

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance

NEPA

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

NEPA Alliance continues to provide quality services to our businesses, communities and governments in Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Wayne counties.

The NEPA staff has accomplished all of the goals set by our funding partners, and we continue to serve our region with quality business, community, economic development and transportation services.

The following pages of our Annual Report chronicle the success of our programs for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025.

- NEPA leveraged \$2.31 million in ARC grants for regional and local organizations.
- NEPA Business Development Programs assisted our clients in creating or retaining 1,476 jobs in our region.
- NEPA's Business Finance Center provided \$4.1 million in loans, generating an additional \$10 million in investment for small businesses. Through our affiliate, NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation, a certified SBA Development Corporation, we closed 18 SBA 504 loans totaling \$17.25 million, leveraging \$24.7 million. Additionally, we closed 28 SBA 7(a) loans for \$4.7 million, bringing in an extra \$522,000 to support regional businesses.
- NEPA's International Business Development Program completed the year at 123% of the goal established by the Commonwealth Office of International Business Development (OIBD) and reported sales of \$98,983,244 for 624 jobs: direct, indirect and induced.
- NEPA's government contracting program, APEX Accelerator, supported 342 jobs through \$209,711,439 in government contracts awarded in our region and assisted 220 businesses.
- The NEPA Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Schuylkill counties

with transportation planning continues to maintain the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for 2025-2028 in the amount of \$548 million.

- NEPA manages the NEPA PREP Partnership (Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance), which is a collaboration of twelve (12) economic development agencies within our region. NEPA leveraged \$637,808 in state funding to support the initiative.
- NEPA assisted business and nonprofit clients leveraging \$3.5 million in PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grants.
- The Nonprofit & Community Assistance Center (NCAC) provided 425 counseling sessions including customized grant, capital and fundraising development strategy guidance.
- NEPA leveraged a \$195,000 Department Community and Economic Development grant to continue Engage!, a business retention and expansion program. NEPA and partners interviewed over 233 companies in the region to assist with growth and expansion strategies.

We thank all of our volunteer Board and Committee Members for their service and dedication to making Northeastern Pennsylvania a great place to live, work and play. We also thank our legislative delegation at the federal, state and county levels for their continued support!

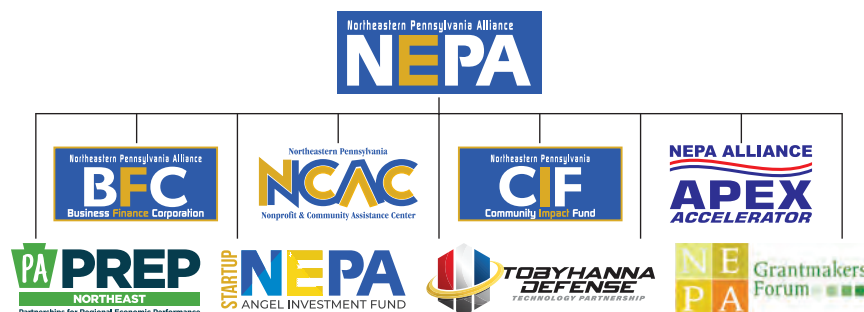


Stephen K. Barrouk
Board Chairperson
2024 - 2026



Jeffrey Box
President & CEO

NEPA Alliance Affiliates



STAFF, OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS



OFFICERS

Stephen Barrouk, Board Chairperson
Bud Quandel, 1st Vice-Board Chairperson
Mary Frances Postupack, 2nd Vice-Board Chairperson
VACANT, Treasurer

Comm. Wayne Nothstein, Secretary
Cynthia DeFebo, Assistant Treasurer
Comm. Jocelyn Cramer, Assistant Secretary
VACANT, Past Board Chairperson

DIVISIONS

Executive Leadership

Jeffrey Box - President & CEO

Administrative Services

Wendi Holena - Vice President/CFO
 Judith Doblix - Senior Accounting Manager
 Jeffrey Loftus - Accountant
 Madison Kuzdro - Accountant

Business Development Services

Stephen Ursich - Vice President
 David Nat - Business Finance Manager
 Donovan Klem - Business Finance Manager
 Ken Doolittle - Business Finance Manager
 James Urso - Business Finance Specialist
 Kristie Miller - Business Finance Specialist
 Carrie Sykes - Business Finance Specialist
 Paula Terpak - Commercial Loan Portfolio Specialist
 Kara Smith - Government Procurement Program Manager
 Bella Ceccoli - Government Procurement Specialist
 Molly Sweeney - Government Procurement Specialist
 Deborah Langan - Senior International Business Development Manager

Community & Economic Development Services

Kurt Bauman - Vice President
 Tyler Day - Community & Economic Development Services Manager
 Colleen Burns Ecklund - Community & Economic Development Services Manager

Communications & Operations

Donna Hritz - Vice President
 Michael Skowronski - Information Technology Manager

Transportation Planning Services

Kate McMahon - Vice President
 Daniel Yelito - Transportation Services Manager
 Annette Ginocchetti - Transportation GIS Manager
 Jonathan Shaw - Transportation Services Manager

CARBON COUNTY

Commissioner Wayne Nothstein**

Harold Pudliner (2026)
 Joseph Sebelin (2025)
 Jared Soto (2026)
 Garry Wentz (2025)

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

Philip Condron (2026)
 Thomas Donohue (2026)
 Kristin Magnotta
 John McNulty (2026)
 Katie Pittelli (2025)
VACANT (2026) **

LUZERNE COUNTY

Stephen Barrouk (2025)**

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 Joseph Lettiere (2026)
 Mary Malone (2025)
 Michelle Mikitish (2026)
 Kerry Miscavage (2025)

MONROE COUNTY

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 Commissioner John Christy
 Charles Leonard (2025)
Mary Frances Postupack (2025)**
 Debra Raneri (2026)

PIKE COUNTY

Cynthia DeFebo (2025)**

Commissioner Matthew Osterberg
 Antonio Perito (2025)
 Jennifer Passenti (2026)
VACANT (2026)

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Robert Carl (2026)
 Courtney Fasnacht (2026)
 Micah Gursky (2025)
Bud Quandel (2025)**
 Michael Tobash

WAYNE COUNTY

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James Hockenbury (2025)
 Craig Rickard (2026)
 Mike Rollison (2025)
 Justin Taylor (2026)

AT-LARGE

Carl Beardsley***
 Chris Doherty***
 Anthony Gabello***
 Vincent Galko***
 Larry Malski ***
 Ben May***
 Kit Pappas***
 Alana Roberts ***

EX-OFFICIO

Jeffrey Box, NEPA President & CEO
 Megan Kennedy, NCAC Board Chair
 Kelly O'Brien, PNE (John Augustine alt.)

EMERITUS

David Donlin
 Ernest Preate

**Officer

*** Chairman's Appointments
 () terms expire June 30th

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION



**Appalachian
Regional
Commission**

As the designated Local Development District (LDD) for the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED), NEPA provides technical assistance to those organizations seeking ARC grant assistance.

FUNDED PROJECTS FY 2024-2025

Organization	Project	ARC Grant Amount
Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.	D&L Luzerne Trail Study	\$75,000
Scranton Area Community Foundation	Lackawanna County Micro Transit Feasibility Study for Workers and Their Employers	\$55,000
United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA	UNC Skilled Childcare Workers Capacity Expansion	\$515,524
Nesquehoning Borough	Nesquehoning Borough Business Park - Industrial Road (extends between Stock St (SR0054) to Park Ave)	\$893,972
Wayne County	Community Health, Wellness, & Innovation Campus – Rt. 191 & Spinner Rd Improvements	\$774,866
Total		\$2,314,362

NONPROFIT & COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CENTER (NCAC)

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Nonprofit & Community Assistance Center (NCAC) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) affiliate agency of NEPA that assists nonprofit organizations and communities.



NCAC PROGRAM TOTALS 2024-2025

Program	Totals
Nonprofit Counseling Sessions	231
Customized Funding Searches	57
Nonprofit Center Visits/FDO Use	62
Grant Proposal Reviews	46
Nonprofit Start-Up Assistance	13
Demographic & Statistic Assistance	10
Workshops Offered	6
Total Assistance Provided	425

NEPA GRANTMAKERS INITIATIVE

NCAC hosted a NEPA Grantmakers Forum on November 18, 2024 at Benco Dental. The forum was attended by 21 grantmakers from 14 foundations. For Pete's Sake Cancer Respite Foundation presented, and breakout groups discussed the evolving needs of the nonprofit sector.



TOBYHANNA DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP

NEPA manages the Tobyhanna Defense Technology Partnership, which was organized as the Blue Ribbon Task Force in 1992 to provide regional community support for the preservation and protection of Tobyhanna Army Depot from the base closure process known as BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure). The name was changed to better reflect the mission. The Partnership launched a membership campaign to raise funds that will be used to help sustain and grow Tobyhanna Army Depot. The Depot has an economic impact on the region of over \$2.3 billion. The Tobyhanna Defense Technology Partnership is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Military Community Enhancement Commission.



COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

NEPA Alliance has created the 2025-2030 Northeastern Pennsylvania Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for our region. To create the CEDS, NEPA held a series of three meetings and received input from over 100 community leaders.

NEPA has partnered with our sister agency, SEDA-COG, to develop an online CEDS Data Dashboard. This dashboard will be interactive and provide live data from various sources.

FOR PETE'S SAKE

NCAC provided a comprehensive suite of in-kind development services to For Pete's Sake Cancer Respite Foundation. The Pennsylvania-based foundation enables cancer patients and their loved ones across five states to strengthen, deepen and unify their relationships by creating unforgettable and lasting respite experiences. The foundation has undertaken the development and construction of the nation's first Cancer Respite Center in Wayne County; this center will transform cancer care in the Northeast region. Services provided include multiple custom funding searches, strategic consulting, economic impact modeling & analysis, and a featured presentation to the NEPA Grantmakers Forum.

FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE (FOP) – PITTSTON TWP. OUTDOOR TRAINING FACILITY PROJECT

NCAC wrote and submitted a Luzerne County LSA grant application for the installation of an outdoor shooting range and training facility at the FOP Lodge 46 in Pittston Twp., PA. The range will be utilized by State Police and local law enforcement professionals and will be used for special community and educational events. The grant was awarded in the amount of \$294,000, and NEPA provided additional support for the project in partnership with state and local legislators during a recent zoning board hearing for the township, during which FOP was permitted to move forward with the project.

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Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance

BFC

Business Finance Corporation

The NEPA Business Finance Center includes fifteen (15) loan products, as well as the NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation (NEPA BFC). The NEPA loan products provide low-cost, fixed-rate financing generally up to 50% of the total financing requirements with a maximum loan amount of \$5,500,000. Job retention/creation criteria apply.

The NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation is an SBA 504 lender. There are numerous advantages associated with the program including subordinate lien position, fixed interest rates that are market based and longer repayment terms with a maximum 25-year loan maturity. The loan structure of a 504 loan preserves working capital as the borrower's cash equity can be as low as 10%. Many business sectors can qualify for this program.

LOAN PROGRAM RESULTS:

- **Counseled 95 entrepreneurs and small businesses**
- **Closed 63 loans for a total of \$25,571,150**
- **Leveraged \$52,147,355 in private/public financing**
- **Retained/created 510 jobs**



NEPA partnered with The Ritz Theater to provide funding for the purchase of their facility. NEPA provided two loans: one from its EDA COVID-19 Relief funds and another through the SBA 504 loan program.



NEPA provided The Swiftwater with a loan through the SBA 504 program to assist the borrowers with the construction of a new 100-room boutique hotel.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE (PREP)



In 2024-2025, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Regional PREP collaborative continued to provide integrated assistance to many businesses throughout the seven-

county Northeastern Pennsylvania region.

Additional Impacts:

- PREP Partners sponsored 67 training workshops that were attended by 3,437 individuals;
- 904 new clients were assisted by PREP Partners and 1,536 clients received counseling;
- 62 loans were closed;
- 136 business plans/projections/research were developed; and
- 54 location leads were provided.

PREP Regional Partners are:

- Berwick Industrial Development Association
- CAN DO, Inc.
- Carbon Chamber & Economic Development
- Greater Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance
- Pike County Economic Development Authority
- Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation
- Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Company
- Schuylkill Economic Development Corporation
- The University of Scranton Small Business Development Center
- Wayne Economic Development Corporation
- Wilkes University Small Business Development Center

For the program year 2024-2025, the APEX Accelerator received funding in the amount of \$563,726.80 from Department of Defense (DoD) with matching funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for a total funded award of \$663,208.



The APEX Team, working with our economic development partners, participated in several speaker/exhibitor event opportunities during the 2024-2025 program year. Of note were Tobyhanna Army Depot Industry Days and NEPIRC MFG Day.



APEX staff visits Brock Construction

The NEPA Alliance APEX Accelerator is actively working with 146 business clients. For the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, the APEX Team achieved the following performance metric results:

• Client Counseling Sessions:	1,400
• One-on-One Counseling Hours:	815
• DoD Contract Awards:	\$179,451,540
• Other Federal Contract Awards:	\$9,841,208
• State/Local Government Awards:	\$5,595,033
• Subcontract Awards:	\$14,823,658
• Total of all Client Awards:	\$209,711,439
• Events	16
• Jobs Supported:	342

Throughout the year, the APEX Team continued their success supporting regional businesses in the government and defense contracting spaces. By assisting small businesses with federal, state and local registrations, socio-economic certifications and bid reviews, the NEPA Alliance APEX Accelerator staff has helped small businesses break into the government contracting space.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

NEPA provides international trade assistance to businesses in Northeastern Pennsylvania with the goal of helping to generate international sales and increase regional employment. As the Regional Export Network (REN) coordinator for BusinessPA's Export Assistance Program, NEPA serves as the first point of contact for international trade in the region.

2024-2025 Outcomes

Companies Assisted	65
New Companies Assisted	11
International Projects	126
Export Clients Reporting Sales	21
Export Sales Reported	\$98,983,244
Export Actions	208
Percentage of Goals Achieved	123%
Jobs Supported	624

EXPORT BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

On November 19, 2024, staff held an in-person business roundtable on exporting, featuring a trade resource panel with experts from NEPA, BusinessPA International, the U.S. Commercial Service, SBA and the Export-Import Bank. Panelists also included Clark-Esposito Law Firm and local exporter Loh Medical. The event was co-hosted with the U.S. Commercial Service and the Carbon Chamber & Economic Development Corporation.



The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance operates the Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization (NEPA MPO), providing transportation planning and programming services for Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Schuylkill counties. As part of the planning process for the MPO, two MPO committees are convened: the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee and NEPA MPO Policy Board. The committees:

- Assist and advise NEPA with assessing the transportation needs of the MPO counties;
- Approve and manage the four-county regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which funds highway and bridge projects, transit system improvements and other transportation programs over four years; and
- Review and recommend projects for grant programs including the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program, Multimodal Transportation Fund Program and Green Light-Go Program.

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA FREIGHT PLAN

The NEPA MPO, in coordination with four other planning areas, developed the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Infrastructure Plan. The plan is a blueprint for future investments and policies aimed at mitigating the impacts of freight traffic within the region, while also managing the expected continued expansion of freight uses within Eastern Pennsylvania. The five participating MPOs have joined together to establish the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance to implement the recommendations of the plan.



GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

GIS is a computer application used to store, view and analyze geographic information through a number of formats, including computer generated maps. GIS helps spot trends, highlight customer bases and manage projects, along with numerous other applications. During the 2024-2025 year, NEPA has completed and continued several GIS projects including:



- Drone Mapping and Visualization Program
- NEPA MPO Active Transportation Plan Story Map
- Route 611 Corridor Map
- Electric Vehicle Charging Needs Survey

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The NEPA MPO adopted its first Active Transportation Plan in June 2025. The Active Transportation Plan addresses the needs of bicycle and pedestrian transportation and will guide future decision-making with respect to these modes. The plan recommends policies in four main areas: safety, accommodation, connectivity and implementation and includes a list of active transportation projects for future funding considerations.



COORDINATED TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The NEPA MPO completed an update of its Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The plan aims to improve transportation services for persons with disabilities, older adults and individuals with lower incomes by ensuring that communities coordinate resources available for public transportation. The Coordinated Transit Plan includes a demographic profile of the NEPA MPO region and a summary of the existing transit services. It also includes a variety of strategies to address transportation gaps in the region.



LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LTAP)



NEPA coordinates the PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) throughout our seven county LDD

region serving our local governments with road maintenance and safety training sessions. These services are available to all municipal and county road staff and are provided at no cost to attendees. This year, LTAP held in-person classes and continued to offer virtual classes and workshops.

2024-2025 LTAP Training

Individuals Trained: 274



LTAP Municipal Stormwater Facilities Class in Luzerne County

THANK YOU MICHAEL!

NEPA Alliance would like to acknowledge the forty years of service that Michael Skowonski has dedicated to the organization's information technology development. Starting his career when computers were a novelty, he has witnessed and steered the agency through technological shifts from the advent of the internet to the integration of cloud



computing and AI. His deep institutional knowledge and dedication have ensured seamless operations, allowing the organization to effectively support the region's local businesses and communities. His quiet professionalism and problem-solving abilities have been instrumental in the agency's success, making his 40 years and counting tenure a truly remarkable legacy.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

The NEPA Alliance Regional Leadership Award is presented annually to an agency, group or individual demonstrating a significant contribution to regional growth, development or cooperation within the seven-county NEPA region. This year's award recipient was Dr. Katie Pittelli on behalf of Johnson College for their contribution to the regional economy and involvement in the regional community of Northeastern Pennsylvania.



From left: Stephen Barrouk, NEPA Board Chairperson; Dr. Katie Pittelli, Johnson College; Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance; and Donna Hritz, NEPA Alliance

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STARTUP NEPA



NEPA has raised \$750,000 in support of our Angel Fund initiative. The official launch meeting was held in January 2022, and member meetings have been held monthly. To date, over 35 businesses have made pitches, and 6 investment commitments have been made. NEPA staff continue to recruit new investors and vet potential pitches from businesses and entrepreneurs.

Business	Industry/Sector	Investment Amount	Location
Conservation Labs	Utility/Tech	\$50,000	Pittsburgh, PA
Buoy	Health	\$50,000	San Diego, CA
LifeAire	Indoor Air Quality	\$185,000	Allentown, PA
Gilson Snow Boards	Recreation	\$50,000	Snyder/Union Counties PA
UpContent	Tech	\$50,000	Pittsburgh, PA
Voxel Innovations	Electrochemical Manufacturing	\$50,000	Raleigh, NC

ENGAGE! AND GET CONNECTED PROGRAMS

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance serves as the Northeast Regional Coordinator for the Engage! program, which is funded by DCED. The Engage! program is a Pennsylvania statewide business retention and expansion program designed to interact with targeted companies regularly and proactively. During FY 2024-2025, there were:

- 233 Engage! surveys completed
- 5 Engage! focus groups with over 40 businesses participating

FUNDING PARTNERS



www.arc.gov



dced.pa.gov



www.northeastprep.net



www.penndot.gov



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