

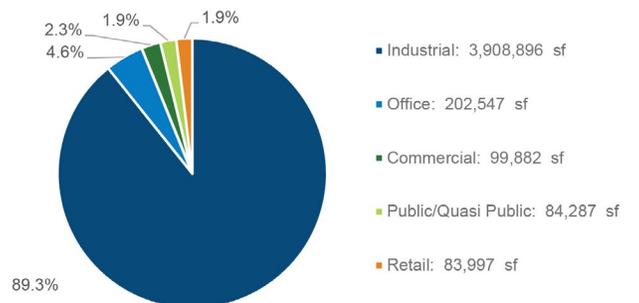
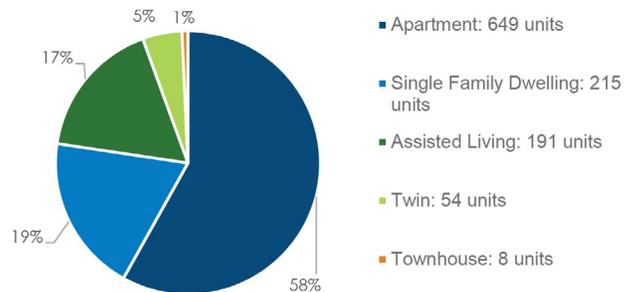
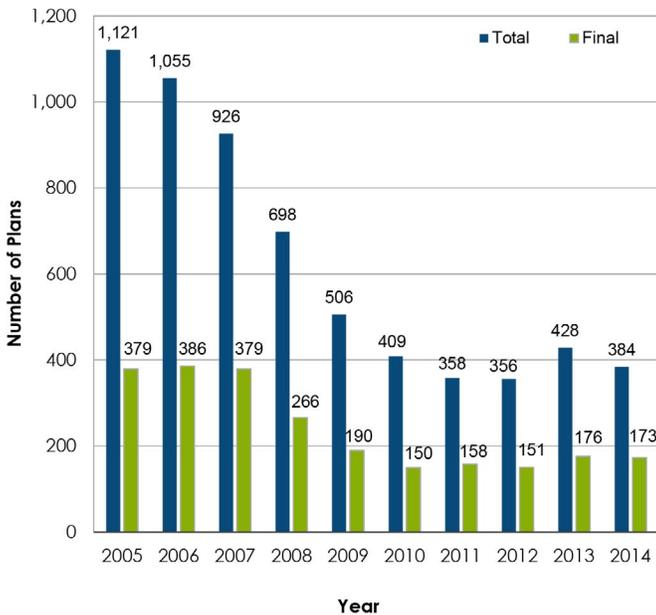
LVPC releases **BUILDLV: Lehigh Valley Annual Development Report**

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At the May 4th BUILDLV event, LVPC staff distributed the *Lehigh Valley Annual Development Report* for 2014. Known in previous years as the *Subdivision and Building Activity Report*, this document consolidates all of the most essential data from 2014 on subdivision and land development plans that the LVPC received and reviewed, based on three categories: sketch, preliminary and final. These plans also detail any new lots created through the act of subdivision. When the lots appear in a sketch or preliminary plan, they are *proposed*; when the lots appear in a final plan, they are *approved*.

As in years past, the LVPC looks at the data on plans and lots from a variety of different angles, providing numerous graphs and tables to illustrate not just what types of development were most prominent in 2014, but how the land development activity compared to previous years. At 384, the total number of subdivision/land development plans submitted in 2014 was down from the previous year's 428; additionally, the LVPC reviewed 3,184 total lots last year, compared to 3,833 in 2014. However, a considerably higher percentage of lots reached the LVPC in final

plans; 38.8% of lots were approved in 2014, compared to only 25.6% in 2013. The 1,236 lots approved last year also represent a nearly threefold increase from 2012, a low point for approvals. As in previous years, development activity has concentrated in a few municipalities, particularly Upper Macungie Township, Lower Macungie Township, Forks Township and the City of Allentown. Among residential lots, apartments have remained the most popular type of approval, comprising 58%, while single family detached dwellings and assisted living both comprise the lion's share of the remaining approved residential lots. These proportions contrast starkly with a decade ago, when single family detached dwellings dominated. Meanwhile, among non-residential approvals, nearly 90% of square footage falls within the Industrial classification. Office construction was a distant second.



Note: No Recreation or Transportation approvals in 2014

This year, the Annual Development Report also introduced building permit data for the municipalities as collected by the state's Department of Community and Economic Development. The data for 2013 and 2014 reveals that, similar to subdivision activity, most permits for new construction have been in the townships. However, permits for "other construction" (which includes additions, accessory units or renovations) were quite high for the cities of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton, suggesting that their older housing stock is undergoing considerable upgrades, which may indicate certain homeowners' preference to improving existing units rather than building new, detached housing on greenfields.

The report concludes by identifying key takeaways from all of the analyzed data. Among them are the following: the demand for new apartment and assisted living developments will continue well into the future; industrial warehousing will cluster around key transportation nodes; retail and commercial construction will remain flat. Ultimately, the report will prove particularly cogent to those in the development industry, but it still speaks to others who seek a general understanding on how the Lehigh Valley economy is growing, particularly in terms of land development.