



STEVEN GLICKMAN
Chair
CHRISTOPHER AMATO
Vice Chair
KEVIN SCHMIDT
Treasurer
BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 7:00 PM

Via Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

THE MEETING CAN BE ACCESSED AT <https://tinyurl.com/LVPC2024> OR VIA PHONE 610-477-5793 Conf ID: 928 251 831#.

Roll Call

Courtesy of Floor

Chairman's Report

1. Introducing Scott Greenly, Director of Regional Planning

Minutes

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Minutes and Review of Roll Call Actions of the June 27, 2024, Commission Meeting (JD)

Comprehensive Planning Committee:

1. *ACTION ITEM*: City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – Muhlenberg College Softball Field (JD)
2. *ACTION ITEM*: City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – Muhlenberg College Baseball Field (JD)
3. *ACTION ITEM*: City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – Center Square Improvements (BD, JS)
4. *ACTION ITEM*: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet (SM)

Environment Committee:

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Environment Committee Summary Sheet (SR)

Transportation Committee:

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Street Vacation Review – New England Avenue, City of Allentown (BH)
2. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Transportation Committee Summary (KH)

Old Business:

1. *INFORMATION ITEMS*: Activity Reports:
 - a. Highway Traffic Monitoring (BH)

- b. Monthly Subdivision, Land Development, Stormwater and Municipal Ordinance/Plans Report (JS)
- c. Mid-Year Subdivision, Land Development, Stormwater and Municipal Ordinance/Plans Report (JS)
- d. Mid-Year Industrial Market Report (JD)

New Business:

- 1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Housing Supply and Attainability Strategy (JS, BB)

Executive Director's Report:

- 1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Multimunicipal Activities Update

Communications and Engagement:

- 1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Monthly, Plan Lehigh Valley Talk Show on WDIY, Lehigh Valley Public Radio, 88.1 (MA)
 - a. Air Date: July 1 - "If we're not all working together, we're falling apart, with Lori Vargo-Heffner and Geoff Brace"
 - b. Next show – Aug. 5
- 2. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Department of Community and Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Fund
 - a. Deadline: July 31
 - b. Grants: \$100,000 to \$3 million
 - c. More Info: dced.pa.gov/programs/multimodal-transportation-fund/
- 3. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Local Technical Assistance Program Virtual Classes (BH)
 - a. August 6: Geographic Information System (GIS) Basics, 8 am to noon
 - b. August 13: Traffic Signals Basics, 8 am to noon
 - c. August 15: Trucks on Local Roads, 8 am to noon
 - d. August 21: School Transportation Management, 8 am to noon
 - Register at <https://gis.penndot.gov/LTAP/default.aspx> or contact Brian Hite at bhite@lvpc.org

Next Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Meeting:

Thursday, August 22, 2024, at 7:00 pm

The LVPC/LVTS website, www.lvpc.org, may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in non-English languages and alternative formats, if requested.



DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes from the Thursday June 27, 2024, Meeting

The LVPC held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, June 27, 2024. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on Wednesday, February 14th, 2024.

LVPC Chair Dr. Chris Amato chaired the meeting.

Mr. Joey Dotta took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Michael Drabenstott, Sunny Ghai, Steve Glickman, Jennifer Gomez, Kent Herman, John Inglis, Diane Kelly, Richard Molchany, Christina Morgan, Stephen Repasch and Kevin Schmidt

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Jessica Cope, Andrew Elliott, Charles Elliott, John Gallagher, Judith Haldeman, Darlene Heller, Carl Manges, John McGorry, Scott Minnich, Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen, Edward Nelson and Jean Versteeg

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Ron Beitler, Percy Dougherty, Bob Elbich, Philip Ginder, Dennis Klusaritz, Santo Napoli, Owen O'Neil and Matthew Tuerk

Northampton County

Ken Kraft, Rachel Leon, Lamont McClure, Steve Melnick, Salvatore Panto, Jr., J. William Reynolds, Grace Crampsie Smith and Tina Smith

Staff Present: Joey Dotta, Jill Seitz, Becky Bradley, Christian Martinez, Susan Myerov, Matt Assad and Brian Hite.

Public Present: Jeff Ward (WFMZ), Phil Gianficaro (Lehighvalleynews.com),

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

None appearing.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Amato revealed that the LVPC has been awarded the 2024 Innovation and Collaboration Award - Government Awardee by the Water Resources Association of the Delaware River Basin (WRA). The WRA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing water professionals, water purveyors, and commercial, industrial, and maritime river users. Chair Amato said that the LVPC won this award for its long history of protecting the environment, and more recently for its innovative Lehigh Valley Green Transportation Infrastructure Plan.

MINUTES

Chair Amato stated that the minutes of the Thursday, May 23, 2024, LVPC meeting are attached, and Mr. Dotta presented the previously voted on agenda items. Chair Amato then asked for a motion to approve

the minutes. Commissioner McGorry made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Commissioner Drabenstott and Commissioner Kelly abstained.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

INFORMATION ITEM: Lehigh County Authority Update from Liesel Gross

Ms. Gross presented an informational slideshow about the Kline's Island Sewer System (KISS) Regional Sewer Plan. In the presentation were details of what the sewer system entailed and some major challenges to the sustainability of its operations. A timeline of what regulatory action has occurred was provided along with a call to action to support the various municipal sewer rehab programs, along with the KISS Act 537 Projects. Ms. Gross noted that the total cost estimate is north of \$561 million for all the KISS Act 537 Projects combined.

Commissioner Repasch seconded Ms. Gross's comments and reiterated the importance of sewer and water infrastructure. Commissioner Morgan thanked Ms. Gross for her time and emphasized the importance of the Regional Sewer Plan.

ACTION ITEM: Act 537 Review - Roseto Borough Sewer Authority Corrective Action Plan

Ms. Myerov reviewed the Roseto Borough Sewer Authority (RBSA)'s draft Corrective Action Plan or (CAP), prepared to address hydraulic overload conditions within its collection systems which were identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection in its review of Bangor Borough Authority (BBA), Roseto Borough Sewer Authority (RBSA), and Washington Township 2022 Municipal Wasteload Management Annual Report.

Ms. Myerov said that the provision of environmentally sound and efficient sewage disposal for existing and future development is a goal of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. Actions to remove or reduce excessive infiltration and inflow align with *FutureLV* Policy 3.2, 'to protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater'. The upgrades of the sewer system align with the *FutureLV* action to 'improve the utility and mobility infrastructure of the region' (under Policy 1.1). The LVPC recommends continued coordination among the partners to address these issues. Long-term monitoring, as proposed in the CAP, will help prevent future problems.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Repasch made the motion, and Commissioner Drabenstott seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed. Commissioner Morgan abstained.

ACTION ITEM: PA Public Utility Commission - Service Territory Addition for Ridings at Parkland Phase 2 - North Whitehall Township

Ms. Myerov presented an application to the Pennsylvania Utilities Commission for approval of a wastewater service territory addition for the Ridings at Parkland, Phase 1 and 2 Subdivision in North Whitehall Township. The proposed subdivision consists of 38 lots on 25.94 acres and then six lots within Phase 1 of the residential subdivision, shown on the slide. The existing Township Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan revision was approved by the PA Department of Environmental Protection on January 26, 2021, officially recognizing that the Applicant can serve additional sewage flows up to 120,000 gallons per day of the design and permitted capacity of the existing treatment plant. Therefore, additional capacity is available at the plant to handle the flows from the proposed development of Phase 2 as well as flows generated from the six Phase 1 lots.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Repasch made the motion, and Commissioner Heller seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Agriculture Security Area 7-Year Review - Lower Milford Township

Mr. Martinez presented an evaluation of Lower Milford Township's Agricultural Security Area (ASA) 7-Year review recommendations. The project parcels are now a residential subdivision, which was formerly a farm. LVPC staff conducted a Geographical Information Systems (GIS)-based analysis of the properties utilizing 2023 aerial imagery and agricultural property data information. This information was overlaid using the ASA property boundary data provided by the Township and compared with LVPC data. Mr. Martinez forwarded the letter's recommendation that the Township's analysis is accurate, and these properties should no longer qualify for ASA inclusion.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Repasch made the motion, and Commissioner Drabenstott seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Repasch noted that this type of review is quite rare to see. Commissioner Nelson asked if there are tax impacts and Ms. Bradley noted that it's determined by the municipality. Commissioner Nelson asked how the parcels were first designated as agriculture and Ms. Bradley responded that they were likely previous agricultural uses but that changed over time.

Commissioner Repasch asked if we will be seeing more of these types of reviews. Ms. Bradley agreed and noted Ms. Myerov and Mr. Martinez were having conversations with municipalities.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: Agriculture Security Area Interim Review - Upper Milford Township

Mr. Martinez presented an evaluation of Upper Milford Township's Agricultural Security Area Interim Review recommendations. As part of this review, the Township must request the county planning commission, the LVPC, to review the ASA and make recommendations. Out of the 282 parcels enrolled in the Township's ASA, 157 were identified by the Township to be reviewed based upon evidence that such properties have been changed to residential or nonagricultural commercial uses. Mr. Martinez said that it is the letter's recommendation that the Township's analysis is accurate, and these properties should no longer qualify for ASA inclusion.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Repasch made the motion, and Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Commissioner Nelson asked what happens when parcels are originally in farmland preservation areas and that use changes to no longer conform. Mr. Molchany noted that the agricultural security area is a precursor to development. Chair Amato thanked the staff for their work.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Fountain Hill – Land Use of Regional Significance – Fountain Hill Elementary School

Mr. Dotta presented a proposal to demolish the existing Fountain Hill Elementary School and construct a new 87,000-square-foot elementary school at 1330 Church Street. New bus loading and student drop-off areas, vehicle parking and outdoor play areas for students are intended to accompany this proposal. In addition to construction of a larger school building, the redevelopment includes construction of a 'Family Center and Food Pantry', supporting cultural and social programs. Additionally, the proposal to expand

community and educational opportunities in Centers and along Corridors improves equity and increases access to daily needs for all people.

Mr. Dotta noted that the proposed signage limiting Church Street, from Norway Place to Greene Court, to bus traffic only from 8 am to 9:30 am and 2:30 pm to 4 pm should also note the days and dates enforced, leaving the street open for all traffic during weekends and off-months. The egress from the western staff parking lot empties onto Church Street and staff member access should be considered during the two identified time blocks.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Repasch made the motion, and Commissioner Gallagher seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner McGorry asked to clarify the location of the proposed project. Commissioner Repasch clarified.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – Peregrine Tower

Mr. Dotta presented a proposal to construct a 37-story building with 206 residential units, 2,651 square-feet of retail and 9,953 square-feet of office space. The proposed uses by floor are retail space on the first and fourth floors, office space on the second, third and fourth floors, residential from floors six to either 33 or 37 and a restaurant on the top floor. The project parcel is currently undeveloped with proximity to the Allentown Parking Authority Maple Street Parking Garage and multiple single-family attached residences.

Mr. Dotta reviewed the letter which recommends the developer clarify the proposed height, in feet, of the building and the number of stories between either 33 or 37. Additionally, it is recommended that the developer provide shadow diagrams to determine how lights and shade impact surrounding lower-scale buildings and public spaces.

Mr. Dotta noted that the proposed height of 33 to 37 stories greatly surpasses the surrounding properties and would surpass the nearby, 22-story PPL Tower in height by 11 to 15 stories. If constructed at 37 stories, this project would be the tallest building in Pennsylvania, outside of the cities of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, and would be 16 stories more than the old Martin Tower site. Because the height of the building would exceed anything in the city and region, careful consideration should be given to the interplay between density and the surrounding community. With the increasing number of taller buildings in the City of Allentown, it is imperative that impact analysis, especially related to height, façade design and setbacks be required for developments at the scale of the current proposal.

Mr. Dotta explained that this proposal is a bellwether of the direction of development in the Lehigh Valley and is one of the most significant development proposals in the City and region's history. This proposal is worthy of intense examination for its potential effect on Allentown and on the region. The review was conducted per the county planning requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and the LVPC offers the City additional consultation and support as needed.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Glickman made the motion, and Commissioner Manges seconded the motion.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen asked what the proposal looked like back in 2015, when the LVPC last reviewed the proposal. Commissioner Gomez answered that the previous proposal was 33 stories and that the developer expects to resubmit largely the same submission but with a greater number of residential.

Commissioner Nelson asked if the proposal is consistent with Allentown's zoning. Commissioner Gomez responded that the project is consistent regarding its height but the City is further reviewing the project. The developer postponed the project at this time.

Ce-Ce Gerlach commented that the area surrounding this proposal is largely residential with very few businesses. Ms. Gerlach provided a video of the surrounding area and stressed that, generally, residents do not want this development to occur. Ms. Gerlach stressed that residents should have a say in the land development process and that the project is generally inconsistent with multiple goals in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments with the amended motion. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEM: City of Easton, Palmer Township and Wilson Borough – Land Use of Regional Significance – Easton Commerce Park

Ms. Seitz presented a proposal for a 1,006,880-square-foot warehouse at 1525 Wood Avenue. The majority of the proposed building is located in Wilson Borough, with an eastern portion extending into the City of Easton. The northwestern portion of the property is in Palmer Township, but has no proposed development. The 106.2-acre site formerly contained industrial development to the southeast where buildings have been removed, and the western and northern portions of the property are undeveloped, containing woodlands and steep slopes. The site formerly contained a pigment plant operation, a heavy industrial use that has been vacant and underutilized for several years. Warehouse is a permitted-by-right use based on the Zoning District designations within the Wilson Borough and City of Easton jurisdictions. Warehousing is not a permitted use in Palmer Township's jurisdiction.

Ms. Seitz noted that the development does not align with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* because it does not 'match development intensity with sustainable transportation infrastructure capacity'. If the project moves forward as proposed, development impacts should be mitigated to protect the public health, safety and welfare, and to ensure the lowest impact and most sustainable site design in the fiscal interests of the developer, Borough, City and Township.

Ms. Myerov explained that the significant footprint and design of the proposed structure lends itself to more innovative approaches to minimize stormwater runoff and higher energy efficiency. Based on current plans, stormwater is to be captured in a series of large managed release concept (MRC) basins. As proposed, the location of the basins will require that a segment of the unnamed tributary to Bushkill Creek be relocated. The letter encourages the developers to evaluate utilizing green and blue roof technologies to take advantage of multiple potential environmental and building efficiency benefits.

Mr. Hite noted substantial discrepancies between the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) and land development plans regarding what is proposed – the submitted plan set reflects a 1,006,880-square-foot warehouse while the TIS reflects a 221,256-square-foot high cube sort fulfillment center. Inaccurate planning process documents preclude accurate analyses and review of the proposal to determine impacts. The TIS must be updated to match the submitted plan set so that a complete and thorough review of anticipated transportation impacts on the community and region can be done with quality data and planning. Without current and correct information within land development applications, LVPC cannot properly review the proposal from a county planning perspective. Anticipated trip generation can change drastically based on what land use is proposed, as illustrated in the letter.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Gallagher made the motion, and Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen seconded the motion.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Repasch asked what the previous vehicle traffic was at its last use. Mr. Hite responded that sometimes a TIS has historical data but since the location has long been abandoned, historical data was not provided.

Commissioner Ghai asked if there were noted concerns about Route 22 and potential effects. Ms. Bradley answered that there can be varying vehicle uses to this facility and it is difficult to determine without adequate information. Several issues relating to Route 22 and its interchanges with tractor trailers were brought up. Commissioner Ghai noted his concern for traffic on Route 22 if the potential traffic generation numbers come to fruition.

Commissioner McGorry expressed his discontent with the proposed project.

Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen spoke on his expertise of the neighborhood and that potential alternative routes that trucks may take have other serious issues. Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen noted that recommendations extending the bike path from the Dixie Cup redevelopment would surely connect to this proposal.

Commissioner McGorry expressed his discontent with the proposed project and potential vehicle generation.

Commissioner Drabenstott commended the LVPC staff for addressing the project's inadequacies. Commissioner Andrew Elliott added that the surrounding streets, especially during rush hour, get congested and the potential for gridlock is real.

Chair Amato asked if this would be the only opportunity for the LVPC to provide comment for this project. Ms. Bradley confirmed it would be unless the developer changes the plan drastically and needs to resubmit. It was noted that the LVPC is regulatory with stormwater.

Brett Webber commented that the plethora of environmental issues on the site cause concern and alternatives to redevelop this site should be proposed. This parcel is a valuable resource to the municipalities and should be something that benefits residents. Ms. Bradley commented that the developer is already marketing the site and it will be interesting to see how the process unfolds.

Commissioner Repasch commented that many warehouses are developed prior to securing an end-user. Commissioner Ghai commented that distinguishing between different warehouse uses can provide more clarity. Ms. Bradley responded that review letters use the legal term for developments such as this and do not deviate from what is listed on the plan.

Mr. Webber asked what authority the LVPC has when a developer does not provide an updated TIS. Ms. Bradley stated that a traffic-study is only required by the LVPC if the municipality requires it. Commissioner Moritz-Chapelliquen asked if the LVPC is able to add language to recommend the municipality not approve a project without an updated TIS. Ms. Bradley responded that the letter is near its legal extent and the municipalities are asking questions as well.

Craig Beavers chatted that Palmer Township has received an updated TIS regarding this project.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed. Commissioner Manges abstained.

ACTION ITEM: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet

Comprehensive Planning Committee Vice Chair John Gallagher presented a summary of the Committee meeting that occurred on Tuesday. The meeting included one zoning ordinance in Forks Township.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Heller made the motion, and Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

INFORMATION ITEM: Transportation Committee Summary

Transportation Committee Chair Kent Herman summarized the Committee meeting that occurred hours before including the PennDOT bridge projects status report, the Local Technical Assistance Program Municipal Tech Assist Program and the 2024 Youth Bike Summit hosted at Muhlenberg College by Community Bike Works.

ACTION ITEM: Ruhr Street and Hill Street – Street Vacation Petition Review

Mr. Hite presented a proposed street vacation petition for Hill Street and Ruhr Street that was reviewed for recommendations under Section 304 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The proposed street vacation application was submitted by the City of Allentown on behalf of Jose A. Cartagena, Sr. of 222 South Saint Lucas Street. It is recommended that the petitioner acquire concurrence signatures for the street vacation petition by all affected property owners including the property owners 2143 and 2135 W Fairview Street that were not listed on the petition submitted.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff comments. Commissioner Herman made the motion, and Commissioner Heller seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

INFORMATION ITEMS: Activity Reports

Mr. Dotta presented the Monthly Subdivision Report that featured eight Subdivisions, 28 Development proposals, 17 Stormwater Management reviews, and two Municipal Ordinances and Maps for a total of 55 reviews over 673 acres. 27 of those reviews were in Lehigh County and 28 were in Northampton County. Mr. Dotta added that the LVPC reviewed 733 total residential units, consisting of 221 single-family detached, 23 townhouses, 475 apartments and 14 twins. On the non-residential side, it was presented that the LVPC reviewed a total of 3.67 million square-feet, which included 198,000 square-feet of commercial, 10,000 square-feet retail, 151,000 square-feet public/quasi-public, and 3.2 million square-feet of warehouse.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Mr. Hite presented the Monthly Traffic Report, which featured a counter on Route 22 between Airport Road and the Fullerton Avenue Exit, which recorded 104,670 vehicles. Interstate 78, just east of Route 309, recorded 84,921 and Route 309 near Coopersburg logged 39,952 vehicles.

Next, Mr. Hite presented commercial truck traffic. Route 33 between Newburg Road and State Route 248 recorded 10,629 trucks and Route 22 recorded 11,340 trucks.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

Mr. Dotta presented the quarterly employment and wages report for both Lehigh and Northampton Counties from The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The report highlighted in Lehigh County an increase of 1.7% in total employment and a 3.6% raise of average weekly wage to \$1,401. In Northampton County, employment increased 0.2% while the average weekly wage rose 3.5% to \$1,147. In comparison, national trends saw employment increase 1.5% and the average weekly wage increase 3.6% to \$1,435. Among the 19 Pennsylvania counties in the BLS report, Lehigh and Northampton counties are fourth and fifth respectively in average weekly wage increase.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

NEW BUSINESS:

ACTION ITEM: LVPC Full Commission Meetings for the Balance of 2024

Chair Amato notified the Commission that, as part of the June 20 Executive Committee meeting, the Executive Committee discussed overall meeting structure as it relates to the LVPC's new office space, the effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic, equitable access for the community and Commissioners, attendance, comradery, Commissioner mentorship, the rate of change in the region as it relates to the Commissioners' work, costs and logistics. Based on these factors the Executive Committee poses the following recommendation and requests the Full Commission's consensus.

In Quarter 3, virtual meetings will be held on July 25th and August 22nd, both at 7 PM. The September 26th meeting at 7PM will be an in-person only meeting at the offices of the LVPC at 615 Waterfront Drive, Allentown, PA 18102.

In Quarter 4, virtual meetings will be held on October 24th and November 21st, both at 7 PM. The December 19th Annual Meeting will be at 11 AM and in-person only, at the offices of the LVPC.

Chair Amato called for a motion to adopt the new quarterly-based meeting program. Commissioner Kelly made the motion, and Commissioner Drabenstott seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions.

Journalist Jeff Ward asked if the meetings are still expected to be broadcast virtually. Ms. Bradley responded that they can be but the expectation is that Commissioners attend in person and that members of the public can attend in person too.

Chair Amato called for affirmative votes to accept the staff comments. The motion passed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: None

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

INFORMATION ITEM: Morning Call Business Cycle Column

Mr. Assad spoke about the most recent Morning Call column where Becky explains just how often municipals roads crews, staff, board members and elected officials take advantage of Lehigh Valley Government Academy and Training, often during evening hours, on top of their daily jobs and lives. That column can be found at lvpc.org/news/v or at mcall.com.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Plan Lehigh Valley radio show on WDIY NPR 88.1FM

Mr. Assad summarized the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley radio show that aired June 3, and took a close look at the benefits of the Green Transportation Infrastructure Project, with guests Susan Myerov and Allison Harvey. That show is streaming at lvpc.org/news/v and at WDIY.org.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Plan Lehigh Valley radio show on WDIY NPR 88.1FM

Mr. Assad presented two grant opportunities, PennDOT National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) and the PA Department of Community and Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF), are both available with deadlines to apply in July.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Local Technical Assistance Program Virtual Classes

Mr. Hite summarized the Lehigh Valley Government Academy classes this upcoming month. On July 9 there is Trucks on Local Roads: Issues and Solutions. On July 23 another new class is for Drones and the municipal transportation uses that can help with including visual inspections of infrastructure including bridges. Both classes are 8 AM to noon.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Amato stated that the next LVPC meeting is set to be on July 25 at 7pm. Chair Amato then asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Gallagher made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Morgan seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Becky Bradley, AICP, Executive Director and Joey Dotta, Regional Planner



DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

July 12, 2024

Ms. Jennifer Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Allentown
435 Hamilton St.
Allentown, PA 18101

**Re: Muhlenberg College Softball Field – Land Use of Regional Significance
City of Allentown
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Gomez:

The subject application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Educational Facility category. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, under the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items primarily takes place during the Committee meeting. Both meetings will be on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting:
 - July 23, 2024, at 12:00PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting:
 - July 25, 2024, at 7:00PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>

The subject application proposes to construct a softball field on the Muhlenberg College Campus at 2301 Chew Street (PIN 549608259217). Existing parking and access to the site will continue to be utilized.

Background

The proposed project site is located on Muhlenberg College's campus and zoned Institutional and Government (IG) according to the City of Allentown Zoning Map. Adjacent properties include the Muhlenberg College stadium and a recently constructed synthetic turf field. A second synthetic turf field was previously approved where this softball field is proposed but will not be constructed if the softball field project is approved.

Improving the existing facility serves to increase access to recreational opportunities and 'support cultural and social programs' (of Policies 5.2 and 5.3). The LVPC

encourages Muhlenberg College to consider opportunities for the general public to access and utilize the facility to diversify park programming and create public spaces in underserved areas (of Policies 5.2 and 5.3).

Transportation

The LVPC commends the proposed sidewalk connectivity along Gordon Street to the south of the development. This helps 'promote safe and secure community design' (Policy 5.1) and 'ensure transportation accessibility for all persons' (of Policy 5.2). Internal traffic signs are recommended along Gordon Street near both parking lots to move vehicles and pedestrians more efficiently (Policy 2.2).

Sustainable Systems

The LVPC recommends that educational institutions incorporate environmentally sensitive building and landscape design. This would further enhance the campus setting, demonstrate environmental leadership within the region, and 'reduce climate change impacts through mitigation and adaption' (Policy 3.4).

Lighting

The LVPC recommends ensuring that light pollution from the stadium lights does not spill into the nearby residential properties, which serves to 'minimize quality of life impacts to residents' (Policy 2.4).

Stormwater Review

The project site is located within the Little Lehigh Creek watershed. This watershed has a fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance. Comments related to our review of the project's stormwater management plan are included as attachment 1.

Municipalities, when considering subdivision/land developments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review.

Sincerely,



Joseph Dotta
Regional Planner

cc: Muhlenberg College (c/o Richard Waligora), Applicant; Keystone Consulting Engineers (c/o Jason Schwyer, RLA, ASLA), Project Engineer/Surveyor; David Petrik, City of Allentown Deputy Director of Public Works; Priscilla Reyes, City of Allentown Assistant Planner; Jesse Sadiua, City of Allentown Chief Planner; Brandon Jones, City of Allentown Planner



DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
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July 12, 2024

Ms. Jennifer Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Allentown
435 Hamilton St.
Allentown, PA 18101

**Re: Muhlenberg College Baseball Field – Land Use of Regional Significance
City of Allentown
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Gomez:

The subject application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Educational Facility category. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, under the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items primarily takes place during the Committee meeting. Both meetings will be on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting:
 - July 23, 2024, at 12:00PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting:
 - July 25, 2024, at 7:00PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>

The subject application proposes to redevelop the existing Bicentennial Park baseball field at 1008-1054 South Howard Street (PIN 640605111176). Muhlenberg College is currently leasing the property and proposes to rehabilitate the existing infrastructure in accordance with the terms of the lease agreement with Bicentennial Park. Existing parking and access to the site will continue to be utilized.

Background

The proposed project parcel is located adjacent to the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) office building and is zoned as Park (P) according to the City of Allentown Zoning Map. The current use is not expected to change.

Improving the existing facility serves to increase access to recreational opportunities and 'support cultural and social programs' (of Policies 5.2 and 5.3). The LVPC encourages Muhlenberg College to consider opportunities for the general public to

access and utilize the facility to diversify park programming and create public spaces in underserved areas (of Policies 5.2 and 5.3).

Multimodal Accessibility

The LVPC recommends that the faded crosswalk across Lehigh Street is clearly marked with appropriate signage and crosswalk markings. This will promote 'safe and secure community design and emergency management' (Policy 5.1).

Sustainable Systems

The LVPC recommends that educational institutions incorporate environmentally sensitive building and landscape design. This would further enhance the campus setting, demonstrate environmental leadership within the region, and 'reduce climate change impacts through mitigation and adaption' (Policy 3.4).

Lighting

The LVPC recommends ensuring that light pollution from the stadium lights does not spill into the nearby residential properties, which serves to 'minimize quality of life impacts to residents' (Policy 2.4).

Stormwater Review

The project site is located within the Little Lehigh Creek watershed. This watershed has a fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance. Comments related to our review of the project's stormwater management plan are included as attachment 1.

Municipalities, when considering subdivision/land developments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review.

Sincerely,



Joseph Dotta
Regional Planner

cc: Muhlenberg College (c/o Richard Waligora), Applicant; Keystone Consulting Engineers (c/o Jason Schwyer, RLA, ASLA), Project Engineer/Surveyor; David Petrik, City of Allentown Deputy Director of Public Works; Priscilla Reyes, City of Allentown Assistant Planner; Jesse Sadiua, City of Allentown Chief Planner; Brandon Jones, City of Allentown Planner



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

July 17, 2024

Ms. Jennifer Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Allentown
435 Hamilton St.
Allentown, PA 18101

**Re: Center Square Improvements Project – Land Development
City of Allentown
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Gomez:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, under the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items primarily takes place during the Committee meeting. Both meetings will be on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting:
 - July 23, 2024, at 12:00PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting:
 - July 25, 2024, at 7:00PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>

The application proposes to redesign the intersection of Hamilton Street and Seventh Street, including roadway realignment and reconfiguring turn lanes, expanded public plazas, and a north-to-south bike lane.

Background

The proposed project is located in the core downtown center of the City of Allentown. The area is zoned Central Business District (B2) according to the City's official Zoning Map.

Hamilton Street is a two-lane road, eastbound one-way. At the Seventh Street intersection, the two lanes split around the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, with one lane to the north of the monument, and one to the south. The lanes rejoin east of the monument.

Seventh Street is a three-lane State Road (State Route 145), southbound one-way. At the Hamilton Street intersection, the two westernmost lanes continue south, west of the

monument. The easternmost lane becomes a left-turn only lane onto Hamilton Street. South of the monument, the left lane splits into two lanes, creating three lanes southbound again.



Hamilton Street and Seventh Street Existing Conditions – Google Maps Aerial Imagery

The proposed improvements to Hamilton Street include converting the right-hand lane into a right-turn only as the lane approaches the Seventh Street intersection, directing traffic southbound onto Seventh Street. The left-hand lane continues through the intersection and splits into two lanes just east of the monument.

The proposed improvements to Seventh Street include reducing travel lanes from three lanes to two between Linden Street and Hamilton Street. The right-most lane north of Linden Street will become a right-turn only lane onto Linden Street, with two lanes continuing south. At Hamilton Street, both lanes continue south around the west side of the monument, while the left-hand lane also allows traffic to turn left onto Hamilton Street. A bicycle lane is proposed along the left (eastern) side of Seventh Street.

Review Comments Historic traffic circle type designs, like this intersection pose many challenges, especially with a monument that vehicle traffic needs to move around. It is understandable that there would be a desire to redesign Center Square. First, it's important to note, that the current configuration is signalized and allows vehicular traffic to move around the monument and pedestrians to cross the street effectively, unless they wish to visit the monument. Driver and pedestrian behavior in this area however, does not always align with the design function of the facility. This is especially obvious when drivers speed through red lights or cross three lanes of Seventh Street without

signaling or pedestrians do not utilize crosswalks or obey hand-man signals. Poor driver and pedestrian behaviors, not design function, affect transportation system operations most in this location. Yet, the design is not particularly optimal either and supports negative driver and pedestrian behaviors. This is why they happen so frequently.

The cyclist functioning of the Center Square, on the other hand, is poor. The very wide Seventh Street is extremely difficult to cycle as the number of lanes creates a 'mini freeway' effect, encouraging higher vehicular speeds and a greater number of lane shifts.

The proposed inclusion of a bike lane along Seventh Street can make a difference in cyclist safety. However there are additional opportunities to further support cyclist safety and mobility in the proposed project. The LVPC strongly recommends providing protected and buffered bike lanes, potentially with curbing, bollards and/or parking lanes, to encourage bike lane use by cyclists of a range road-riding confidence levels. Additionally, the LVPC strongly encourages bike lanes be a minimum of six feet wide. Two handlebars cannot fit abreast in a four-foot lane, especially with cars and trucks driving inches away, and only separated by a painted line and no physical buffer.

The bike lane should be the right-most lane. The Pennsylvania motor vehicle code requires "pedalcycles" to use the right-most lane, so building a bike lane on the left will require the cyclists' path and motorists' path to conflict before the start of the bike lane and again after the bike lane ends. The "sharrow" marking on North 7th Street in the left lane is confusing to cyclists and motorists that expect cyclists to use the right-most lane. Providing sufficient cyclist infrastructure serves to 'develop a mixed-transportation network to support a more compact development pattern, optimize roadway capacity and encourage alternative travel options' (of Policy 2.1) and 'provide a safe, well-maintained transportation network' (of Policy 2.2).

The City of Allentown overall lacks clearly designated and safe bike routes traveling from west to east. Without dedicated bicycle lanes, cyclists have to bike in the roadway with Several studies nationwide have shown that bike lanes generate numerous economic benefits to local businesses. Hamilton Street is identified as a candidate Bicycle Commuting Corridor in the *Walk/RollLV: Active Transportation Plan*, and the section of Hamilton Street between 10th Street to 6th Street is recommended to incorporate sidewalk level separated bike lanes along this corridor, five feet wide with a two-foot buffer on either side (page 84-85).

For any streets without dedicated bike lanes, the LVPC strongly recommends posting signage alerting drivers that bicycles may use the full lane (U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) R4-11, "BICYCLES MAY USE FULL LANE").

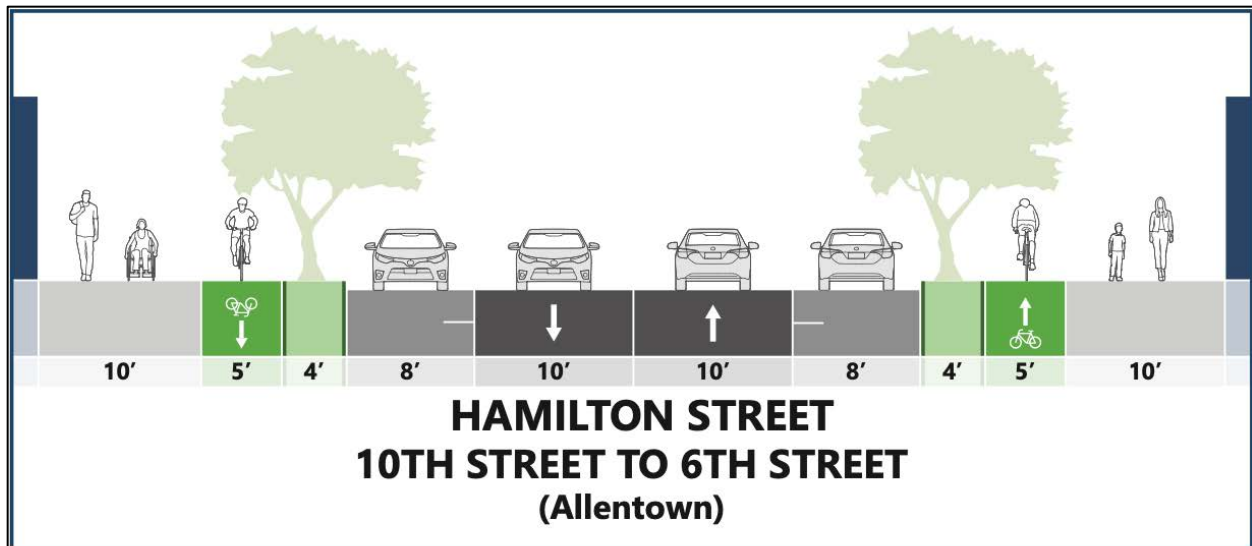


Figure 5.11: In Center City Allentown (**Map D**) expanding the sidewalks as part of a larger streetscape upgrade would create space for sidewalk level separated bike lanes on each side of the street.

The LVPC recommends eight-foot widths for parking lanes. For through-lanes, ten-foot widths are common in urbanized settings. Dedicated additional space for motor vehicles invites higher speeds. Narrow widths require drivers to slow down and “thread the needle” through the narrow passage. Implementing complete street and traffic-calming measures support safe and secure community design (of Policy 5.1). Reducing vehicle lanes would also provide more width for the bike lane and buffering.

All crosswalks should be elevated to sidewalk level and function as a speed table for the motorists. In the southwest corner of the square, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramps take up a large percentage of the pedestrian space, and potentially create tripping hazards. By elevating the crosswalks (or the entire intersection) to sidewalk level, ADA curb ramps will not be necessary in the pedestrian space. Elevated crosswalks and intersections show that crosswalks are pedestrian spaces used by cars, and not spaces for cars used by pedestrians. The LVPC encourages the City to consider a diagonal crosswalk between the PPL Center and the monument peninsula. The close proximity between the PPL Center plaza area curb and the monument plaza may give pedestrians an unintended sense of shortest route direction across the intersection and encourage crossing in this location. If a diagonal crosswalk is determined to be infeasible, the LVPC strongly recommends installing barriers such as a raised planter wall that prevents street access towards the monument from the PPL Center plaza, with further consideration regarding traffic controls and the safest and most likely route pedestrians will take between corners of the intersection. Prioritizing pedestrian safety supports safe and secure community design and reducing bicycle and pedestrian fatalities towards zero (of Policy 5.1).

The LVPC recommends the City reconsider striped roadway buffer areas or “gore” areas. Instead, physical barriers such as curbing allow the space to be used by

pedestrians. On Hamilton Street, a Pedestrian Refuge Island should be included instead of goring asphalt between the two lanes. Additionally, the LVPC recommends roadway shoulders less than eight feet wide be curbed and dedicated as pedestrian space. Shoulders over eight feet wide can be designed as street parking.

Overall, the LVPC strongly recommends the City evaluate the redesign of Center Square to ensure safety and walkability for pedestrians. Elements of the realigned roadway, such as rounded curves for turn lanes and streamlined travel lanes through the intersection, will cause traffic to flow faster than the existing roadway design around the monument island. While designing the roadway to accommodate all transportation modes is encouraged, pedestrian and bicyclist safety should be prioritized in design decisions, as these are the most vulnerable road users.

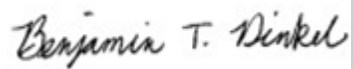
It is clear that the City is demonstrating a commitment to increase social and economic access to daily needs for all people and create community spaces that promote physical and mental health for this proposal (of Policy 5.1 and 5.2). Additionally, the proposal attempts to create and enhance public spaces in underserved areas. The location of the project (Census Tract 97) is identified as Disadvantaged according to Justice40 criteria, and is above the 90th percentile nationwide for lack of green space (Council on Environmental Quality Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool). The proposal includes street trees, planters and landscaping that improve access to green spaces (of Policy 5.3). Providing pervious surfaces such as planters also reduce rainwater runoff and serves to incorporate resiliency into planning and design (of Policy 5.1). Yet, a number of opportunities to further refine the design to truly enhance the functionality and safety of this facility remain. The transportation design aligned with urban design is paramount. This proposed design over-emphasizes vehicular movements, where an all modes equal design refinement would go a long way to achieving the pedestrian, ADA and bicycle-friendly environment and maximized safety that the City is very committed to. Again, the LVPC is supportive of the City in its efforts to improve placemaking and transportation accessibility in its downtown core, which also serves as an essential downtown hub of the Lehigh Valley, and is available for further discussion of this review.

Municipalities, when considering subdivision/land developments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review.

Sincerely,



Jillian Seitz
Chief Community Planner



Benjamin T. Dinkel
Transportation Planner

cc: City Center Investment Corp, Applicant; Paul McNemar, RETTEW, Project Engineer/Surveyor; David Petrik, City of Allentown Deputy Director of Public Works; Priscilla Reyes, City of Allentown Assistant Planner; Jesse Sadiua, City of Allentown Chief Planner; Brandon Jones, City of Allentown Planner



Project Review Summary Sheet

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Date: July 2024

Project	Municipality	Brief Statement of Purpose	LVPC Comment
Zoning Ordinance Amendment	Tatamy Borough	<i>Main Street Commercial Zoning District</i> – Proposes minor amendments pertaining to the Main Street Commercial Zoning District, including removing references to the completed Route 33/Main Street Interchange Project and updates to setbacks and parking regulations.	While these amendments are generally a matter of local concern, the LVPC commends the Borough for continuing to evaluate and update its ordinance regulations as a best practice for local governments (of <i>FutureLV: The Regional Plan</i> Policy 1.4).



Project Review Summary Sheet

Environment Committee

Date: July 2024

Project	Municipality	Brief Statement of Purpose	LVPC Comment
Application to Renew Approval of Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant and Discharge (DRBC Review)	North Whitehall Township	Application by Lehigh County Authority to renew approval of existing 60,000 gallons per day (gpd) Wynnewood Terrace wastewater treatment plant and discharge. No modifications to the plant are proposed.	Aligns with <i>FutureLV</i> action to 'protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater' (of Policy 3.2).
Application to Renew Approval of Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant and Discharge (DRBC Review)	North Whitehall Township	Application by Allied Utility Services, Inc. to renew approval of existing 120,000 gallons per day (gpd) Schneeksville North wastewater treatment plant and discharge. No modifications to the plant are proposed.	Aligns with <i>FutureLV</i> action to 'protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater' (of Policy 3.2).
Application to Renew Approval of Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant and Discharge (DRBC Review)	Lower Milford Township	Application by Lower Milford Township to renew approval of existing 35,000 gallons per day (gpd) Village of Limeport wastewater treatment plant and discharge. No modifications to the plant are proposed.	Aligns with <i>FutureLV</i> action to 'protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater' (of Policy 3.2).
Application to Renew Approval of Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant and Discharge (DRBC Review)	Portland Borough	Application by Borough of Portland to renew approval of existing 105,000 gallons per day (gpd) Portland Borough wastewater treatment plant and discharge. No modifications to the plant are proposed.	Aligns with <i>FutureLV</i> action to 'protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater' (of Policy 3.2).
Application to Renew Approval of Existing Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant Discharge and Approve a New Industrial Wastewater Treatment Plant (DRBC Review)	South Whitehall Township	Application by Nestle Purina PetCare Company to renew approval of the existing industrial wastewater treatment plant (IWTP) discharge of 530,000 gallons per day (gpd) and to approve a new industrial wastewater treatment plant to replace the existing IWTP due to expected increased flows to the plant as well as the addition of two production lines. The effluent limit will remain 530,000 gallons per day until construction of the new plant is complete. Once construction is completed, the effluent limit will increase to 1.08 million gallons per day.	Aligns with <i>FutureLV</i> actions to 'protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater' (of Policy 3.2), 'match development intensity with sustainable infrastructure capacity' and 'improve the utility and mobility infrastructure of the region' (of Policy 1.1)



DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

July 2, 2024

Michael P. Hanlon
435 West Hamilton Street
Allentown PA 18101
Michael.Hanlon@AllentownPA.gov

RE: **Street Vacation Petition
Portion of unopened New England Avenue from Union Boulevard to N. Dauphin
Street
City of Allentown, Lehigh County**

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject street vacation petition at its Transportation Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, please see the meeting details below to attend. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting should the Commission have any additional comments or revisions.

- LVPC Transportation Planning Committee Meeting
 - July 25, 2024 at 5:30 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - July 25, 2024 at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.htm>

Mr. Hanlon,

The proposed street vacation petition was reviewed for recommendations under Section 304 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, and for general consistency with the intent of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*.

The proposed street vacation application was submitted by the City of Allentown on behalf of Executive Education Academy Charter school through their representative Frank Natale D'Amore, III, Esq. of Fitzpatrick, Lentz and Bubba, PC. The proposed street vacation requests vacating the rights of way for the portion of unopened New England Avenue from Union Boulevard to North Dauphin Street in the city.

New England Avenue at the location petitioned to be vacated is an unimproved plotted street with an extensive history involving the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study historical Transportation Improvement Programs and the current Long Range Transportation Plan in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. The petitioner currently has ownership of property on both sides of the area of rights of way for New England Avenue.

The *FutureLV: 2023-2050 Long Range Transportation Plan* has a planning and research project in the mid-range element, 2029-2036, for a “New England Avenue Feasibility study” that was sponsored by the City of Allentown to analyze the feasibility of converting the former New England Railroad rail line into a roadway in the amount of \$150,000.

Additionally, the area of rights of way for unopened New England Avenue also has within the 2037-2050 bridge portion of the *FutureLV: Long Range Transportation Plan* for a project entitled “Union Boulevard, State Route 1002, bridge rehabilitation/replacement over abandoned railroad” in the amount of \$3,400,000. This bridge located above a portion of unopened New England Avenue rights of way carries Union Boulevard, State Route 1002, adjacent to the east of the Tilghman Street Bridge over the Lehigh River. The area of rights of way may be required to perform rehabilitation or replacement activities of the bridge on a portion of rights of way.

The study project and the bridge rehabilitation/replacement project listed above could be impacted by the vacating of rights of way by the city. The city submitted and successfully had these projects accepted into the Long Range Transportation Plan with their intent to consider a roadway in the area of the rights of way petitioned to be vacated.

It is strongly recommended that the city perform critical due diligence of the long-term ramifications of vacating these rights of ways. Careful consideration is an essential planning process for the city and is strongly recommended that the city coordinate and involve the LVTS and PennDOT with any long-term planning or change of direction for potential of planning for and constructing of New England Avenue.

It should be noted that this area was within the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program that was part of the planning and construction of New England Avenue as referenced by the Multi-modal Project Management System (MPMS) ID# 24725. The public narrative for the project at the time was as follows: “New England Ave Extension is proposed as a new 40 mile per hour two-lane roadway that would connect Hanover Avenue to North Dauphin Street. This advanced project is part of the overall American Parkway project in City of Allentown, Lehigh County.”

This project first appeared on the State Twelve Year Program (TYP) on July 18, 2002. The project was never completed due to a variety of reasons including litigation.

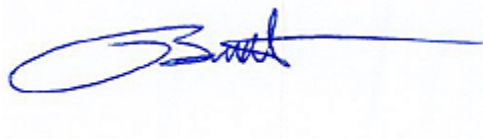
While the vacating of rights of way would not negatively affect current traffic circulation it may have significant impacts to any future planning and construction within the rights of way to be petitioned for the potential of a future New England Avenue.

If the petition is granted by the City of Allentown, it is recommended utilities that are above or below ground remain accessible as they are today in the event of maintenance or repair that may be required to maintain the essential power and telecommunications utilities as well as any City of Allentown or Lehigh County utilities and infrastructure required to sustain the public health, safety and welfare of the community. It is also recommended that any emergency access to utilities and to access properties be maintained to ensure proper response by emergency services personnel. (*FutureLV: The Regional Plan, Policy 5.4*)

It is also recommended that if the City grants the petition to vacate, that the city communicate and notify the LVTS of the potential change for the viability of studying the corridor for a proposed New England Avenue as referenced in the current Long Range Transportation Pla if critically important rights of way is vacated (*of FutureLV Policies 1.4 and 2.2*).

The LVPC appreciates the City of Allentown's consideration of the goals and policies of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in as much as it relates to the street vacation petition of unopened New England Avenue

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the LVPC review.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brian Hite", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brian Hite
Transportation Planner



Aerial view of the area petitioned to be vacated in yellow, courtesy of Google Earth

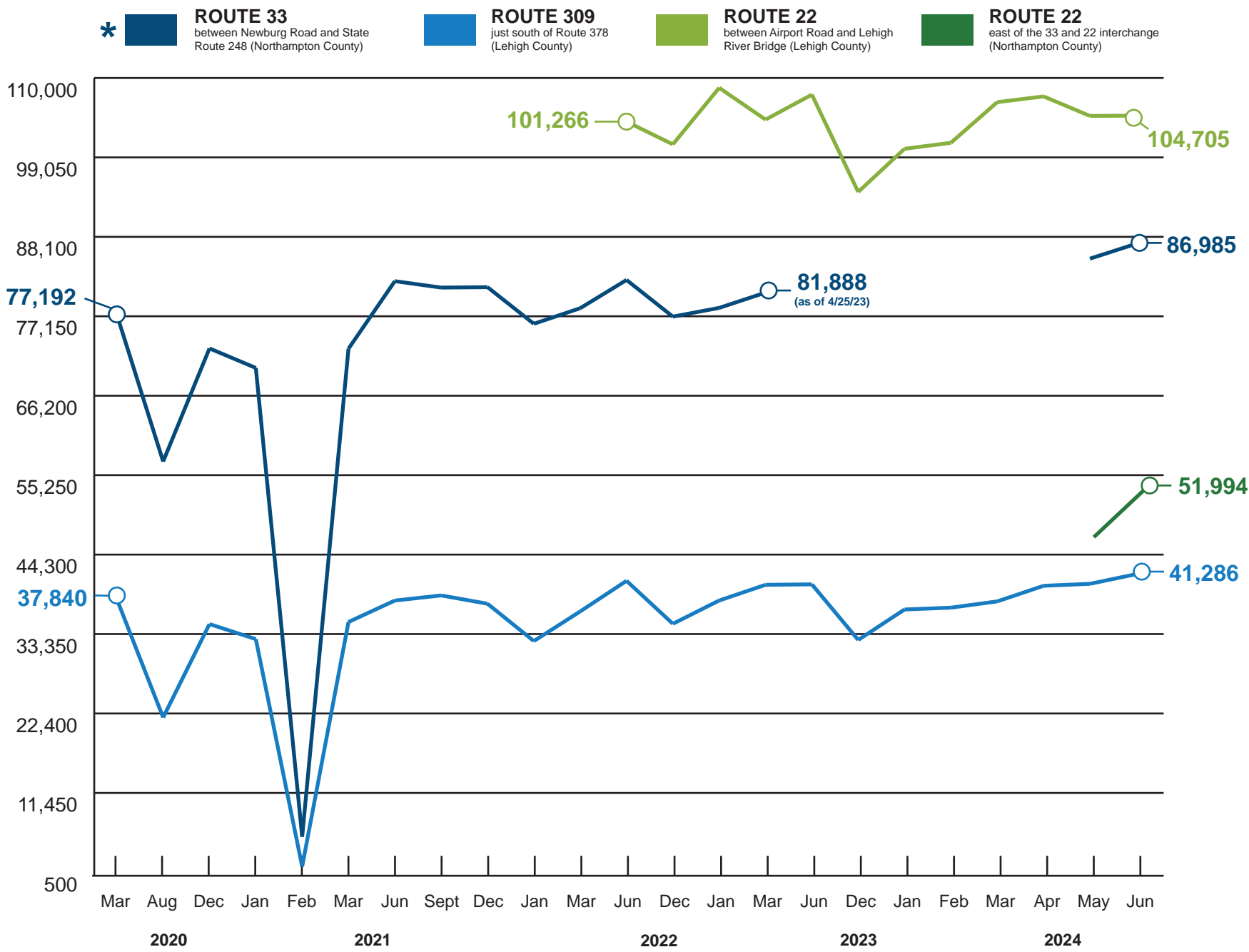


Area petitioned to be vacated of New England Avenue, looking north from Union Boulevard Bridge towards North Dauphin Street to the left

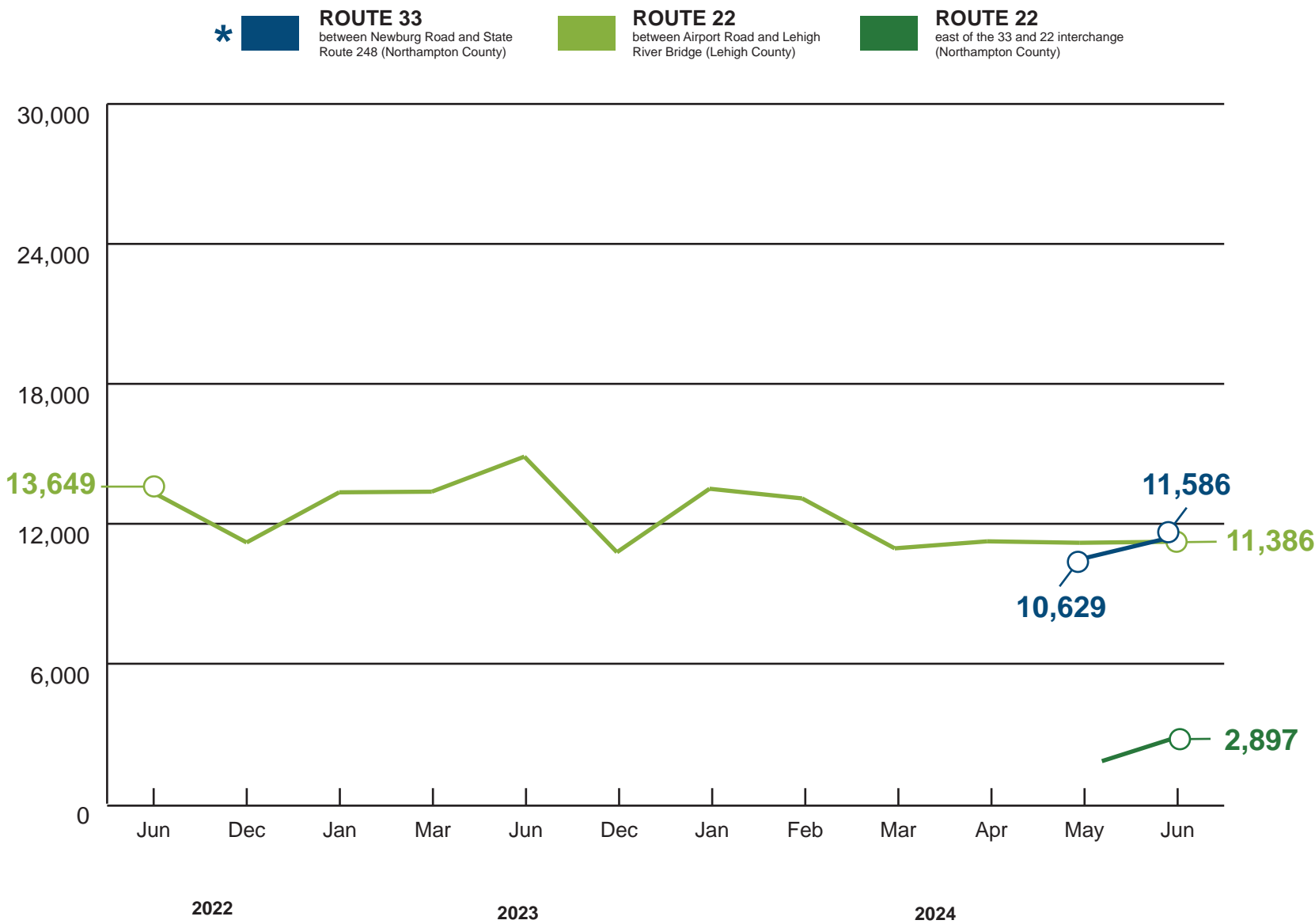


Plan provided by the petitioner; yellow area is the area petitioned to be vacated of rights of way

TOTAL VEHICLE TRAFFIC

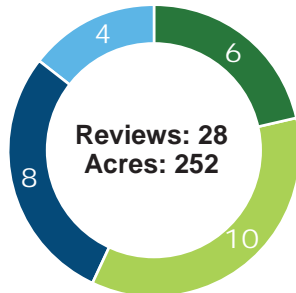


TOTAL TRUCK TRAFFIC

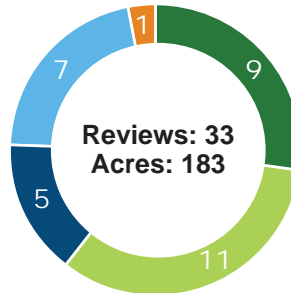


Plan Activity

Lehigh County



Northampton County



■ Residential ■ Non-Residential ■ Subdivisions and Lot Line Adjustments
■ Stormwater Management ■ Municipal Ordinances, Maps and Plans

Regional Totals*

13
 Subdivision/Lot Line
 Adjustments

36
 Development

11
 Stormwater Management

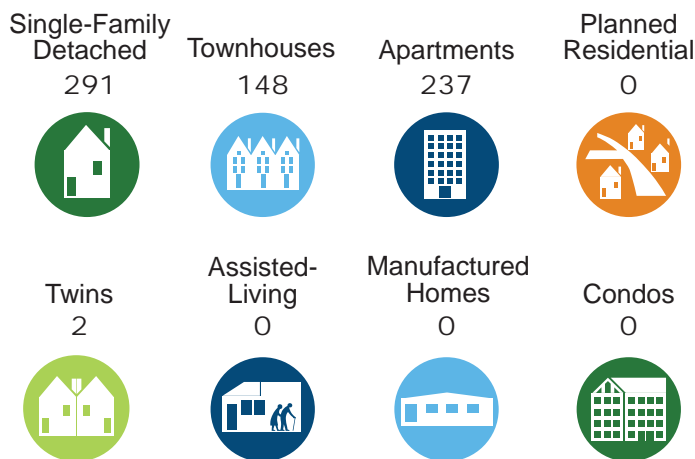
1
 Municipal Ordinances,
 Maps and Plans

435
 Acres

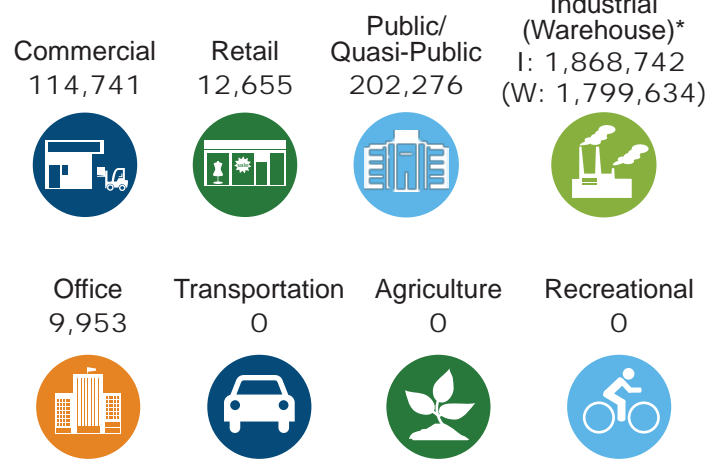
*Includes preliminary and final plans

Types of New Development

Residential: 678 Total Units

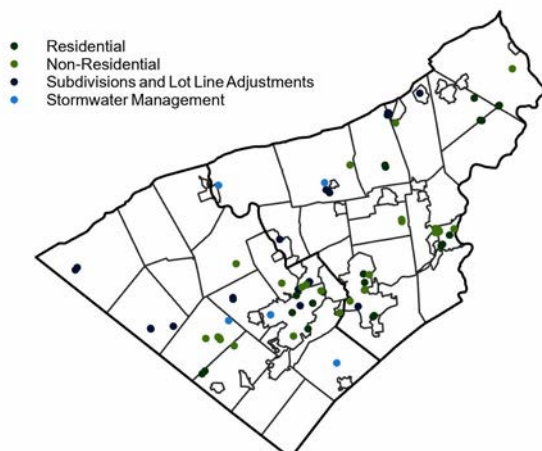


Non-Residential: 2,208,367 Total Square Feet

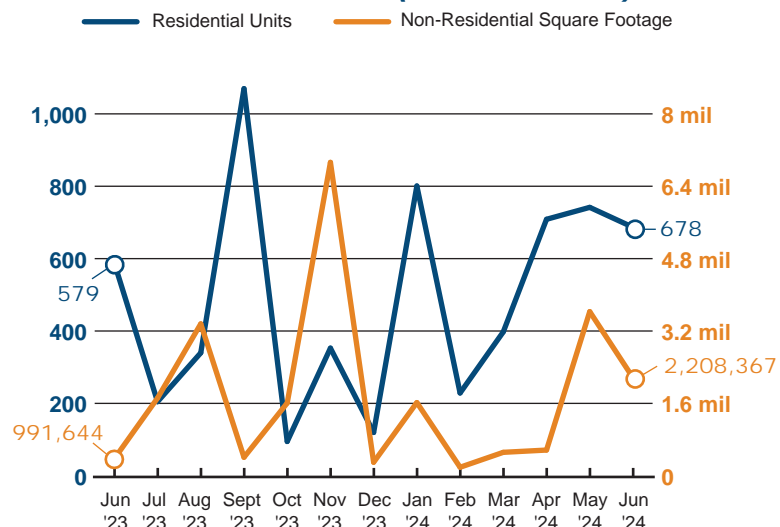


* Warehouse number is a subset of industrial total square footage.

Location of Development

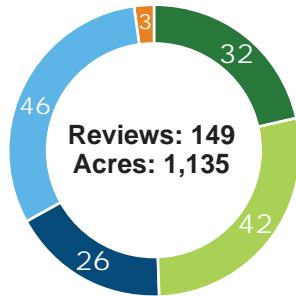


Year to Date (Year to Year)



Plan Activity

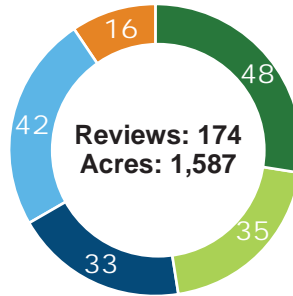
Lehigh County



Residential Non-Residential

Stormwater Management

Northampton County



Subdivisions and Lot Line Adjustments

Municipal Ordinances, Maps and Plans

Regional Totals*

59
Subdivision/Lot Line
Adjustments

157
Development

88
Stormwater Management

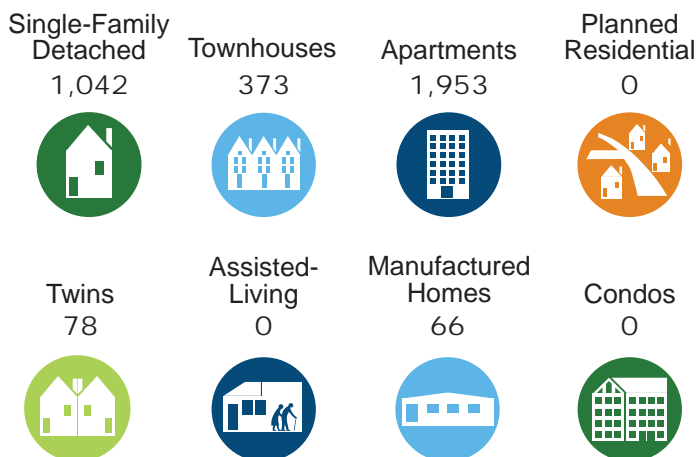
19
Municipal Ordinances,
Maps and Plans

2,722
Acres

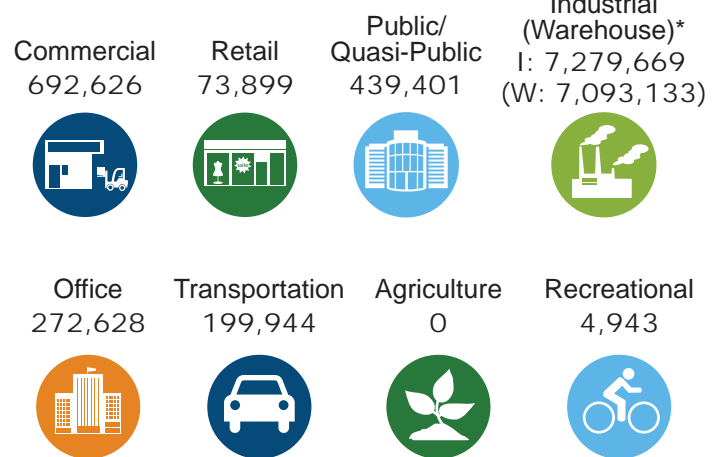
*Includes preliminary and final plans

Types of New Development

Residential: 3,512 Total Units

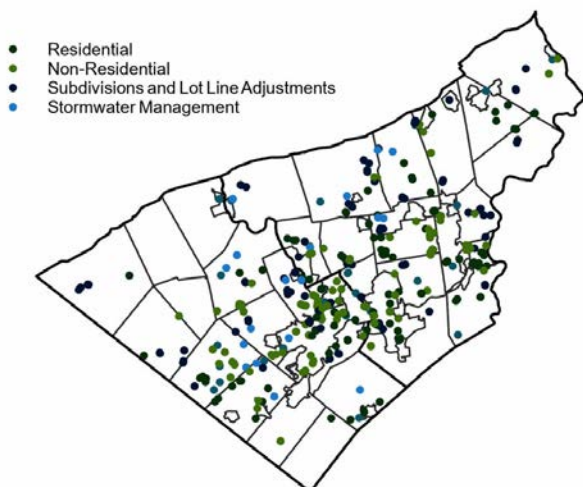


Non-Residential: 8,963,110 Total Square Feet



* Warehouse number is a subset of industrial total square footage.

Location of Development



Year to Date (Year to Year)

