



## Lehigh Valley Transportation Study

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Chair, Coordinating Committee

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Chair, Technical Committee

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Secretary,  
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### **LVTS, LVPC Adopts FutureLV: The Regional Plan**

*FutureLV: The Regional Plan* got unanimous approval from the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study October 2, and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission followed with unanimous approval of the plan on October 31, ending a three-month period of debate that saw the plan receive more than 200 public comments.

The approvals opens a new phase in which FutureLV will head to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, Lehigh County Commissioners, Northampton County Council, and the US Department of Transportation over the coming weeks and months.

FutureLV is designed to help the Lehigh Valley manage its steady economic, population and job growth over the next 25 years, while preserving the farmland, recreation and open space that defines the quality of life residents have come to expect. The LVTS approval was necessary to keep transportation money flowing into the region for the current Transportation Improvement Program that is investing \$534 million on road, bridge, trail and transit projects over four years.

It also came after a 45-day public review period in which community, education and business leaders, as well as the public, issued 224 comments about the plan.

“It’s encouraging that people are so interested and so passionate about their community,” said LVPC Executive Director Becky Bradley. “We had a great dialogue with the community and received a lot of really good ideas. It prompted us to make more than 30 revisions to the Plan.”

The LVTS put the plan out for review August 9, opening a period in which hundreds of municipal officials, community leaders and citizens issued comments and debated how to spend \$2.4 billion in the Long-Range Transportation Plan, and how a successful region should navigate into an uncertain future.

Some touted the plan as “proactive, progressive and forward-thinking” and complimented its innovative Centers and Corridors concept that directs most new development along existing activity centers and the roads that connect them, to keep that development from venturing into the farmland and open space people say they want preserved. Many suggested new actions that could be added to the plan, such as a greater focus on education, climate change or the need for municipalities to work together.

For the first time since 1964, the regional plan also includes the Long-Range Transportation Plan, which lays out the spending for nearly 250 projects and mass transit over the next 25 years, but also details \$4.1 billion in needed projects that there isn’t enough money to fund – revealing the transportation challenges ahead. As the comment period progressed, members of the LVTS gave municipal, non-profit and private project sponsors a chance to present the projects they wanted funded, and then held several meetings to determine the right mix of

projects to be on the funded list. Being on either list - funded or unmet needs - makes a project eligible to be included in a future Transportation Improvement Program, which maps out the projects that will be done regionwide, and is updated every two years.

“In the end, we were able to add every project that committee members thought should be in the plan,” said LVTS coordinating Committee Chair Michael Rebert. “We had representation from all cities, communities, the counties, LANTA and the [Lehigh-Northampton] Airport Authority. We came to a pretty strong consensus, given the money we had to allocate. “

From here, FutureLV is scheduled to go before LVPC October 31. If approved, that will send the plan to Lehigh and Northampton counties. By then it will already be in the hands of US Department of Transportation, which will determine whether the analyses, methodology and evaluation process for the projects is consistent with federal regulations, and whether the project chosen are consistent with federal policy.

The plan is available at <https://www.lvpc.org/futurelv.html>.