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## It's an Important Time for Community Planning

You know that walking path that runs near your home? Or the neighborhood you live in? Or even that scenic stretch of farmland you pass on the way home from work? It's all the result of meticulous planning by architects, engineers, builders and yes, community planners.

October is Community Planning Month, nationally and locally. Change is constant and community planning helps manage that change, while giving the public a chance to have a say in how that change should look. It's particularly important for the Lehigh Valley, where population is projected to grow by 24 percent – or 165,000 people -- by 2045.

“Community planning is more important than ever for us,” said LVPC Executive Director Becky Bradley. “We’re running out of land, we’re filling up with people and businesses want to be here. We have to make some hard choices as we determine how to manage our success, without losing the things we love.”

The 2019 theme for National Community Planning Month is “Planning for Infrastructure That Benefits All.” The Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, Wednesday, unanimously approved *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, which includes a 25-year Long-Range Transportation Plan that maps out \$2.5 billion worth of infrastructure projects that impact every municipality in the region.

Planning can be summed up as comprehensive, community-focused choices that enhance the spaces where people live, work, and play. It may not seem obvious, but planning has a significant impact on everyone's day-to-day life, from where they live, to how they commute, to the type of home they live in to how they chose to recreate. Through planning, strategic investments in innovation and infrastructure can boost the economy and strengthen communities, and public and private funds are leveraged, leading to business growth, job creation, robust infrastructure, and economically resilient communities.

Planning does not stop at a geographic border. Communities are served best when planners take a broader viewpoint, encompassing regional and statewide perspectives. This is especially critical for infrastructure projects, which are most successful when planned at a regional scale. Taking a regional focus ensures the infrastructure system will benefit those well beyond the immediate location of the project.

Established in 2006, National Community Planning Month is celebrated each October as a way to highlight the role of planners and the importance of good planning in our communities.

Community Planning Month gives the LVPC a chance to extend a thank you to all the community planners, planning commissions and citizens in 62 municipalities that help make the Lehigh Valley a great place to live.

“The many successes of this region don’t just happen by accident,” Bradley said. “It’s the result of a lot of hard planning work by a lot of people in every city, borough and township. We’d like to recognize all of their efforts”