



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

DR. CHRISTOPHER R. AMATO
Chair

CHRISTINA V. MORGAN
Vice Chair

ARMANDO MORITZ-CHAPELLIQUEN
Treasurer

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, April 22, 2025, 12:00 noon
AGENDA

THE MEETING CAN BE ACCESSED AT <http://www.tinyurl.com/LVPC2025> OR VIA PHONE
610-477-5793 Conf ID: 651 626 091#.

Roll Call

Courtesy of the Floor

1. Staff Introduction
 - a. Chris Embert, Creative Manager

Committee Business

1. *ACTION ITEM*: Bethlehem Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Primrose School Childcare Center (JD)
2. *ACTION ITEM*: South Whitehall Township – Land Use of Regional Significance – Parkland High School Expansion (JD)
3. *ACTION ITEM*: City of Allentown – Land Use of Regional Significance – ASD Family Engagement and Resource Center (JD)
4. *ACTION ITEM*: Lowhill Township – Comprehensive Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Update (JS, SM)
5. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Upper Mount Bethel Township – Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Data Centers (JS)
6. *INFORMATION ITEM*: Housing Supply and Attainability Strategy Update (JS)

Next Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting:
May 20, 2025, at 12:00 pm



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Executive Director

April xx, 2025

Samantha Smith, Community Development Director
Bethlehem Township
4225 Easton Avenue
Bethlehem, PA 18020

**Re: Primrose Schools Childcare Center – Land Use of Regional Significance
Bethlehem Township
Northampton County**

Dear Ms. Smith:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The meetings are on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - April 22, 2025, at 12:00 Noon
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - April 24, 2025, at 7:00 PM
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>

The application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Educational Facilities category. The project proposes a 14,088-square-foot childcare center along with associated parking at 5007 Freemansburg Avenue (Parcel Identification Number N8 1 2).

Background

Adjacent to the proposed site are various densities of residential properties and some commercial/retail buildings. Less than one mile to the east is State Route 33 and St. Luke’s Anderson Campus. The LVPC previously reviewed a sketch plan application at this site in June 2022 for a 26-unit apartment building.

Site Suitability

According to the General Land Use in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, this parcel is in a Development area and has the factors needed to support growth, such as sewer and transportation infrastructure capacity and contiguity to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The proposal serves to ‘expand access to education and job training’

(of Policy 4.1) which serves to stimulate investment in local institutions and increase social opportunities (of Policy 4.2).

Transportation

Reuse for increasing educational opportunities in an urban area located in centers and along corridors supports Policy 1.1 and Policy 4.3 of *FutureLV*. The proposed external and internal sidewalk improvements align with Policy 5.1 of *FutureLV* to ‘promote safe and secure community design’. A large percentage of students walk to and from school, as well as some parents and teachers. The inclusion of new crosswalks, sidewalks, and ADA compliant ramps help visitors navigate the property and promote safe routes to schools and playgrounds (of Policy 5.2). The Township is encouraged to identify opportunities to extend the external sidewalk east along Freemansburg Avenue to connect with Wagner Drive. This would further facilitate safe routes to schools from the various residential neighborhoods nearby.

Sustainability

The LVPC recommends that educational institutions incorporate environmentally sensitive building and landscape design, such as green roofs or solar panels. This would increase the cost-effectiveness of building operation and further academic endeavors related to these technologies, while enhancing the campus setting, demonstrating environmental leadership within the region, and ‘reducing climate change impacts through mitigation and adaptation’ (of Policy 3.4).

Stormwater

The project site is located within the Fry’s Run watershed. This watershed has a fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance. Comments related to our review of the project’s stormwater management plan are included as attachment 1.

Municipalities, when considering subdivision/land developments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review.

Sincerely,



Mary Grace Collins
LVPC Community Fellow

cc: Jason Lang, Applicant; Reid Cooksey, Project Engineer/Surveyor; Ron Gawlick, Township Engineer.



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BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

April 18, 2025

David Manhardt, Director of Community Development
South Whitehall Township
4444 Walbert Avenue
Allentown, PA 18104

**Re: Parkland High School Expansion – Land Use of Regional Significance
South Whitehall Township
Lehigh County**

Dear Mr. Manhardt:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The meetings are on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - April 22, 2025, at 12:00 Noon.
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - April 24, 205, at 7:00 pm.
 - <https://lvpc.org/lvpc-meetings>

The application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Educational Facilities category.

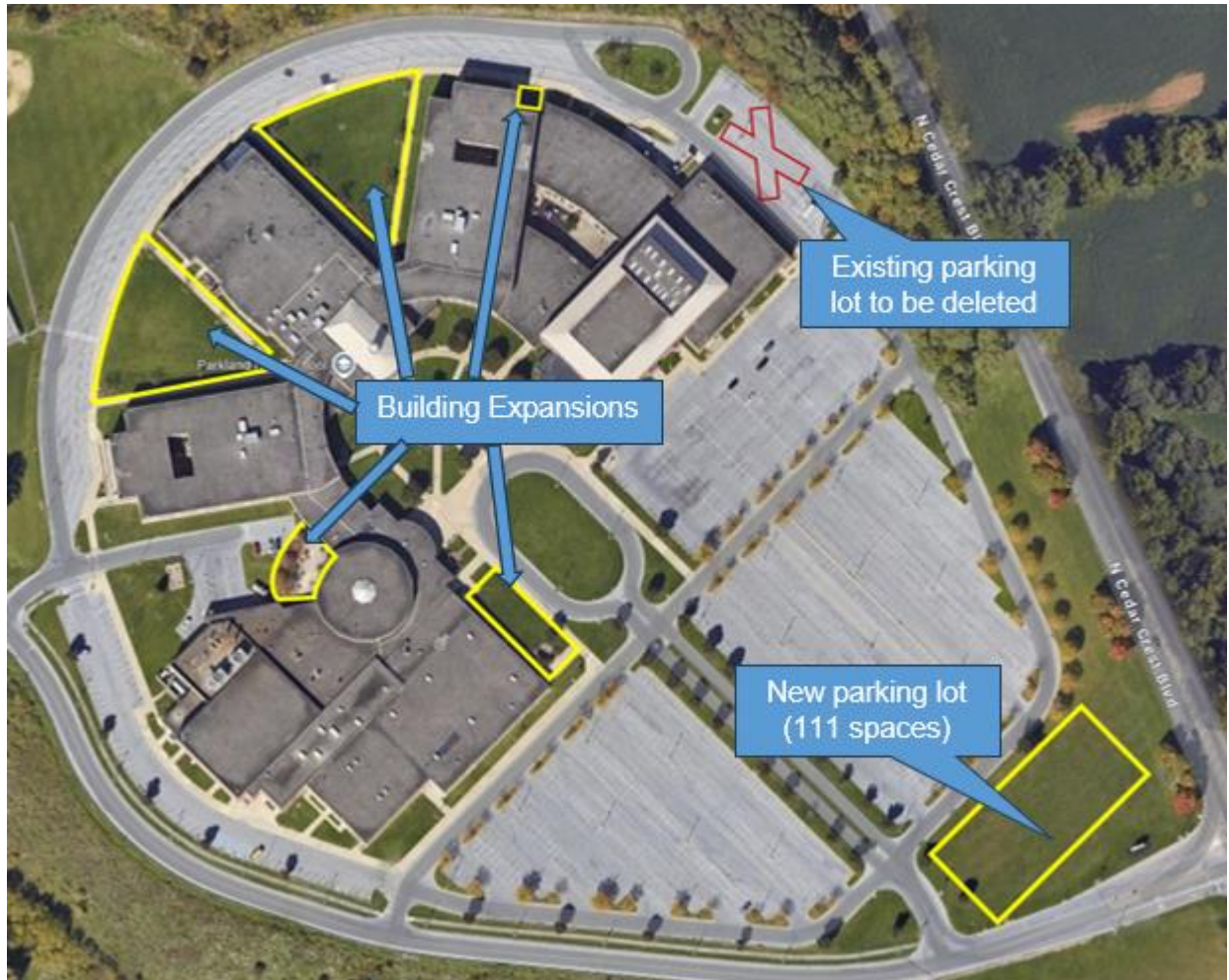
Background

The project proposes five building expansions to the Parkland High School at 2700 N Cedar Crest Boulevard. Construction includes a:

- 5,385-square-foot athletic entrance expansion
- 2,753-square-foot cafeteria expansion
- 18,773-square-foot and a 19,782-square-foot classroom expansion
- 572-square foot building addition

In addition to the building expansions, the project also includes the extension of the existing bus loop to create an additional 11 bus parking spaces. This will eliminate the 63-space parking lot adjacent to the bus loop. A new parking lot will be constructed to the southeast of the existing parking lots near Cedar Crest Boulevard, adding 111 new

parking spaces to the site. The changes to the parking areas will increase the total number of parking spaces on the site from 1,445 to 1,489.



Site Suitability

The proposal supports a core strategy of *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* to increase density in urban areas using infill development (Density Special Section, page 71), which serves to ‘expand access to education and job training’ (of Policy 4.1) and increase social opportunities (of Policy 4.2). Reuse in an urban area located in centers and along corridors supports Policy 1.1 and Policy 4.3 of *FutureLV* for increasing educational opportunities.

Environment

To offset the heat island effect, additional natural landscaping is recommended to ‘minimize environmental impacts of development’ (Policy 3.2). The LVPC recommends that educational institutions incorporate environmentally sensitive building and landscape design, such as green roofs or solar panels. This would increase the cost-effectiveness of building operation and further academic endeavors related to these technologies, while enhancing the campus setting, demonstrating environmental

leadership within the region, and 'reducing climate change impacts through mitigation and adaptation' (of Policy 3.4).

The developer is also encouraged to include electric vehicle charging spaces, recognizing the rapidly expanding need for renewable energy sources and the advancement of autonomous and electric vehicle technologies (of Policies 2.5 and 3.2).

Stormwater Review

The project site is located within the Jordan Creek watershed. This watershed has a fully implemented Act 167 Stormwater Management Ordinance. Comments related to our review of the project's stormwater management plan are included as attachment 1.

Municipalities, when considering subdivision/land developments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review.

Sincerely,



Mary Grace Collins
LVPC Community Fellow

cc:
Arthur J. Oakes, Applicant;
Laura Eberly, Project Engineer/Surveyor;
Anthony Tallarida, Township/Borough Engineer;

m
oakesa@parklandsd.net
leberly@reutherbowen.com
atallarida@pidcockcompany.com



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BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Executive Director

April xx, 2025

Ms. Jennifer Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Allentown
435 Hamilton St.
Allentown, PA 18101

**Re: ASD Family Engagement and Resource Center – Land Use of Regional Significance
City of Allentown
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Gomez:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The meetings are on:

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The application is considered a Land Use of Regional Significance under *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* in the Educational Facilities category. The project application proposes construction of a 9,360-square-foot, two-story addition to the existing Allentown School District Building 21 for a family engagement and resource center at 265 Lehigh Street (Parcel Identification Number 640629328216). The expansion is on the north side of the property and includes a new 20-space paved parking lot and sidewalks.

Site Suitability

According to the General Land Use in *FutureLV*, this parcel is in a Development area and has the factors needed to support growth, such infrastructure capacity and contiguity to Building 21 Allentown. The proposal serves to ‘expand access to education and job training’ (of Policy 4.1) which serves to stimulate investment in local institutions and increase social opportunities for current students and teachers of Building 21 (of Policy 4.2).

Transportation

Reuse in an urban area located near centers and along corridors supports Policy 1.1 and Policy 4.3 of *FutureLV*. The proposed external and internal sidewalk improvements align with Policy 5.1 of *FutureLV* to 'promote safe and secure community design'. A large percentage of students walk to and from school, as well as some parents and teachers. The inclusion of new crosswalks, sidewalks, and ADA compliant ramps help visitors navigate the property and promote safe routes to schools and playgrounds (of Policy 5.2).

Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) provides fixed-route public transportation directly to the southern portion of the project site, with a pair of bus stops (Bus Stop IDs 6376 and 1356) located just north of the Lehigh Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive intersection. It is recommended that the addition of a second bus stop be considered at the northern part of the property near the new proposed sidewalk across Union Street. The existing topography along this portion of the Lehigh Street corridor is a substantial hill, and the existing bus stop is located at the base of the hill. While this bus stop serves many nearby residents to the south, a second bus stop closer to the northern entrance of the proposed ASD resource center facility will benefit many in the Lehigh Street and Union Street vicinity. A five-foot concrete pad with a bench is recommended to further enhance public transit service (Policy 2.3).

LANTA recommends follow up with Molly Wood at mwood@lantabus-pa.gov to discuss any additional bus stop details.

Environment

To offset the heat island effect, additional natural landscaping is recommended to 'minimize environmental impacts of development' (Policy 3.2). The LVPC recommends that educational institutions incorporate environmentally sensitive building and landscape design, such as green roofs or solar panels. This would increase the cost-effectiveness of building operation and further academic endeavors related to these technologies, while enhancing the campus setting, demonstrating environmental leadership within the region, and 'reducing climate change impacts through mitigation and adaptation' (of Policy 3.4).

Municipalities, when considering subdivision/land developments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article 1§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)].

The LVPC review does not include an in-depth examination of plans relative to subdivision design standards or ordinance requirements since these items are covered in the municipal review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Dotta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph Dotta
Regional Planner

cc: Robert Whartenby, Applicant; Paul Schmoll, Project Engineer/Surveyor; David Petrik, City of Allentown Deputy Director of Public Works; Jesse Sadiua, City of Allentown Chief Planner; Brandon Jones, City of Allentown Planner; Lillian Bernstein, City of Allentown Assistant Planner.



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Executive Director

April xx, 2025

Ms. Jill Seymour, Secretary
Lowhill Township
7000 Herber Road
New Tripoli, Pennsylvania 18066

**RE: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance – Comprehensive Update
Lowhill Township
Lehigh County**

Dear Ms. Seymour:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject application at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, per requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The meetings occur on:

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - April 22, 2025, at 12:00 PM
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The application proposes a comprehensive update to the Lowhill Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). The project follows the recent adoption of the updated Northern Lehigh Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, and the Township recently coordinated updates to the Township Zoning Ordinance with the other five Northern Lehigh municipalities. The purpose of the proposed SALDO, as specified in Section 102 of the proposed ordinance, is to ‘regulate and control the subdivision and development of land within Lowhill Township... creating conditions favorable to the health, safety and welfare of the community and consistent with the goals and policies of the 2022 Northern Lehigh Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan and its intergovernmental agreements, the Lowhill Township Zoning Ordinance and Official Map’.


Administration

The General Provisions of the proposed Ordinance align with Article V of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), which grants powers to municipalities to regulate subdivision and land development and outlines the contents of subdivision and land development ordinances. Article 2 of the proposed ordinance, which outlines Procedures for Processing Applications, supports transparency in the

process of subdivision and land development application and review. The proposed definitions for 'Land Development' and 'Subdivision' are written to align with definitions provided in the MPC and are best practices in managing development (of *FutureLV* Policy 1.4).

The LVPC recommends including definitions for bicycle path, bicycle lane and recreation trail to improve clarify for Ordinance users and further strengthen provisions of Section 507.

The proposed definition for 'Traffic Calming Devices' references the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Traffic Calming Handbook of 2001. PennDOT recently eliminated this publication in January of 2025, and the LVPC recommends updating the definition with the current applicable publication reference (see below). Section 502.H should also be updated with this new reference:

 pennsylvania DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION <small>www.penndot.pa.gov</small>	Pennsylvania's Traffic Calming Handbook	PUBLICATION 383 (1-25)
Publication 383, Pennsylvania's Traffic Calming Handbook, has been eliminated.		
For information and guidance on the selection and design of Traffic Calming for state and local roads in Pennsylvania, reference Publication 13, Design Manual Part 2 – Contextual Roadway Design, Chapter 18, Traffic Calming.		

Plan Review Procedures / Applications

The Township's proposed site plan submission criteria and review procedures align with MPC requirements for plan review timelines and approval procedures (MPC Section 508. Approval of Plats). The LVPC commends the clarity and specificity of the proposed submission requirements and review procedures which support an efficient development process (of Policy 1.4).

The LVPC appreciates the inclusion of Section 203.B.4 which specifies the requirement of LVPC's review prior action by the Township within the allotted 30 day review timeframe as provided by the MPC (of *FutureLV* Policy 1.4).

The LVPC recommends identifying Township emergency service providers as consultants for review and recommendations during the plan review process to 'enhance planning and emergency response efforts among emergency management personnel' (of Policy 5.1).

The LVPC encourages the Township to require LVPC's review of sketch plans in Section 202 Optional Review Procedures. This provides the Township with the benefit of input from the County and Regional perspective at an early stage in the planning process, and enables the LVPC to better support the Township through discussions or negotiations with the developer. These benefits come at no cost to the Township and can help 'coordinate land use decisions across municipal boundaries' (of Policy 1.4).

Site Plan Standards

Article 3 of the proposed Ordinance identifies drafting standards that provide a basis of the Township's considerations that ensure proposals promote public health, safety and welfare through the review process (of Policy 3.2). Cross-references to zoning ordinance requirements support users navigating both ordinances and encourage an efficient development process (of Policy 1.4).

Trail, Pedestrian and Bicycle Connectivity

Section 507 of the proposed Ordinance requires bicycle paths when designated by an official plan or map and supports the intent of *FutureLV* to 'improve access to green spaces' that promote physical and mental health (of Policy 5.3) and 'establish mixed-transportation corridors' and enhances walk/roll facilities along Corridors (of Policies 2.1 and 2.3). The LVPC recommends specifying that trail surface material aligns with standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. All aspects of transportation should adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide transportation options and access to people of all abilities. Inclusion of this statement would support compliance of federal law (of *FutureLV* Policy 2.3).

Transportation

The Township's proposed ordinance provisions serve to 'maintain and enhance existing transportation infrastructure' (of *FutureLV* Policy 2.6). The LVPC commends Section 305.A.5 for requiring a transportation impact study when developments or changes in use generate greater than 500 new trips per day or greater than 50 trips during peak hours among other criteria. Requiring traffic impact studies serve to 'improve the efficiency of infrastructure and avoid traffic incidents' (of *FutureLV* Policy 2.2). Under Section 305.A.5.g, the LVPC recommends specifying that the trip generation rates used be approved by the Township engineer as acceptable to the Township for the study.

Stormwater Management

Section 515 of the proposed ordinance requires that erosion control and stormwater drainage systems be provided as specified in the Lowhill Township Standard Construction Details (Appendix 6). The LVPC cautions the Township that provisions of Section 515.3.i may be too prescriptive. Language should require a green stormwater infrastructure measure as first practice but not require that both rooftop and land practices be mandated.

Further in this paragraph, very specific measures are prohibited in designated Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) High Quality and/or Exceptional Value Streams or within 150 feet of an exceptional value wetland. This includes, for example, rain gardens. LVPC understands the importance of protecting these vital resources from stormwater discharges but rather than include a list of prohibited practices, recommends that stormwater control measures (SCM) proposed must be suitable for a location as determined by site evaluations conducted by professional(s) experienced in soil classification, geology, and the design of infiltration SCMS. This is consistent with PA DEP's proposed post construction stormwater management guidance and provides a site-specific analysis.

Landscaping

The LVPC supports the Township's intent of preserving and protecting environmentally sensitive and natural features, as it aligns with the *FutureLV* vision of a 'protected and vibrant environment' (Goal 3) and 'preserve natural resources in the land development process (of Policy 3.1).

The landscaping requirements in the proposed Ordinance support creating community spaces that promote physical and mental health (of Policy 5.3). Section 518.A.3 requires that trees with a diameter of 10 or more inches removed or destroyed during development be replaced. The LVPC recommends requiring replacement of trees with a diameter of eight inches or more, which is a recommendation of the LVPC Woodlands Guide/Model Regulations and further promotes sustainable stewardship of natural resources (of Policy 3.1).

The LVPC recommends clarifying in all sections that landscaping consist of native plants to support use of native, climate-adapting and carbon-sequestering landscaping (of Policy 3.4). In particular, in section 518.C Landscaping Ground Cover, native plants chosen should be deep-rooted to prevent soil erosion.

The proposed Ordinance includes buffering requirements which minimize impacts of development by providing screening that mitigates visual and noise impacts and further reduces glare and light spillage onto neighboring properties (of Policy 3.2).

Sewer and Water Utility

Section 510.A.3 requires that each lot to be developed shall contain a suitable location for installation of a primary individual on-lot sewage system and shall also contain a suitable and approved perk tested location specifically for a replacement on-lot sewage system. This requirement serves to 'protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater' (of *FutureLV* Policy 3.2). The provision of a tested replacement absorption area will ensure a future safeguard in the event of a non-repairable primary area malfunction.

Overall, the Township's updated Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance is clear, concise, and supports current-day best practices for regulating subdivision and land development. The proposed Ordinance contains strong environmental protection standards including specifically requiring the use of Green Stormwater Infrastructure measures as a first option, specifying stormwater control measures in High Quality and Exceptional value streams and requiring analysis of special geologic conditions. The proposed Ordinance also includes strong landscape design standards which require sustainable practices including use of native vegetation, promoting adequate shading and plants into the exurban environment, greater landscape resiliency, tree protection and replacement standards, all that will enhance the natural environments of the township. Additionally, the proposed Ordinance promotes the integration of stormwater management and landscape design using trees and plants to promote compliance with state water quality mandates and stormwater management and erosion control, through detention, treatment, infiltration and groundwater recharge of rainwater.

The proposed requirements support the community vision outlined in the *Northern Lehigh Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan* and *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, and

demonstrate an exemplary approach to guiding and managing development utilizing the tools municipalities have available, per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

Municipalities, when considering ordinance and map amendments, should reasonably attempt to be consistent with *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) [Article I§105, Article III§303, §304 & §306(a), Article VI§603(j)]. Please send a copy of any final amendments that are adopted, per the requirements of the MPC.

The LVPC has copied appropriate representatives from the *Northern Lehigh Multi-Municipal Plan* to further expand collaboration on planning and development between neighboring communities (of Policy 4.6).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,



Jillian Seitz
Chief Community Planner



Susan Myerov
Director of Environmental Planning



Brian Hite
Transportation Planner

cc: Mike Siegel, Lowhill Township Planning Consultant