

THE
PLAN
**STRATEGY
LABS**

FUTURELV
FUTURE LIMPCOR VALLEY

Who is the LVPC?

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission was formed by Lehigh and Northampton counties in 1961 to create a comprehensive plan to **guide orderly growth** in Lehigh and Northampton counties. Since our creation we have been dedicated to providing the best planning possible to the counties and 62 municipalities in the Lehigh Valley. We maintain a professional staff that is able to provide a wide variety of planning services to municipalities in the region.

The purpose of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is to **promote the health, safety and general welfare** of the Lehigh Valley region in accordance with the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.



COMMUNITY
ECONOMY
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBDIVISION
PEOPLE + PLACES
TRANSPORTATION
RESOURCES
HIGHWAYS + BRIDGES
ORDINANCES + PLANS
RESEARCH + ANALYSIS
WATER
SEWER
UTILITIES
CARTOGRAPHY
PEDESTRIANS
ENVIRONMENT
PROJECTIONS
HOUSING
PARKS + RECREATION
CULTURE
FARMLAND PRESERVATION
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION



What is a Comprehensive Plan?



A Regional Comprehensive Plan...

- Is the official and legal strategy guiding the growth, development, redevelopment and preservation of the assets of the Lehigh Valley.
- Consolidates all the information we already know about our community into one simple, organized, easy-to-read toolkit.
- Articulates community goals and aspirations for the years ahead, based on an understanding of current, on-the-ground conditions and accurate projections and trends.
- Demands strong community involvement and citizen participation during the creation process, and, once complete, it encourages further engagement to bring all of its various actions and directives into play.
- Informs future decision making on how we shape the land, including changes in existing laws on zoning, land development, subdivision, or other key laws that help determine how our communities will change and grow.
- Brings all 62 municipalities, private and non-profit sectors, and the public together to recognize shared objectives and collaborate on implementation.
- Is a playbook for the region, guiding official decisions, research, reports and funding.

A Regional Comprehensive Plan is Not...

- The same as zoning or subdivision. It is not an actual code that establishes what is or isn't legal in how we use or develop the land.
- So dense and complicated that it requires a law degree (or a billion other degrees) to read and understand.
- A text-only document. Or, at the very least, a good comprehensive plan is not text only! It should also include maps, charts, graphs, tables, graphics and infographics and be accessible on as many platforms as possible.
- An end in itself. It should be MUCH more than a summary of what the region has achieved. In some ways, it's the launch pad for where we would like to go and how we expect to measure our success at getting there.

ENVIRONMENT is ...

- Woodlands – including interior and riparian
- Steep slopes – 15% to 25%, greater than 25%
- Riparian buffers – an area of vegetation adjacent to a water body
- Floodplains – 100-year, 1% chance in a given year
- Natural heritage areas – locations of rare plants and animal species of concern and significant natural communities
- Carbonate bedrock – bedrock, such as limestone or dolomite, prone to solution by acidic water that creates an underground drainage pattern
- Air quality – levels of pollutants and particulate matter in the air

How is ENVIRONMENT relevant
to the plan and
the community?



ENVIRONMENT is relevant to the plan because ...

- The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires a plan for the protection of natural resources (e.g., woodlands, steep slopes, floodplains and unique natural areas).
- When a comprehensive plan is developed, it is first necessary to determine what needs to be preserved.
- A comprehensive plan provides goals, policies and strategies related to the health and safety of the public.
- Voters have spoken consistently in public opinion surveys that they want to preserve important natural features.

ENVIRONMENT is relevant to the community because ...

- Woodlands provide recreational opportunities, timber and firewood harvesting and buffers between conflicting land uses.
- Steep slopes protection minimizes erosion water quality impacts, provides micro-habitats and provides scenic character.
- Riparian buffers provide a vital feature for protecting and reclaiming waterways.
- Floodplains absorb and store large amounts of water helping to recharge aquifers, help trap sediment from upland runoff, stabilize stream banks and provide habitat for wildlife.
- Natural heritage areas protection preserves plants, animals and natural communities and habitats most at risk of extinction.
- Carbonate bedrock provides the primary raw material for the local cement industry and underlies the most fertile soils.
- Air quality affects health and quality of life of residents and visitors.
- Natural system service benefits in the Lehigh Valley average \$355.5 million per year.



THANK YOU

for joining us on this journey and for contributing to making the Lehigh Valley a place in which we're proud to live and work for years to come!

SEE YOU SOON!



February 7, 2017
STRATEGY LAB: Community Utilities
8:30-10:30 AM

February 7, 2017
STRATEGY LAB: Community Facilities
10:30 AM-12:30 PM

Visit lvpc.org/futurelv.html for a full listing of our 2017 events and for links to register!

