



American Planning Association
Pennsylvania Chapter
Lehigh Valley-Berks Section

Monthly Newsletter

 July 2025

Welcome to the Start of Summer!

Hello planners:

I hope you have been staying cool and hydrated during the past few weeks of high temperatures and changing weather. If you haven't noticed by now, we are officially in summer in the Lehigh Valley and Berks County. Not only does that mean the start of summer vacations and travel, but also many planning efforts and community engagement events across our region.

The Berks County Planning Commission is kicking off their [County Comprehensive Plan](#) update process, with the goal of producing a document that will promote cooperation and coordinated planning among municipalities that supports balanced growth, protects valuable land resources, and maintains the unique identities of local communities. [Stay tuned for several meetings, discussions, and engagement activities over the next year.](#)

Over at the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, there are several initiatives coming soon, underway, or wrapping up. The [Greater Lehigh Valley Regional Climate Action Plan](#) is being finalized and will be released within the next few months, which will outline strategies to reduce emissions across the four-county MSA. The LVPC team is also preparing to release the [Lehigh Valley Housing Supply and Attainability Strategy](#) after a successful public event on June 23rd. This comes after national recognition for the [Lehigh Valley Housing Dashboard](#), receiving the 2025 NARC Regional Achievement Award.

Across our region, our municipalities are keeping busy with their own planning processes. Allentown is preparing to adopt [ZONE Allentown](#), Pennsylvania's first form-based code. Bethlehem is developing the [40 in 10 Plan](#) to drive the future of the parks and open spaces. Reading is preparing to launch their recently adopted [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) to make their streets safer for all. There are a dozen more planning initiatives happening across our cities, boroughs, and townships, so make sure to get involved!

While planners and officials stay busy this summer, please make sure you take time to relax as well! In addition to the hundreds of community-based events all cross our region, we will be hosting a summer social to relax as well! However you unwind, it's important to take care of yourself and have fun.

If you have any questions, concerns, or anything you'd like to discuss, please feel free to reach out to me at craigbeavers24@gmail.com. Otherwise, I'll see you in our next newsletter!

Craig Beavers, AICP Candidate

Section Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Beavers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Summer Break!

We will be taking a break from our regular Section Council meetings during the months of July and August as we all enjoy the wonderful summer weather and schedule various vacations.

Don't worry: there's still plenty happening behind the scenes in the meantime! Check out the information below for upcoming events and initiatives!

Summer Social

We're excited to bring together members of APA PA LVB for a Summer Social & Conference Info Session on **Tuesday, July 15th from 6 - 7:30 p.m.** in Southside Bethlehem (exact location TBD)! This will be a great opportunity to connect, learn about the upcoming 2026 APA Conference in Bethlehem, and explore ways to get involved in the planning process.

Attending this session does not commit you to volunteering for the conference. It's simply an opportunity to learn more.

Let Samantha know if you have any questions (samantha.mclean@mbakerintl.com).

Section Volunteers Wanted!

We have several volunteer opportunities open for anyone in our section who is interested. These positions have a low-time commitment, allow for AICP credits, and are a fun way to connect with colleagues across the region! If any of these items interest you, please reach out to Craig or Samantha.

- 2026 Conference Planning Committee Members - This committee helps to plan and organize the upcoming conference in Bethlehem. Commitment involves a few meetings over the next year, and help in various subgroups like awards planning, social events planning, speaker selection, etc. Participants are also eligible for discounted registration rates to the conference.
- Election Nomination Committee Members - This committee consists of three people who collect the names of interested candidates for section office, and distribute the candidates list and ballot. Commitment involves 1-3 meetings total, and about 30 minutes of data collection.
- Section Officers - Later this fall, we will be holding elections for all of our Section Council Officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, 5 Council (2 planners/ 2 PC members). Positions have various levels of commitment and responsibilities, but are eligible for AICP credits and reimbursement to Section and Chapter events.

[Click Here to Volunteer](#)

Webinar Wednesday: Embedded Planning: A New Praxis for Pennsylvania

July 2 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

This session introduces a new method of urban planning called Embedded Planning Praxis, which emphasizes planners working directly from the community rather than solely from an office desk. Born out of zoning code enforcement work, Embedded Planning has evolved into a community-rooted praxis that puts ideas into action to better our neighborhoods. Embedded planners work from community spaces and places, moving from traditional policy formation to immersive, on-the-ground collaboration in and from the community. Embedded Planning is a timely evolution in the field that aligns with growing calls for more equity-centered, place-based, participatory practices. Originating in South Central Los Angeles, Embedded Planning has spread coast to coast, with an emerging example now taking shape in Hollidaysburg, PA. This session will illustrate what Embedded Planning looks like in practice while highlighting both the challenges and benefits of this new praxis. We close with a forward look at the future of street-level planning in PA and beyond.

CM credit is pending approval. You must attend the webinar live in order to earn CM credit.

Speaker(s):

Jonathan Pacheco Bell

The Pennsylvania Chapter is not responsible for the materials or opinions of the speaker(s) you will hear

Deadline to register is June 30

If you're interested in sponsoring a Webinar Wednesday session or have a session for Webinar Wednesday please contact us.

Send your request to admin@planningpa.org.

[Register Now](#)

Upcoming Events

Our Section provides a calendar of CM events, local initiatives, and major planning meetings. Here are a few upcoming events of note:

- [July 2 - Webinar Wednesday](#) (1 CM)
- [July 8 - Improving Airport Curbside and Roadway Operations](#) (1.5 CM)
- [July 10 - Volunteer Trail Builders](#) (1 CM)
- [July 17 - Sourcing and Utilizing Data for Hazard Mitigation Planning](#) (1 CM)
- [July 18 - AI in Action: Practical Use Cases in County Planning](#) (1.5 CM) (1 Law)
- [July 24 - National Trails Legislative Update](#) (1 CM)
- [July 24 - Reading's Sustainability Strategy](#)
- [July 25 - Assistants for Planners](#) (1.5 CM)

To view more events and CM webinars, click the button below.

[View More Events](#)

Employment Opportunities

Our Section highlights a variety of planning and planning related jobs in our area. Here are a few open positions:

- [Transportation Planner - Lehigh Valley Planning Commission](#)
- [Community Planner – Hanover Engineering](#)
- [Planning Engineer – Lehigh County Authority](#)
- [Civil/Environmental Engineer – Lehigh Valley Planning Commission](#)

To view more job opportunities, click the button below.

[View More Jobs](#)

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**Lehigh Valley/Berks Section,
APA PA**

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United States of America

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