



# STEEL RIVERS

Council of Governments

# NEWSLETTER

## FOR MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES

### NO BOARD MEETING IN APRIL

Several COG members and staff will attend ALOM in April. Board Meetings will resume in May.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING THURS MAY 1**

**6:00 PM DINNER  
6:30 PM MEETING**

800 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET,  
WEST ELIZABETH

RSVP TO [PENNY DONALDSON](#)

### MANAGERS MEETING

SEE PREVIEW, P.5

**THURSDAY, MAY 22  
AT 12:00 PM**

SHARE AND LEARN FROM YOUR FELLOW MUNICIPAL MANAGERS. GUEST SPEAKERS FROM [LANDFORCE](#) WILL JOIN US.

Contact Penny to reserve your spot

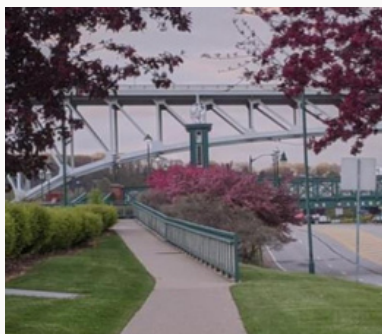


### PA TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

PENNDOT WANTS TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS ABOUT TRANSPORTATION ISSUES THAT AFFECT THEIR DAILY LIVES. READ MORE ON PAGE 2.

**SURVEY DUE  
APRIL 30**

**FIND TIPS FOR SUBMITTING EFFECTIVE COMMENTS ON PAGE 4**



### MEET THE ALLEGHENY COUNCIL DISTRICT 9 CANDIDATES ON MAY 1! SEE PAGE 5

BRADDOCK HILLS BOROUGH, CITY OF CLAIRTON, CITY OF DUQUESNE, DRAVOSBURG BOROUGH, ELIZABETH BOROUGH, FORWARD TOWNSHIP, GLASSPORT BOROUGH, HOMESTEAD BOROUGH, LIBERTY BOROUGH, LINCOLN BOROUGH, CITY OF MCKEESPORT, MUNHALL BOROUGH, PORT VUE BOROUGH, SOUTH VERSAILLES TOWNSHIP, VERSAILLES BOROUGH, WEST ELIZABETH BOROUGH, WEST HOMESTEAD BOROUGH, WHITAKER BOROUGH, AND WHITE OAK BOROUGH



## UPCOMING EVENTS

05/01/25 COUNCIL CANDIDATE BREAKFAST

05/01/25 BOARD MEETING

05/22/25 MANAGERS MEETING



The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is conducting a 12-year Transportation Program Update. Together with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), they are gathering comments from the public about traffic issues that affect their daily lives, commutes, and connectivity. The 2025 Public Comment Period opened on March 3 and continues through April 30, 2025. Please let your residents know that comments can be submitted by completing the **Transportation Survey**, by **emailing PennDOTSTC@pa.gov**, or by **calling 717-783-2262** between 7:30am and 4:00pm. Callers can complete the survey over the phone or request a paper copy of the survey. SPC and PennDOT will review comments and use them to address areas of greatest need. As you inform your residents about this survey, share with them the **Tips for Submitting Effective Comments** on page 4.

## LINCOLN and MUNHALL RECEIVE LOW VOLUME ROAD FUNDS



Allegheny County Conservation District (ACCD) recently awarded funds to two SRCOG municipalities to improve roads and reduce pollution in nearby streams through the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road (**DGLVR**) **Program**.

Munhall Borough was awarded \$142,000 to fix a landslide on Creek Street that deposits sediment into Homestead Run. The plan includes stabilizing the hillside by building a step-like base and adding rock to secure the slope.

In Lincoln Borough, \$200,000 will be used to improve Deer Lane with new drainage, stabilization, and an updated stream crossing. This project marks the borough's fourth DGLVR grant, continuing vital water quality improvements in the Youghiogheny Watershed.

Is your municipality considering a DGLVR application? "Think outside the box," advises Tammy Firda of Lincoln Borough. "This is not a traditional road project, but it satisfies MS4 compliance." Recipients must attend a training class to apply, but that training is good for 5 years and ACCD can help with training costs for first-time applicants. The application process is simple and does not require engineering input. "Plan ahead, and review your application with the ACCD staff," suggests Munhall Borough grant writer Dan Soltesz. "Look carefully at what ACCD wants to do and connect your application to their mission." A portion of funds are awarded up front to help kick start the project. Contact Jenny Kwiatek if you would like the COG to help you apply.

## ANNUAL DINNER

Celebrating Partnerships and Collaborations



Thanks to those of you who shared time with us at our Annual Dinner. After all the hard work we've done together this year, we enjoyed the chance to relax together as well. We shared our 2024 Annual Report (copies available at our office) highlighting our progress for the year and plans for 2025. Special thanks to Vannie Wang for the report's design and layout, and to our keynote speaker, County Treasurer Erica Rocchi Brusselars.

Above, SRCOG Executive Director An Lewis speaks with Allegheny County Treasurer Erica Rocchi Brusselars and her assistant Maria Montano at The Sunset Room in Elizabeth Borough on March 27, 2025.

## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

**THE COG CAN APPLY TO ALMOST ANY GRANT ON BEHALF OF MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES** and manage the project for a small administration fee. If you would like the COG to apply to a grant on your behalf, your submission deadline will be one week prior to the published deadline. Contact [Jennifer Kwiatek](#), Government Grants Manager, for more details.

### GHHI Thriving Communities

Now taking applications for planning and assessment projects.  
**Deadline April 30, 2025.**

**PA Small Water and Sewer**  
open now through April 30

### Greenways, Trails, Recreation and Parks (GTRP)

Now taking applications for trail and park projects.  
**Deadline May 31, 2025**

### Multimodal Transportation (MMT) Open March 1 - July 31

**Mon Valley Public Health Fund**  
Opened March 24. Apply asap.



# Allegheny Altogether Summit

SRCOG representatives and colleagues from neighboring communities attended the Allegheny Altogether Summit on Friday, February 21 in Braddock. The Summit featured county speakers from DCED, Neighborhood Allies, Neighborhood Community Development Fund, Chatham University Center for Women’s Entrepreneurship, and Paramount Pursuits/ Open for Business. SRCOG President and Glassport Council President Anthony Colecchi spoke about Glassport’s successful use of County resources for improvements throughout the borough. "Allegheny Altogether" refers to the All In Allegheny Action Plan, a county-wide initiative by Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato to address community priorities, identified through the All In Allegheny community survey and County Conversations, and to guide county government policies. According to



An Lewis, SRCOG ED, talks with County Executive Sara Innamorato at the 2025 Allegheny Altogether Summit at [Connect Cafe](#) in Braddock.

the Action Plan website, nearly 19,000 residents participated in the All In Allegheny Community Survey, and over 650 residents joined County Conversations to discuss community priorities. The plan incorporates community priorities into

actionable county government policies and initiatives. It is guided by 91 solidified action items and includes biannual progress updates. In future newsletters, we will feature more details about the Action Plan, its community partners, and how their efforts can help your municipality.



# IN FOND MEMORY

When you hear the name Louise Biddle, you might remember an educator, a small business owner, a public servant, or a friend. "One of my favorite humans on the planet," is how SRCOG Executive Director An Lewis remembers her. A life-long educator, Mrs. Biddle served for many years on the West Elizabeth Borough Council and the Jefferson Hills Chamber of Commerce, and was a dedicated advocate for her Mon Valley neighbors. Mrs. Biddle was laid to rest in Round Hill Cemetery in Elizabeth. The family suggests donations to Olivet Food Pantry in Mrs. Biddle’s memory.



## Meeting updates

At our board meeting on March 6, we discussed our continued efforts to renew the lease for the shooting range. Contact An Lewis if you find this resource beneficial to your borough and want to express your support. \* A Mon Valley Tour is being planned to familiarize new elected officials with our municipalities’ needs and successes. \* Street sweeping season is opening! Contact our office to schedule our street sweeper to visit your municipality. \* **THERE WILL BE NO BOARD MEETING IN APRIL!** Many of us will be at the Allegheny League of Municipalities (ALOM) Spring Educational Conference at Seven Springs. \* Our May board meeting will be held on May 1 in West Elizabeth. \*

# PennDOT Transportation Survey

## TIPS FOR SUBMITTING EFFECTIVE COMMENTS

2025 Public Outreach Campaign for the 2027 12-Year Program Update

### *We Want to Hear from You!*

The State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) conduct a survey every two years as part of the 12-Year Program (TYP) Update public comment period. Public input from the survey is used to inform the update of the TYP as well as updates to other state transportation programs.

#### Purpose:

The purpose of the survey is to collect feedback in key transportation areas including Transportation Modes, Budget, Transportation Issues, and Priorities. You will be asked to identify and categorize your concerns by Bridge, Freight, Pedestrian or Bike, Roadway, and Transit.

Examples for each category include but are not limited to:

- **Bridge:** narrow, bridge closure is affecting access to local businesses
- **Freight:** truck route needed, closure, widening needed due to growing freight developments
- **Pedestrian or Bike:** crosswalk safety, bike trail connection, signage needed to alert drivers
- **Roadway:** congestion, merge length, additional lanes needed, unsafe intersection
- **Transit:** bus stop needed, ADA compliance updates, limited access to train stations

The STC is looking for long-term solutions. To report an immediate state-owned road condition or safety concern, please submit your comments at [the customer care center](#) or call 1-800-FIX-ROAD.

#### Tips For Submitting Effective Comments:

Your input will help align regional and statewide transportation priorities. The following suggestions are intended to provide guidance for submitting comments that will help the STC and PennDOT best use your feedback. One comment that is well-supported with facts and local knowledge can be more influential than 100 comments on a single topic.

- **Be constructive** – When possible, support a comment with an example. A constructive, information-rich comment that is clear and supported by facts and local knowledge is more likely to have a decision-making impact.
- **Be concise** – While there is no minimum or maximum length for an effective comment, being specific and using plain language can help better identify the concern.
- **Gather information and documentation** – Be specific about location and clearly explain the issues and impacts. Always provide data or evidence if possible and then propose a solution.
- **Questions to consider** – What are the region's needs? What should be prioritized when considering both funding and the safety of the roads? How can the STC best address safety, congestion, accessibility, economic development, and asset condition?

#### What's Next?

During the Public Comment Period, the STC will review comments and compile information for decision making. A summary that details demographic information and comment data will be available for the public to review.

**Comments will be accepted for the 12-Year Transportation Program from March 3 to April 30, 2025.**



# MAY MANAGERS MEETING PREVIEW

Representatives Kayleigh Del Cotto and Thomas Guentner from [LandForce](#) will join us as guest speakers at our next Managers Meeting on May 22. LandForce is a Pittsburgh-based non-profit that recruits, trains, educates, employs and supports adults who have faced structural barriers to stable, family sustaining, employment based upon race or personal histories. What started as a community development project grew into a **regional stewardship and employment training resource**.

Municipalities can hire LandForce to perform land stewardship services such as invasive plant management removal, vacant lot stabilization, garden bed installation, wooden step installation, trail building, reforestation, garden maintenance, erosion control, tree care/maintenance, and riparian zone management. LandForce can also provide additional green infrastructure maintenance for a variety of land types.

Why is this important to our municipal managers? Poverty is a real and serious issue in Pittsburgh, notes the LandForce website. “By providing work, training, and supportive services, Landforce aims to fight against the wealth disparity within Pittsburgh’s population by providing opportunities for individuals to overcome barriers to employment and obtain family-supporting wages.”

LandForce is looking to expand their connections within the Mon Valley to create more opportunities for work force development. **Plan on attending our May Mangers Meeting to learn more about partnering with LandForce.**



## LANDFORCE SERVICES

- [Maintain Vacant Land](#)
- [Construct Trails](#)
- [Restore Habitats by removing invasive plants, cleaning up dumpsites or planting and maintaining native plantings](#)
- [Maintain Green Infrastructure like rain gardens and bioswales](#)

**With almost 45,000 vacant lots and well over 10,000 acres of parks and land trusts, Allegheny County is home to important open space. All that space must be maintained to retain and increase its value, and to allow everyone to benefit from it. If you don't see your needs on this page, [just tell us about your project](#). We love teaching our crew members new skills.**

## ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL DISTRICT 9 CANDIDATES COMING TO GLASSPORT



Since 2006, Bob Macey has represented Mon Valley communities as the District 9 representative on the Allegheny County Council. The West Mifflin native is the longest-serving member of the current council and will retire at the end of this term to spend more time with family. His successor will have big shoes to fill.

Currently three candidates are in the running to be this successor. [Dylan Altemara](#) is a Mon Valley native and an educator in Beaver County. Aaron Adams is a mechanical designer and City of Duquesne council member. [Kellianne Frketic](#) is a Mon Valley native and Inventory Control Coordinator for the Greater

Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The candidates for the District 9 Council seat will meet in Glassport on May 1, 2025 to engage with Mon Valley leadership. This is a unique opportunity for local elected officials and municipal managers to speak directly to council candidates and ask questions. The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the Glassport Municipal Building, 440 Monongahela Ave, Glassport, PA 15045. **Contact Penny at the SRCOG office to reserve your spot for this event.** Primary elections take place on May 20, 2025.