

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Full Commission Meeting

April 27th, 2026



Opening Agenda Items

1. Welcome/Introductions
 - a. Quorum
 - b. Conflict of interest declarations
2. Approval of Minutes from February 23rd Meeting
3. Public Comment

Executive Director's Report

Rich Fitzgerald, Executive Director

Agenda Item: 4



Executive Director's Report

- NFL Draft Recap
 - Transit plan well-executed
 - Thank you Devon and team!
 - New attendance record
- Local improvements opened
 - Arts Landing
 - Market Square



Executive Director's Report

- New state park in Fayette County
 - Laurel Caverns state park announced last month
- Homer City redevelopment progressing
- Former Bruce Mansfield Plant
- Lower Mon Valley development



Executive Director's Report

- TIP meetings starting soon
- Long Range Plan Meeting
 - Great attendance
 - Every county represented
 - Next meeting May 18th (Virtual)
 - Survey open
 - Sign up for next meeting using link on agenda
 - Final LRP meeting week of July 13th



Strategic Initiatives Report

Dj Ryan, Director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives

Agenda Item: 5

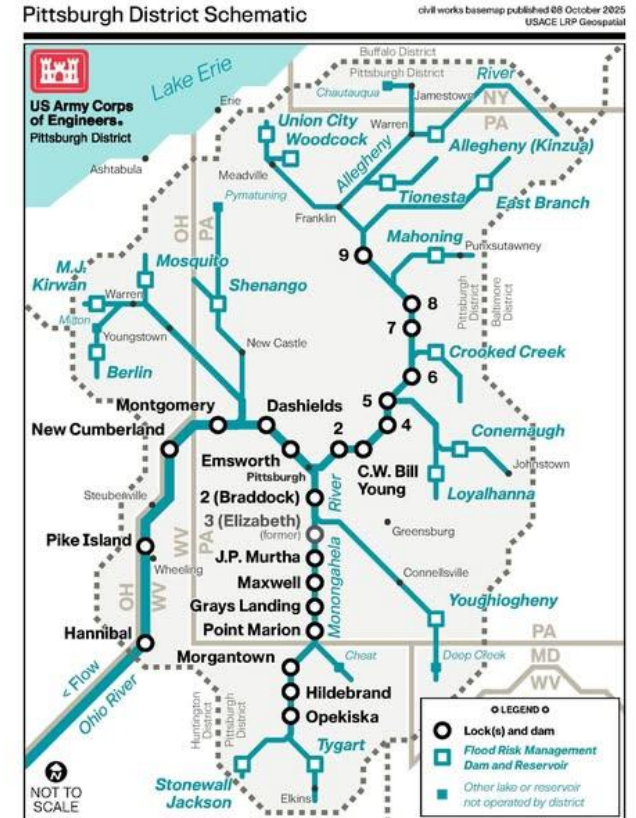


Strategic Initiatives Report

- TIP Pubic Meetings beginning
- Survey for Long Range Plan is OPEN!
 - Please share on your socials, both personal and official
- Register for the next LRP meeting – spcregion.org/LRP
- Loudoun County Trip
 - Thank you to those who attended!
- Allegheny County Airport Authority Discussion
- Housing Study

Strategic Initiatives Report

- Port of Pittsburgh Commission
 - Approved next FY budget and revision to strategic plan
 - USACE Work Plan released
 - Includes \$183M for Montgomery Lock in Beaver County
- Keystone Transportation Funding Coalition
 - Large SWPA Contingent
 - Next meeting on May 5th in Harrisburg



BUILT TO

THRIVE



The Long Range Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania

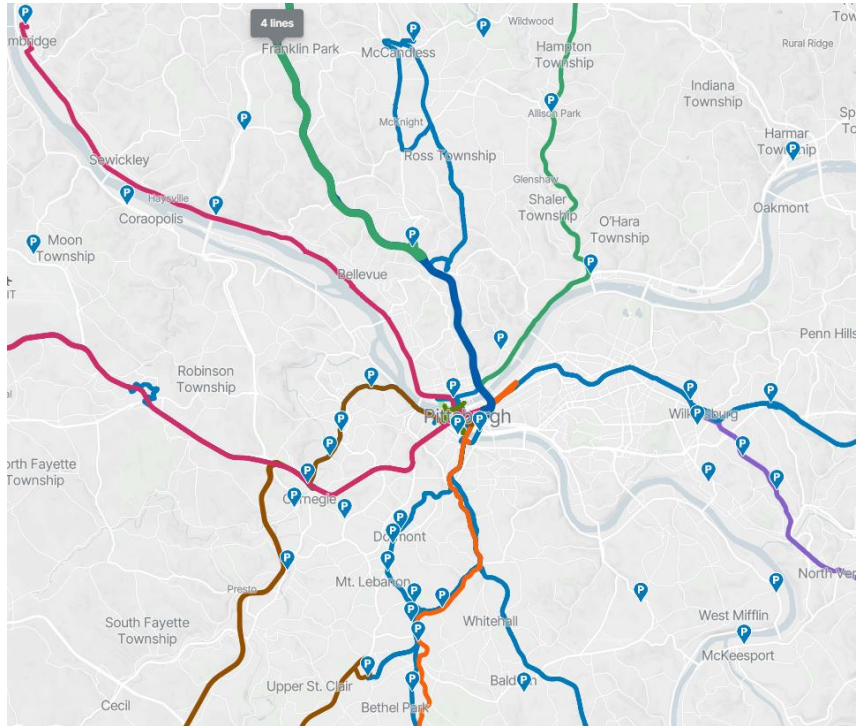
Transportation Report

Lillian Gabreski – Director of Transportation

Agenda Item: 6



NFL Draft Preparation



- Using Remix Platform – transit team created a map of transit service and Park-n-Rides in the greater Pittsburgh region with direct or high-frequency connections to the 2026 NFL Draft
- SPC transit team worked alongside partner organizations to coordinate a comprehensive approach to moving fans safely throughout Pittsburgh and the surrounding region.

NCHRP RSA Pilot & AMPO Presentation

- Safety team staff attended the AMPO 2026 Planning Tools & Training Symposium in Lexington, KY to present on SPC RSA process
- SPC Staff participated in National Highway Cooperative Research Program to revise RSA process to incorporate Safe System Approach. Will serve as tool for state & local practitioners nationwide.
- National Pike (US 40) between US 119 and Canistra Road in Uniontown, PA used as RSA – NCHRP Pilot (3/18)



Allegheny County Vision Zero – Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

Leadership Commitment

As leaders responsible for the safety, mobility, and quality of life for the people who live, work, and travel in Allegheny County, we recognize that traffic deaths and serious injuries are unacceptable and preventable.

This Allegheny County Comprehensive Safety Action Plan reflects the principles of Vision Zero and was developed through a collaborative, data-driven process with input from partners, stakeholders, and the public. It identifies priority safety issues, outlines strategies grounded in the Safe System Approach, and proposes projects to reduce severe crashes across our roadways.

We endorse this plan and its goal to **work toward zero traffic fatalities and serious injuries in Allegheny County by 2050**.

We will:



Support the Plan's Implementation

Integrate its findings, strategies, and priority projects into our respective planning, design, operations, and maintenance programs where feasible.



Prioritize Safety for All Users

Focus on improvements that address the most dangerous parts of the network and protect those most at risk, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and people using transit.



Collaborate Across Jurisdictions

Continue to work collaboratively across jurisdictions, agencies, and disciplines to deliver safety projects efficiently and effectively.



Track and Share Progress

Monitor safety performance and review strategies regularly to progress toward the long-term goal.

By endorsing this plan, we affirm our shared intention to make measurable, sustained progress toward a transportation system in which every journey in Allegheny County ends safely.



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Sara Innamorato
County Executive
Allegheny County

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Corey O'Connor
Mayor
City of Pittsburgh

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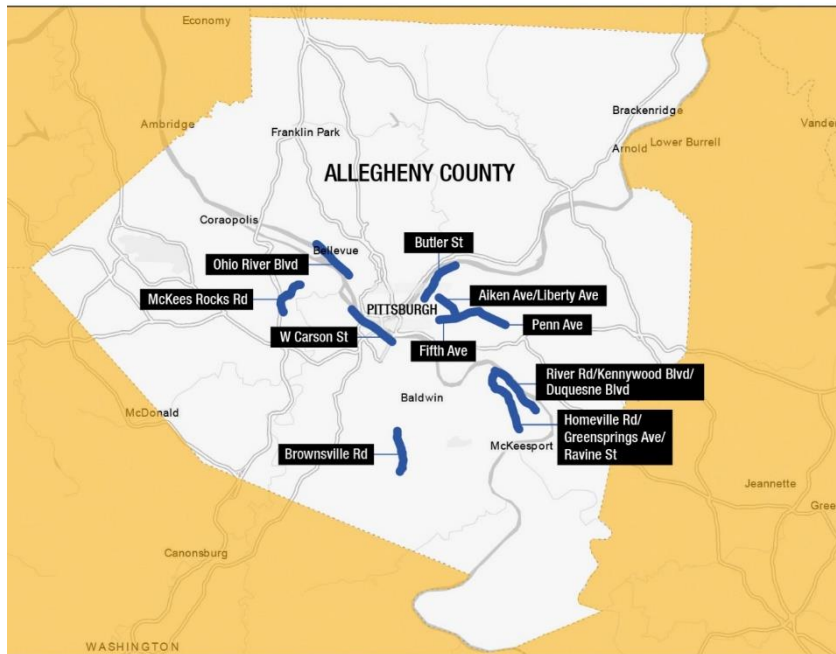
Jason Zang
District Executive
PennDOT District 11-O

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Katharine Kelleman
Chief Executive Officer
Pittsburgh Regional Transit

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Rich Fitzgerald
Executive Director
Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



Transportation Department Meetings

- Keystone Funding Coalition Meeting (3/17)
- IRISE Transportation Forum (3/19)
- PennDOT District 12 Annual Construction Kick-Off Event (4/1)
- Versailles Ave Viaduct Bridge Project Announcement (4/1)
- Network Appalachia Presentation (4/8)
- Funding Workshop/Grant Seminars:
 - Representative Jill Cooper – Westmoreland County



Transportation Department Updates

- Regional Operations Plan (ROP) Update Meetings in each district
- PennDOT NEVI Program – Western Region funding round announced in late May
- USDOT RFI: Transportation Digital Infrastructure
 - RIDC, Carnegie Mellon, Pitt IRISE
- Bike + Walk to Work Day – May 12th

Region Timelines

Most dates below are estimates and are subject to change. See the Community Charging Funding Opportunities below for exact dates, as they become available.

	Southeastern	Western	Central	Eastern
Funding Opportunity Published	February 19, 2026	May 2026	Aug./Sept. 2026	Aug./Sept. 2026
Deadline to Submit Proposals	August 21, 2026	Nov./Dec. 2026	March/April 2027	March/April 2027
Award Announcements	Oct./Nov. 2026	Feb./March 2027	June/July 2027	June/July 2027

2027 TIP Development



2027 TIP Update

- All 21 Work Group Meetings Completed
- FTA and PennDOT BPT have reviewed draft list of transit projects. Meetings with operators wrapping up.
- TTC approved the draft TIP project list at its March meeting and advanced it to air quality conformity and public involvement activities.
- The Preliminary Draft SPC TIP has been reviewed by Central Office and has moved to Interagency Consultation Group for review of air quality significant projects.
- The latest application round of SPC Smart Transportation for Livable Communities opened on 2/16 & closed on 4/10. Staff are reviewing applications and starting evaluation process.
- **June Commission Meeting – Commission will vote on adopting the 2027 TIP, amending the Long Range Plan based on the 2027 TIP and finding that the region’s fiscally constrained 2027-2030 TIP and long range plan conform to the federal Clean Air Act by supporting its intention to achieving and maintaining NAAQS.**

2027 Draft TIP

- Draft TIP is Fiscal Years 2027-2030
- Highway/Bridge = \$2 billion Transit = \$2.6 billion
- Transportation asset management and safety needs in the region far exceed available funding for projects.
- Draft TIP is 85% carryover from 2025 TIP and 15% new projects
- Non-Interstate Candidate projects exceeded \$2.8 billion
- Extensive coordination and cooperation with our PennDOT Districts, City and County reps. Held 21 meetings with our PennDOT District TIP Work Groups.
- SPC has conducted extensive Public Involvement holding 10 public meetings in member counties in Fall of 2025
- A formal public comment period and another round of public meetings are scheduled in May and early June.
- Commission will consider adoption of the 2027 TIP at its June meeting.



TIP Public Meetings

More details at
<https://www.spcregion.org/events/>

- Indiana County – May 7th 3-5pm @ CareerLink Building
- Fayette County – May 11th 1:30-3:30pm @ Gallatin Building
- Armstrong County – May 14th 4-6pm @ Kittanning Township Fire Department
- Washington County – May 19th 11:30am-1:30pm @ Crossroads Building
- Lawrence County – May 20th 2-4pm VIRTUAL
- Greene County – May 20th 2-4pm @ PennDOT Engineering District Building in Waynesburg
- Allegheny County & City of Pittsburgh – May 27th 3-5pm VIRTUAL
- Westmoreland County – May 28th 11am-1pm @ Westmoreland County Planning Offices
- Butler County – June 3rd 4-6pm @ Forward Township Municipal Building
- Beaver County – June 4th 12-2pm @ Beaver County Courthouse

2027 Long Range Plan Development



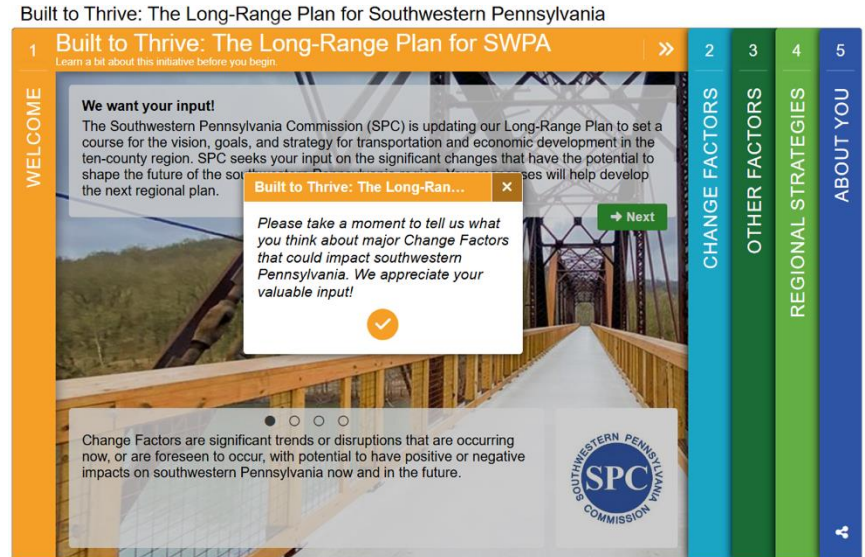
Expert Panel Meeting 1

- First expert panel work group meeting held on March 23rd at the Steamfitters Event Center in Harmony, PA
- Groups split into five focus areas – Transportation, Technology, Land Use/Development, Funding and Socioeconomics
- Content will be used to develop survey and prepare for next meeting – where group will start identifying strategies
- Thank you!



Long Range Plan Timeline

- October 2025: SPC Executive Committee Briefing
- December 2025: SPC Commission Briefing
- March 23rd, 2026: Expert Resource Panel Meeting 1
- April 2026: Survey 1 Launch
- May 18th, 2026: Expert Resource Panel Meeting 2
 - link provided in packet, invitations to go out this week
- July 2026: Policy Conference
- October – November 2026: Fall Public Meetings and Survey 2
- April - May 2027: Spring Public Meetings
- June 2027: Long Range Plan Adoption



[Privacy](#) - [About MetroQuest](#)

Regional Trail Development Capacity & Needs Assessment

Leann Chaney, Senior Active Transportation Planner

Agenda Item: 6a



2025 Active Transportation Plan

Four Regional Focus Areas

- **Regional Trail Coordination:** Establish a formal entity responsible for the planning, development, and funding of trails at the regional level, to include coordination with railroad companies where applicable.
- **Funding**
- **Sidewalk Maintenance and Repairs**
- **Model Policy Development**



2025 Active Transportation
Plan
for Southwestern Pennsylvania

Regional Trail Capacity & Needs Assessment Goals

- Identify trail development challenges, capacity, and needs
- Explore potential creation of a regional support structure



SOUTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA
COMMISSION

REGIONAL TRAIL
DEVELOPMENT
CAPACITY & NEEDS
ASSESSMENT

April 2026



Allegheny | Armstrong | Beaver | Butler | Fayette | Greene | Indiana | Lawrence | Pittsburgh | Washington | Westmoreland

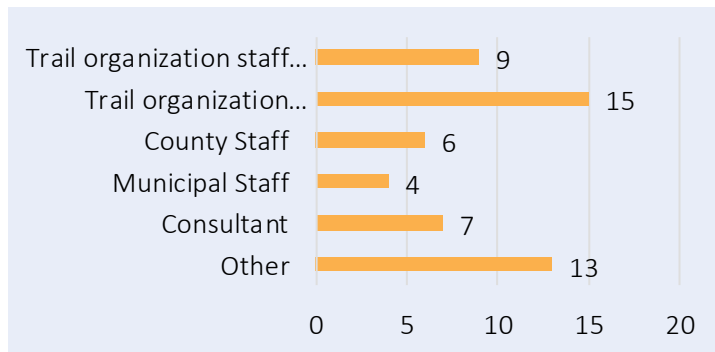
Stakeholder Input

- Steering Advisory Group
- Focus Groups
 - State Agencies
(PennDOT, DCNR, DCED)
 - County Staff
(Planners, Parks & Recreation, Conservation Districts)
 - Regional/National Trail Organizations
(e.x., Rails to Trails Conservancy, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, North Country Trail Association)
 - Local Trail Organizations
(e.x., Montour Trail Council, Steel Valley Trail Council, Sheepskin Trail)
- Individual Meetings
(Adam Mattis, DCNR, Trish Meek, PennDOT)

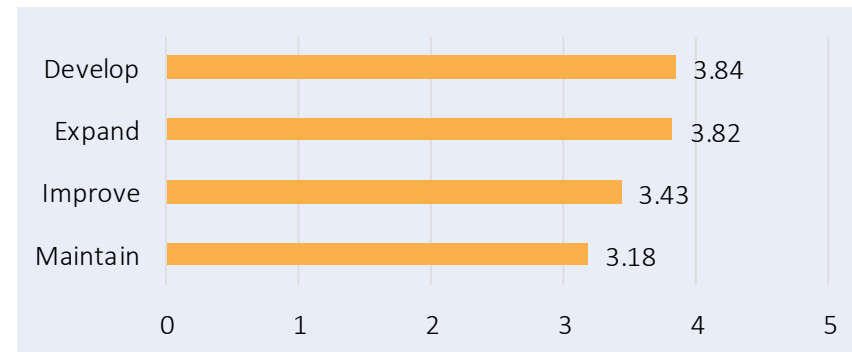


Survey Key Findings

Role in Trail Development



Ease of maintaining, improving, expanding, developing trail networks



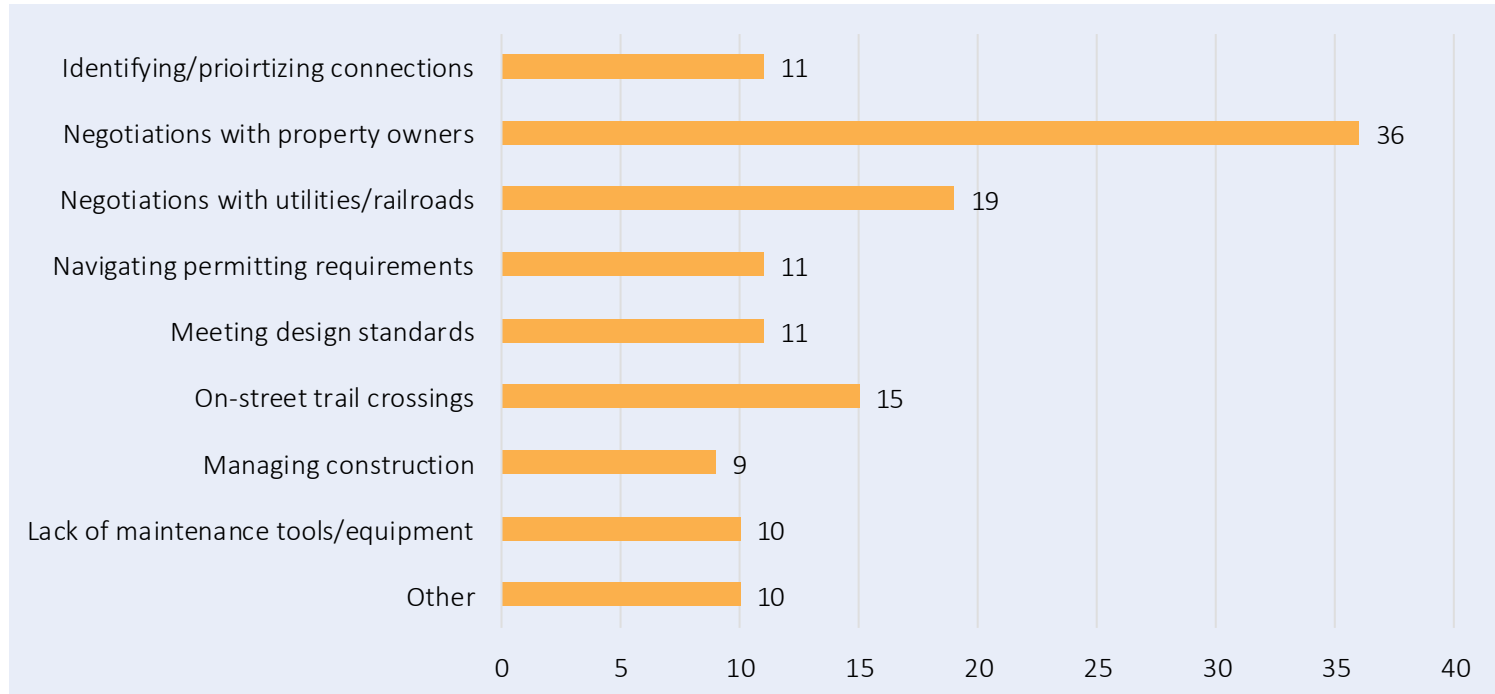
Survey Key Findings

Administrative/Management Challenges



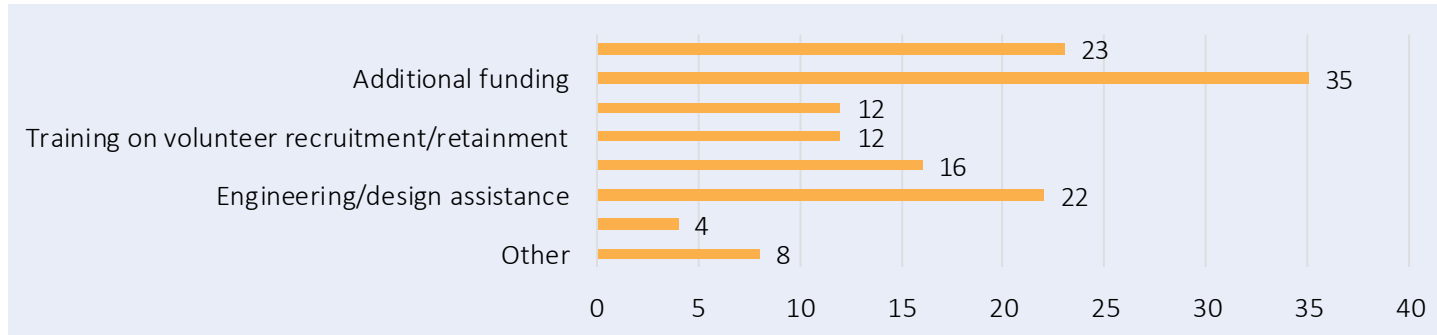
Survey Key Findings

Trail Development Challenges

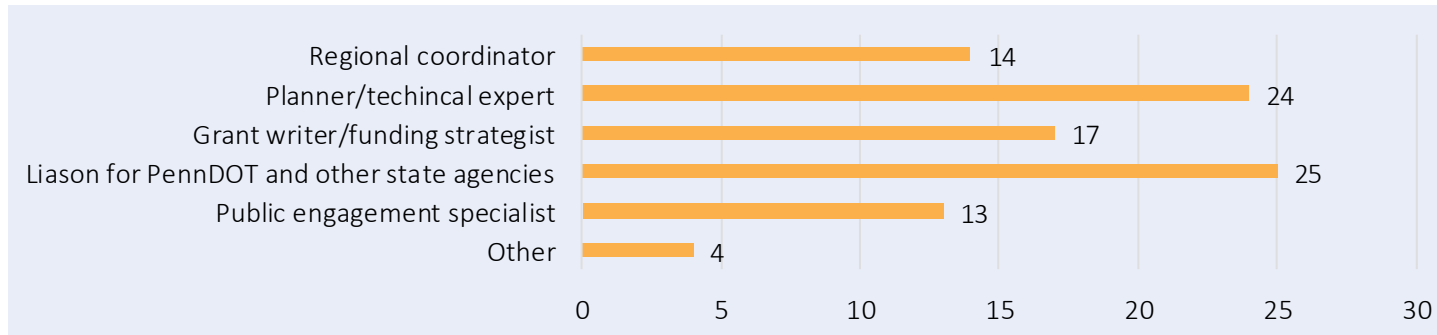


Survey Key Findings

Beneficial Support



Valuable Support Roles



Identified Needs, Challenges, & Opportunities

FREQUENCY	CATEGORY	FOCUS AREA	NEED/GAP	SOURCE	ACTIONS TO CLOSE GAPS	
	Funding & Finance	Lack of Available Funding	Not enough funding for all of the planned projects in the region	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with grant writing skills Knowledge of funding programs Political support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraising strategies Leveraging in-kind services Matching grants
	Funding & Finance	Cost for Engineering/Design	Inability to pay consultant fees to conduct feasibility studies, engineering, and design work	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with grant writing skills Knowledge of funding programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political support Fundraising strategies
	Human Resources	Staff/Volunteer Availability	Difficulty with coordination and availability of existing staff and volunteers	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear communication channels Set expectations Clear onboarding process and ongoing training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define roles and responsibilities Show appreciation Use technology (shared calendars, group chats, etc.)
	Planning & Management	Navigating Processes/Policies	Lack of understanding of different agency processes and policies or the differences between districts/divisions of the same agency	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare education/communications plan Use a centralized platform to share information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicize SPC's Active Transportation Resource Center as the central platform
	Planning & Management	Property Access/ Right-of-Way Negotiations with Property Owners	Difficulty negotiating with private property owners to purchase property or come to terms for access easements through private property	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve professionals (land trust, governments, legal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire an expert
	Funding & Finance	Maintenance Costs	Costs are rising and maintenance funding is limited	Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistance with grant writing skills Knowledge of funding programs Political support Fundraising strategies Collaboration among groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer labor Design trails with preventative practices to mitigate climate change impacts Build maintenance into future trail projects
	Operations & Maintenance	Volunteer Recruitment/Retention	Difficult to recruit and retain of new volunteers	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with local businesses, clubs, organizations Volunteer training programs (including safety protocols) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community outreach (social media, news, etc.) to recruit new and younger volunteers
	Human Resources	Succession Planning	Uncertainty around plans to replace founding staff and volunteers who are "aging out" and not able to participate in the organization as in the past	Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct organizational audit Succession planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and recruit leaders Show appreciation
	Planning & Management	Funding Knowledge	Lack of staff or volunteers with grant writing experience or the time/capacity to develop complicated applications for many state and federal funding programs	Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a grant writing consultant Attend grantsmanship classes or trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with other trail groups that do grant writing
	Planning & Management	Property Access/ Right-of-Way Negotiations with Utilities/Railroads	Difficulty negotiating with railroad companies to purchase property, negotiate easements, or relocate utilities for trail projects	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve professionals (governments, legal) Hire an expert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize benefits for railroad/utility Identify their concerns
	Planning & Management	Property Access /Right-of-Way Trail Crossings/ Intersections	Difficulty securing permits and/or specific design features (signage, crosswalks, etc.) when trails cross state or local roadways	Survey, Focus Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage roadway owner early Hire an expert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review agency requirements (manuals/publications)
	Planning & Management	Liability Issues/Concerns	Trail groups are not protected from liability/safety lawsuits in the same way as municipalities or the Commonwealth	Stakeholder Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with a lawyer Example legal agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review insurance options
	Community	Public Outreach Shared Marketing/Messaging	Lack of cohesive regional marketing, messaging, signage, etc.	Trail support/ partnership research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create regional goals Develop a unified brand strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster collaboration amongst trail and tourism groups
	Planning & Management	Strategic Planning	Many individual trail plans in the region, but the region is lacking collaboration among trail groups	Trail support/ partnership research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare regional trail strategic plan 	

Identified Needs, Challenges, & Opportunities

- Administrative Challenges
 - Coordination and availability of exiting staff and volunteers
 - Recruitment and retention of new volunteers
 - Costs of studies, engineering, and design
- Trail Development Challenges
 - Lack of available funding
 - Grant management (reporting and administrative requirements)
 - Property acquisition
 - Railroad right-of-way
 - Trail crossings

Existing Support / Governance & Funding Models

- Explored and Recorded Existing Trail Support
- Explored Governance & Funding Models
 - Nonprofit 501(c)(3)
 - Public Authority
 - MPO Program
 - Technical Assistance Program with/without Consultant Support
 - Coalition
- Benchmarking

Proposed Study Outcomes

- Create a Regional Trail Coordinator Position
 - SPC considering reorganizing staff to include someone that could serve as a centralized resource for Southwest PA trail organizations.
- Develop Robust, Centralized Trail Resources
 - Feedback indicated that establishing a new trail support organization is not needed.
 - Gaps are related to technical assistance, coordination with state agencies, and connections to existing resources.

Additional Tactics

- Update Smart Moves Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Conduct Periodic Peer Learning/Networking Events
- Develop Framework for a Regional Trail Coalition or Forum
- Enhance Active Transportation Resource Center
- Coordinate with related Regional and Statewide Efforts
- Identify additional trail Funding Opportunities

Feedback on Report

- Robust, comprehensive study
- Could serve as a Peer Study / transition to Circuit Rider (DCNR)
- Survey results - Western PA GW + Trails Summit (August 2026)
- Survey questions - PEC ARC Ready project
- Opportunities to share lessons learned + best practices

Thank you!



Workforce & Economic Development Update

Jenn Lasser – Director Workforce & Econ Development

Agenda Item: 7

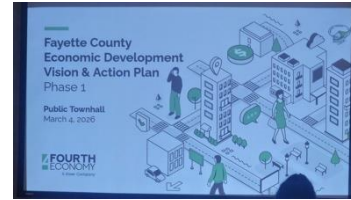


Workforce & Economic Development Update & Priorities Jan-February 2025

- Small Business Support
 - Loans - 2
 - Export – Food Show Meeting
 - Gov. Contracting – 8 awards
- Water Resource Center
 - Chartiers Creek
- Grant Season
 - ARC and EDA
 - POWER
 - Getting the Grant
 - INSPIRE
- DCED PREP/Engage (Q4)
- EDA Planning
 - CEDS Process/LRP
- Rural Health Care Transformation Funding
- Grants Submitted:
 - EDA Partner Planning
 - ARC Administration
- Grants in draft
 - ARISE

Economic Development Team Activities

- Data Center Tours - Sterling, VA
- Community Foundation – Washington PA
- Grant Seminar – Rep Shaffer
- Fayette County Economic Development Vision & Action Plan Meeting
- DCED Visit to Pittsburgh Promise
- Appalachian Leadership Institute - Abingdon VA
- LDD Meeting Harrisburg, PA
- NEOCITY - Kissimmee, Florida
- NADO/DDAA – Washington DC
- Urban Agriculture Webinar



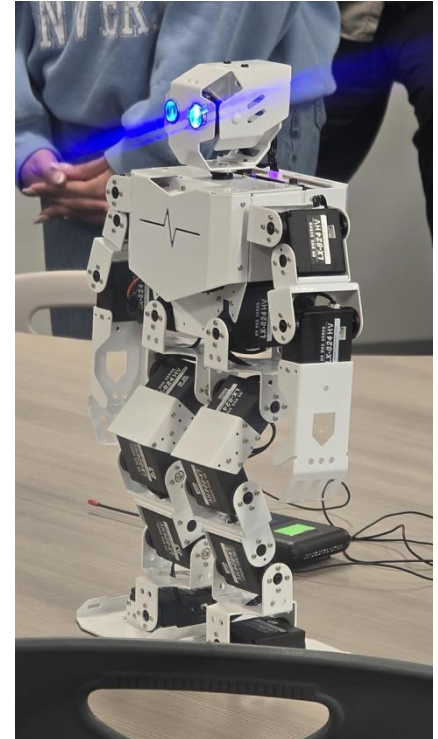
Spotlight: Network Appalachia Meeting

- April 8th-9th 2026 in Pittsburgh PA
- Transportation and logistics professionals from 13 states including federal and state partners (DCED)
- Hosted by ARC and supported by SPC as LDD – providing site visits, speakers, logistics and tours
- Presenters included: SPC, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, RAMP, CMU, Cambridge Economics, PennStart, IUP, Aurora and Heartland Fabrication
- Tours to NREC, Mill 19 and Pittsburgh sites



Spotlight: Building Better Regions

- April 22nd-24th 2026
- Kissimmee Florida (NEOCITY)
- BBBRC Partners & EDA
- SPC attended and spoke on panel spotlighting our workforce success
- Focused on what's next and the remaining months of grant
- Opportunities for future grants and growth



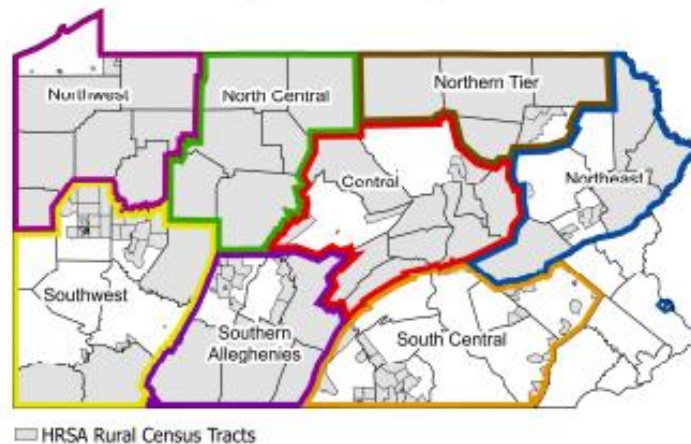
Build Back Better - Update

- 5 Months Remaining of Contract
 - then a 60 Day program closeout
- PRIORITY: Spending down remaining dollars
- PRIORITY: Finding follow-on funding for partners
- Thousands Trained & Educated
 - Semi-Annual Report due April 30th
 - Estimated close to 10,000 trained via Community Colleges, WIB, University systems
 - Working on impact report of equipment
- Robotics & AI Discovery Day – September 16th 2026
 - David L. Lawrence Convention Center
 - 4,500+ attended last year

Spotlight: Rural Healthcare Transformation

- PA Appx 193M awarded of 200M request
 - 5 year renewable program
- DCED PREP Regions will be the service areas
- Five Goals of RHT via CMS:
 - Rural Health
 - Sustainable Access
 - Workforce
 - Innovative Care
 - Technological Innovation
- What's Next:
 - Creation of Boards/Groups
 - Hiring Regional Coordinator
 - Position Listed as Executive Policy Specialist I – Southwest
 - New Grants being released

Figure 2: PREP Regions



Rural Health: Rapid Response Stabilization

RHTP Payments

- Application Dates: May 1, 2026 to June 1, 2026, or until or until the authorized funding cap has been met, whichever is sooner
- Total Available Funding: \$25 million
- Payment amount: \$10,000-\$1,000,000
- Qualified Entities: Hospitals, health care providers, or rural health facilities within specific regions
- To receive an RHTP payment qualified entities must complete and submit the eligibility certification.
- The payment must stabilize or enhance rural health care access, promote rural well-being and fall under one of the following six initiatives in the Department's federally approved RHTP application: (1) Aging and Access, (2) Behavioral Health, (3) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Transportation, (4) Maternal Health, (5) Technology and Infrastructure and (6) Workforce

Rural Health Future Funding Possibilities:

Rapid Response Program RHTP applications for funding tied to:

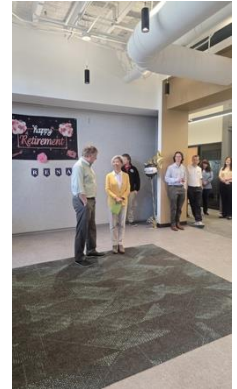
- Aging and Access
- EMS and Transportation
- Maternal Health
- Remote Monitoring
- Technology and Infrastructure
- Workforce

Possible Funding under:

- Payments for electronic health record (EHR) systems and health information provider (HIO) onboarding for specific types of providers
- Payments and applications for funding for mobile health units
- Service linked educational and training awards to support rural workforce
- Surgical Obstetric Fellowship for Family Medicine Physicians (FM-OB)

Thank you Rena Liu-Belshe!

- SPC's International Trade & Export Manager Rena Liu-Belsche has retired after 27 years at SPC
- Rena served 1000's of businesses over her tenure at SPC and program managed SPC's international programming including Bringing the World to PA, Fancy Food Show and so much more
- Jackie Pacheco has worked alongside Rena for the last 17 years and has been promoted to the Export Manager role starting April 2026.



Thank you!

Jenn Lasser



Other Business

Agenda Item: 8



Register for May 18th Expert Panel Session

www.spcregion.org/LRP

Agenda Item: 9



Next Meeting Date: June 22nd, 2026

Agenda Item: 10



Adjourn

