



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, August 28, 2025, at 7:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

THE MEETING CAN BE ACCESSED AT <http://www.tinyurl.com/LVPC2025> OR VIA PHONE
610-477-5793 Conf ID: 651 626 091#.

AGENDA

Roll Call

Courtesy of Floor

Chair's Report

1. Staff Introduction
 - a. Clay Karnis, GIS Planner

Minutes

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Minutes and Review of Roll Call Actions of the July 24, 2025, Commission Meeting (JD)

Comprehensive Planning Committee:

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Hanover Township (LC) – Land Use of Regional Significance – Lehigh Valley International Airport Runway 6-24 Rehabilitation Program (JD)
2. *ACTION ITEM*: Whitehall Township and City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – Riverside Drive Revised Plan (JS)
3. *ACTION ITEM*: City of Bethlehem – Land Use of Regional Significance – Commonwealth Charter Academy Cyber School (JD)
4. *ACTION ITEM*: Summary Sheet (SM)

Environment Committee:

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Act 537 Sewage Facilities Planning Module Review - 2951 Betz Court – Lowhill Township (CR or SM)

Transportation Committee:

1. *ACTION ITEM*: South Whitehall Township - Street Vacation Request (FU)

New Business:

1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Lehigh County Industrial Land Use Guide Project Kick-Off (DC)
2. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Trail Gap Analysis Project Kick-Off (CM)

Monthly Reports:

1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Geospatial Land Development Trends, 2015-2025 (MG, SK)
2. *PACKET ITEMS*:
 - a. July Subdivision, Land Development, Stormwater and Municipal Ordinances/Plans Report
 - b. July Traffic Monitoring Report

Communications and Engagement

1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: New LVGA Training (MA)
 - a. September 10: Assessing Traffic Impacts in Your Community, 11 am-1 pm
 - b. September 11: Assessing Traffic Impacts in Your Community, 6 pm-8 pm
2. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Big Check Presentation Events (MA)
 - a. September 3: Riverside Drive at Franklin St. & Lehigh Ave., Whitehall Township, 1 pm.
 - b. September 4: Hellertown Borough at Detwiller Plaza, 1 pm
 - c. September 8: LANTA at Allentown Transportation Center, 6th Street, 1 pm.
3. *PACKET ITEM*: Morning Call Business Cycle Column
 - a. Published: August 17 - "Access and Security Celebrate Anniversaries, Shape Lehigh Valley Life"
 - b. lvpc.org; mcall.com
 - c. Next column: September 28
4. *PACKET ITEM*: Monthly, Plan Lehigh Valley Talk Show on WDIY, Lehigh Valley Public Radio, 88.1
 - a. Air Date: August 4 - "Social Security and the ADA: Two Parallel Programs with Nora Dowd Eisenhower"
 - b. Lvpc.org; wdiy.org/show/plan-lehigh-valley
 - c. Next show – 6:30 pm, September 1
5. *PACKET ITEM*: Lehigh Valley Government Academy
 - a. Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) In Person Classes held at the LVPC Conference Center, 615 Waterfront Drive, Suite 201, Allentown
 - o October 14: Winter Maintenance, 8 am to Noon
 - o October 28: Municipal Stormwater Facilities, 8 am to Noon
 - Register at www.gis.penndot.gov/LTAP/ or by contacting Hannah Milagio at hmilagio@lvpc.org 610-264-4544
 - b. PA Municipal Planning Education Institute (PMPEI) Zoning - SOLD OUT
 - o September 9, 16 and 23
 - o In Person Classes held at the LVPC Conference Center, 615 Waterfront Drive, Suite 201, Allentown PA 18102

Executive Director's Report:

1. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Strategic Plan – Consultant Presentation in September
2. *INFORMATION ITEM*: "But you can't feed your hunger and you ain't getting younger" --- Mimi and Richard Farina

Next Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Meeting:

In-Person at LVPC Conference Center
Thursday, September 25, 2025, 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.



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LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION Minutes from Thursday, July 24, 2025, Meeting

The LVPC held a public meeting on Thursday, July 24, 2025. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on January 8th, 2025.

LVPC Chair Dr. Chris Amato chaired the meeting.

Mr. Joey Dotta took Roll Call.

Members in Attendance:

Lehigh County

Ron Beitler, Bob Elbich, Sunny Ghai, Philip Ginder, Jennifer Gomez, Kent Herman, John Inglis, Richard Molchany, Christina Morgan, Santo Napoli, Stephen Repasch and Kevin Schmidt.

Northampton County

Christopher Amato, Andrew Elliott, Charles Elliott, Carl Manges, John McGorry, Steve Melnick, Armando Moritz-Chapelliquen, Tina Smith and Basel Yandem.

Members Absent:

Lehigh County

Phillips Armstrong, Percy Dougherty, Michael Drabenstott, Steve Glickman, Diane Kelly, Dennis Klusaritz, Owen O'Neil and Matthew Tuerk.

Northampton County

Jessica Cope, John Gallagher, Judith Haldeman, Ken Kraft, Rachel Leon, Lamont McClure, Scott Minnich, Edward Nelson, Salvatore Panto, Jr., J. William Reynolds and Jean Versteeg

Staff Present: Becky Bradley, Joey Dotta, Jill Seitz, Matt Assad, Susan Myerov, Enzo Fantozzi, Gio Rizkallah, Subham Kharel, Faria Umy, David Cohen and Jacob Engbert

Public Present: Amy Unger, Phil Gianficaro, Alan and Patti Shukaitis, Craig Beavers, Adrienne Fors, Debra, Brian, Lisa Rodger, Paul, Mary K. Riegel, Heather W., Robin Zmoda, Shelley, Jane Mellert, Jack Kmetz, Steve, Robert C Rute and Joseph Colosi.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

None

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Amato introduced three new members of the LVPC staff Jacob Engbert, Enzo Fantozzi, and David Cohen, AICP.

MINUTES

Chair Amato stated that the minutes of the Thursday, June 26, 2025, LVPC meeting are attached. Chair Amato asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Repasch made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Melnick seconded the motion.

Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There were none. The motion passed. Commissioners Andrew Elliott and Bob Elbich abstained.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Northampton Borough – Land Use of Regional Significance – Atlas Industrial

Mr. Dotta presented a proposal to construct a 350,400-square-foot industrial building with 307 parking spaces including loading dock and trailer storage spaces at 799 Smith Lane.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the staff review. Commissioner Ginder made the motion, and Commissioner Molchany seconded the motion. Chair Amato asked for any comments or questions. There was a brief discussion about further strengthening the recommendation in the letter to specify an end user for the site.

Commissioner Melnick made a motion to amend the letter to strengthen the language about identifying an end user. Commissioner Elbich seconded the amended motion. It was commented that the existing plastic recycling facility on the site can produce an odor that may be a nuisance to neighbors.

The motion with the amended language passed.

ACTION ITEM: Plainfield Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Solid Waste Rezoning

Ms. Seitz and Ms. Myerov presented a review for a trio of solid waste zoning ordinance amendments for Plainfield Township. The application proposed to amend the Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map pertaining to sanitary landfill facilities. The zoning ordinance amendments and zoning map amendment proposed to expand waste disposal land uses from the current zoned area and to regulating landfill land uses differently than current zoning allows, including review procedures and application requirements. Different aspects of the proposal aligned and conflicted with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*.

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

Several members of the public spoke about their concerns about whether the landfill is to be expanded. Quality of life factors like air quality, odor and truck traffic were discussed. Several Commissioners commented to commend the LVPC staff on their thorough review and for incorporating many of the concerns brought up during Tuesday's Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting.

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

ACTION ITEM: Comprehensive Planning Committee Summary Sheet

Comprehensive Planning Committee Chair Melnick briefed the Commission on the Comprehensive Committee Summary Sheet that featured zoning ordinance amendments for Heidelberg Township, East Allen Township, and Lower Saucon Township, and an official map proposal for Bath Borough.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the summary sheet. Commissioner Molchany 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.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

ACTION ITEM: Environment Committee Summary Sheet

Commissioner Repasch briefed the Commission on Environment Committee's business that included a wastewater treatment plant and discharge renewal for the Li'l Wolf Mobile Home Park wastewater treatment plant in North Whitehall Township.

Chair Amato called for a motion to accept the summary sheet. Commissioner Repasch 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: Priority Climate Action Plan for Transportation

Decarbonization Implementation

Ms. Bradley introduced the Priority Climate Action Plan for Transportation Decarbonization Implementation which lays out a roadmap to reduce transportation-related carbon emissions from Lehigh Valley's transportation system. Ms. Urmey highlighted the allocations by federal fiscal year, the project selection process, and some previous projects that were selected to receive funding.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Walk/Roll LV: Active Transportation Plan & Future LV: The Regional Plan Implementation

Ms. Bradley briefed the Commission on the *Walk/Roll LV Plan* and project funding updates. Ms. Urmey explained the project selection process and the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) funding details. The final project list was adopted by the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS) Coordinating Committee on June 18th, 2025. Community Bike Works and Coalition for Appropriate Transportation both received TASA funding for the 2025 federal fiscal year. The Cities of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton all received TASA funding for 2026 federal fiscal year. The Commission was then invited to grant presentation events for the remainder of TASA funding recipients.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

INFORMATION ITEM: It's Regional Plan Update Time Again! Preparations Underway and What to Expect Next

Ms. Bradley updated the Commission on progress being made to prepare to update the regional comprehensive plan. Data updates and determining the overall project selection process for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan are both in the works. Ms. Bradley then briefly went over the schedule for updates throughout the rest of 2025.

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

MID-YEAR REPORTS

INFORMATION ITEM: Mid-Year Subdivision, Land Development, Stormwater and Municipal Ordinances/Plans Report

Ms. Seitz briefed the Commission on the activity LVPC saw in the first half of 2025. There was 75 subdivisions, 163 development plans, 77 stormwater management reviews and 26 municipal ordinances and maps for a total of 341 reviews. Ms. Myerov noted that stormwater management reviews have leveled compared to this time last year. There is also a trend in decades-old stormwater projects being modified or redeveloped and moving forward in the review process. Additionally, there were more solar array projects as stormwater management measures for these uses are continuing to evolve.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Mid-Year Industrial Market Report

Dr. Kharel presented an analysis of industrial market trends through the first half of 2025. Data going back to quarter one of 2023 was used to contextualize the analysis and additional research was used to ground the report. Overall, both net absorption and new construction declined in the Lehigh Valley. This trend reflects a broader market realignment following the surge in activity during the pandemic and a subsequent cooling period as the market moves toward equilibrium.

Mr. Dotta provided a national perspective and noted that nationwide trends reflect some of the changes the Lehigh Valley is experiencing.

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Mid-Year Traffic Monitoring Report

Mr. Fantozzi presented a six-month traffic volume update for four of the Lehigh Valley's major roads based on Pennsylvania Department of Transportation data. The six-month trend and year-over-year comparison was reported for Route 33 between Newburg Road and State Route 248, Route 309 just south of Route 378, Route 22 between Airport Road and Lehigh River Bridge, Route 22 east of the 33 and 22 Interchange. Truck traffic was included for Route 33 and Route 22.

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Bradley updated the Commission on the expected timeline for the LVPC Strategic Plan.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Chair Amato notified the Commission that items for communications and public engagement are featured in the meeting packet.

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

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Amato stated that the next LVPC meeting will be on Thursday, August 28th at 7 pm. Chair Amato then asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Molchany made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

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



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BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

August 27, 2025

Ms. Melissa Wehr, Manager
Hanover Township
2202 Grove Road
Allentown, PA 18109

**Re: Lehigh Valley International Airport – Runway 6/24 Rehabilitation Program –
Land Use of Regional Significance
Hanover Township
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Wehr:

The subject application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Airports – All category. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) consider proposals at the Comprehensive 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, and we encourage all participation. Meeting details are below:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - August 26, 2025, at 12:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - August 28, 2025, at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/meetings.html>

The application proposes improving the existing runway and associated taxiways. The entirety of the rehabilitation program project is located within the Lehigh Valley International Airport (LVIA) facility, and the proposed work area constitutes a small area of the overall airport campus. Proposed is the construction of new Taxiway D and a new cargo apron with the addition of two new stormwater infiltration beds. The proposed amendment will create a total of 23.72 acres of new impervious pavement at 3311 Airport Road (Parcel Identification Number 641819088171).

This proposal is located in the Development area of the General Land Use Plan of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, and aligns with *FutureLV* by 'providing a safe, well-maintained transportation network to move people and goods efficiently, while capitalizing on existing infrastructure' (of Policy 2.2). The proposal supports interregional transportation services (of Policy 2.2) and the expansion of local business

operations that diversify the regional economy and strengthen economic resilience (of Policy 4.2).

As the Lehigh Valley continues to grow, so does reliance on key transportation partners to continually meet the needs of the area, and undertaking the necessary improvements enables the operations of LVIA to meet the current and future demands of passenger and freight air traffic for the Lehigh Valley (of *FutureLV* Policies 2.2 and 2.6). Improvements to infrastructure at LVIA are an important element to the sustained economic viability and mobility of the Lehigh Valley (of Policy 4.1).

The project site is located within the Catasauqua Creek Watershed. This watershed has a fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance. Comments relative 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,



Joey Dotta
Regional Planner



Evan Gardi
Transportation Planner



Jillian Seitz
Chief Community Planner

cc: Audrey Anderson, Township Clerk; Kevin Chimics, Township Engineer; Ryan Meyer, LNAA Planning Director, Applicant.



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Executive Director

August 19, 2025

Lee Rackus, Planning, Zoning & Development Bureau Chief
Whitehall Township
3219 MacArthur Road
Whitehall, PA 18052

Jennifer Gomez, AICP
Director of Planning & Zoning
City of Allentown
435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101

**RE: Riverside Drive Revised Plans – Land Use of Regional Significance
Whitehall Township and City of Allentown
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Rackus and Ms. Gomez:

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

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - August 26, 2025 at 12:00 PM
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 - August 28, 2025 at 7:00 PM
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The application proposes to construct a new local road and multi-use trail along former railroad right-of-way between Furnace Street in the City of Allentown and Wood Street/Lehigh Avenue in Whitehall Township, approximately 2.3 miles (parcel numbers 640746335876, 640747104161, 640738706988, 640739333753, 640820766814, 640821390309, 640823417857, 640824645120, 640815791987 and 640806671365).

The proposal extends Riverside Drive from Furnace Street to Wood Street, connecting to the Route 22 interchange at Fullerton Avenue, with additional links to Jordan Drive and Kimmet Avenue. A paved shared-use path for walking and biking is also proposed parallel to the road, separated by a five-foot landscaped buffer with streetlights and street trees; where Riverside Drive meets Wood Street at Route 22, the path transitions to gravel, extending north past Bridge Street/Race Street to connect with Lehigh Avenue, and offering a potential future link to the Ironton Rail Trail at Water Street, while also serving as an emergency access road.

The LVPC previously reviewed a version of the plans in a letter dated May 15, 2024. After notable revisions, the plans have been provided to LVPC for review.

Traffic and Network Mobility

In its previous review, the LVPC noted that constructing Riverside Drive with a shared-use trail supports *FutureLV* by expanding safe, multimodal transportation options (Policy 2.1) and addressing limited City–Township connections with infrastructure that improves mobility and safety (Policy 2.2). The project enhances north-south access, supports emergency response, and includes trail segments designed for emergency vehicle use, aligning with goals for secure community design and emergency management (Policy 5.1).

Speed humps have been added to the revised plans in different segments along the Riverside Drive corridor, which align with *FutureLV* by providing a safe transportation network (of Policy 2.2). The corridor is lengthy and straight which can often lead to vehicle operators reaching higher speeds. Speed humps reduce the overall speed of the corridor increasing safety for all users. Signage should accurately reflect the location of these infrastructures.

The LVPC recommends considering a raised intersection at Riverside Drive and Kimmet Avenue would align with the speed hump additions as well as increase safety for the crossing infrastructure and proposed bus stops at the intersection.

The straightening and reconfiguration of the Wood Avenue access to the Riverside Drive project is an improvement from the previous plan by reducing the chance for driver confusion and conflict from the previous configuration with a curve in the road. It also creates a better sight triangle for vehicles coming from Riverside Drive. For emergency vehicles, the removal of a roadway curve allows easier access to the Riverside Drive corridor.

The addition of a parking lot at the intersection of Wood Avenue and 2nd Street provides access to the multi-use path along Riverside Drive. It is recommended that an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant crosswalk and related curb cuts from the parking lot across 2nd Street to the existing sidewalk infrastructure be implemented to ensure safe and convenient access for pedestrians (of Policy 5.1).

Multimodal Access and Placemaking

The paved shared-use path proposed along the length of Riverside Drive and the continuation of the path beyond the end of the roadway align with *FutureLV* by supporting mobility, transportation accessibility, air quality, safety and economic competitiveness, all things that are essential to quality of life for residents and visitors (of Policies 2.2, 4.1, 5.2 and 5.3). The inclusion of enhanced crosswalk markings and ADA-accessible curb cuts also increase access to daily needs for all people (Policy 5.2).

The LVPC encourages further considerations to include additional amenities supporting alternative transportation modes along the Riverside Drive trail. Bicycle racks should be included in well-lit locations. Benches should also be considered along the paved portion of the shared-use path to provide resting areas.

As part of the Riverside Drive Plan, the LVPC encourages installation of distinctive neighborhood signage that reflects and uplifts the unique identity, history, and character of the surrounding community. Thoughtfully designed gateway signs, wayfinding markers, or interpretive displays can serve multiple purposes: reinforcing a sense of place, and 'promoting development that complements the unique history, environment, culture and needs of the Valley' (of Policy 5.4).

Transit Connections

The Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) currently provides public transportation near the proposed roadway along North Front Street in the City of Allentown, continued to Fullerton Avenue in Whitehall Township. LANTA has long-term plans to ultimately provide service on the Riverside Drive corridor. Since the time of the previous review, the plans have been updated to address prior comments by providing a 5-foot concrete bus stop landing pad, pedestrian connection between the proposed shared use path and proposed roadway curbs, and ADA curb ramps, which facilitate the extension of transit service in the future. These transit-supportive design features align with *FutureLV* by 'improving connections between mass transit and walk/roll infrastructure' (of Policy 2.3). The LVPC supports and encourages continued coordination with LANTA as project development continues.

Street Trees

The revised application removes approximately 30 proposed street trees along the two-mile road and trail corridor from the previously removed plan. The LVPC recommends reconsideration of this change, and that any existing and originally proposed trees be retained wherever possible to preserve the significant benefits they provide to community residents and the Township and City as a whole. While a substantial number of street trees are still proposed on the current plan set, maximizing opportunities for street trees provides direct benefits to the Township and City by helping to manage stormwater and reduce infrastructure costs, improve air quality and public health, and support higher property values and a stable tax base (of *FutureLV* Policies 4.6 and 5.3).

Stormwater Review

The project site is located within the Catasauqua and Little Lehigh Creek Watersheds. These watersheds have fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management

Ordinance. Because this is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation project, stormwater management review is still required but is deferred until design is complete that supports the project moving towards construction. Note that the plans cannot be recorded until stormwater requirements are met.

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 I§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.

The LVPC has copied representatives from adjacent municipalities to 'coordinate land use decisions across municipal boundaries' (of Policy 1.4).

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Evan Gardi
Transportation Planner



Jill Seitz
Chief Community and Regional Planner

cc: Christine Frey, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Applicant; Chris Stanford, Michael Baker International, Project Engineer; Frank Clark, Whitehall Township Engineer; David Petrik, City of Allentown Deputy Director of Public Works; Jesse Sadiua, City of Allentown Chief Planner; Brandon Jones, City of Allentown Planner; Rick Molchany, Lehigh County Director of General Services; Molly Wood, LANTA Planner/Land Use Specialist; Garrett Cook, Lehigh County Conservation District; Antone Pierucci, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Executive Director; Cathy Fletcher, City of Bethlehem Planning Director; Kerry Rabold, Salisbury Township Administrative Assistant; Shane Pepe, Emmaus Borough Manager; David Manhardt, South Whitehall Township Director of Community Development; Melissa Wehr, Hanover Township Manager; Glenn Eckhart, Catasauqua Borough Manager; Peter Paone, President, North Catasauqua Borough Council; LeRoy E. Brobst, Manager, Northampton Borough; Tiffany Benson, Coplay Borough Secretary/Treasurer; Randy Cope, North Whitehall Township Manager



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August xx, 2025

Ms. Cathy Fletcher, Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Bethlehem
10 E Church St
Bethlehem, PA 18018

**Re: Commonwealth Charter Academy – Land Use of Regional Significance
City of Bethlehem
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Fletcher:

The subject application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance, as 'All' Education Facilities are considered land uses of regional significance in FutureLV: The Regional Plan (page 147). The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive 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 will be virtual, and we encourage your participation.

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 - August 26, 2025, at 12:00 PM
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The application proposes the conversion of a 46,670-square-foot building into office space for teachers and staff of a cyber charter school at 2200 West Broad Street. The existing building will remain and surrounding parking improvements are proposed. According to the submitted application, there will be full interior renovation of the building along with structural repairs to the exterior. A lot consolidation of two parcels is also proposed in conjunction with this application (Parcel Identification Number 641758491179 and 641758795207).

Site Suitability

The redevelopment proposal serves to 'expand access to education and job training' (of Policy 4.1) and invests in schools located along corridors (of Policy 4.3). The addition of bicycle parking on the site plan supports a safe, healthy, inclusive and livable

community (*FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, Goal 5). Additionally, the area contains existing multimodal infrastructure, and the site is served by the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) with a pair of bus stops along W Broad Avenue.

The LVPC recommends that educational institutions incorporate environmentally sensitive building and landscape design, such as green roofs or solar panels. This would increase the cost-effectiveness of building operation and further academic endeavors related to these technologies, while enhancing the campus setting, demonstrating environmental leadership within the region, and 'reducing climate change impacts through mitigation and adaptation' (of Policy 3.4).

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Dotta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized "J" and "D".

Joseph Dotta
Regional Planner

cc: Strada Architecture, LLC, Applicant; Stahl Sheaffer Engineering, Inc, Project Engineer/Surveyor; Commonwealth Charter Academy; Record Property Owner; Craig Peiffer, City of Bethlehem Assistant Director.

Project Review Summary Sheet

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Date: August 2025

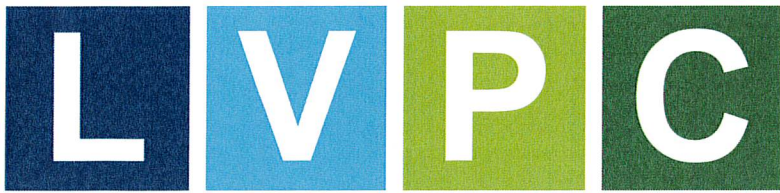
Project	Municipality	Brief Statement of Purpose	LVPC Comment
Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update	City of Allentown	<i>ZONE Allentown</i> - The application proposes a comprehensive update to the City of Allentown Zoning Ordinance. The purposes of the Zoning Ordinance, as specified in Section 600-01.E of the Ordinance, include "protecting and promoting the public health, safety and general welfare" and "implementing the policies and goals of the comprehensive plan".	Allentown's proposed zoning ordinance establishes the City as a regional leader in modern, people-centered land use regulation by prioritizing the public experience and integrating multiple transportation modes. In doing so, Allentown positions zoning as a proactive tool for economic sustainability and quality of life, which serves as a model for communities across the Lehigh Valley to manage growth in ways that strengthen both place and people
Comprehensive Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Update	City of Allentown	<i>ZONE Allentown</i> – The purpose of the proposed SALDO, as specified in Section 350-1.E, includes 'guiding for future growth and development of the City in accordance with the Official Comprehensive Plan'.	Overall, the City's proposed SALDO reflects a clear effort to ensure consistency with its Comprehensive Plan and alignment its Draft Zoning Ordinance, creating a coordinated framework to guide growth and development. This integration between regulatory documents strengthens the ability of the proposed ordinance to support <i>FutureLV's</i> goals for livability, sustainability, and multimodal accessibility.
Zoning Ordinance Amendment	South Whitehall Township	<i>Planned Innovation, Research, and Technology (PIRT) Overlay District</i> - proposes to amend the South Whitehall Township Zoning Ordinance to introduce the PIRT Overlay District and add Data Center as an allowed use.	The Township takes a comprehensive approach to modernizing their regulatory documents. The ordinance amendment demonstrates several best practices in innovative planning and aligns with <i>FutureLV: The Regional Plan</i> . Using an overlay district is a strategic move to direct potential energy-consumptive uses to areas that can accommodate them.

Project Review Summary Sheet

Comprehensive Planning Committee

Date: August 2025

Zoning Map Amendment	Macungie Borough	<i>Amendment</i> - proposes to amend Macungie Borough's Official Zoning Map to rezone an area zoned as Town Center (TC) and Medium Density Residential (R-7.8) to Low Density Residential (R-10).	It is recommended the current zoning designation remain to 'diversify price points and types of available housing' (FutureLV, of Policy 4.5). The proposed area is largely built out, but potential for redevelopment and infill development remains
Zoning Ordinance Amendment	Lower Saucon Township	<i>Transitional Manufacturing District Revised</i> - proposal amends the Lower Saucon Township Zoning Ordinance to create Article XIVB Transitional Manufacturing District as a new district.	The revised application, including a zoning map demonstrates adaptability of government (Policy 1.1). Carbonate geology areas are present throughout the rezoning area and are recommended to remain to preserve natural lands and minimize environmental impacts of development
Zoning Ordinance Amendment	Lowhill Township	<i>Amendment</i> - The amendment proposed at this time corrects references between the zoning ordinance and the Township's recently updated SALDO, with additional revisions to further implement Plan Northern Lehigh and align with the Township SALDO.	Updated definitions advance responsible land use regulation by clarifying ordinance language and providing consistency with state codes and Township ordinances (of Policy 3.2). Updating zoning objectives to reflect the Northern Lehigh Multi-Muni Comprehensive Plan supports cooperation in planning and land use regulation (of Policy 1.1).



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

August XX, 2025

Mr. Joshua Hoffman, PE
Pennoni Associates Inc.
5072 Ritter Road, Suite 102
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Re: Act 537 Review - Sewage Facilities Planning Module
2951 Betz Court
Lowhill Township, Lehigh County
DEP Code No. 2-39914076-2

Dear Mr. Hoffman:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC), at its regularly monthly meeting on August 28, 2025, reviewed the above-referenced planning module according to the requirements of Act 537, the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act. We offer the following comments.

The LVPC has reviewed a previous version of the planning module for this project on May 28, 2024. This sewage facilities planning module has been revised as a result of the completion of additional on-site investigation and testing to establish a tested replacement absorption area for the proposed development and is intended for the proposed construction of a 299,880 square foot warehouse on approximately 52.5 acres located at 2951 Betz Court. The development is proposed to be served by on-lot sewage disposal and community water supply via a lengthy extension of the existing Lehigh County Authority water system. A first addendum to a Water Service Agreement between Lowhill Township and the Lehigh County Authority was signed in 2022 concerning 2951 Betz Court. However, the Lowhill Township Supervisors voted to rescind/terminate the approval of the Water Service Agreement on May 11, 2023. The termination/rescindment by the Lowhill Township Supervisors is in Lehigh County Court legal review currently. Accordingly, a determination on the status of the Will Serve Water supply letter is awaiting court action. The development is considered marginal for on-lot sewage disposal by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection since the system will serve an industrial use and due to soils profile examinations, which documented areas of suitable soil intermixed with areas of unsuitable soils.

The proposed development is in an area designated as High Priority Farmland Preservation, with a portion of the site designated as High Priority Natural Resource Conservation, according to *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. The proposed extension of the community water system is not recommended in areas designated for farmland preservation or natural resource conservation (Policies 3.1, 3.2, 3.3). However, while farmland preservation and natural resource conservation are strongly preferred, the use of on-lot sewage facilities is appropriate for this rural area if the scale of the proposed use maintains the low-density, low-scale, low-intensity of agricultural areas (Policies 3.3, 4.4). Essentially, any development and associated utilities would need be context sensitive (Policies 1.2, 5.4), and "preserve natural areas and farmland" that are matched to the character and intensity of the community (Policy 1.1). Furthermore, development, including associated infrastructure must be consistent with the conservation of high priority natural areas in accordance with the development criteria in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, including "protecting assets from potential threats" and "enhancement (sic) of the long-term viability" of priority environmental and agricultural areas (Policy 1.3).

Should service be extended, the provision of a tested replacement absorption area will ensure a future safeguard in the event of a non-repairable primary area malfunction, aligning with the *FutureLV* action to "protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater" (of Policy 3.2).

Enclosed please find an executed Module Component 4b. Please call me if you have any questions regarding this review.

Sincerely,

Corinne Ruggiero
Environmental Planner

Enclosure

cc: Michael Siegel, Manager, Lowhill Township
Jill Seymour, Municipal Secretary, Lowhill Township
Jeffrey Mondulick, PA Department of Environmental Protection
Fred Ferraro (Applicant)



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF CLEAN WATER

DEP Code #:
2-39914076-2

**SEWAGE FACILITIES PLANNING MODULE
COMPONENT 4B - COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY REVIEW**

(or Planning Agency with Areawide Jurisdiction)

Note to Project Sponsor: To expedite the review of your proposal, one copy of your completed planning package and one copy of this *Planning Agency Review Component* should be sent to the county planning agency or planning agency with areawide jurisdiction for their comments.

SECTION A. PROJECT NAME (See Section A of instructions)

Project Name

2951 Betz Court

SECTION B. REVIEW SCHEDULE (See Section B of instructions)

1. Date plan received by county planning agency ---
2. Date plan received by planning agency with areawide jurisdiction August 12, 2025
Agency name Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
3. Date review completed by agency August XX, 2025

SECTION C. AGENCY REVIEW (See Section C of instructions)

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Is there a county or areawide comprehensive plan adopted under the Municipalities Planning Code (53 P.S. 10101 et seq.)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Is this proposal consistent with the comprehensive plan for land use? <u>Area designated for High Priority Farmland Preservation /</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Does this proposal meet the goals and objectives of the plan? <u>Natural Resource Conservation Area in Future LV.</u>
If no, describe goals and objectives that are not met --- <u>Farmland preservation / natural resource conservation</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 4. Is this proposal consistent with the use, development, and protection of water resources? <u>Meets sewage disposal needs.</u>
If no, describe inconsistency --- <u>Extension of community water system is not recommended.</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 5. Is this proposal consistent with the county or areawide comprehensive land use planning relative to Prime Agricultural Land Preservation? <u>Area designated for High Priority Farmland Preservation in Future LV.</u>
If no, describe inconsistencies: --- |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 6. Does this project propose encroachments, obstructions, or dams that will affect wetlands?
If yes, describe impact --- |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Will any known historical or archeological resources be impacted by this project? <u>PHMC determination</u>
If yes, describe impacts --- |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Will any known endangered or threatened species of plant or animal be impacted by the development project? <u>See PNDI results.</u>
If yes, describe impacts --- |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 9. Is there a county or areawide zoning ordinance? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Does this proposal meet the zoning requirements of the ordinance? <u>N/A</u>
If no, describe inconsistencies --- |

SECTION C. AGENCY REVIEW (continued)

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11. Have all applicable zoning approvals been obtained? <i>N/A</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12. Is there a county or areawide subdivision and land development ordinance? <i>Not applicable to Lowhill Township</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13. Does this proposal meet the requirements of the ordinance? <i>N/A</i> If no, describe which requirements are not met ---
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14. Is this proposal consistent with the municipal Official Sewage Facilities Plan? <i>See municipal interpretation.</i> If no, describe inconsistency ---
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15. Are there any wastewater disposal needs in the area adjacent to this proposal that should be considered by the municipality? If yes, describe ---
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16. Has a waiver of the sewage facilities planning requirements been requested for the residual tract of this subdivision? <i>N/A</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, is the proposed waiver consistent with applicable ordinances. If no, describe the inconsistencies ---
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	17. Does the county have a stormwater management plan as required by the Stormwater Management Act?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, will this project plan require the implementation of storm water management measures?
18. Name, Title and signature of person completing this section:		
Name: <u>Corinne Ruggiero</u>		
Title: <u>Environmental Planner</u>		
Signature: _____		
Date: <u>August XX, 2025</u>		
Name of County or Areawide Planning Agency: <u>Lehigh Valley Planning Commission</u>		
Address: <u>615 Waterfront Drive, Suite 201, Allentown, PA 18102</u>		
Telephone Number: <u>610-264-4544</u>		

SECTION D. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (See Section D of instructions)

This component does not limit county planning agencies from making additional comments concerning the relevancy of the proposed plan to other plans or ordinances. If additional comments are needed, attach additional sheets.

The county planning agency must complete this component within 60 days.

This component and any additional comments are to be returned to the applicant.



DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

August 1, 2025

Dave Manhardt
Director of Community Development
4444 Walbert Avenue
Allentown PA 18104
manhardtd@southwhitehall.com

RE: **Street Vacation Petition**
Portion of unopened Orator Street west of North Bird Street
South Whitehall Township, Lehigh County

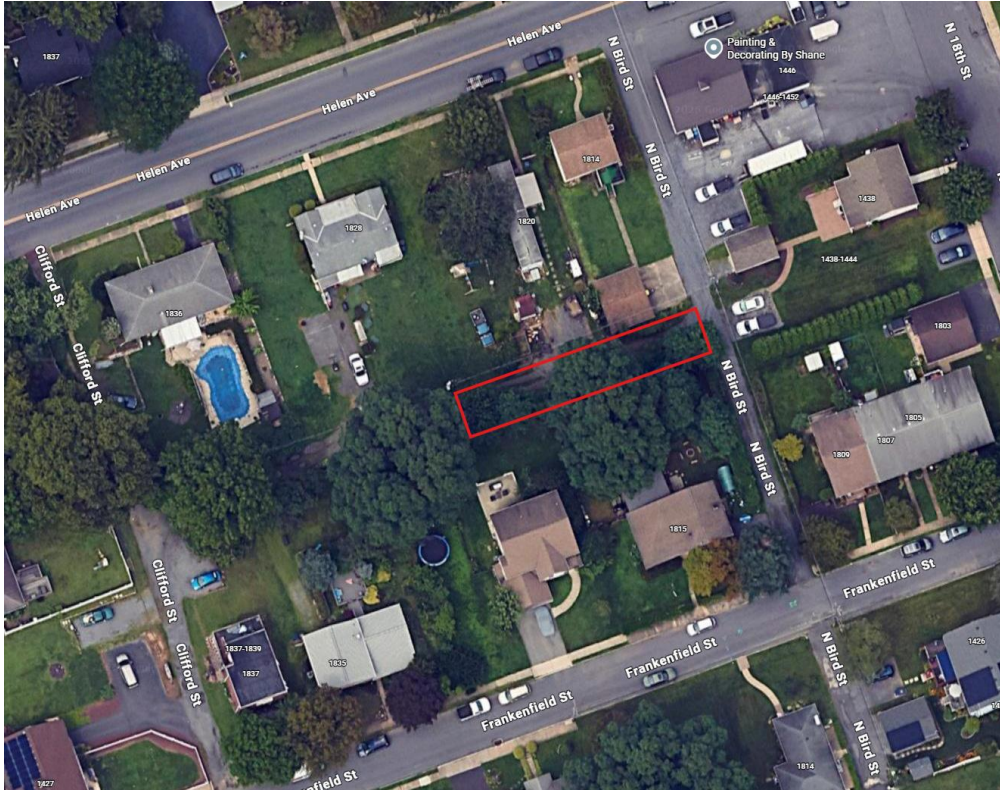
The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject street vacation petition at its Transportation Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings were virtual, and held on:

- LVPC Transportation Planning Committee Meeting
 - August 28, 2025 at 5:30 PM
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - August 28, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Mr. Manhardt,

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

The proposed street vacation application was submitted by the South Whitehall Township on behalf of SLS Properties, LLC through their representative Shane Smoyer. The proposed request to vacate the rights of way for a portion of unopened Orator Street west of North Bird Street in the Township. The petitioner currently has ownership of property on both sides of the area of rights of way for Orator Street. The proposed location is in a residential area connected to an existing alley that does not have high levels of traffic.



Aerial view of the area petitioned to be vacated in red, courtesy of Google Maps

It should be taken into account the interaction of utilities in the proposed street vacation right-of-way. Careful consideration is an essential planning process for the township and is strongly recommended that the township coordinate and involve the LVPC with any long-term planning or change of direction for potential of planning for and constructing of Orator St.

If the petition is granted by South Whitehall Township, it is recommended the utilities that are above the proposed street vacation 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 South Whitehall 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.

The LVPC appreciates South Whitehall Township's consideration of the goals and policies of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in as much as it relates to the street vacation petition for a portion of Orator St. Such as:

Goal 5 –

- Policy 5.1 Promote safe and secure community design and emergency management.
 - o Enhance planning and emergency response efforts among emergency management personnel.
- Policy 5.4: Promote development that complements the unique history, environment, culture and needs of the Valley.
 - o Encourage reuse of vacant and underutilized properties

It is also recommended that if the township grants the petition to vacate, that the township communicate and notify the LVPC of the potential change. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the LVPC review.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Evan Gardi".

Evan Gardi
Transportation Planner

Area petitioned to be vacated of Orator St., looking west from N Bird St towards Clifford St.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

SCOPE OF PROJECT

- Industrial market evolution and trends
- Tools local governments have available to them through the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code
- Provide a guide to address existing and evolving industrial land use issues
- Questions municipalities can ask developers in the land development process
- Resources to manage impacts

DELIVERABLES

- Land Use Guidance Publication
- Resource Tools for Local Governments
- Local Government Training/Technical Assistance

ENGAGEMENT

- **Industrial Land Use Workshop**
 - Presentation by LVPC on project scope and initial data findings
 - Facilitated discussion on local industrial land use and freight concerns, priorities for planning for industrial growth, areas of traffic impacts and tools municipalities use to address impacts.

TIMING

- **August / September** – Research and Analysis
- **October** – Municipal Workshop
- **November** – Draft Guidance
- **December** – Publication

Online @
LVPC.org

f in X @

What is the project?

A how-to guide to help communities address existing industrial impacts and plan for new and emerging industrial land uses. The guide provides an overview of the ways the industrial market is evolving in the Lehigh Valley and highlights the tools that local governments have available to best manage the trends.

When will project be complete?

End of 2025.

Where will the project focus?

This will be a general industrial land use guide, which will include recommendations focused on Lehigh County municipalities.

Why are we doing this project?

Freight and industrial development have evolved throughout the region since the period of rapid growth before and through the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan will help local leaders connect data to planning decisions to proactively manage their existing industrial land uses and plan for new kinds of industrial uses, such as data centers, advanced manufacturing or alternative energy generation.

Who is this for?

This information is intended for a wide range of stakeholders including local governments, elected officials, planning commission members, zoning hearing board members, appointed municipal officials, developers, engineers, planners, industrial companies and the general public.

Key organizations and partners such as the Federal Highway Administration, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation and the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority are among the intended audience.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

SCOPE OF PROJECT

- Updated regional trail inventory
- Identification of top trail gaps
- Strategies to close trail gaps, including resources and tools

DELIVERABLES

- Trail Inventory and Gap Analysis Document
- Map-based trail location and implementation tracker

ENGAGEMENT

- Municipal survey to collect trail information
- Trail partner coordination workshop and gap priorities discussion

TIMING

- **August** – Municipal survey, research and analysis
- **September** – Trail partner coordination
– Gap priorities discussion
- **October** – Mapping tool and draft report development
- **November** – Publication

What is the project?

An inventory of all existing, planned and future trail infrastructure in the Lehigh Valley. This information will help identify trail infrastructure gaps, benchmark them against regional goals and prioritize their closure, and interactive mapping tools designed to coordinate the regional trail system and track gap closures will set the stage for organized implementation of gap closures.

When will the project be complete?

The Trail Inventory and Gap Analysis will be published by November 2025.

Where will the project focus?

The project area covers the Lehigh Valley, including all 62 municipalities. Ten top trail gaps will be determined through data analysis and outreach with municipalities and trail partners.

Why are we doing this project?

The previous Trail Inventory and Gap Analysis was completed in 2013, many changes have occurred since then. This project will organize up-to-date trail data into one report, which will inform regional stakeholders about the status of trail infrastructure and support creation of a larger regional system.

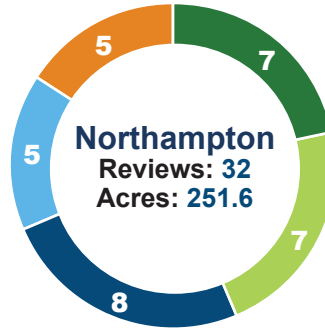
This effort will support other active transportation initiatives throughout the Valley for both commuter and recreational options. Municipalities and trail partners will be able to use information included in the analysis to support funding applications for trail improvements.

Who is this for?

This project is designed for a wide range of audiences, including local and county governments, planning staff, non-profits, advocacy groups, the general public and agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, PA Department of Community and Economic Development and PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

July 2025

PLAN ACTIVITY BY COUNTY



REGIONAL TOTALS*

8
Subdivision/Lot Line
Adjustments

28
Development

10
Stormwater
Management

6
Municipal Ordinances,
Maps and Plans

378.4
Acres

*Includes preliminary and final plans

RESIDENTIAL

NON-RESIDENTIAL

SUBDIVISIONS AND LOT LINE ADJUSTMENTS

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES, MAPS AND PLANS

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

386 Total Units



79

SINGLE-FAMILY
DETACHED



8

TOWNHOUSES



293

APARTMENTS



6

TWINS



0

ASSISTED-
LIVING



0

MANUFACTURED
HOMES



0

CONDOS

NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

897,850 Total Square Feet



16,732
COMMERCIAL



56,189
RETAIL



52,477
PUBLIC/
QUASI-PUBLIC



688,100
INDUSTRIAL



667,400
WAREHOUSE*



84,382
OFFICE



0

TRANSPORTATION



0

AGRICULTURE



0

RECREATIONAL

*Warehouse is a subset of Industrial

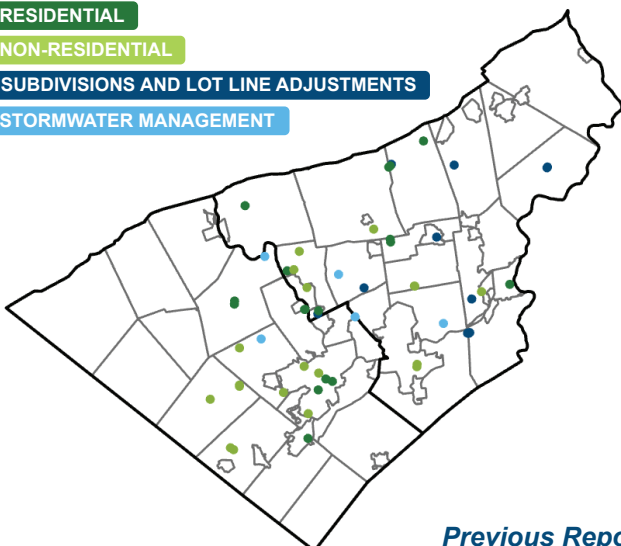
LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

RESIDENTIAL

NON-RESIDENTIAL

SUBDIVISIONS AND LOT LINE ADJUSTMENTS

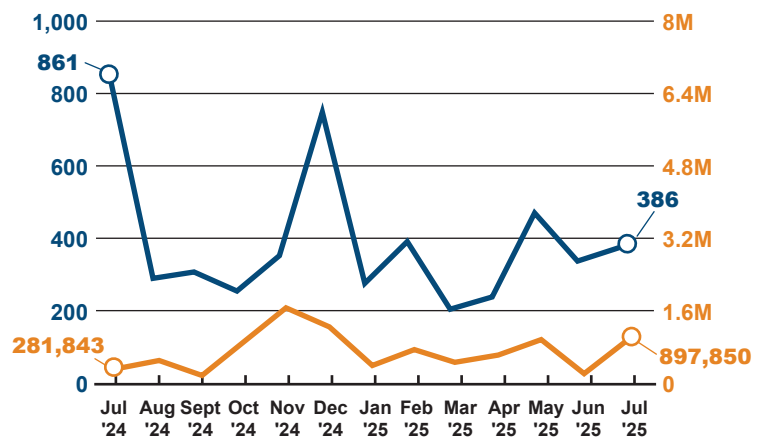
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



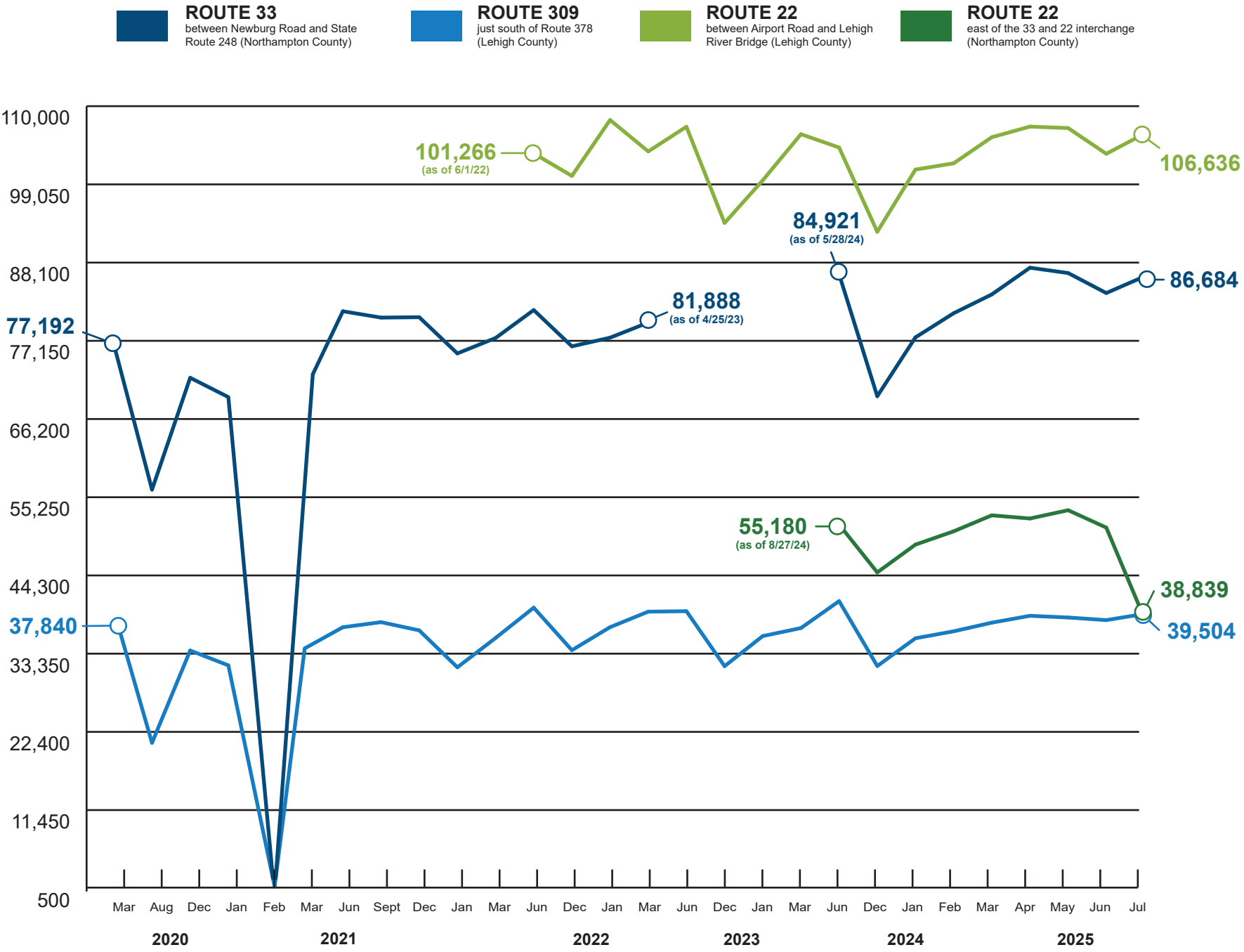
YEAR TO DATE (YEAR TO YEAR)

RESIDENTIAL UNITS

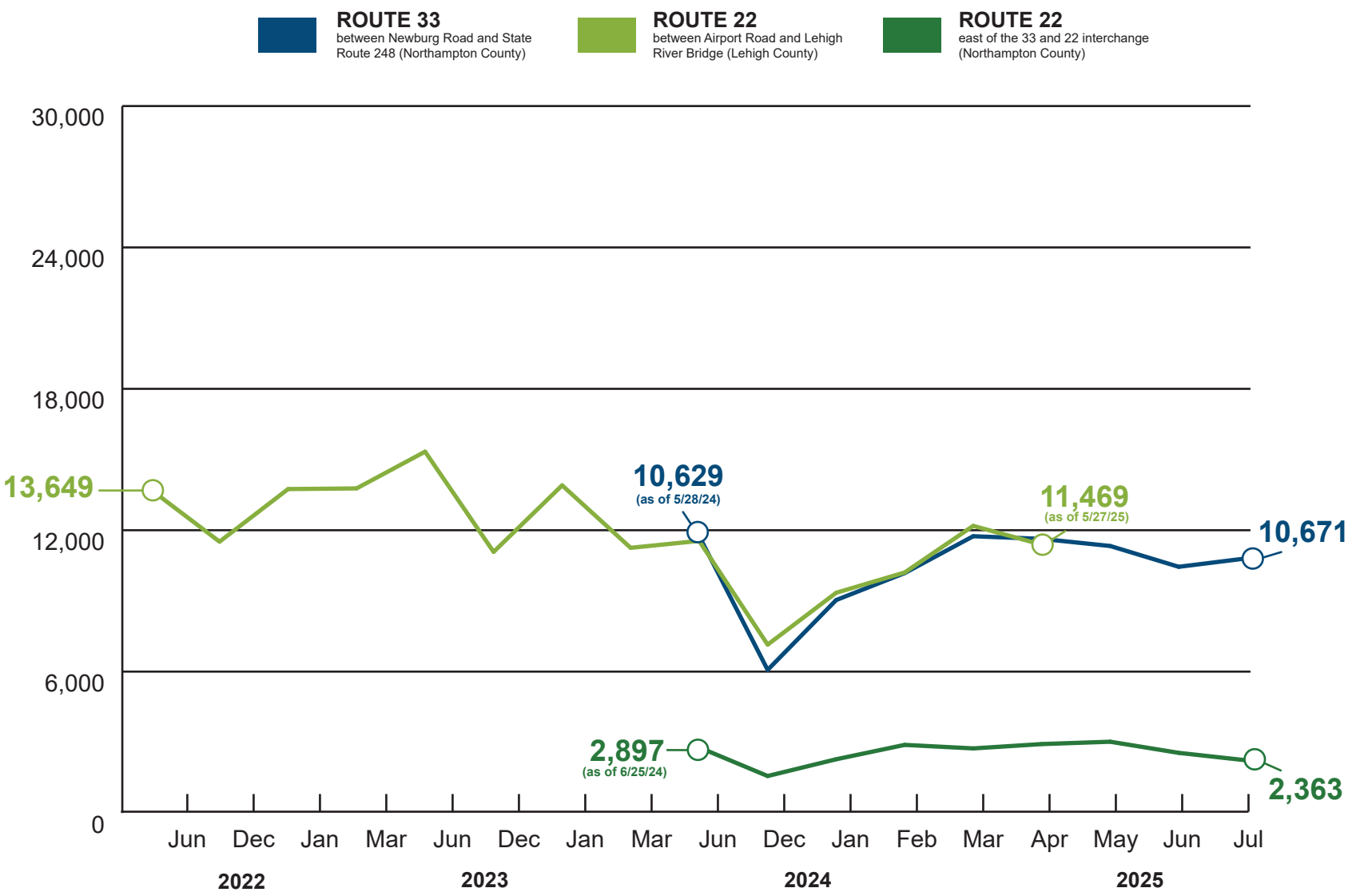
NON-RESIDENTIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE



TOTAL VEHICLE TRAFFIC



TOTAL TRUCK TRAFFIC





Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 28, 2025
TO: Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Commissioners
FROM: Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Staff

REGARDING: Public Engagement, Education and Grants

Public Engagement

The most recent **Plan Lehigh Valley National Public Radio** show, which aired at 6:30 pm, August 4 on WDIY radio 88.1 FM, took a close look at two monumental anniversaries: The 90th Anniversary of Social Security and the 35th Anniversary of the American's With Disabilities Act (ADA). We were fortunate to have as our guest Nora Dowd Eisenhower, Volunteer President of AARP Pennsylvania. Dowd Eisenhower talked with hosts Becky Bradley and Matt Assad about how those two important pieces of legislation have shaped the Lehigh Valley and nation. The show is available at www.wdiy.org/show/plan-lehigh-valley and www.lvpc.org/news/v. The next Plan Lehigh Valley Radio Show will air September 1, at 6:30 pm.

The current **Business Cycle Column** published on Sunday, August 17, also focused on Social Security and the ADA, with Becky focusing on how our community is changing and how these laws have touched all of our lives by making the Lehigh Valley more accessible, age-inclusive and family-oriented. The column can be found at www.lvpc.org/news/v and mcall.com. The next column in the Morning Call will be published Sunday, September 28.

Educational Opportunities

The following Lehigh Valley Government Academy (LVGA), Classes will be held In Person at the LVPC Conference Center, 615 Waterfront Drive, Suite 201, Allentown PA 18102.

NEW! Assessing Traffic Impacts in Your Community

Two timeslots available: Wednesday, September 10, 11 AM – 1 PM OR Thursday, September 11, 6 PM – 8 PM

More people. More cars. More industry. More trucks. As the Lehigh Valley grows, so does the pressure on our transportation systems. Is your community ready? This hands-on workshop will walk you through: understanding the land development and highway occupancy gap; identifying traffic demand early; collaborating with outside regulatory agencies; applying legal frameworks and funding programs; making data-driven decisions and using real-world tools. You'll walk away with practical skills and the connections needed to better manage transportation in your municipality. Local government staff, elected officials, municipal engineers, school districts, water/sewer authorities, and county/state/federal partners supporting regional growth should attend.

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP):

Winter Maintenance: Tuesday, October 14th – 8 am to Noon

This course covers the basics of an effective and efficient winter maintenance program. Best Practices for winter maintenance operations will be emphasized. The topics will include an overview of the various materials available

for treating the roadways, as well as, the latest techniques in pre-wetting and anti-icing practices. Other topics will include spreader calibration, material application rates, basic plowing techniques and environmental awareness.

All LVGA LTAP classes are free and are intended for municipalities, transportation non-profits and organizations with a transportation purpose. LTAP Enables many practitioners who need courses with professional development hours (PDHs) to earn credits for maintaining their licenses and certificates.

Anyone can register at www.gis.penndot.gov/LTAP or by contacting Hannah Milagio at hmilagio@lvpc.org or 610-264-4544

Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute Courses:

Zoning: Tuesdays in September 9, 16, 23, 5:30-9 pm

This course is a three-session in-depth “nuts and bolts” course in the drafting, amending, administering, and monitoring of zoning ordinances. Course topics include the Municipal Planning Code authority for zoning, basic and advanced zoning techniques such as overlay and performance zoning, flexible regulatory techniques, planned residential and traditional neighborhood development regulations. Ordinance reviews, map problems, ethical issues are included in the course.

Anyone can register at www.lvpc.org/lvga or by contacting Hannah Milagio at hmilagio@lvpc.org or 610-264-4544

Grant Opportunities

Transportation Alternative Set Aside (TASA) State Grant Program

The federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) provides funding for projects and activities defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation, trails that serve a transportation purpose, and safe routes to school projects. The application opens July 14, 2025 and the application deadline is October 31, 2025. More information is available at <https://www.pa.gov/grants/search/grant-details.penndot2.html>

Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant (AFIG)

AFIG has approximately \$5 million in funding available to school districts, municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and businesses in Pennsylvania that want to transition to cleaner fuel transportation. Applicants will be eligible for a maximum grant award across all applications of \$500,000. Individual application awards are still capped at \$300,000. The program will collect and review all applications submitted by 11:59 PM on October 10, 2025. Supported alternative fuels include electricity, compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas, propane, hydrogen, hythane, biodiesel, ethanol, methanol, and other advanced biofuels. Grant funding covers:

- Incremental costs related to retrofitting vehicles to operate on alternative fuels;
 - Incremental costs to purchase alternative fuel vehicles;
 - Cost to purchase and install the necessary fleet-refueling or home-refueling equipment for alternative fuel vehicles;
- Cost to perform research, training, development, and demonstration of new applications or next-phase technology related to alternative fuel vehicles.

More information is available at: [Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant \(AFIG\) | Department of Environmental Protection | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

Transportation Alternative Set-Aside + Carbon Reduction Program Events Media coverage

Bethlehem Event News Coverage



From www.lehighvalleynews.com: **\$3.7 million in grants to complete South Bethlehem Greenway Trail, other projects**



BETHLEHEM, Pa. — Funding for South Bethlehem Greenway Trail Extension: Check.

Funding for the Linden Street Two-Way Conversion: Check.

Funding for Broad Street Multimodal Project: Check.

Each of those boxes were checked as checks from grants totaling \$3.7 million were presented to Bethlehem by Lehigh Valley Transportation Study on Wednesday to support the city's transformative transportation and infrastructure projects.

A news conference was held at the South Bethlehem Greenway trailhead in Saucon Park.

"People here are committed to creating things, not just for themselves, but for others and for spaces we can share," Bethlehem Mayor J. William Reynolds said.

Attendees also included Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and LVTS members, Northampton County Executive Lamont McClure, Lehigh Valley state representatives and a representative from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Three separate checks from state grants were awarded by the LVTS under distinct transportation programs.

'What this is all about'

The grants included:

From the federally funded Transportation Alternative Set-Aside, or TASA Program:

- [South Bethlehem Greenway Trail Extension](#) received \$500,000 to help complete the final phase of a two-decade project that will develop a 13.7-mile corridor connecting Bethlehem, Hellertown, Coopersburg and Quakertown.

From the Carbon Reduction Program, or CRP:

- [Linden Street Two-Way Conversion Project](#) received \$1.8 million. The project will convert the street from one-way southbound to two-way within the city, from Fairview Street to East Church Street to reduce congestion.

The CRP was established to reduce transportation-related carbon emissions, create bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, promote green infrastructure and implement intelligent transportation systems that reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement.

"In its current configuration, Linden Street is a one-way racetrack," said Scott Slingerland, executive director for the Coalition for Appropriate Transportation, or CAT.

"With two lanes for car drivers to go too fast and jockey for position at the expense of pedestrians."

- Broad Street Multimodal Project received \$1.4 million.

The project consists of constructing improvements along Broad Street, from Hanover Avenue to Stefko Boulevard, as recommended in the Broad Street Act Transportation Plan of 2021.

The project is a cornerstone of Bethlehem's Safe Streets and Carbon Reduction Strategy.

The Broad Street redesign will better accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and drivers through safer intersections, upgraded crossings and modernized streetscapes.

"These projects come together because people in the Lehigh Valley and Bethlehem get it right about how to come together in a nonpartisan way to do good things," Reynolds said.

“That’s what this is all about.”

'Building healthier communities'

The Greenway project now is fully funded, Reynolds said, and will move into the design and engineering stage.

The \$500,000 grant will help build a one-mile trail extension connecting the South Bethlehem Greenway with the Saucon Rail Trail in Hellertown.

It’s part of a \$7.1 million plan to connect two of the region’s most widely used trails, closing one of the state’s Top 10 trail gaps.

The project also will include installing a 12-foot-wide trail that will be ADA compliant, with native plants, benches, wayfinding signs and trash receptacles. Construction will take place in 2026.

Bethlehem also received a \$300,000 Livable Landscapes Grant, presented to Reynolds by McClure.

“This is a vibrant connected community and Northampton County is proud to be a partner in this effort,” McClure told Reynolds.

“Projects like this, mayor, demonstrate that you are strategic in determining the funding through which the Livable Landscapes would come in and help.

“We’re not just building trails, we’re building healthier communities, enhancing access to green space and investing in the long-term wellbeing of our residents.”

LVPC Executive Director Becky A. Bradley celebrated the grants for helping invest in these projects.

“All these projects have been ones the local governments have given to the region,” Bradley said. “Then the region matches them up with the policy that we developed together.

“These are two specific funding pools that have allowed us to invest in these priorities.”

THE MORNING CALL

‘Changing the way people are moving around Bethlehem.’ City announces timeline for 3 major transportation projects

Bethlehem officials on Wednesday celebrated more than \$3.7 million in outside investments that will go toward making the city easier and safer to walk and bike in.

Standing in front of what will become an extension connecting the Saucon Rail Trail with the Bethlehem Greenway trail, Mayor J. William Reynolds said the following investments will make the city a “healthier and more sustainable community”:

\$800,000 to help Bethlehem pay for construction costs of a 1-mile trail extension connecting the rail trail with the greenway.

\$1.5 million to construct improvements on Broad Street between Stefko Boulevard and Hanover Ave., including bike lanes and pedestrian bump outs.

\$1.8 million to convert Linden Street from a one-way to a two-way street between Fairview Street and East Church Street, which officials say will slow traffic on the street.

All of the projects have already received millions in outside funding and have been in the works for several years. Engineering and planning work is ongoing for all three projects. However, the newly announced investments mean the projects are fully funded so the city can give a timeline of when they will be complete.

Officials touted what they see as the benefits of better trail connections and walkable and bikeable infrastructure, including safer routes and better connections with the community.

“When you are on a trail, people say hi to you, so you say ‘good morning,’ ‘good afternoon,’ ‘I’m glad you’re enjoying your day on the trail,’ ” said Claire Jantz, deputy secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, which previously announced around \$1.7 million in grants toward the Greenway project. “It really makes you feel connected within the community. And so there is a magic to trails that that is really transformative for communities.”

“We are here today because we are changing the way people are moving around Bethlehem,” Reynolds said. “Most people drive their car too much, and I will say that. And we need to find a way to reduce those car trips and also connect communities.”

Most of the newly announced funding for the improvements came from grants via the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, an arm of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission that awards grants to transportation oriented projects. Northampton County also kicked in an additional \$300,000 this month for the trail construction costs.

Construction on the South Bethlehem Greenway extension will begin early next year and be complete by the end of 2026. The trail will be 12 feet wide and include landscaping, benches, signage and trash bins. Construction on both the Broad Street and Linden Street improvements will also begin next year. The Linden Street conversion will be complete by next summer, and the Broad Street project will take around three to four years, according to Reynolds.



Bethlehem secures funding for final phase of Greenway, other multimodal travel projects

BETHLEHEM, Pa. – A green addition is coming to Southside Bethlehem.

The city secured funding for the final phase of the South Bethlehem Greenway. It will now move into the design and engineering stage, followed by construction in 2026. The project will include the installation of a 12-foot-wide trail that will be ADA-compliant and will include landscaping with native plants, benches, wayfinding signs and trash receptacles.

Once completed, the South Bethlehem Greenway will provide continuous travel along a 13.7-mile corridor that serves residents and visitors in Bethlehem, Hellertown, Coopersburg and Quakertown.

Funds to complete the final construction of the Greenway were granted by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (\$500,000), the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (\$500,000), and Northampton County via the Livable Landscapes Grant (\$300,000).

Two other significant transportation initiatives were also announced Wednesday.

Linden Street

After years of public feedback and planning, the city will move forward with the conversion of Linden Street from one-way to two-way traffic between Church Street and Fairview Street, connecting to the existing two-way roadway. This will make the entirety of Linden Street between Elizabeth Avenue and the Fahy Bridge two-way traffic.

The city says this change is designed to improve traffic flow and enhance safety for all road users, including drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. LVTS presented the city with a check for \$1.8 million to support the initiative.

Broad Street

The Broad Street Multimodal Corridor Project is part of Bethlehem's "Safe Streets and Carbon Reduction Strategy." The project aims to redesign Broad Street to better accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and drivers through safer intersections, upgraded crossings and modernized streetscapes.

In addition to the nearly \$10 million secured through the Safe Streets for All grant, LVTS presented the city with \$1.4 million to bring the project to fruition.

Easton Event News Coverage



'Safer and more welcoming': Easton gets \$1.3 million for transportation improvements



EASTON, Pa. — Easton soon will see \$1.3 million in funding for safe and accessible transportation efforts in the city.

Community members, city and regional workers, and politicians gathered Wednesday to celebrate a \$1 million award for traffic calming and safety improvements.

Additionally, the city got \$300,000 for a downtown intersection redesign as a conference in Scott Park near the waterfront.

The money comes from the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study.

LVTS Technical Committee Chairman Brendan Cotter said the body works with the state Transportation Department, the U.S. Department of Transportation, each municipality in the Lehigh Valley, and active community groups to ensure funding is allocated in a balanced manner for all modes of transportation.

Those groups include Community Bike Works and the Coalition for Appropriate Transportation and Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Association.

\$1.3 million in funding for Easton

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside and Carbon Reduction Program funding helps support community-based projects that expand transportation — including biking and walking.

In addition, it supports safety and education programs and the reduction of carbon emissions due to travel.

“This funding is dedicated to advancing transportation alternative projects such as bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, promoting sustainable and green infrastructure and implementing intelligent transportation systems that reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement throughout the region,” Cotter said.

“LVTS is distributing \$11.4 million in grants from these two essential programs: \$2.6 million in TASA grants and \$8.8 million in CRP grants.

“On behalf of the LVTS, we are honored and excited to award \$1.3 million of that right here in Easton at this time.”

LVPC Executive Director Becky Bradley, also the study's secretary, thanked United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley and AARP Pennsylvania for partnering with the LVPC for a walking study that helped identify intersections and other areas that posed problems for pedestrians and cyclists.

In addition, Bradley commended the Greater Easton Development Partnership, Easton City Council, Northampton County Council, Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development, and other city and state groups that have played a role in the acquisition of funding or improvements.

The improvements

“With this money, Easton is going to install all kinds of new sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA-accessible ramps and bump-outs that will make this very busy downtown community all the way into the West Ward of Easton better,” Bradley said.

“And those improvements continue up Northampton Street, as most of you know, which is the lifeblood of Easton's downtown business district.

“So all of those things will help from 7th to 15th Street and then, eventually, along to 13th Street, from Butler to Jackson, allow the city to accomplish its goals of a more pedestrian and bike friendly and transit friendly place.

“So all these traffic calming strategies will help make the city's busiest corridor safer and more welcoming to everyone, as well as provide options and make it easier for people to walk, bike and take transit, which helps meet some of our global air quality goals.”

Easton Mayor Sal Panto Jr. gave a brief history of the LVPC and LVTS helping to connect the waterfront to the downtown district via one of his favorite funding methods — “OPM,” or “Other People’s Money.”

In addition, Panto said, it has helped the city's historic design as a walkable metro area that requires accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

"We need to be able to go across streets, and the bump-outs will make a smaller area for people to have to cross," Panto said. "And we're really looking forward to this \$1.3 million as we provide more bike lanes."

"We just provided one up at College Avenue and one from the circle all the way out to 15th street. That's very important, as more and more people use alternative methods of transportation, and bicycles seems to be the cheapest and easiest ones to get."

Panto concluded his remarks alluding to federal funding that was "clawed back," leading to the city cutting a position, though he reassured attendees that would not happen with the \$1.3 million.

"This one isn't coming back," Panto said. "This one we're going to spend real quick."

Steering from a car-centric culture

State Rep. Robert Freeman also spoke on the rise in pedestrian and cyclist traffic in the city, saying, "we have been a far-too car-centric culture," which leads to accidents.

"These improvements will go a long way to accommodate even more safety, ensuring pedestrian safety and also ensuring that we calm traffic to a reasonable level," Freeman said.

"This is long overdue. This is a great shot in the arm to the community, and I am just so grateful for the work that's been done by everyone to bring these dollars here to Easton to improve our pedestrian, bike and transit friendly setting."

State Sen. Lisa Boscola's chief of staff, Joe Kelly, closed out remarks, touching on the walkability of Easton as a key feature that needs to be promoted and protected.

"I've been to a number of Sal Panto presentations, where he often laments that you don't have a parking problem here in Easton, you have a walking problem," Kelly said.

"And creating interesting places and fascinating ways to move people about the city encourages people to walk, walk a little further and make it more interesting. So that's always important."

'Getting stuff done for a long time'

Kelly said Boscola "always likes to emphasize it's really easy to invest in Easton because Sal Panto has been getting stuff done for a long time."

Following the presentation, city Department of Public Works Director Dave Hopkins said he was very excited about the funding. He called it "a decent amount of money, and significant for us" that could also help drive traffic to the waterfront.

"It doesn't go as far as it used to, but \$1.3 million is definitely significant," Hopkins said.

Hopkins said he's "really looking forward to working on the intersection of Larry Holmes Drive and Northampton Street. That is a tough one to navigate for anybody."

"I'm a walking commuter, and I have trouble getting through there," he said. "So trying to shorten the crossing distance and make it a lot easier to cross there, that is a big goal of ours."

"We want people to come to the waterfront. It's a beautiful space: We have a new dog park, we have some new swings, and we want to get people here as easily and safely as possible."

THE MORNING CALL

How one Lehigh Valley city plans to spend \$1.3 million to protect pedestrians

A construction facelift along heavily traveled intersections and traffic corridors in Easton will help improve safety for pedestrians and motorists, officials say.

The city has received \$1.3 million in transportation grants, which officials heralded Wednesday during a media event hosted by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission at Scott Park.

A \$300,000 grant will redesign an intersection near Scott Park, at Northampton Street and Larry Holmes Drive. The work will include new sidewalks, disability curb ramps, crosswalks and bump-outs designed to slow traffic at the busy intersection, which also connects the Easton free bridge.

Another \$1 million will go toward traffic-calming and safety improvements along the West Ward. They include bump-outs, crosswalks and disability ramps along Northampton Street from Seventh to 15th streets, and along North 13th Street from Butler to Jackson streets, near Wood Avenue.

"This is a great shot in the arm to the community," said state Rep. Robert Freeman, D-Northampton, who called the grants "long overdue."

But the streets projects won't begin soon. City officials said after the event it is likely to be at least two years before the work begins, with construction bids and other steps necessary to start.

"It is hard to get contractors to bid on things," said Easton Mayor Sal Panto Jr., who expressed hope that the money would cover the entire work. "Once bids come in, we will know how much it costs."

The grants are part of \$11.4 million in investments toward improving safety, extending trails, expanding bicycle and pedestrian options, and providing youth bike-education programs.

The money comes via the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, an arm of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission that awards grants for such projects.

Easton's work, LVPC Executive Director Becky Bradley said, "advances the regional plan, our active transportation plan, creating a mixed-transportation region" that includes mass transit, biking and walking.

Wednesday's event was one of four news conferences to announce funding awards for improvements in Allentown, Bethlehem and Hellertown. One event was held last month in

Bethlehem to announce several projects, while two are being planned to announce funding for rapid bus transit and Allentown's Riverside Drive, LVPC officials said.

Most projects have already received millions in outside funding and have been in the works for several years. Engineering and planning work is ongoing for all three projects in Bethlehem, for instance.

However, the newly announced investments in the Valley mean the projects are fully funded, so municipal officials can provide a timeline of when they will be completed.

The \$11.4 million covers eight grants: \$2.6 million awarded through the 2025-26 Transportation Alternative Set-Aside Program, and \$8.8 million under the Carbon Reduction Program to reduce transportation-related pollution emissions.



Easton gets \$1.3 million in grants for traffic, pedestrian improvements

EASTON, Pa. - Easton has landed two major federal grants which will help make people walking along the city's streets safer. The funding totals \$1.3 million. The grants were announced Wednesday by Mayor Sal Panto at Scott Park.

Easton received a \$300,000 grant to re-design the intersection at Northampton St, and Larry Holmes Drive, right at the Free Bridge. But that's not all, there is another \$1 million coming to allow for pedestrian improvements on Northampton St. in the West Ward.

The funds will support traffic-calming and safety improvements, and downtown intersection redesigns to enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

The grants are part of the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) initiatives.

The work includes installing new sidewalks, crosswalks, bumpouts, and ADA-accessible ramps, and will focus on making Northampton Street in the West Ward more pedestrian-friendly.

"I appreciate the fact that instead of having to cross a 50-foot highway that with people going faster and faster every day, they only have to cross about 30 feet," said Mayor Panto.

The Department of Public Works is Easton's largest department, with an operating budget of \$17 million. The two grants total \$1.3 million. Easton Public Works Director David Hopkins says the money is important to city improvement projects that would otherwise remain unfunded.

"We do not have a tremendous amount of capital resources available," Hopkins said. "So, when you get an influx of money like this to be able to do some bigger things, it's great."

Easton was founded in 1752 as a pedestrian-oriented city, and city officials have worked hard to preserve that spirit downtown.

"I think there's been a much greater focus on pedestrian-friendly routes versus vehicle-centric routes. That's part of every design that we do," explained Hopkins.

Easton won't be the only beneficiary of the federal grants. Another \$10 million will be awarded to communities for pedestrian projects throughout the Lehigh Valley.

"The money has to be placed in places where you can have safer walking or biking routes help kids get more safely to schools, for example," said Becky Bradley, Executive Director of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

More grants are on the way. There will be announcements in Allentown and Hellertown in the coming weeks, as well as grants for several nonprofits.

Allentown Event News Coverage



Allentown gets \$1.5 million to address transportation safety, carbon emissions



ALLENTOWN, Pa. — The stream of traffic that whizzed past South Mountain Middle School on Tuesday morning provided a fitting backdrop for the event at hand.

Vehicles were racing horizontally; emissions were rising vertically.

Meanwhile, standing among four ceremonial checks totaling \$1.5 million from the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study to address transportation safety and carbon emissions in the city, Allentown School District Chief Operating Officer Robert Whartenby shared a story.

“I’ve received dozens of phone calls from people telling me they were worried about kids crossing into intersections from between cars,” Whartenby said during a ceremony outside the school.

“These weren’t all from parents who have kids in school, just people concerned about their safety. This money will help provide a safety net for those children.”

The city received four separate grants under two distinct programs — the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside, or TASA, and the Carbon Reduction Program, or CRP.

TASA is funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the state Transportation Department.

It directs money to community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by integrating biking, pedestrian safety and education program projects into the transportation network to improve safety and mobility.

‘Shining example,’ economic impact

The grants were allocated through a competitive selection process, prioritizing projects that enhance safety, connectivity and accessibility within the Lehigh Valley region.

The CRP grant is dedicated to advancing transportation alternatives projects such as bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and promoting sustainable and green infrastructure, including public transit.

It’s also dedicated to implementing transportation systems that reduce the environmental and community impacts of freight movement.

The LVPC’s partnership with AARP and the Greater Lehigh Valley United Way in prior Walk Audits provided data to help identify the most critical areas for pedestrian improvements, including corridors near South Mountain Middle School.

“This money will improve safety and visibility for thousands of children who walk to and from schools like this one every day,” said Becky A. Bradley, Lehigh Valley Planning Commission executive director and LVTS secretary.

“It will help improve things like crosswalks and pedestrian signalization markings at various school sites around the city.”

The TASA grants include:

- Safe Routes to School upgrades: \$400,000 for Allentown to begin modernizing existing school zone traffic controls and installing eight new ones. The improvements are part of a \$2.4 million plan to improve school safety zones throughout the district.
- Albert Street Share the Road Corridor: \$95,000 to add pavement markings along Albert Street to provide a clear connection to the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Trail Network.

Allentown Mayor Matt Tuerk said the improvements will help achieve his goal of no pedestrian/roadway fatalities and serious injuries in the city by 2030.

“There are more and more kids in our city and people are getting around in lots of different ways,” Tuerk said. “They’re riding bikes, they’re riding scooters and e-bikes. I saw somebody on a push scooter today, and people bicycling.

“There’s also more cars on the road in the city, just a lot more activity. So we need to continue to invest in infrastructure that keeps everybody safe.”

‘We can lower that number’

The CRP grants address:

- LED Streetlight Conversion: \$719,000 to install LED lighting along pedestrian corridors throughout the school district to improve energy efficiency, visibility and safety.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Drive: \$300,000 to modernize key intersections with Americans with Disabilities Act ramps, traffic control signals, sidewalks and crosswalks.

The transportation safety and emissions projects rose to the top of a list of more than 100 that applied because the improvements will touch the lives of families across the city, Bradley said.

“And we know from our research that this region emits 12.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent every year,” she said. “That’s 14.7 metric tons for every resident who lives here.

“That research shows that two-thirds of all of our transportation emissions come from passenger vehicles — not trucks or buses.

“We can lower that number by reducing congestion and encouraging people to walk, bike or use transit. These projects do that.”

Coalition for Appropriate Transportation Event News Coverage



CAT in Bethlehem rolling with new federal boost for K-12 bicycle programming



BETHLEHEM, Pa. — As car traffic whizzed by on West Broad Street on Friday, a celebration just down from the Pennsylvania Avenue intersection centered around the love of bicycles.

Coalition for Appropriate Transportation, a local nonprofit advocating and educating for bicycling, public transit and pedestrian safety, outside its headquarters announced it was awarded \$634,122 to further its educational programming across the Lehigh Valley.

The money through the federal Transportation Alternative Set-Aside program will cover staffing, bicycle helmets, safety checks from skilled mechanics and other supplies needed for the nonprofit's bicycle cooperative and off-site events for several years.

For CAT, with more than three decades of service to the Lehigh Valley and more than 4,000 children benefitting from its services annually, it's a welcome boost to an already busy operation.

"These younger kids ages 5, 8, 10, 12 years old, TASA supports that they can enjoy their freedom and exhilaration and responsibility of navigating their neighborhoods, local trails," CAT Executive Director Scott Slingerland said.

“And when they get a little older, to make these kids better drivers, no matter what kind of vehicle they drive.

“And for young people at age 14, 16 or 18 years old, a bicycle can be transportation to get to their first job.”

'Walk and roll!'

CAT sports a variety of programs, such as Holiday Bikes, which has provided 873 refurbished bikes for Lehigh Valley children for Christmas since 2017.

And since 2004, CAT has connected with more than 27,000 young people through its efforts, Slingerland said.

“For many kids, this is the first time they'll feel the freedom of riding on their own or the pride of fixing something with their own hands,” CAT Board President Bill Meiklejohn said.

“Those moments can spark a lifetime of active, sustainable transportation.”

Lehigh County Executive Phillips Armstrong, with a bit of a shimmy, said, “Walk and roll!”

The funding comes through the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside program, which funds “on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, environmental mitigation, trails that serve a transportation purpose, and safe routes to school projects,” the commonwealth website reads.

TASA is funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the state Transportation Department.

'Every single day, every single year'

Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, has awarded \$2.6 million in TASA grants to area agencies such as CAT.

Its mission is to “ensure every person has access to a safe and efficient transportation network that connects them to all areas of the region, whether they are walking, rolling, driving or riding,” LVTS Vice Chairman Ryan Meyer said.

Becky Bradley, executive director with Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, said research from LVPC shows the region emits 12.7 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually, or roughly 14.7 metric tons for each area resident.

Two-thirds of that figure is attributed to transportation, specifically passenger vehicles.

“So we know we can lower that number by reducing congestion and encouraging more people to bike, to walk, to take transit,” Bradley said.

“And CAT works on that mission every single day, every single year.”

Bethlehem Planning and Zoning Director Cathy Fletcher said “to move people, not just cars, through the city safely, sustainably and equitably” is the city's role at hand.

And the TASA funding makes that a reality.

Beyond that, the city has announced major updates to come for the eastern and western ends of the Broad Street thoroughfare, all benefitting the safety of everyone using the roadway.

CAT will relocate from its current 1935 W. Broad St. headquarters to the ground floor of the new Walnut Street Garage downtown when it's finished later this year.

There are other LVTS area funding announcements to come in the weeks ahead, including 1 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 28, at Keck Park, celebrating the efforts of Community Bike Works of Allentown.

THE MORNING CALL

Talking Business with Becky Bradley: Celebrating 2 laws that changed US for the better

By Becky Bradley

For The Morning Call

August 17, 2025 at 8:30 AM



I'm not usually overjoyed about celebrating anniversaries, especially those that only serve to remind me how old I am. I recently crossed the half-century mark, received a welcome kit from AARP, have reduced the time in-between hair appointments, and now use the flashlight on my phone to read menus at restaurants.

But there are two anniversaries worth celebrating right now regarding major initiatives that have shaped life in the Lehigh Valley and across the nation. This month is the 35th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the 90th anniversary of Social Security – both have worked towards achieving equity, access and a higher quality of life for millions of people.

The 1990 ADA was designed to provide equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities in many aspects of life, such as employment, public accommodations and transportation. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission does more than 1,000 development-related reviews a year and I think an argument can be made that every one of them has been influenced by the ADA. Every time you walk through a curb cut to cross the street, use a public building with spacious doors and hallways designed for wheelchair access, or use public transit, you're experiencing the effects of the ADA. All of that is in addition to provisions in the law that enable everyone to contribute within our workforce. This law has not only changed how we travel, but how we work, recreate and conduct a healthy lifestyle.

Take my cousin Ben Thompson, for example, who was in a motorcycle accident and has been wheelchair bound ever since. We met up with him and his friend and teammate, Andre Shelby, at an archery tournament in suburban Philadelphia a little over a year ago, where they were both shooting for Team USA, as Paralympic athletes. Shelby is the first African American archer to compete in the Paralympics and Ben is a two-time world champion. So, we were in the presence of some important and incredible men, who defied their disabilities by turning them into strengths, not just for themselves but as representatives of our nation.

After the tournament, we went to a restaurant in a strip mall. I was amazed at the amount of effort and strength it took them to get their wheelchairs in and out of the van, into the restaurant and to a table. That alone required an Olympic effort. And to think that without the ADA the parking spot, curb ramps, slope of the sidewalk and doorway into the restaurant may not have been accessible. Translate that to doctor's offices, schools, grocery stores, banks, government buildings and other destinations critical to everyday life. The power and importance of the ADA cannot be understated – it has been and continues to be transformative for millions.

Social Security's place in shaping the nation and Lehigh Valley is also great. Social Security was first signed into law in 1935, in the heart of the Great Depression, as a safety net primarily for citizens over 65 years old. Statewide, of the 2.9 million Pennsylvanians who collect benefits, 1.1 million rely on it for 50% of their income, and for 450,000, it accounts for 90% of their income.

Maybe the most telling statistic is that 10% of all people 65 and older in this country live below the poverty line. That's distressing, but without Social Security, that number would increase to 37%. I can't imagine what life would be like if more than one-third of all seniors lived in poverty, especially with so many of already struggling to afford necessary prescriptions and basic groceries.

Here in the Lehigh Valley, more than 156,000 people collect Social Security, and while it's targeted primarily for seniors, it's impact reaches all of us because that income pumps more than \$3.5 billion into the regional economy. Its influence goes well beyond the people who collect. However, after decades of collecting more money than it paid out, the fund began paying out more than it received in 2021, as increasing numbers of Baby Boomers started to collect benefits. By 2033, the trust fund that fills the deficit will run out, forcing those who collect to take a roughly 20% cut. All the more reason for Congress to take action to stabilize the fund.

Stabilizing this fund is particularly important as our community ages. Preliminary LVPC analysis forecasts that this region will add another 28,000 people over 65 years old by 2050. That's roughly equivalent of adding a city the size of Easton or one of our developed suburbs. We're going to have to evolve with our aging community, and that will certainly require us to plan differently.

Some may think that means more 55-plus communities, but I do not. I'm far more interested in seeing us build more walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods with a variety of housing, commercial, retail and service uses. Mixed-use communities reduce social and economic isolation and allow grandparents to support their adult children and their grandchildren, really to be families.

I know that I would not be the person I am today without my Grandma Ann and Grandpa Brad, who cared for me while my mom and dad were working. We walked to church, the neighborhood restaurant, hardware store and to the village office to help print the community newsletter. We drove too, in fact, my Grandpa's beloved 1963 powder blue Mercury Comet was a not-so-secret storage unit for mini-Hershey bars, which he always told my grandmother were for me. His diabetes be damned, those Krackle and Mr. Goodbars were really for both of us.

Grandpa Brad and Grandma Ann had the ability to help raise me, because they had Social Security income which allowed them to retire. They took me everywhere, and I believe that age-friendly upbringing gave me access to people and experiences that brought me to know and understand what a community really is.

However we come to know community, we know it when we see it, and we really know it when we experience it. And the community I really know is accessible, age-inclusive and ultimately, family-oriented thanks to the actions of Congress all those years ago.

Becky Bradley is executive director of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. She can be reached at planning@lvpc.org. The views expressed in this piece are those of its individual author, and should not be interpreted as reflecting the views of this publication.