

Section 1. Introduction

The planning process is a means of dealing with change.

--Governor's Center for Local Government Services

Successful places that compete well have good planning, and the growing recognition of the value of regionalism and the importance of regional consensus-building were cornerstones in developing a plan that transcends boundaries, empowers the region and builds on successful foundations.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC)

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, or SPC, is the region's forum for collaboration, planning, and public decision-making. As the official Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the ten-county region, including the City of Pittsburgh and the counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland, SPC is responsible for planning and prioritizing the use of state and federal transportation funds allocated to the region. The Commission has the authority and responsibility to make decisions affecting the 10-county region.

As the Local Development District (LDD) and Economic Development District (EDD) for Southwestern Pennsylvania (as designated by the U.S. Appalachian Regional Commission and the U.S. Department of Commerce), SPC establishes regional economic development priorities and provides a wide range of public services to the region. SPC combines management of community assistance, financial assistance, export and government procurement assistance, and special enterprise development activities with delivery of other state and federal programs to help our region become increasingly competitive in national and global markets.



Mission

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission is the cooperative forum for regional collaboration, planning, and public decision-making. The Commission develops plans and programs for public investments; fulfills federal and state requirements for transportation, economic development, and local government assistance programs; and operates with public involvement and trust.

The 2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania

The 2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania, or 2035 Plan, is the mechanism for connecting the region's vision to an official, coordinated implementation program of projects and actions. The 2035 Plan was developed through an unprecedented community engagement process called Project Region. Project Region was led by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, and was conducted in partnership with a wide range of other public, private and non-profit organizations.



The Project Region process was a set of organized activities to help the 10 counties of Southwestern Pennsylvania work together to develop regional consensus on a growth plan by using analytical tools, community involvement and scenario development to create the most effective strategies. The 2035 Plan is intended to maximize regional assets and infrastructure to achieve balanced, cost effective growth; to capitalize on investments in existing communities; and to strengthen quality job creation and regional economic competitiveness.



As regional plans are implemented through a partnership of many organizations, including governing bodies, road and transit agencies, community groups, and the business and philanthropic communities, it is essential for this regional partnership to be actively involved throughout the plan development process.

Public involvement is the cornerstone of an effective transportation planning process. SPC conducts an open process that actively involves all affected individuals, groups and communities from the earliest

stages, including identifying needs and resources, developing alternatives, and deciding to implement solutions. SPC gives the public an active role by bringing planning directly to residents in each county through Public Participation Panels (PPPs), which reflect the region's diverse needs and perspectives.

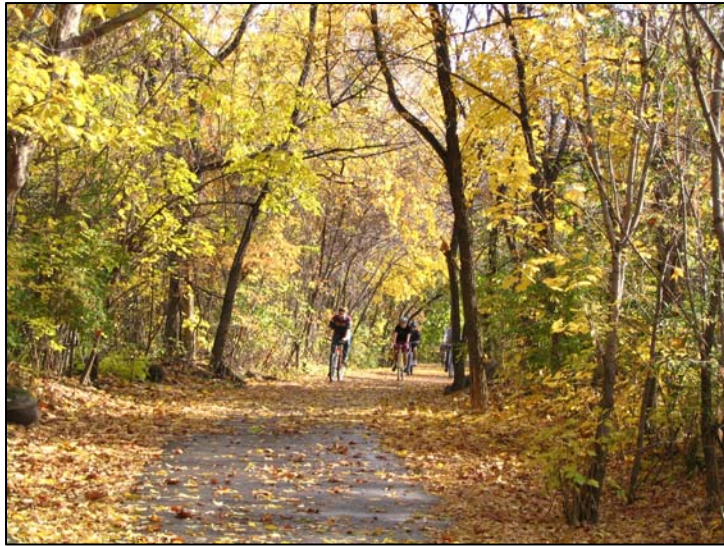
SPC took public involvement to a higher level through the Project Region outreach process. Using a wide range of community engagement techniques, from Economic Development Workshops throughout the region, to Project Region Partners Meetings and a Regional Town Meeting that was conducted live on the Internet, more individuals and organizations in our region participated in the planning process than ever before.

**Transcending Boundaries:
Geographic Building Blocks**

The Project Region process raised the level of transparency in regional planning, and worked to improve its utility, by focusing on the functional rather than the jurisdictional and geographic aspects of the region's communities.

Project Region used the functional groupings of urban, suburban and rural areas in data presentations and in locating its initial community input meetings to encourage participation across county lines. Urban areas include the City of Pittsburgh, the county seats, the urbanized river valleys and smaller communities with urban characteristics. Suburban areas include older, established suburbs like Monroeville and growing suburban communities like Cranberry. Rural areas are those lower-density areas where agriculture and recreation are primary themes, including the small towns and communities that support them.





The concept of looking at the region functionally is based upon the true diversity of the region. Each area performs a distinct function in the regional symbiosis that is Southwestern Pennsylvania. Project Region worked to understand the issues and concerns of the disparate communities of the region while seeking to capitalize on their symbiotic relationships.

Each community has a different set of assets and needs, and the strategies needed to deal with that diversity will also be different. This perspective

allowed for a better understanding of different needs across the region, as well as common concerns and interests.

Regional Long Range Transportation Plan

The regional long range transportation plan (regional plan) is a long range (20+ years) strategy and capital improvement program developed to guide the effective investment of public funds in multi-modal transportation facilities within the context of the regional vision. The regional plan provides the context from which the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a short-range capital improvement program for implementing transportation projects, is drawn. The regional plan is updated every four years in consultation with interested parties.

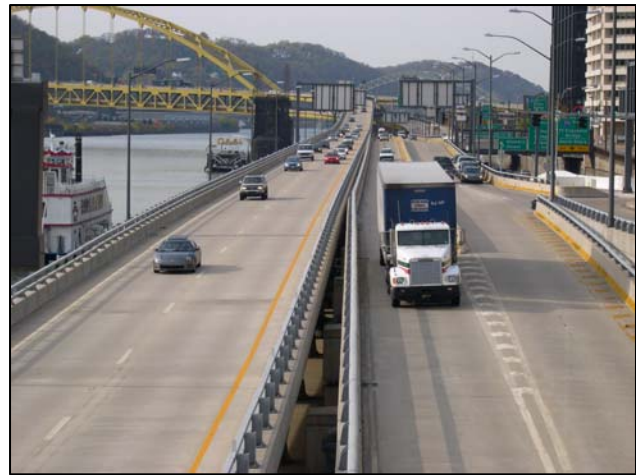
This document was prepared in accordance with the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Section 302 23 C.F.R. Parts 450 and 500, and 49 C.F.R. Part 613.



2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania

The development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan is guided by eight planning factors:

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
4. Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight
7. Promote efficient system management and operation
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system





Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, or CEDS, is the official planning document of regional strategy recognized by the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA). A CEDS is a plan that emerges from a broad-based continuous planning process addressing the economic opportunities and constraints of a region. The guidelines for developing a CEDS include effective general planning practices that can be used by any community to design and implement a plan to guide its economic growth. A CEDS should promote economic development and opportunity, foster effective transportation access, enhance and protect the environment, and balance resources through sound management of development.

This document was developed consistent with section 302 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. § 3162) and EDA regulations at 13 C.F.R. part 303 governing CEDS development. Over the last several CEDS development cycles, SPC, as both the Economic Development District and the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Southwestern Pennsylvania, has integrated its CEDS development with the development of its long range transportation plan as a joint transportation and development plan. The CEDS was developed in conjunction with the long range transportation plan through the Project Region outreach process, a multiyear initiative that incorporated the public, private, civic, and philanthropic sectors of the region.



2035 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania

CEDS development committees and workgroups included the Financial Resources Work Group, the Economic Development Strategies Work Group, the Transportation Strategies Work Group, the Modeling and Forecasting Work Group, the Principals Group, and the Regional Partners Group.