

MARKET MOVING OUR WAY
Recent research by the National Association of Realtors highlights the growing desire for compact and efficient developments and a renewed interest in urban centers in small towns as places where people want to live and work. Additionally, growing public resource constraints and increasing fuel costs lend to a “low mileage” lifestyle that is possible through implementation of smart growth policies and reinvestment of our existing infrastructure assets. Current market momentum provides opportunities for 10,000 Friends to build upon.

We believe the greatest external asset is that the market is moving toward the 10,000 Friends agenda—Pennsylvanians want and thus are affecting the availability and the price of efficient and responsible land use solutions. 10,000 Friends’ work will help provide more product and more choices of great places for Pennsylvanians to live, work, and enjoy a better quality of life. This approach provides solid opportunity for the organization to successfully focus efforts within a more conservative policy and fiscal environment.

MAKING SENSE OF THE SECTOR
Smart growth policy is a crossroads of different professional disciplines. Public policy, real estate, transportation and infrastructure and planning/design are all important components when considering land use decisions. 10,000 Friends often finds itself at the intersection of these disciplines which provides both opportunities and challenges. To make the most of our limited resources and grow the impact of the organization we will strategically target our external activities by finding ways to leverage and coordinate these disciplines and align our internal capacity to serve those activities and professions.

MAKING SENSE OF THE WORK AHEAD
The next three years will be a time to define our focus, bring clarity to our efforts, and rebuild the administrative capacity needed to get the work done. To be effective, we will need to do less and be clear about what we do. There is also a need to create order within the larger world of land use and smart growth and to clearly define the best role for 10,000 Friends within this discipline.

A New Strategy  The board and staff have crafted a simple and complementary strategy that builds on our goals and projects to form a workplan that is more effective together than as individual components. We see the strategy as a formula for success to encourage a better, more compact and sustainable built environment that preserves the natural environment. The strategy will be implemented by leveraging the positive impacts of individual projects that create:

1. A better investment philosophy that results in more responsible land use decisions by both public and private stakeholders; leading to
2. Smarter public investments that link infrastructure and transportation projects to efficient land use; leading to
3. More private investment opportunities that leverage smart public infrastructure projects and responsible land use decisions—resulting in construction of more smart growth projects providing more choices and better communities for Pennsylvanians.
Where We’re Headed  SETTING PRIORITIES

10,000 Friends helped establish and define the smart growth agenda throughout Pennsylvania, establishing innovative state policy legislation and helping build a statewide network of local partners and practitioners. 10,000 Friends will refine and focus our role within this policy infrastructure to prioritize our work where it’s most effective in the current policy environment, and to leave other work to our partners.

The environment to create meaningful improvements to land use decision making is challenging. To address these challenges, the board and staff of 10,000 Friends has created an integrated strategy that addresses current organizational and external realities. While the elements of our activities are discreet, they complement one another and advance our goals and objectives. Our priorities were selected because they align with our core beliefs, create a greater likelihood for success and establish a comparative advantage for the organization. Our decision to disengage from other issues is recognition of our own capacity, as well as acknowledgement of existing policy and market trends.

Given our internal capacity, and recognizing the policy environment in Harrisburg and across the state, we have crafted two strategic goals that will define our course in the coming years:

1. Tighten our external focus to align with the realities of current capacity. Seize opportunities that move our agenda forward while also allowing us to attract additional resources needed for continued growth.
2. Clarify our mission within the larger umbrella of land use policy. Refine our identity/brand and develop a clear communications strategy while strengthening existing operations and stabilizing funding.

To pursue these strategic goals 10,000 Friends priorities will include:

- Regional and local engagements that advance improvements to land use decision making and core community investment
- Providing technical assistance to regional and local programs and projects, community services, and educational outreach, instead of largely policy initiatives
- Project-based work and partnerships that allow us to address specific land use policy activities
- Targeted legislative work around injecting Smart Growth & land use perspectives and language into legislation likely to move in the legislature
- Engaging private sector businesses to support projects offering more Smart Growth choices in the market
- In the longer term, developing new program work that advances our mission
- Advancing an investment philosophy that catalyzes responsible land use decision making
Where We’re Headed

WHY WE’VE CREATED THIS APPROACH

The selection of goals and associated activities is the result of the creation of a shared vision developed by the board and staff.

OUR VISION

To have a positive impact on the built and natural environments of Pennsylvania’s communities through responsible and efficient land use.

The vision comes from a shared recognition that responsible land use decisions lead to a more prudent use of scarce public and natural resources and result in more economically and socially prosperous communities.

OUR STRATEGY

To use education, research, advocacy, communication and coalition building to promote better, more responsible and efficient land use decisions by both public and private stakeholders.

We will encourage public policy making that results in smarter public infrastructure projects and more prudent use of public resources to facilitate private investment opportunities that leverage public infrastructure projects and responsible land use decisions. Our strategy is designed to help create a more compact, efficient, sustainable built environment that creates a better quality of life in all of Pennsylvania’s communities.

OUR PROGRAMMING

Programming will be guided by the following strategies:

• Improving investment decisions based on responsible land use criteria
• Providing assistance to regional and local leaders
• Undertaking discreet projects that improve land use decision making
• Engaging the private sector directly
• Broadening our networks
Where We’re Headed **ORGANIZING OUR WORK**

Within the focus of positively impacting the built environment, we will organize our work in two broad areas: Land Use Policy & Decision Making, and Land Use Practice Implementation.

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**BACK TO BASICS: AN ORGANIZER OF ORGANIZATIONS**

One of the original and core purposes of the establishment of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania was to create a common table where the diverse interests and professions that engage in land use policy decision could convene. While we recognize that some of those organizations and original issues have evolved, the need for a convener of organizations and a credible resource of information has not diminished. We believe it is essential in advancing our work to play a unique role of convening and coordinating disparate stakeholders. We have a long history of success in this regard, and now recommit ourselves to broadening and deepening our relationships with Pennsylvania’s most influential leaders, officials, organizations, companies, and individuals to persuade them to actively support and work to advance smart-growth principles.

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### TABLE: ORGANIZING OUR WORK

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<th>PROGRAM AREA</th>
<th>LAND USE Policy &amp; Programming</th>
<th>LAND USE Practice &amp; Implementation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL</strong></td>
<td>Policy development, analysis &amp; applied research</td>
<td>Influencing public infrastructure investment &amp; policy</td>
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<td>Regional / local community outreach &amp; services</td>
<td>Engage &amp; coordinate private sector businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6 - 12 MONTHS PROJECTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td>- Organize &amp; support the Pennsylvania Legislative Smart Growth Caucus by end of 2012</td>
<td>- Create and have the state adopt a growing and sustainable resource to finance smart transportation &amp; smart infrastructure programs by end of 2013</td>
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<td>- Identify and promote 50 Smart Growth projects by end of 2013</td>
<td>- Form an investment fund that supports Smart Growth development across PA by end of 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12 - 24 MONTHS PROJECTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td>- Conduct Analysis of Land Use Impacts in Marcellus Shale Communities</td>
<td>- Develop and Promote Regional and Statewide PCTI Program</td>
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<td>- Create Research Fellowship Program</td>
<td>- Participate in and influence the Keystone Transportation Coalition</td>
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<td>- Develop Community Transportation Training Program with PennDOT</td>
<td>- Advocate for a more comprehensive approach to Marcellus Shale Funding</td>
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<td>- Advocate for Creation of Local Government and Infrastructure Film</td>
<td>- Organize a working group to identify and advance policy recommendations related to Pennvest and Water and Sewer Policy</td>
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<td>- Develop Smart Growth Community Leadership Training and Curriculum</td>
<td>- Form Smart Growth Fund Business, Operations and Feasibility Model Creation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Community Planning and Official Map Training (PennDOT)</td>
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