



ANNUAL REPORT

CONNECTING THE REGION

FY23-24



ALLEGHENY, ARMSTRONG, BEAVER,
BUTLER, FAYETTE, GREENE, INDIANA,
LAWRENCE, WASHINGTON,
WESTMORELAND COUNTIES AND THE
CITY OF PITTSBURGH.



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THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC) HEREBY GIVES PUBLIC NOTICE THAT IT IS THE POLICY OF THE COMMISSION TO ASSURE FULL COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, THE CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION ACT OF 1987, EXECUTIVE ORDER 12898 ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND RELATED STATUTES AND REGULATIONS IN ALL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. TITLE VI AND OTHER RELATED STATUTES REQUIRE THAT NO PERSON IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA SHALL, ON THE GROUNDS OF RACE, COLOR, SEX, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, OR DISABILITY, BE EXCLUDED FROM THE PARTICIPATION IN, BE DENIED THE BENEFITS OF, OR BE OTHERWISE SUBJECTED TO DISCRIMINATION UNDER ANY PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY FOR WHICH SPC RECEIVES FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. ANY PERSON WHO BELIEVES THEY HAVE BEEN AGGRIEVED BY AN UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE BY SPC UNDER TITLE VI HAS A RIGHT TO FILE A FORMAL COMPLAINT WITH THE COMMISSION. ANY SUCH COMPLAINT MUST BE IN WRITING AND FILED WITH SPC'S TITLE VI COORDINATOR WITHIN ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY (180) DAYS FOLLOWING THE DATE OF THE ALLEGED DISCRIMINATORY OCCURRENCE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO OBTAIN A TITLE VI DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM, PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE AT: WWW.SPCREGION.ORG OR CALL 412-391-5590.

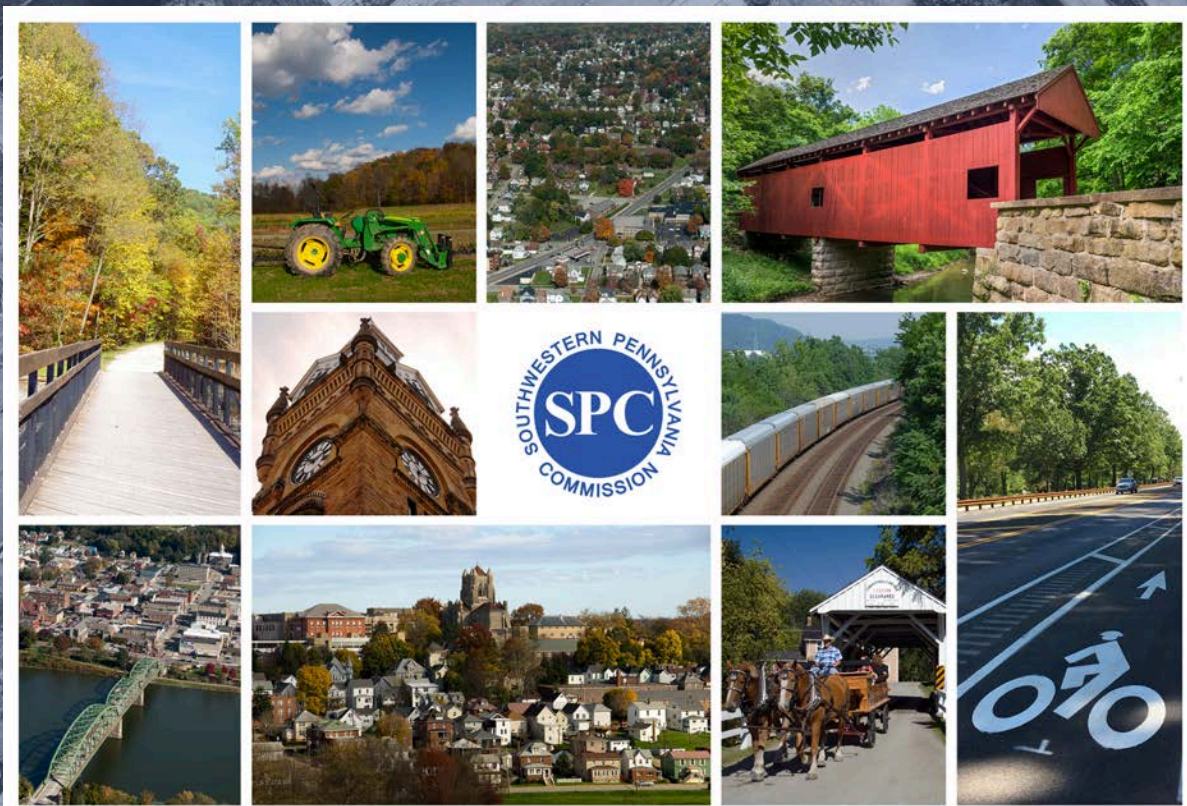
ABOUT SPC

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) is the cooperative forum for regional collaboration, planning, and public decision-making. The organization develops plans and programs for public investments, as well as fulfills federal and state requirements for transportation, economic development, and local government assistance programs.

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Economic Development District (EDD), and Local Development District (LDD), SPC's mission is to ensure that public funding allocated to Southwestern Pennsylvania improves the quality of life for the region's residents. SPC works on behalf of and with Allegheny County, Armstrong County, Beaver County, Butler County, the City of Pittsburgh, Fayette County, Greene County, Indiana County, Lawrence County, Washington County, and Westmoreland County.

To support the region, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, accounts for all funds, enters into contracts, and employs a staff of 50 individuals to carry out SPC's work. Operations are funded through a combination of federal and state planning grants, member contributions, in-kind service contributions, and grants from private foundations that support various planning projects and programmatic activities.

The staff provides an invaluable resource to the region and they have expertise in the areas of transportation, economic and workforce development, strategic initiatives, public outreach, government contracting, export issues, data management, geographic systems, and technical assistance.



COMMISSION MEMBERS

Allegheny County

Sara Innamorato
Jesse Di Renna
Daniel Grzybek
Gil Berry
Chris Sandvig

Fayette County

Scott Dunn
Vincent A. Vicites
Dave Lohr
Fred Junko
Robert Lesnick

Washington County

Nick Sherman
Electra Janis
Larry Maggi
Robert Griffith
John Timney

Governor's Office

Laura Sohinki

Federal Highway Administration*

Alicia Nolan

U. S. Economic Development Administration*

Planning Partners

Army Corps of Engineers
Neighboring MPOs/RPOs
PA Broadband Authority
PA Dept. of Environmental Protection

Armstrong County

John Strate
Anthony Shea
Pat Fabian
Darin Alviano
Michael Baker

Greene County

Jared Edgreen
Betsy McClure
Blair Zimmerman
Jeff Marshall
Jeremy Kelly

Westmoreland County

Sean Kertes
Douglas Chew
Ted Kopas
Tom Ceraso
Robert Regola

Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development

Johnna Pro

Federal Transit Administration*

Theresa Garcia-Crews

Pittsburgh Region Clean Cities
Transit Operators
Transportation Management
Associations

Beaver County

Daniel Camp
Tony Amadio
Jack Manning
Kelly Gray
Charles Jones

Indiana County

Mike Keith
Bonni Dunlap
Sherene Hess
Mark Hilliard
Byron G. Stauffer, Jr.

City of Pittsburgh

Ed Gainey
Scott Bricker
Aadil Ginwala
Joylette Portlock
Barb Warwick

Port Authority of Allegheny County (1 Vote)

Katharine Kelleman
Ed Typanski

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

Laura Mohollen

Funders

PennDOT
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Authority
Economic Development
Administration

Butler County

Leslie A. Osche
Kevin Boozel
Kim Geyer
Amber Davis
Mark Gordon

Lawrence County

Daniel J. Vogler
Chris Sainato
Dan Kennedy
Brad Berlin
Amy McKinney

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (2 Votes)

Brian Allen
Rachel Duda
Brandon Leach
Kristin Mulkerin
Jason Zang

Transit Operators Committee

Sheila Gombita

Federal Aviation Administration*

Appalachian Regional Commission
PA DCED
DOD/DLA
Member Counties
The Hillman Foundation

NOTE: These are the officers and members as of December 2024 when this report was published.

**Nonvoting Members*





MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

When I first learned about the opening for the Executive Director position at SPC, I was contemplating what my next step would be. As the Allegheny County Executive for 12 years, my term was coming to an end. I knew I wanted to continue in a role that would allow me to serve the region, and be a part of a team that works to improve the quality of life for area residents.

As County Executive, I had served as a member of, and at one time, Board Chair of SPC. During that time, I had a front-row seat to witness SPC in action and learn about the various state and federal programs that the organization either directly supports or is responsible for administering.

Southwestern Pennsylvania's topography is as diverse as our region. More than 2.6 million individuals call our rural, suburban, and urban communities home, and each locality has its own set of unique needs and priorities.

Whether our team has helped to plan for highway expansion projects, to increasing access to trails, to supporting small businesses with loans, to cultivating broadband initiatives, to developing road safety recommendations, the impact of our organization's planning work—while very often conducted behind-the-scenes—is certainly felt by area residents every single day.

This report does not include every project or accomplishment that SPC made in FY23-24, but it does highlight a few of the successes that the region should be incredibly proud of. It also demonstrates the robust activities that SPC has undertaken that the general public may not realize came to fruition because of conversations and initiatives that first started here.

As I quickly approach the one year mark of leading SPC, I am tremendously proud of the staff's work and the counties that we are privileged to serve. Improving the quality of life for our region's residents takes significant planning, time, and resources. While this type of work does not happen instantaneously, it does take our members regularly coming together and working collaboratively.

SPC plays a vital role in planning for the overall future of Southwestern Pennsylvania, and I am confident that we are well-positioned to foster innovative approaches that help to solve the economic, transportation, infrastructure, and environmental challenges that will undoubtedly lie ahead for the region.

We are always stronger when we unite around shared goals, interests, and values. Each member and entity of our Commission wants the region to succeed. If the region as a whole succeeds, we all reap the benefits. As we take time to reflect on what SPC has accomplished thus far, know that I am focused on the future. There is much to do, but together, we will continue to propel the region forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rich Fitzgerald". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

RICH FITZGERALD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE REGION



EASTERN MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR PROJECT

Earlier this year, U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, alongside elected officials like Lt. Governor Austin Davis, Senator John Fetterman, Congresswoman Summer Lee, Congressman Chris Deluzio, Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato, and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Secretary Mike Carroll, came to Southwestern Pennsylvania to announce that our organization, along with Pittsburgh Regional Transit and PennDOT, was being awarded a \$142 million grant to support the Eastern Pittsburgh Multimodal Corridor project.

This project will make improvements for residents residing in the eastern suburbs of Allegheny County, Westmoreland County, and the southern portion of Indiana County, offering expedited commuting routes. These funds will facilitate enhancements to the MLK Busway, the Parkway, remediation of the "bathtub," and the repair of several bridges. By mitigating congestion along the Parkway and enhancing overall accessibility, the region stands to experience a marked improvement in transportation efficiency.

Specifically, this project will install a new flood wall that fixes the re-occurring flooding in the bathtub in downtown, and construct a new ramp to connect I-376 with the East Busway.

This would provide buses an alternate inbound route from the eastern suburbs to the Busway. It will also deploy an Active Traffic Management system for the Parkway. Components will include overhead gantries every quarter to one-half mile, overhead lane use control signs, variable speed limit signs, queue and wrong-way detection system with automated motorist advisories, and dynamic message signs along the corridor and intersecting roadways. Additionally, this project will install Adaptive Traffic Signal Control along 4.8 miles of two important arterials that feed into I-376: Penn Avenue and South Braddock Avenue. It will address 10 aging bridges along the busway, and complete slope protection in landslide-prone areas of busway. Finally, it will also add 1.2 miles of sidewalk, 14 high-visibility crosswalks, and two pedestrian rapid flashing beacons on Business 22 corridor in Wilkins and Monroeville.

Overall, this project will streamline travel routes, enhance safety, and increase access for those that live in our region's eastern communities.

HEARING FROM THE RESIDENTS OF SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA



As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), one of our responsibilities is to draft the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP outlines specific initiatives for the next 25 years and those are implemented through shorter-term Transportation Improvement Programs which are often called TIPs.

The 2025-2028 TIP, has over \$4.5 billion in investments to addresses various transportation modes and connections. We are required by the state and federal government to host a 30 day comment period with public meetings in an effort to solicit community feedback on the plan. Between May 8 through June 7, our team hosted 11 public meetings in Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Indiana, Greene, Lawrence, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties, as well as the City of Pittsburgh.

We received 54 comments from area residents that pertained to transit, roadway conditions, passenger rail, safety, active transportation methods and a variety of other issues important to the region. Our team responds to the comments and submits a robust public comment report to PennDOT that is a part of the TIP plan.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

COMMISSIONER HARRISBURG TRIP



We recently embarked on a highly successful visit to Harrisburg, where our Commissioners engaged in productive meetings with senior state officials. The focus of these discussions was on the region's key priorities, particularly related to transportation, infrastructure, and economic development. During the visit, we had the opportunity to highlight and advocate for several critical priorities affecting our region, including:

- **Broadband Expansion:** Ensuring equitable access to high-speed internet across underserved areas.
- **Site Permitting:** Streamlining processes to support economic growth and development.
- **Transportation:** Addressing infrastructure needs to improve connectivity and mobility.
- **Infrastructure:** Advocating for improvements in our physical infrastructure to foster long-term regional growth.

WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2024

We also made significant progress on a major legislative initiative. Through our efforts, we successfully advocated for the inclusion of language in both the House and Senate versions of the Water Resources Development Act of 2024. This language will:

- **Preserve Service Levels:** Ensure that service levels on the Allegheny River are maintained for the next several years.
- **Economic Impact Study:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will conduct a comprehensive economic impact study of the river, assessing its importance to regional commerce, transportation, and local economies.



TRANSPORTATION

STRENGTHENING OUR REGION'S BRIDGE NETWORK

From July 2023 to June 2024, our organization made significant strides in improving the region's infrastructure. Through our Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding, 23 structurally deficient bridges were let for replacement or rehabilitation, ensuring safer travel for residents and commuters. Additionally, 78 non-structurally deficient bridges were let for preservation or restoration to extend their lifespan, while over 71 miles of roadway resurfacing projects were let for construction across the region. These investments reflect our commitment to enhancing mobility, safety, and connectivity for Southwestern Pennsylvania's communities. By focusing on critical infrastructure improvements, the region is now better equipped to support the flow of commerce and daily travel, creating a foundation for continued growth and prosperity.



A NEW CHAPTER FOR INDIANA COUNTY'S BIKE/PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE PROJECT

In Indiana County, the long-awaited Bike/Pedestrian Bridge over Route 22 stood as a vision for years—a crucial link to enhance safety and mobility for walkers and cyclists. After years of planning and preparation, the County faced an unexpected obstacle: a significant funding shortfall during the construction bidding stage. With the project at a critical juncture, the future of the bridge seemed uncertain. But thanks to our Carbon Reduction Program, this vital project was given new life. Indiana County applied for assistance through the Carbon Reduction Program, and in January 2024, we stepped in to address the funding gap, advancing an additional \$2.8 million in construction funds, reprogrammed through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This infusion of resources ensured that the project could stay on track and move forward. Now, with the collaboration of PennDOT District 10, Indiana County is preparing for an anticipated construction start in August 2024.



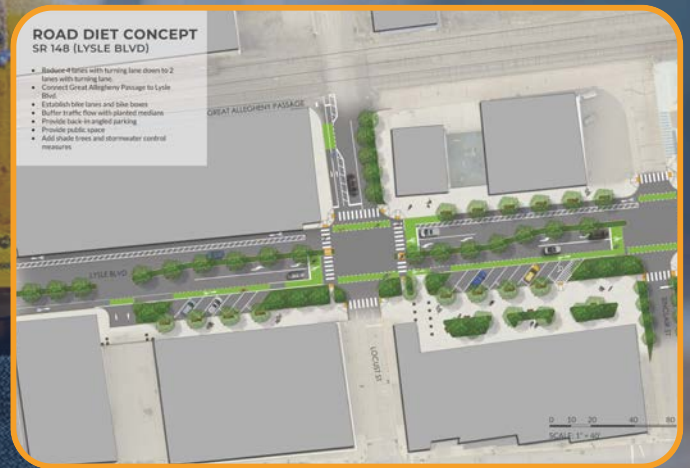
TRANSPORTATION

RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT OPERATIONS & SAFETY IN THE REGION

To advance regional safety, our team conducted comprehensive Road Safety Audits across PennDOT Districts 10, 11, and 12, along with our first Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Audit on Lysle Boulevard in McKeesport, Allegheny County. This landmark audit focused on improving pedestrian and cyclist safety along the corridor, where fieldwork identified key areas needing enhanced protective measures.

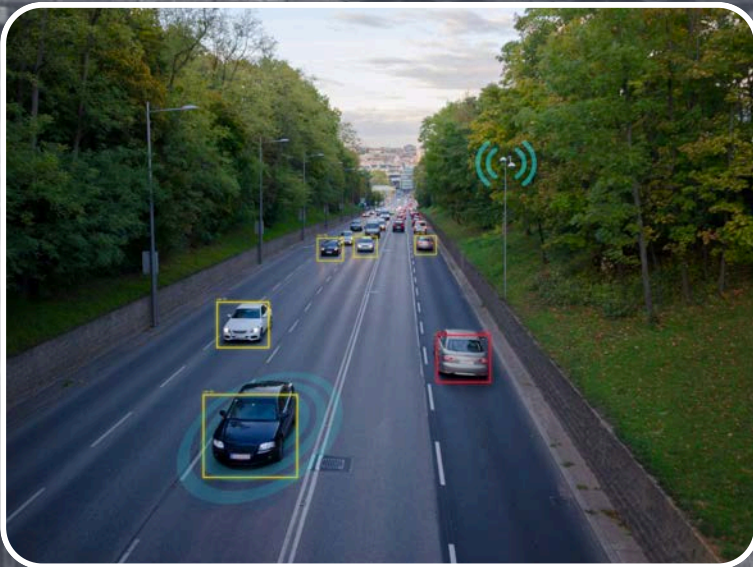
By examining traffic volumes and the feasibility of implementing a road diet, the audit team proposed strategies to calm traffic and reduce vehicle speeds. Among the long-term recommendations was a roundabout that would act as a gateway to the city, offering both aesthetic and functional benefits while enhancing safety. As a proven countermeasure to reduce crash severity, the roundabout is a step toward creating a safer, more welcoming environment for McKeesport's residents and visitors.

This initiative has both raised awareness about operational and safety improvements and strengthened our commitment to safer, more accessible roadways for all in Southwestern Pennsylvania.



DATA & INFORMATION

ADVANCING TRAFFIC COUNTING METHODS THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



In the fall of 2023, we took a bold step forward in modernizing traffic data collection by deploying the iTHEIA Video-Based AI Traffic Counting system. This cutting-edge technology was introduced to solve a significant challenge: conducting 24-hour traffic counts on roadways deemed too unsafe for traditional tube counters or where standard data collection methods were limited.

Throughout the 2023-2024 counting season, we conducted 69 counts using the iTHEIA system, transforming how traffic data is gathered across the region. The AI-powered system has improved not only the accuracy and efficiency of data collection but also safety for the team, eliminating the need for manual setups in hazardous locations.

This new approach ensures that we can monitor high-risk or hard-to-reach areas with precision, providing invaluable insights for planning and improving the region's roadways. As we continue to embrace innovative technologies, the iTHEIA system is paving the way for smarter, more informed infrastructure decisions, supporting safer and more efficient transportation for all of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

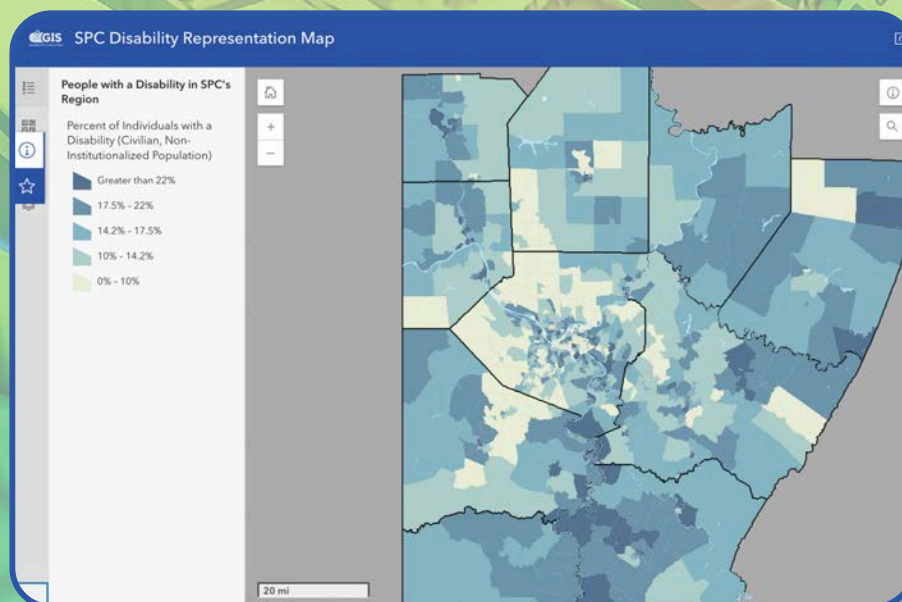


DATA & INFORMATION

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES WITH DATA: OUR NEW LAND USE AND DISABILITY REPRESENTATION TOOL

This year, we introduced several innovative tools designed to provide valuable insights for regional planning and community development. Two standout resources—the new Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) application and the Disability Representation map—are making it easier for communities, decision-makers, and planners to access critical data at various levels of detail. The Land Use/Land Cover application offers comprehensive LULC data for the entire 10-county region, as well as individual counties and municipalities. This tool provides a detailed view of how land is being used across Southwestern Pennsylvania, from urban development to agricultural areas, forests, and wetlands. With customizable levels of detail, users can explore the patterns of land use and make informed decisions about future development, zoning, and sustainability efforts.

We also launched the Disability Representation map, a powerful tool that displays information about residents with disabilities in each Census Tract across the region. By providing detailed demographic data, this map helps local governments, service providers, and community organizations better understand the needs of residents with disabilities and plan for more inclusive infrastructure, services, and programs. It is a vital resource for ensuring that all members of the community have access to the opportunities and amenities that improve quality of life. Both of these tools are part of our commitment to increasing accessibility to high-quality data and supporting regional collaboration. These resources are available through the SPC Open Data ArcGIS Hub Site, where users can explore a variety of maps, applications, and spatial datasets that help shape smarter, more equitable development in Southwestern Pennsylvania.

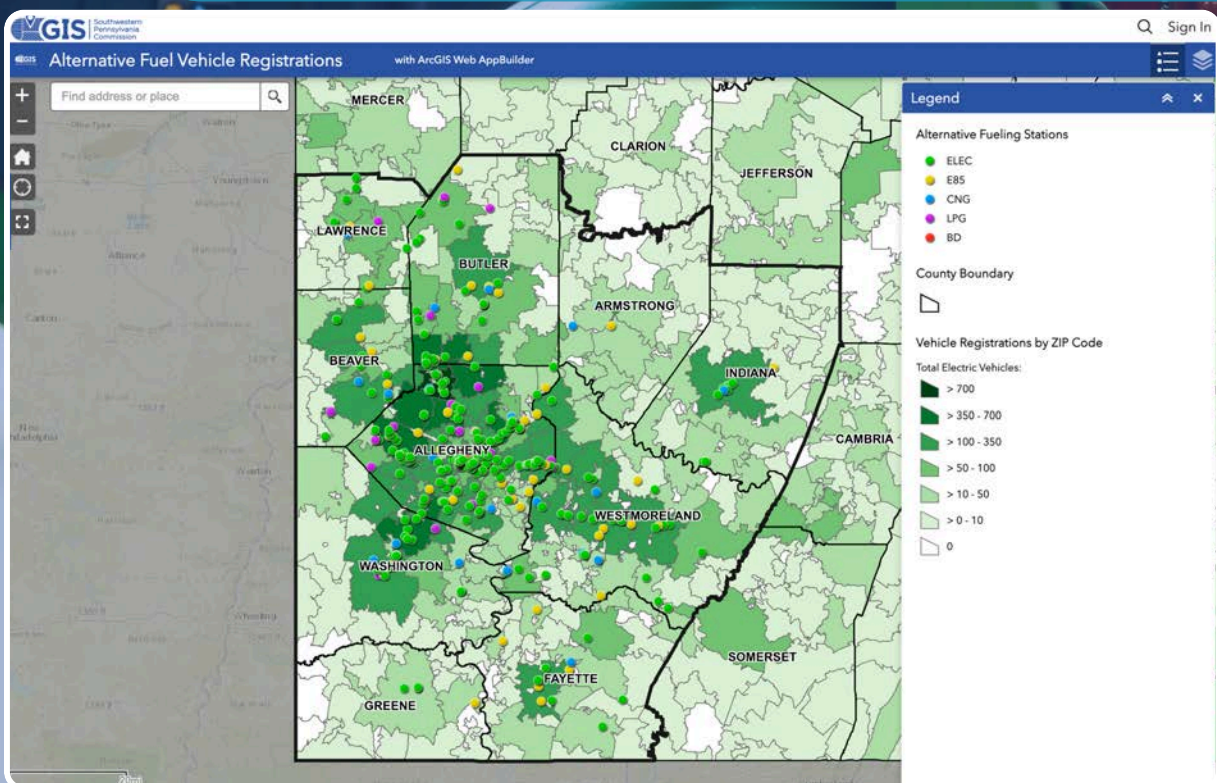


DATA & INFORMATION

ADVANCING CLEAN ENERGY: OUR NEW ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS TOOL

To support the transition to sustainable transportation, we have developed the Alternative Fuel Vehicle Registrations web application. This tool maps alternative fuel vehicles by ZIP code across the 10-county region and displays fueling stations for electric vehicles (EV), ethanol (E85), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), compressed natural gas (CNG), and biodiesel. Updated frequently with data from PennDOT and other sources, the application tracks battery electric vehicles, hybrids, plug-in hybrids, and fuel-cell electric vehicles. By offering insights into vehicle registrations and fueling infrastructure, this tool helps local planners make informed decisions about expanding alternative fuel options and supports the region's shift toward cleaner energy.

Access this tool and more on SPC's Open Data ArcGIS Hub Site via spcregion.org to explore how data is driving a sustainable future in Southwestern Pennsylvania.



WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS STORY:



Ace Wire Spring & Form Co., Inc employs 43 full time workers in McKees Rocks, Allegheny County. They are fully owned by Linda Froelich, but it is a family business with her children involved in the company. They were looking to purchase a Fortuna CNC Lathe and a Bennett Mahler extended length down feed grinder. They contacted Catalyst Connection and SPC for financing help. Catalyst and SPC (with our EDA Cares Act Loan Fund) were able to provide \$335,851 each towards the total project of almost \$750,000 at lower than bank rates. This is expected to create 6 jobs over the next 3 years and help retain all 43 employees by keeping their technology on the cutting edge of the industry.

SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS STORY:



As a third generation family company, Bon Tool has grown to be a global leader in the manufacture of professional construction tools. The company was founded in 1958 in Lower Burrell as Masonry Specialty. In early 1980s the company moved to Gibsonia to a larger facility and changed the name to Bon Tool, Today the company offers a selection of more than 6,000 contractor-grade construction tools, light equipment and materials. The company also added a couple of distribution centers in Nevada and India in order to provide better customer services.

Bon Tool started working with our Export development program in early 2000 and participated in many of the program's events. Although the company's leadership has changed over the years, their focuses and efforts to compete in the international marketplace have remained strong and consistent. They have been actively participating in international trade shows, gathering market information from various seminars, meeting with PA overseas trade representatives, etc. We have also assisted the company to receive Global Access Program grants multiple times for their international marketing activities. Recently the company has reported that they are exporting to more than 20 countries. With all the successes and long-term commitment of exporting, Bon Tool was nominated to receive the 2023 National Small Business Exporter Award. It's the highest recognition from the US government for exporters.

WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SBDC FANCY FOOD SHOW NYC & SW PREP LIFE PROJECT

This is the third year that we worked with our PREP partners to grow our LIFE (Local Initiative of Food Exports) program by organizing a group of small food companies to exhibit at the Fancy Food Show, an international trade event in New York City held every June. This trade show attracts more than 2,300 exhibitors from 56 countries, and is trades-only event. It is a great opportunity for small food companies in our region to meet food distributors and buyers. This year we expanded our booth space to accommodate six companies with four of them are new exhibitors. A post event survey showed that all of our attending businesses were extremely happy and excited about the show and so appreciative of our program and support. All said that they have great potential to expand their sales beyond borders as a result of the show.



NEW EXHIBITORS



My Favorite Sweet Shoppe – Carnegie, Allegheny County

Nina Midgley, with her parents Terri & Ed Midgley, established My Favorite Sweet Shoppe in 2014. The company was founded on the principles of providing products and customer service that is second to none. The company specializes in Gourmet Caramel Apples, Homemade Fudge, Hand-dipped chocolates, specialty chocolates, custom gifts and more!

The Toffee House – Washington, Washington County

A family business, Laura Ross began The Toffee House in 2002 to make a little Christmas money for her and Don's family of 8. After Don was laid off just a few months later, they decided to grow The Toffee House as their sole income. Twenty-two years later, they are still making the best toffee this side of the Atlantic.



Two Ugly Mugs Salsa – Pittsburgh, Allegheny County

Two Ugly Mugs salsa was born out of the Perella family garden in Pittsburgh in 2012. Father and son, Mike and Matt Perella represent the Ugly Mugs, while wife and mother, Diane Perella runs the company. Because of the Perella family tradition of gardening and canning together, they have created something wholesome and healthy for friends and family. It's their pride of the products they bring to market.

Uncle Jammy's Sauces and Seasonings – Pittsburgh, Allegheny County

Uncle Jammy's is a Pittsburgh-based small business dedicated to bringing bold flavors to your table. Founded by Jamal Etienne-Harrigan, their brand is inspired by the rich culinary traditions and vibrant culture of Pittsburgh region. He creates premium BBQ sauces, seasonings, and dry rubs that elevate everyday meals into extraordinary culinary experiences.



FINANCIAL HEALTH

Our administrative arm is the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Our operations are funded through a combination of federal, state and private foundation grants, SPC member contributions, and in-kind service contributions that support various transportation planning and economic development projects.

Our fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30, and the accompanying financial information is for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. The financial transactions of the SPC are recorded on a full accrual basis in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Our program revenues totaled \$18.6 million dollars during the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

FY 2023 - 2024

PROGRAM REVENUES

Federal Grants	\$13,335,347
State Grants	1,783,450
SPC Member Contributions	932,867
In-kind Service Contributions	1,994,218
Contributions	483,966
Other	110,784
TOTAL	\$18,640,632

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

General	\$592,605
Highway, Transit Planning	9,030,097
Special Projects	\$293,577
Economic Development Program	9,138,735
TOTAL	\$19,055,014

THANK YOU!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to our initiatives and successes throughout the past year. Our work would not be possible without the dedication and collaboration of our board members, regional partners, government agencies, community organizations, and local leaders. Your commitment to fostering a more connected, resilient, and prosperous Southwestern Pennsylvania drives our efforts every day.

A special thank you to our staff, whose hard work and passion continue to fuel our mission. Their expertise, innovation, and dedication have made meaningful impacts across the region, enabling us to support diverse communities and tackle challenges with determination and vision.

We also extend our appreciation to our residents, who actively engage with our initiatives, share their insights, and contribute to shaping a brighter future for Southwestern Pennsylvania. Your input and involvement are invaluable as we continue working toward our shared goals.

Thank you for your trust, collaboration, and support. We look forward to building on this year's accomplishments as we work together to achieve an even stronger and more vibrant region.



**SOUTHWESTERN
PENNSYLVANIA
COMMISSION**

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