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## The Future is Now

How soon will it be commonplace for people to summon driverless cars on their smartphones? How worried should factory workers be about being replaced by robots? And should your business be preparing for climate change?

These are among the questions expected to be tackled during the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's daylong "FutureLV – Big Ideas. Bold Conversation." event on December 6 at Lehigh University's Iococca Hall.

The event will feature renowned futurist Peter Leyden and panel discussions led by experts such as BB&T Corp. executive Scott Fainor, Uber Senior Manager Shari Shapiro and engineering firm WSP USA's automated vehicle expert Steve Buckley.

The day will be packed with a full schedule of expert commentary, but Leyden's keynote speech figures to be the centerpiece. The former Managing Editor at Wired Magazine spent 20 years in Silicon Valley, used the expertise of some of the world's top innovators to found his startup company, Reinventors, and co-authored the "The Long Boom" and "What's Next."

"We are in the biggest technological transformation, you could argue, that this country has ever gone through," Leyden said in May, during the National Planning Conference in New York City. "It's essentially the computerization of everything, and the connection of all those computers is a world historical event that will be something people talk about in 500 years and say 'that's when the world went digital'."

Leyden's hour-long talk at Lehigh University is expected to focus on emerging trends such as artificial intelligence, blockchain technology and the sharing economy, and how they're likely to impact our future.

"Wired Magazine is still the only publication that regularly speaks to the future, and he had a lot to do with that," said LVPC Executive Director Becky Bradley. "He has access to some of the greatest tech leaders in the world, and he's bringing some of that vision and information to us."

The morning will feature two panel discussions. The Transportation Panel will cover vehicle automation and transit, with featured panelists Buckley, LANTA Executive Director Owen O'Neil, AECOM Senior Transit Planner Will Calves, and Cassandra Amato of the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley.

The Economy Panel will include Fainor, Shapiro, The Workforce Board Lehigh Valley Executive Director Nancy Dischinat and AT&T Assistant Vice President Joe Divis.

The Built Environment Panel in the afternoon will be led by University of Pennsylvania Associate Professor Ellen Neises, Nurture Nature Center Science Director Kathryn Semmens, and Liberty Property Trust Vice President Michael Alderman.

The event will also include the unveiling of the LVPC's DataLV. DataLV is envisioned as a statistical snapshot of the Lehigh Valley that can be updated as new data arrives, and married to the LVPC's ArcGIS Online mapping database to provide people with a one-stop shop for information on everything from housing to transportation to healthcare to education. DataLV is scheduled to go live at the FutureLV event, but the long-term goal is to build a single data repository that can be bolstered by data from LVPC partners such as PennDOT and The Workforce Board Lehigh Valley, and accessed by anyone, anytime.

The day will also include a chance for attendees to engage in their own panels discussions led by experts that can help them take a glimpse into the future.

Information collected will be used to draft The Plan for the Lehigh Valley.

"The key part of this is people are going to come together to discuss what we all need to know if we want to be ready for what's coming," Bradley said. "This is going to help us build our Regional Comprehensive Plan."

Registration for FutureLV begins at 8 a.m., and the program ends at 4:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$25 and include coffee and lunch. Tickets are available at [LVPC.org](http://LVPC.org).