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Rich Fitzgerald Named the New Executive Director of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

Fitzgerald will bring many years of executive leadership experience to the organization

Pittsburgh, PA—The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's (SPC) Board of Directors has named Rich Fitzgerald as the organization's new Executive Director. Fitzgerald will officially assume this role on Jan. 2, 2024 once his tenure as Allegheny County Executive concludes. As the federally certified metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and local development district (LDD) serving 10 counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania, SPC plans for the continued growth of the region.

"Thank you to the SPC and its board for this opportunity and thank you to Vince for his work to energize and elevate the organization during his tenure," said Rich Fitzgerald, SPC's incoming Executive Director. "While I've always had a regional focus, I look forward to putting my skills and relationships to work for all 10 of our counties. Together, we will continue to concentrate on infrastructure, communication, economic development, workforce and quality of life issues for our region."

As the incoming executive director, Fitzgerald will lead a team of 50 staff members. The organization has seven departments which include: economic and workforce development; transportation planning; strategic initiatives and policy; information and data; finance; human resources; and communications and public relations. It acts as a cooperative forum for collaboration, planning, and decision-making. The organization's staff members develop public investment plans and programs, and ensure that federal and state transportation requirements are being met.

"The Board is grateful to Vincent Valdes for positioning SPC to be the region's leading agent of support to local governments for transportation, broadband, and economic development," said Leslie Osche, SPC's Board Chair and Butler County Commissioner. "He laid the groundwork for Mr. Fitzgerald to carry the Commission and our region to the next level. We are excited about the future of our region under Rich's leadership."

Fitzgerald will bring many years of executive leadership experience to SPC. Prior to serving as Allegheny County's Chief Executive, Fitzgerald was a County Council member for 11 years, including being elected four times as Council President. He has served as Allegheny County Executive since 2012. During his tenure as County Executive, Fitzgerald was focused on growing and diversifying the economy, retaining and attracting younger workers, investing in transportation and infrastructure, and improving the county's public services.

Before entering public service, Fitzgerald spent many years in the private sector. He founded and ran his own business, a water treatment services and equipment company. He grew up in Pittsburgh's Bloomfield-Garfield neighborhood before attending Carnegie Mellon University. There, he earned a bachelor of science degree in Mechanical Engineering with a minor in business. He and his wife live in Squirrel Hill and are the proud parents of eight adult children.

"The Board had several objectives when we launched the search process: to attract a candidate that intrinsically understood this region's unique needs and characteristics, had a track record of leadership and growth cultivation, and would build upon the current strength, talent, and consistency of the SPC staff," said Osche. "We interviewed a diverse group of candidates from the region and beyond. Rich Fitzgerald certainly exceeded the Board's robust qualifications and competencies."

The Board of Directors will officially welcome Rich Fitzgerald as SPC's new Executive Director at the organization's next Commission meetings on Dec.11. The organization's current Executive Director, Vincent Valdes, will retire at the end of this year.

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About Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission:

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and local development district (LDD) serving Southwestern Pennsylvania. The organization's coverage area includes Allegheny including the City of Pittsburgh, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington and Westmoreland counties. It is responsible for planning and prioritizing the use of state and federal transportation funding and establishing economic development priorities for the region.