



LEHIGH VAI

BUILD

## BULD 2018 Annual Development Report

## Lehigh County



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#### Lehigh County Commissioners

Lehigh County Government Center - Room 408 17 South Seventh Street Allentown, Pennsylvania 18101

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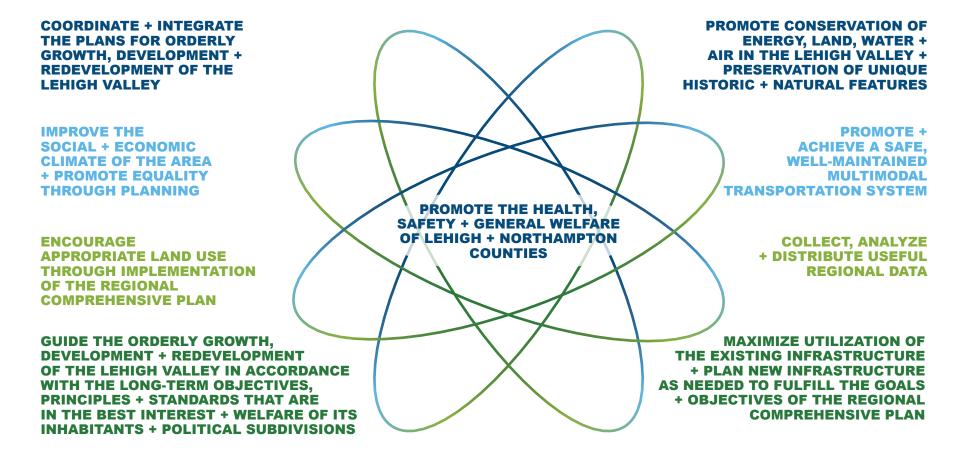


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## **MISSION**





Land is one of the Lehigh Valley's most precious resources. Roughly 23% of the region's 464,411 acres is developable land, and more than half of that is farmland. Therefore, how we develop what's left will not only have a profound impact on the quality of life today, but for generations to come. BuildLV 2018 is designed to create a clear picture of the development activity of the past, in order to best predict and plan for what's coming in the future.

Since 1972, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) has been producing the annual development report for the region.

As the official planning agency for Lehigh and Northampton counties, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission reviews all subdivision and land development plans to determine whether they are consistent with *The Comprehensive Plan: The Lehigh Valley ...2030*, which serves as a blueprint for future growth. Through a process that is required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the LVPC tracks all plan activity filed in every municipality to collect important data needed to identify trends in the regional economy and changes to its physical landscape. All of the data collected is sent monthly to stakeholders across the region and is made publically available online at LVPC.org.

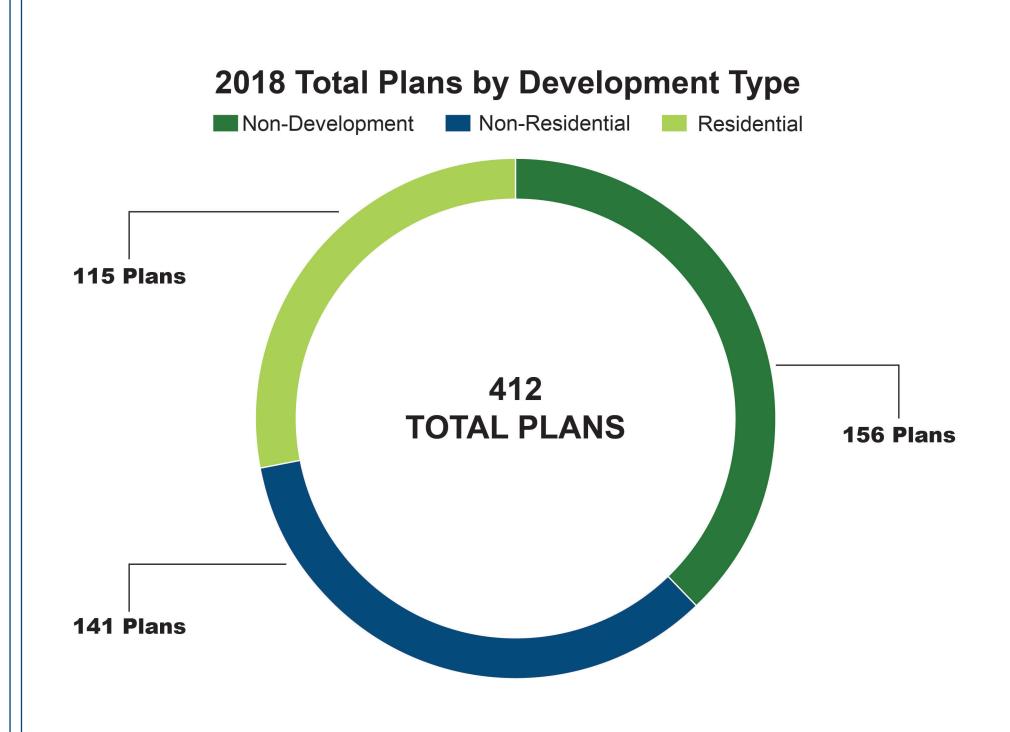
That data is key to managing future growth and will be invaluable as the LVPC drafts FutureLV: The Regional Plan, the comprehensive plan and longrange transportation plan update that will carry the region through 2045. FutureLV: The Regional Plan will be available later this year.



The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) reviews sketch, preliminary and final plans in Lehigh and Northampton counties. Sketch and preliminary plans fall within the proposed plans phase of development, while final plans are in the approved phase. It is important to note that "approved" almost always refers to the municipality's approval of the final plan. While the LVPC reviews the final plan, its recommendations are advisory. It generally does not have the authority to approve or reject subdivision and land development plans, except in municipalities that do not have their own Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances, which includes the boroughs of Slatington, Chapman, Glendon and West Easton.

In 2018, the LVPC reviewed 412 subdivision and land development plans - a 4% decrease from the 427 plans received in 2017. However, the approved acreage contained within all final plans rose by 41%, from 1,335 acres in 2017 to 1,867 acres in 2018. Keeping with historic trends, the cities of Allentown and Bethlehem had the most activity, while smaller boroughs and more rural townships generally had the lowest activity.

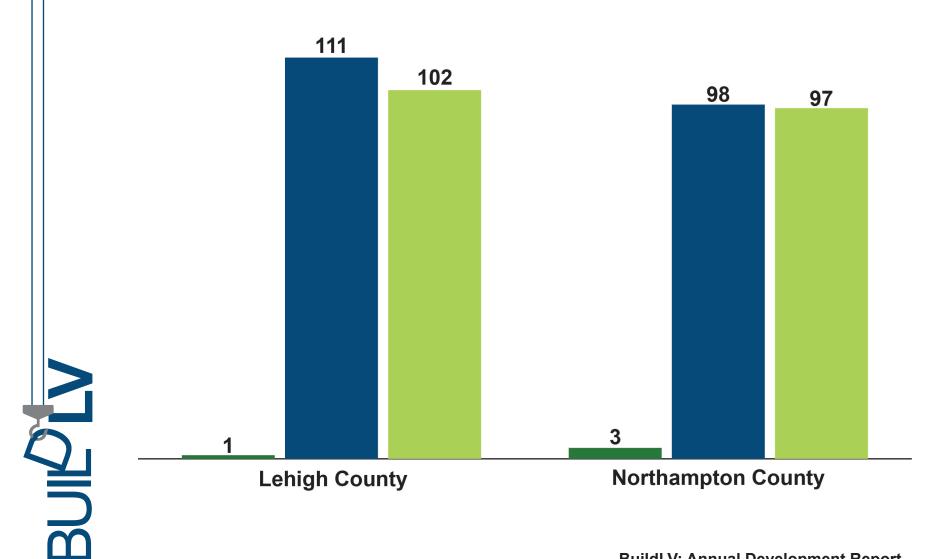


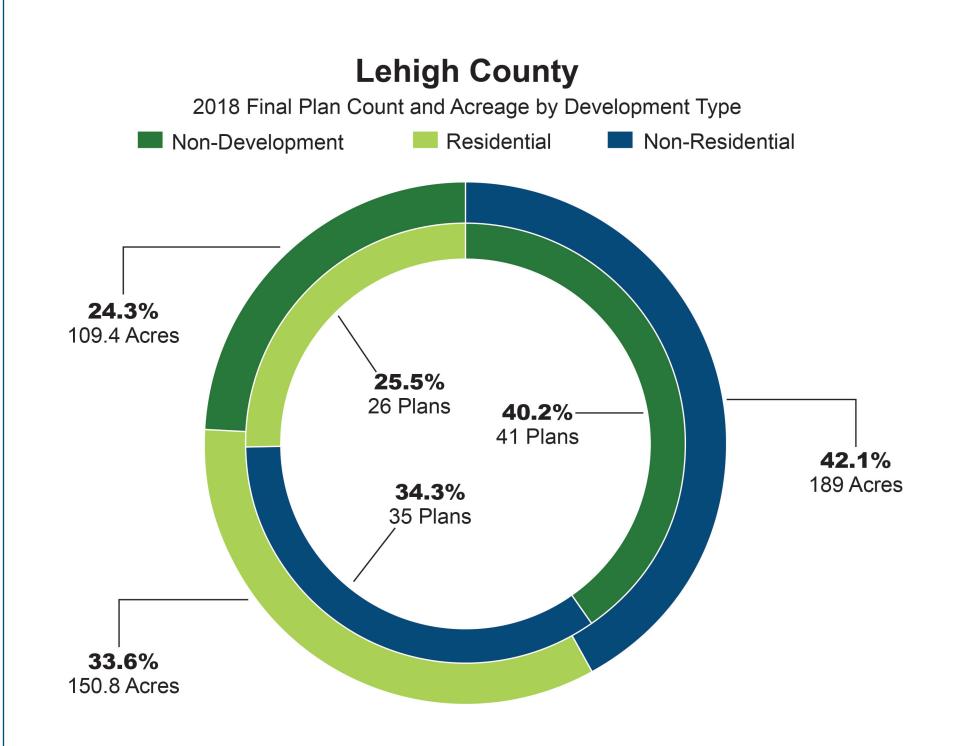


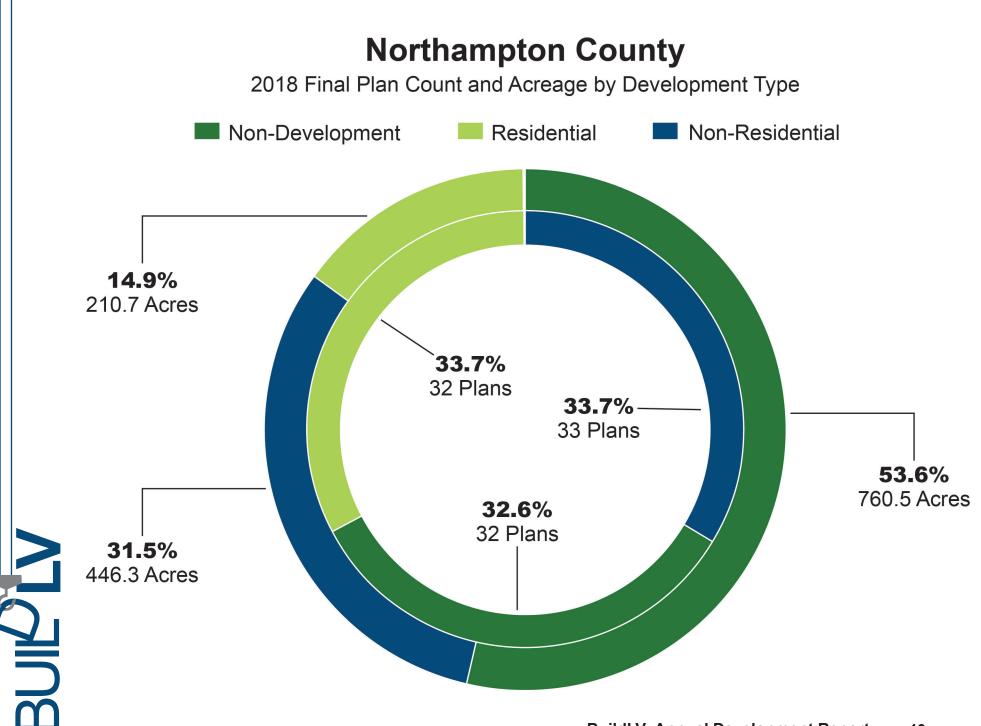
## 2018 Total Plans by County and by Plan Type

Sketch Preliminary

Final



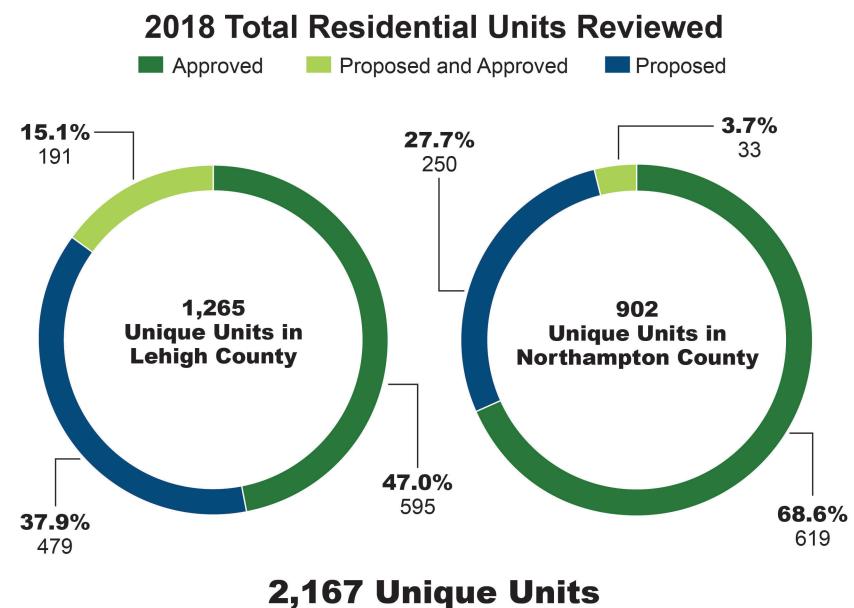




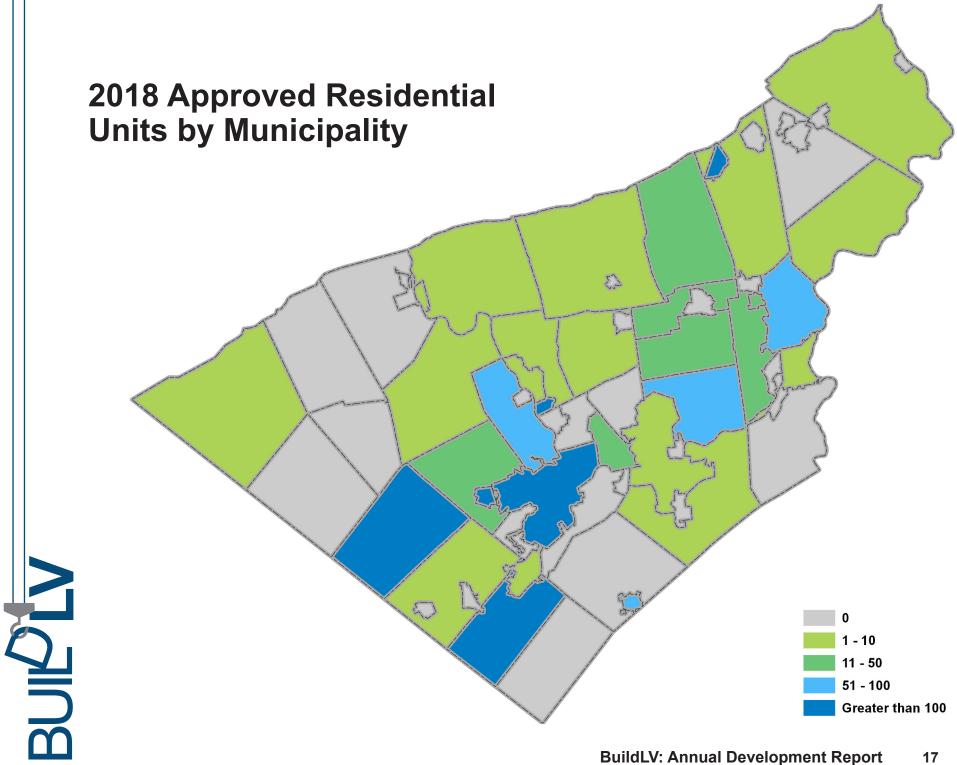


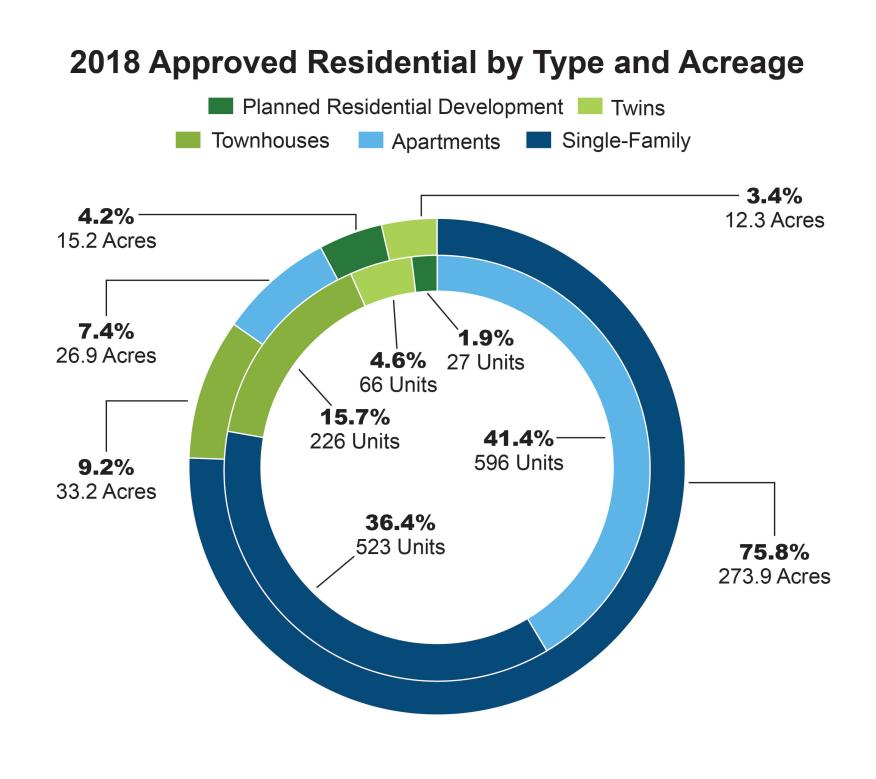
In 2018, 115 residential subdivision and land developments totaled 2,167 unique units (plans reviewed at both preliminary and final phases were not double-counted). That included 1,438 approved units, which was a 14% increase from the 1,257 approved units reviewed in 2017.

Apartment development remains strong in the region. The 596 approved units was close to historic annual averages, after spiking to 1,182 approved units in 2016. Roughly a quarter of the approved apartment units in 2018 were located in downtown Allentown, with 98 units at Five City Center, 61 at Walnut Street Commons, and another 220 units proposed in the Five City Center development at 7th and Walnut streets. Other notable approved apartment developments include the 200-unit Water's Edge at Wind Gap and the 112-unit Water Polo VIII development in Upper Macungie Township. For the second consecutive year, single-family detached housing development has shown renewed strength, with 420 approved units reviewed in 2017 and 523 approved units reviewed in 2018. The largest single-family detached development to be approved was the North Catasauqua portion of the Willow Brook Farm subdivision, with 153 single-family homes. Nearly a third of all single-family detached units approved in 2018 were in communities targeted for older adults, including the 82-unit Taylor Villas in Whitehall Township and 88-unit The Fields at Indian Creek Adult Community in Upper Milford Township.

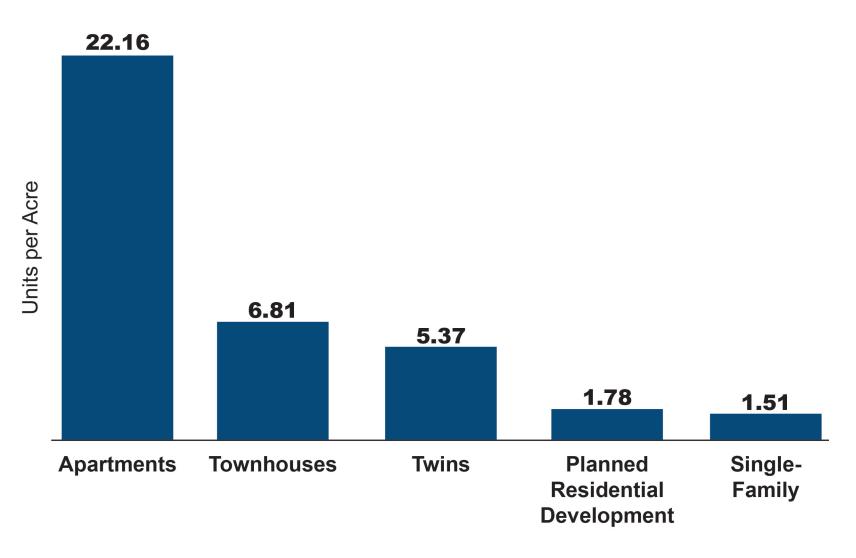


in the Lehigh Valley





## **2018 Approved Average Residential Density**



BUIC



## **Types of Non-Residential Development**



Commercial



Retail



Public/Quasi-Public



Industrial/Warehouse





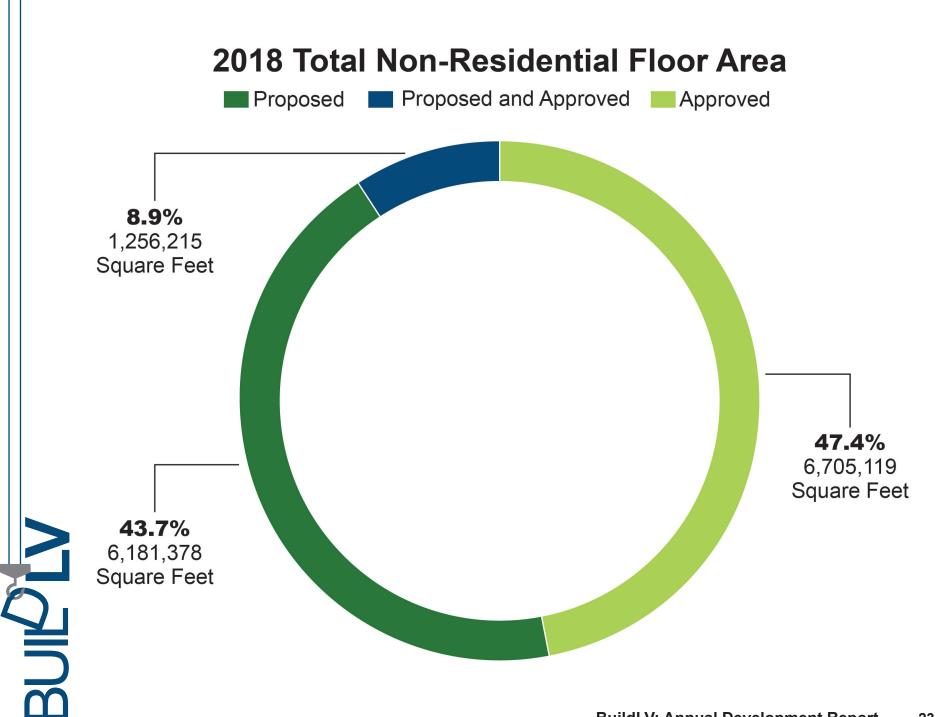


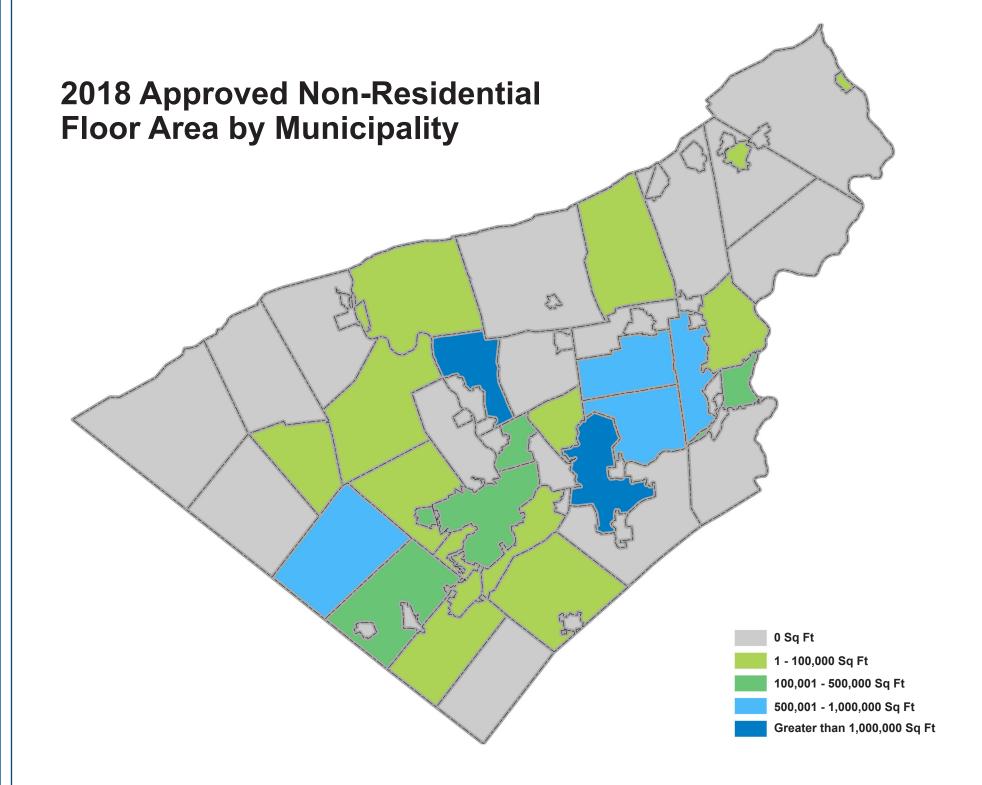


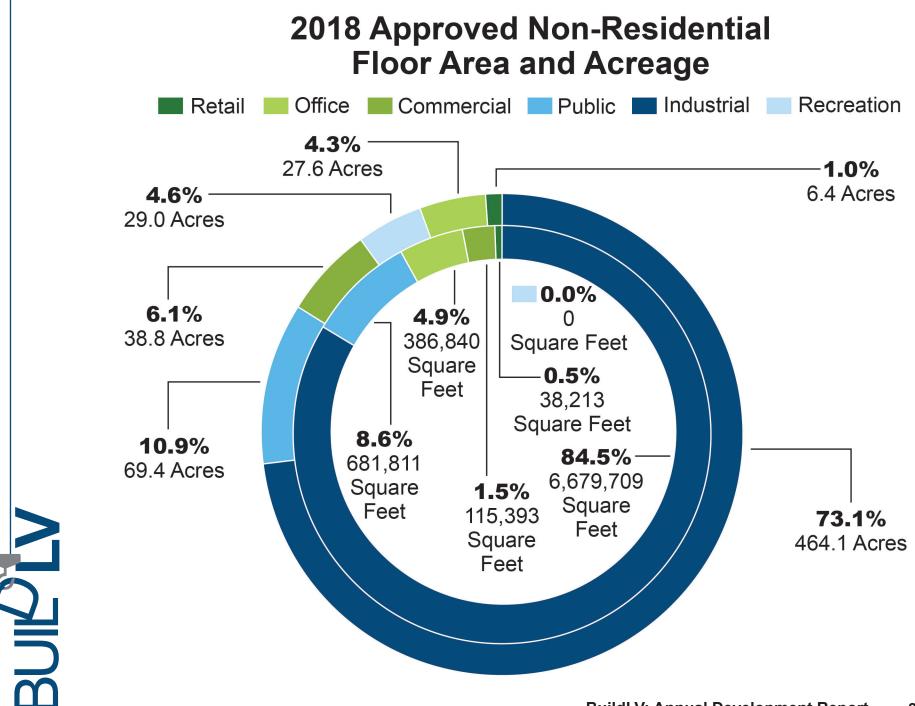
The 141 non-residential subdivision and land developments reviewed in 2018 contained 14.1 million unique square feet of space (square footage reviewed at both preliminary and final phases was not double-counted). The LVPC reviewed 8 million square feet of approved floor area in 2018, more than quadrupling the 1.7 million square feet approved in 2017. Industrial development accounted for 84.5% of all approved floor area in 2018. Five industrial developments submitted for final review were deemed by the LVPC as Land Uses of Regional Significance because they are larger than 500,000 square feet.

Over the course of 2018, the LVPC reviewed seven proposed developments determined to be Land Uses of Regional Significance. Four were the industrial/warehouse developments: the 560,000 square-foot Wind Gap Business Center, the 1.36 million square-foot Spring Creek Properties with two separate lots in Lower Macungie Township and the 907,000 square-foot development at Crackersport Road & Eck Road in South Whitehall Township. The remaining three Land Uses of Regional Significance were large-scale infill and redevelopment projects in Center City Allentown and South Side Bethlehem. The Five City Center Office Tower brings 246,500 square feet of additional office space to downtown Allentown, while Lehigh University submitted the 765-bed Lehigh University Bridge West dormitory (258,290 square feet) and a 192,000 square-foot Health Science Building in Bethlehem.

Other notable approved non-residential developments include the 188,817 square-foot Tower 2 Expansion of St. Luke's Hospital Anderson Campus in Bethlehem Township, Lafayette College's new 103,061 square-foot Integrated Science Center, and a trio of new elementary schools in Allentown, Easton and Upper Macungie Township.









#### Warehouse and Industrial

The warehousing development boom, which over the past six years has made the Lehigh Valley one of the fastest-growing freight corridors in the nation, will continue in the near term, as companies tread further into the region's township and rural areas to compete for developable land. More than 7 million square feet of new warehouse space has been approved in the past two years and another 10 million square feet have been proposed, but not yet approved over that period. More than three-quarters of the proposed warehouse floor area awaiting approval comes from six Land Uses of Regional Significance. Of particular concern is the number of large-scale projects being proposed in rural locations where the roadway infrastructure to support such intensive uses is either inadequate or non-existent and where such development conflicts with the area's existing residential or rural character.

### Largest Warehouse Projects Proposed in 2017-2018

Municipality	Project	Square Feet
Allen Township	Northampton Business Center	2,552,700
Allentown City	Allentown Commerce Park	1,553,000
Lower Macungie Township	Spring Creek Properties (Settlement Subdivision Lots 7-8)	1,359,080
South Whitehall Township	Crackersport Road and Eck Road	907,205
Bethlehem City (NC)	Majestic Bethlehem Center-Eastern Phase	750,660
Bushkill Township	Wind Gap Business Center	560,000

Beyond the national and global market forces driving this, the scale and location of warehouse development is being influence locally by the relatively low cost of land, the scattered locations of industrially zoned land and fragmented political organization that inhibits municipal coordination. This leaves municipalities vulnerable to legal challenges, powerful market forces and pressure from developers and large landowners.

To provide a counterbalance to these powerful forces, some municipalities will need to update their zoning and coordinate their long-range planning strategies with their neighbors. Additionally, from an economic development perspective, the region should also ensure that appropriate lot and building sizes are made available for small-scale manufacturing enterprises.

#### **Downtown Revitalization**

The redevelopment of the region's three major downtowns continues to advance and evolve. In Center City Allentown, new residential development is increasing to meet demand, bolstering downtown as an employment, commercial and residential center.

In South Side Bethlehem, collaboration between the City and Lehigh University continues to bear fruit, with a variety of infill and adaptive reuse projects being proposed or reaching fruition.

While Easton experienced less development in its downtown that the other two cities, the City updated its zoning code to amend height allowances and parking requirements in its downtown historic district. The region's easternmost city also continues to support substantial reuse projects at the former Simon Silk Mill, among other locations throughout the community.

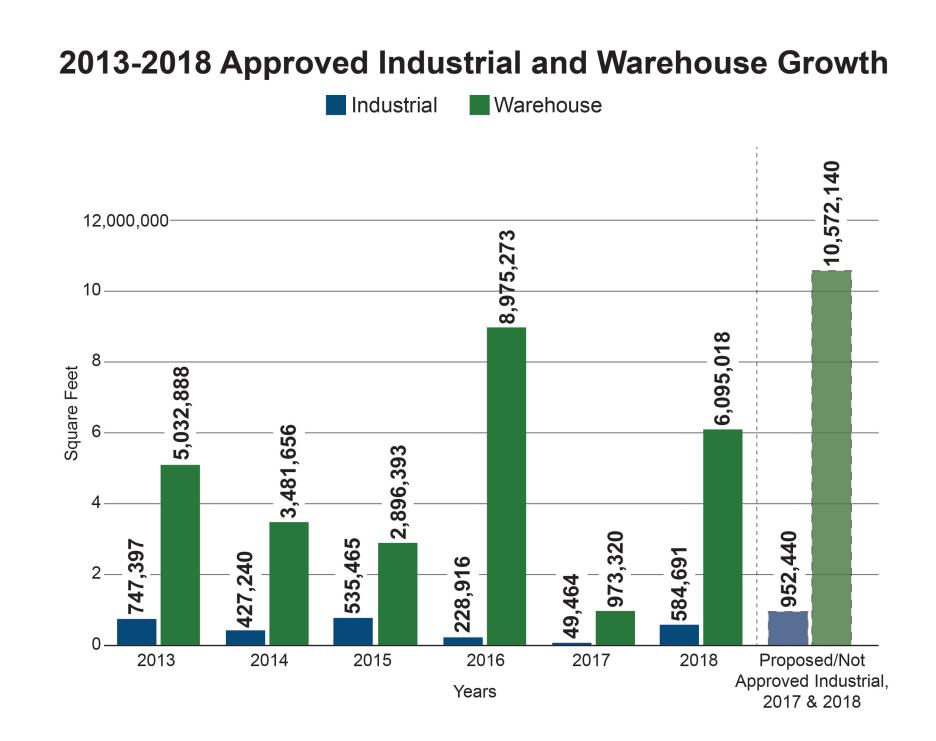
#### Residential

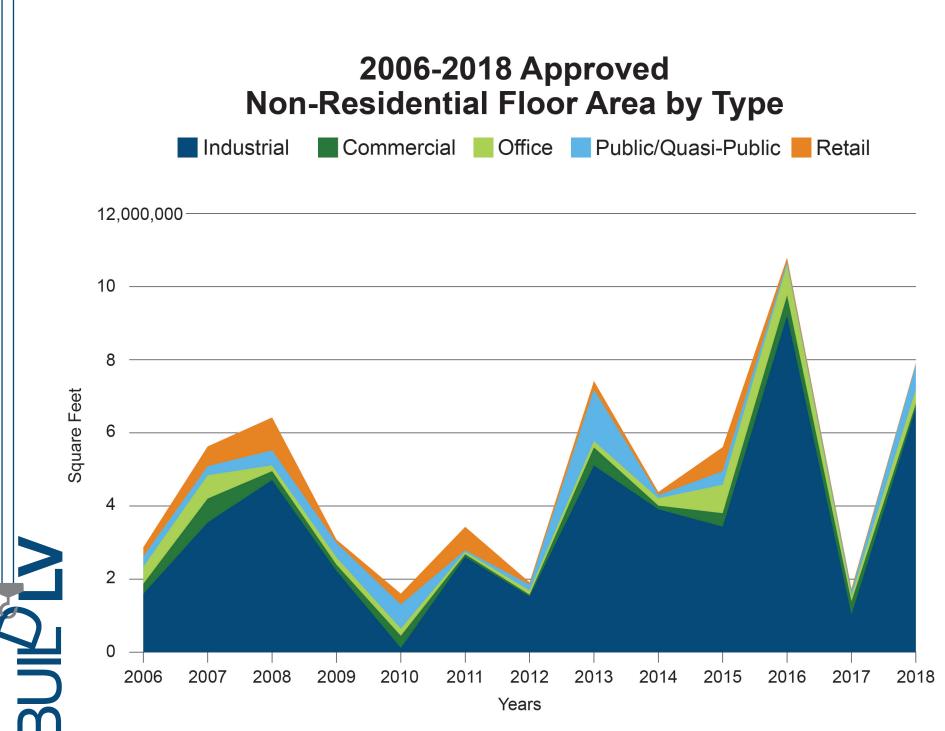
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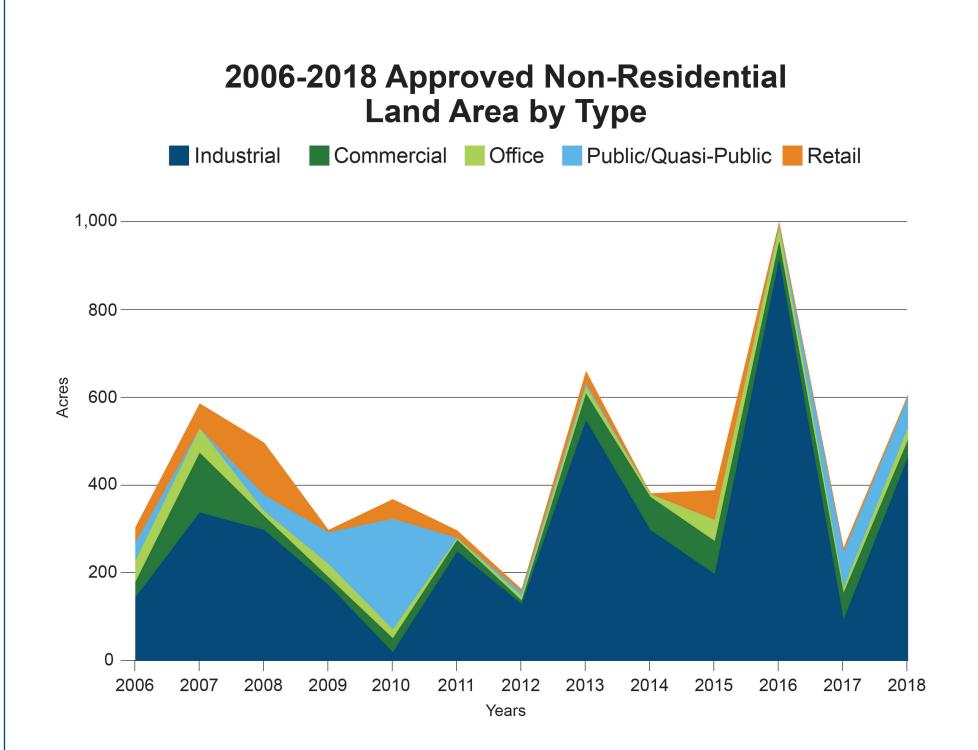
With 3,820 units since 2013, apartments have dominated the residential development in the Lehigh Valley, accounting for nearly as many units as all other housing types combined. That was more than twice the number of single-family detached homes built during that period, but the past two years points to a resurgence in single-family home development that is expected to continue in the near term. The 943 single-family homes approved in 2017 and 2018 was the most in any two-year span since 2007 and 2008. After being dwarfed by the number of apartment units approved over the past five years, the number of single-family homes approved in 2018, for the first time in more than a decade, approached the 596 apartment units approved. Combined with the more than 600 townhomes and twins approved over the past two years, homeownership appears to be on a steady incline across the region, even as the national trend toward apartment living continues to be strong in the Lehigh Valley. Based on the most recent monthly Subdivision and Development Snapshot reports produced by LVPC, both trends have been carried into 2019.

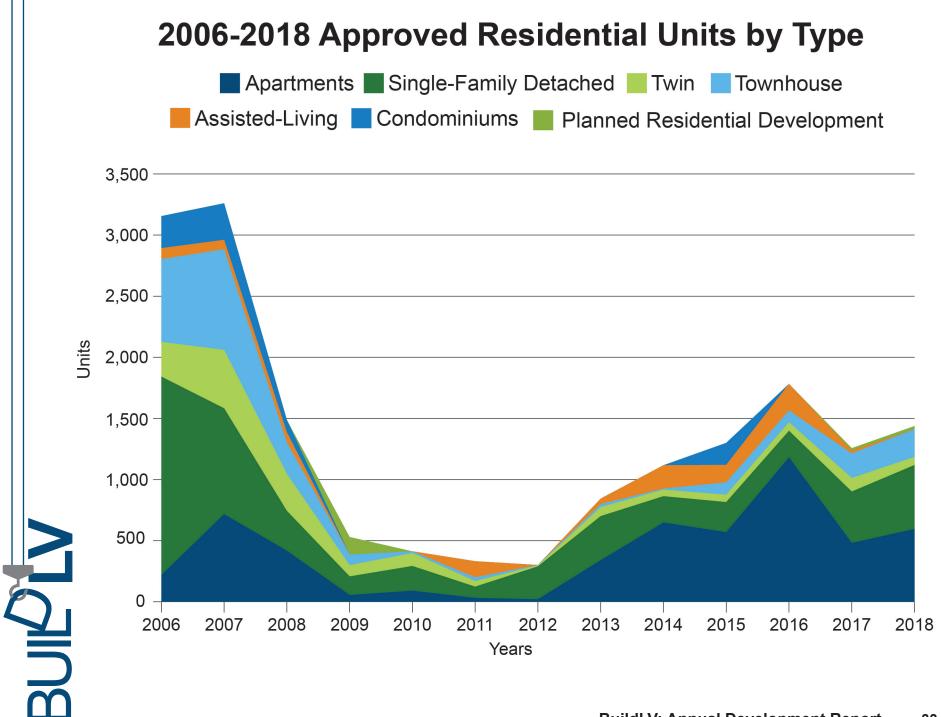
All of the data in this report, including an interactive map showing where development is happening, can be found at:

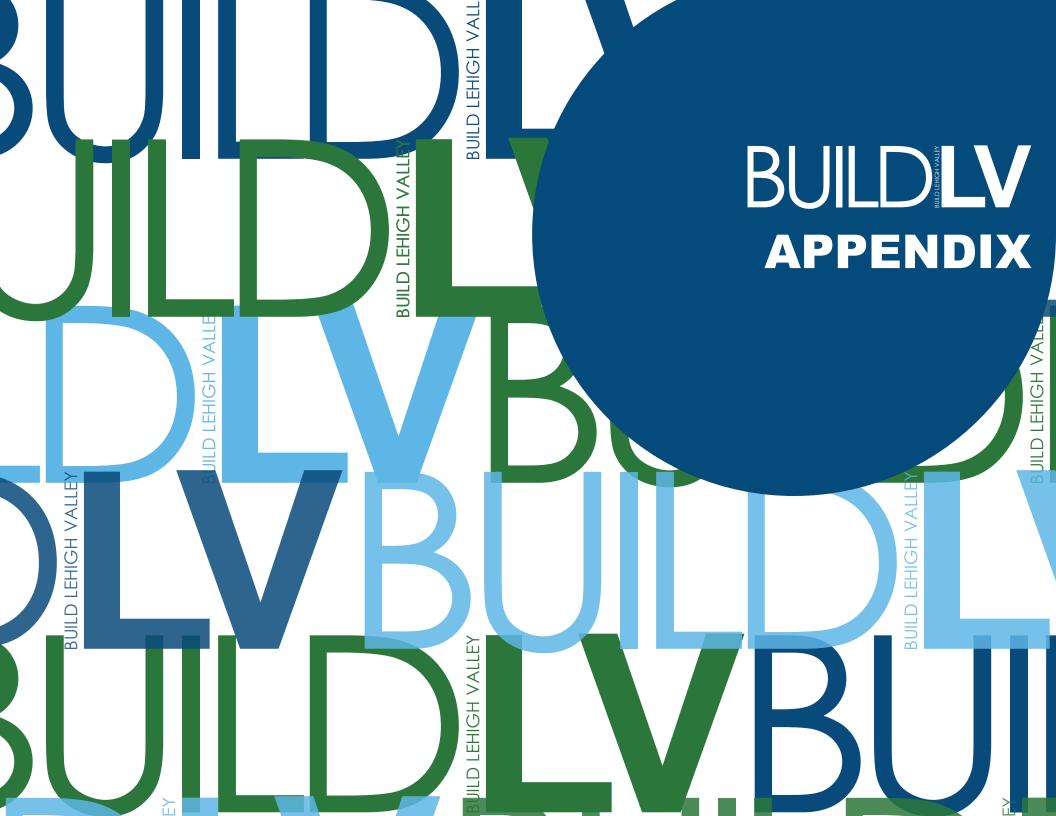
#### http://lvpc.org/subdivisionreport.html

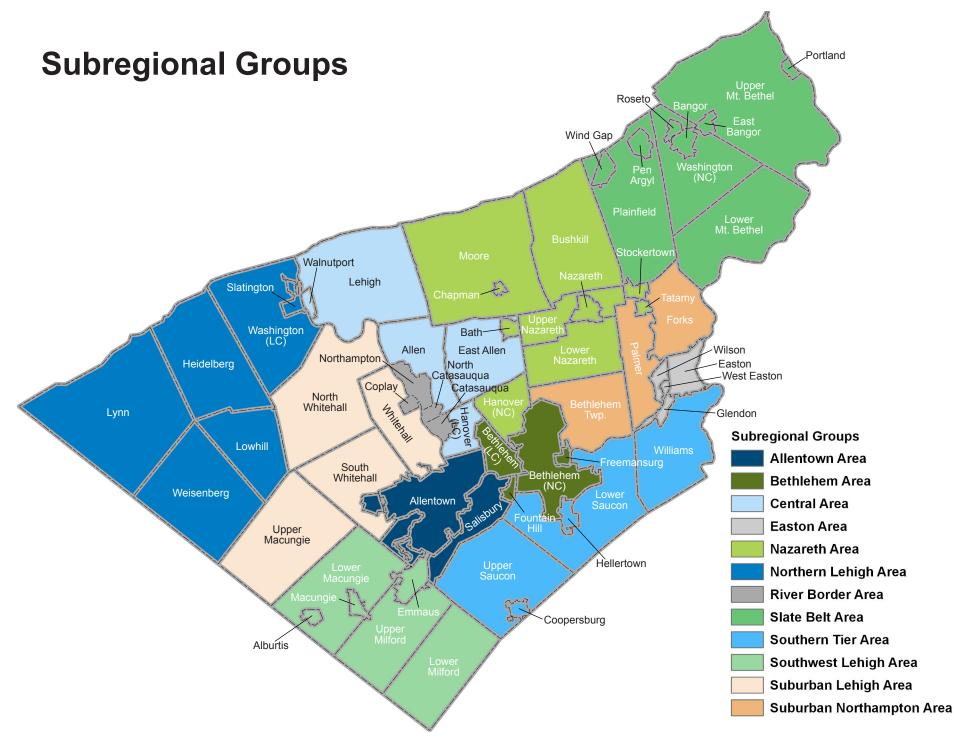












## 2018 Subregional + Municipal Subdivision + Land Development Activity

**Legend:** AL = Assisted-Living; APT = Apartment; MHP = Mobile Home Park; PRD = Planned Residential Development; ROW = Row house/Townhouse; SFD = Single-Family Detached; TW = Twin; AG = Agriculture; COMM = Commercial; IND = Industrial (Warehouse is a subset of this); OFF = Office; PUB = Public/Quasi-public; REC = Recreation; RET = Retail; TRANS = Transportation

Subregion: Allento	wn Area	a															
		Res	identia	l (units)	)						Ν	on-Reside	ntial (squ	are fee	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Allentown City	-	428	-	-	59	2	6	495	-	-	60,373	246,500	130,116	-	13,680	-	450,669
Salisbury Township	-	-	-	-	-	5	2	7	-	6,200	-	-	123,874	-	-	-	130,074
Grand Total	-	428	-	-	59	7	8	502	-	6,200	60,373	246,500	253,990	-	13,680	-	580,743

#### Subregion: Bethlehem Area

		Res	identia	l (units	)						No	on-Resid	ential (squ	are fee	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Fountain Hill Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-:	-	1 <b>-</b>	-	-	-	-	-
Freemansburg Borough	-	-	-	Ξ.	-	-		-	-	-	-	i.	Ξ.		-	-	-
Bethlehem City (LC)	-	44	-	-	-	-	-	44	-	-3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bethlehem City (NC)	-	44	-	-	3	-	8	55	-	13,012	1,006,589	-	486,165	×	2,543	-	1,508,309
Grand Total	-	88	-	-	3	-	8	99	-	13,012	1,006,589	-	486,165	-	2,543	-	1,508,309

#### **Subregion: Central Area**

		Res	identia	l (units	)				I		No	on-Resid	ential (squ	are feet	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Allen Township	-	-	-		-	-	8	8	-	-	2,948,652	-	=	-	-	-	2,948,652
East Allen Township	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hanover Township (LC)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	251,805	-	-	-	-	55,000	306,805
Lehigh Township	-				-	4	-	4	-	5,135	3,200	-	75,200	-	-	-	83,535
Walnutport Borough	-	10	-	-	4	-	6	20	-	2,365	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,365
Grand Total	-	10	-	-	4	5	14	33	-	7,500	3,203,657	-	75,200	-	-	55,000	3,341,357

#### **Subregion: Easton Area**

		Res	identia	l (units	)						Ν	on-Resid	ential (squ	are fee	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Easton City	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3	-	4,909	-	-	247,992	-	7,912	-	260,813
Glendon Borough	-	-	-	÷	-	-		-		-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
West Easton Borough	-2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-
Wilson Borough	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-		-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	_	1-1	-	_	3	-	-	3	-	4,909	-	-	247,992	-	7,912	-	260,813

Legend: AL = Assisted-Living; APT = Apartment; MHP = Mobile Home Park; PRD = Planned Residential Development; ROW = Row house/Townhouse; SFD = Single-Family Detached; TW = Twin; AG = Agriculture; COMM = Commercial; IND = Industrial (Warehouse is a subset of this); OFF = Office; PUB = Public/Quasi-public; REC = Recreation; RET = Retail; TRANS = Transportation

Subregion: Nazareth	Area																
		Res	identia	l (units)							No	n-Reside	ential (squ	uare feet	:)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	СОММ	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Bath Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,400	-	-	-	-	-	20,400
Bushkill Township	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	15	-	2,155	560,000	-	-	-	-	-	562,155
Chapman Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Hanover Township (NC)	1	=	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	13,390	115,692			=	4,000	-	133,082
Lower Nazareth Township	-	-	-	-	12	93	-	105	-	90,767	882,062	-	4,128	40,800	-	-	1,017,757
Moore Township	-	-	-	=	-	8	-	8		-	-1	-		-		-	-
Nazareth Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-2	-	-	-	-	_ 1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stockertown Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2-	-
Tatamy Borough	-	-	-	-	-	23	-	23	-	-	_	-	-	-8	-	8-	-
Upper Nazareth Township	-	4	-	78	-	-0		82	-	-	-	=	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	1	4	-	78	12	139	-	234	-	106,312	1,578,154	-	4,128	40,800	4,000	-	1,733,394

#### Subregion: Northern Lehigh Area

		Res	identia	l (units	)				1		N	Ion-Reside	ential (squ	are feet	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Heidelberg Township	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lowhill Township	÷	-	i H	-	-		Ξ.	-	-	7,728		1,750	-	-	-	-	9,478
Lynn Township	-	-	66	-	-	1	-	67	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slatington Borough	-	2 <b>-</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Washington Township (LC)	-	5-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5-	-	-	-	-	-
Weisenberg Township	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
Grand Total	-	-	66	-	-	5	-	71	-	7,728	-	1,750	-	=	-	-	9,478

#### Subregion: River Border Area

		Res	identia	l (units	)						Ν	on-Reside	ential (sq	uare feet	t)		
Municipality	AL	ΑΡΤ	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	TW	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Catasauqua Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coplay Borough	-	48	-	-	-	-	-	48	-	-0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Catasauqua Borough	-	-	-	-	-	153	-	153	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northampton Borough	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	-	48	-	-	-	154		202	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Legend:** AL = Assisted-Living; APT = Apartment; MHP = Mobile Home Park; PRD = Planned Residential Development; ROW = Row house/Townhouse; SFD = Single-Family Detached; TW = Twin; AG = Agriculture; COMM = Commercial; IND = Industrial (Warehouse is a subset of this); OFF = Office; PUB = Public/Quasi-public; REC = Recreation; RET = Retail; TRANS = Transportation

Subregion: Slate Belt	Area	1															
		Res	identia	l (units)	)				1		No	on-Reside	ntial (squ	are feet	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Bangor Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,000	-	-	-	-	6,000
East Bangor Borough	-	-	-	-	-		-	ι <del>π</del>	-	÷	-	-	-	=	9	-	-
Lower Mount Bethel Township	) -	-	-	_	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-1	-	r-	_
Pen Argyl Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plainfield Township	-	-	_	_	-	14	-	14	-	2,753	20,446	-	-	_	-	-	23,199
Portland Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	137,027	-	-	-	-	-	140,027
Roseto Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-1	Ξ.	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-
Upper Mount Bethel Township	- (	-	-1	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Washington Township (NC)	-	н	-	÷	-	-	×		-	-	-0	×	1	-		-	÷
Wind Gap Borough	-	192	-	-	12		-	204	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grand Total	-	192	-	-	12	19	-	223	1 -	5,753	157,473	6,000	-	-	-	-	169,226

#### Subregion: Southern Tier Area

		Res	identia	l (units	)						Ν	Ion-Reside	ntial (squ	uare fee	t)		
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Coopersburg Borough	-	-	-	-	-	65	2	67	- 1	_	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hellertown Borough	- 1	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lower Saucon Township	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upper Saucon Township	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,995	-	65,152	-	-	-	-	79,147
Williams Township	-	-	-	-	-	3		3	-	5,200	-	-	=	-	-	-	5,200
Grand Total	-	-	-	-	-	70	6	76	-	19,195	-	65,152	-	-	-	-	84,347

#### Subregion: Southwest Lehigh Area

		Res	identia	l (units	)				1		No	on-Reside	ential (squ	are fee	t)		
Municipality	AL	ΑΡΤ	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
Alburtis Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emmaus Borough	-	-		-	-	20	-	3	-	5,585	26,200	-	-	-	-	-	31,785
Lower Macungie Township	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	-	65,058	1,390,705	52,800	19,435	-	15,370	-	1,543,368
Lower Milford Township	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Macungie Borough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	_	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upper Milford Township	-	-	-	-	79	71	44	211	-	10,200	-	-	4,200	-	-	-	14,400
Grand Total	-	-	-	-	79	95	44	218	-	80,843	1,416,905	52,800	23,635	-	15,370	-	1,589,553

**Legend:** AL = Assisted-Living; APT = Apartment; MHP = Mobile Home Park; PRD = Planned Residential Development; ROW = Row house/Townhouse; SFD = Single-Family Detached; TW = Twin; AG = Agriculture; COMM = Commercial; IND = Industrial (Warehouse is a subset of this); OFF = Office; PUB = Public/Quasi-public; REC = Recreation; RET = Retail; TRANS = Transportation

Subregion: Suburban	Leu	Ign Are	d														
		Res	identia	l (units)	)				1		No	on-Reside	ential (squ	are fee	t)		
Municipality	AL	ΑΡΤ	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	тw	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total
North Whitehall Township	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	28	-	3,600	3,060	23,866	26,740	-	14,868	-	72,134
South Whitehall Township	-	-	-	-	47	5	-	52	-	47,433	950,845	-	-	-	7,489	-	1,005,767
Upper Macungie Township	-	142	-	-	-	-	-	142	-	5,562	900,080	27,700	90,000	-	5,484	-	1,028,826
Whitehall Township	-	-	-	-	5	88	-	93	-	28,509	-	-	-	-	85,095	-	113,604
Grand Total	-	142	-	-	52	121	-	315	-	85,104	1,853,985	51,566	116,740	-	112,936	-	2,220,331

#### Subregion: Suburban Lehigh Area

#### Subregion: Suburban Northampton Area

Residential (units)										Non-Residential (square feet)								
Municipality	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	TW	Total	AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total	
Bethlehem Township	-	-	-	-	70	9	2	81	-	-	621,620	101,562	188,817	4,368	-	-	916,367	
Forks Township	-	48	-	-	-	-	4	52	-	-	134,728	-	-	-	6,900	-	141,628	
Palmer Township	-	-	-	-	-	58		58	-		1,587,166	-	-	-	-	-	1,587,166	
Grand Total	-	48	-	-	70	67	6	191	-	-	2,343,514	101,562	188,817	4,368	6,900	-	2,645,161	

Residential Totals and Acreage										Non-Residential Totals and Acreage									
	AL	APT	MHP	PRD	ROW	SFD	ΤW	Total		AG	COMM	IND	OFF	PUB	REC	RET	TRANS	Total	
TOTAL	1	960	66	78	294	682	86	2,167		-	336,556	11,620,650	525,330	1,396,667	45,168	163,341	55,000	14,142,712	
ACREAGE	8.8	35.4	16.2	32.2	39.7	527.2	14.1	673.6	Ţ	-	84	1123.7	62.8	93.5	146.3	12.4	0	1522.3	

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Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission / Lehigh Valley Transportation Study 961 Marcon Boulevard, Suite 310, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18109 Phone: 610-264-4544 / Website: www.lvpc.org

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