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A promotional banner for the Lehigh Valley Transportation Needs Assessment Survey. The background is a light blue map of the Lehigh Valley region. The text 'YOUR VOICE COUNTS!' is at the top left. The main title 'Lehigh Valley Transportation Needs Assessment Survey' is in large, bold, dark blue letters. Below the title, a short paragraph asks for transportation priorities. A dark blue button with white text says 'LEARN MORE HERE'. Two QR codes are on the right side, with 'En Español' written below the bottom one.

How Would You spend \$3.6 billion on Lehigh Valley Transportation?

With a projected \$3.6 billion to invest in transportation over the next 25 years, the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study spent March meeting with municipal stakeholders from across the region to determine the transportation needs of all 62 municipalities.

Now, with a roadshow of 24 public meetings in 25 days behind it, LVTS wants to know how you would shape the Lehigh Valley's transportation network between now and 2050.

The regionwide Transportation Needs Survey will help the update of the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The goal is at least 1,000 surveys completed. You can help put us over the top. **Find the survey at lvpc.org.**

"As we determine how to spend \$3.6 billion in the 25-year Long-Range Transportation Plan, it's critical that we understand the priorities of our community," said Lehigh Valley Transportation Study Secretary Becky Bradley, who is also executive director of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. "That's why we scheduled personal meetings with all 62 municipalities and developed a survey we hope will be taken by as many Lehigh Valley residents as possible."

The LRTP is the transportation section in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. Under federal law it must be updated every four years, and as such must be in place before the next fiscal year begins October 1. The plan can only schedule projects based on the funding that is expected to come, and the need is always great then the money to pay for it. Therefore, the current LRTP includes \$2.5 billion worth of projects in the 25-year plan, and \$4 billion worth of projects on an

Unmet Needs list. Though new money will be available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and more than \$1 billion more is expected in the new plan, the need will certainly outpace the funding. Still, the LVTS decided to schedule meetings with all 62 Lehigh Valley municipalities – the only Metropolitan Planning Organization in Pennsylvania to schedule such transportation needs meetings – because priorities are changing. Some projects could come out of the old plan, while some from the Unmet Needs list are added, and still new projects in the community may have risen in need over the past four years.

Roughly 80% of the money is federal through the Federal Highway Administration, with the remaining mostly state and some local.

All of the projects will be evaluated using more than 60 datasets to measure their eligibility using criteria that includes safety, bridge and pavement conditions, congestion management, partnerships and consistency with *FutureLV* policies. Two new criteria that will have special focus this year are equity designed to funnel more money into underserved neighborhoods, and resiliency designed to make sure the projects are well-prepared for the extreme conditions caused by climate change.

Once chosen, the LRTP projects are then eligible to be funded in the Transportation Improvement Program, which serves as the first four years of the LRTP.

“This process prioritizes transportation projects and programs that will improve the operating efficiency and preservation of transportation aspects for all modes of transportation with an emphasis on safety and equity,” said LVPC Director of Transportation and Data Patrick Osei. “The end result is improving the quality of life for the Lehigh Valley with the available and potential funding sources.”

Once the list is set, a financial model will be developed this spring, a draft plan including policies and actions will be released and be open for 30-day public review, before it can be approved by the LVTS in September. Answers from the regionwide survey will also be key in writing policy for the plan. From there it will need approval by Federal Highways Administration and Federal Transit Authority.

If approved, the new LRTP takes effect Oct. 1.