

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance

NEPA

Annual Report



2024

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, 2024.

- NEPA leveraged \$3.44 million in ARC grants for regional and local organizations.
- NEPA Business Development Programs assisted our clients in creating or retaining 1344 jobs in our region.
- NEPA's Business Finance Center provided \$24.5 million in loans, generating an additional \$37.2 million in investment for businesses. Through our affiliate, NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation, a certified SBA Development Corporation, we closed 21 SBA 504 loans totaling \$19.9 million, leveraging \$31.7 million. Additionally, we closed 19 SBA 7(a) loans for \$2.4 million, bringing in an extra \$824,000 to support regional businesses.
- NEPA's International Business Development Program completed the year at 119% of the goal established by the Commonwealth Office of International Business Development (OIBD) and reported sales of \$81,999,205 for 603 jobs: direct, indirect and induced.
- NEPA's government contracting program, APEX Accelerator, supported 446 jobs through \$113,409,658 in government contracts awarded in our region and assisted 300 businesses.
- The NEPA Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Schuylkill counties with transportation planning approved 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 \$584,808 in state funding to support the initiative.
- NEPA assisted business and nonprofit clients leveraging \$3 million in PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grants.
- The Nonprofit & Community Assistance Center (NCAC) provided customized grant/capital/fundraising development strategy sessions to over 360 organizations.
- Through the Get Connected E-Commerce program, NEPA used \$70,000 in grant funding to provide e-commerce platforms including websites and social media support to over 20 businesses.
- 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 204 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!

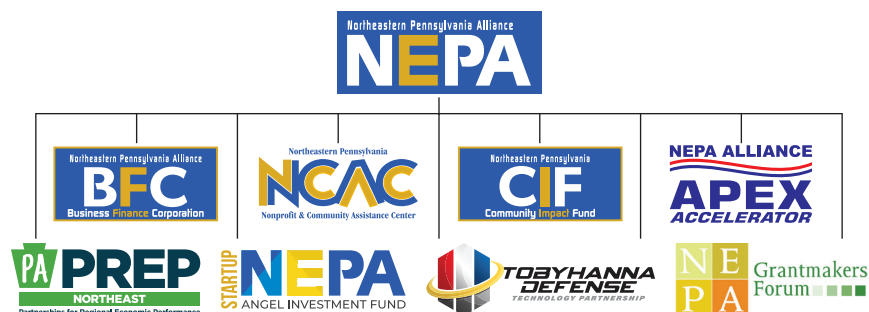


Mary Beth Wood
Board Chairperson
2022 - 2024



Jeffrey Box
President & CEO

NEPA Alliance Affiliates





OFFICERS

Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
Stephen Barrouk, 1st Vice-Board Chairperson
Bud Quandel, 2nd Vice-Board Chairperson
William Kerstetter, Treasurer

Mary Frances Postupack, Secretary
Alex Stark, Assistant Treasurer
Commissioner Wayne Nothstein, Assistant Secretary
Joseph Sebelin, Past Board Chairperson

DIVISIONS

Executive Leadership

Jeffrey Box - President & CEO

Administrative Services

Wendi Holena - Vice President/CFO
 Judith Doblax - 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
 Frank Migneco - Senior Government Procurement Manager
 Paula Terpak - Business Dev. & Govt. Procurement Specialist
 Kara Smith - Government Procurement Specialist
 Quinn Speckhardt - 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 - Community & Economic Development Services Specialist

Communications & Operations

Donna Hritz - Vice President
 Michael Skowronski - Information Technology Manager

Transportation Planning Services

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

CARBON COUNTY

Kathy Henderson (2024)
Commissioner Wayne Nothstein
 Harold Pudliner (2024)
Joseph Sebelin (2025)**
 Garry Wentz (2025)

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

Philip Condron (2024)
 Thomas Donohue (2025)
 Kristin Magnotta
 John McNulty (2024)
 Katie Pittelli (2025)
Alex Stark (2024)**

LUZERNE COUNTY

Stephen Barrouk (2025)**
 Joseph Lettiere (2024)
 Mary Malone (2025)
 Michelle Mikitish (2024)
 Kerry Miscavage (2025)
 VACANT

MONROE COUNTY

Christopher Barrett (2024)
 Commissioner John Christy
 Charles Leonard (2025)
Mary Frances Postupack (2025)**
 Marynell Strunk (2024)

PIKE COUNTY

Cynthia DeFebo (2025)
William Kerstetter (2024)**
 Commissioner Matthew Osterberg
 Antonio Perito (2025)
 Peter Wulffhorst (2024)

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Robert Carl (2024)
 Courtney Fasnacht (2024)
 Micah Gursky (2025)
 Bud Quandel (2025)
 Michael Tobash

WAYNE COUNTY

Commissioner Jocelyn Cramer
 James Hockenbury (2025)
 Craig Rickard (2024)
 Mike Rollison (2025)
Mary Beth Wood (2024)**

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
 Maria Montoro Edwards, NCAC Board Chair
 Kelly O'Brien, PNE (*John Augustine alt.*)

EMERITUS

David Donlin
 Ernest Preate

**Officer

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

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance

BFC

Business Finance Corporation

The NEPA Business Finance Center includes ten (14) 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.

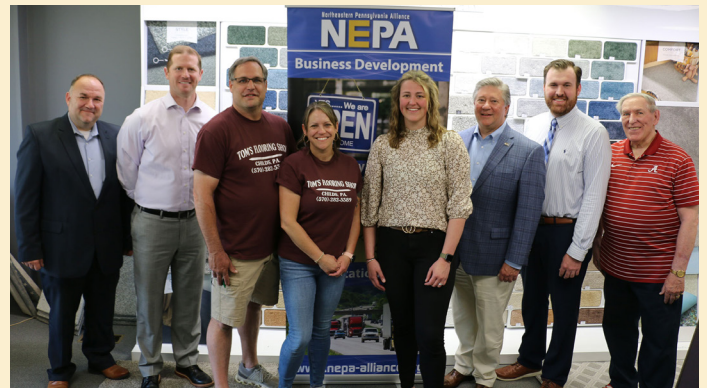
The NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation is a SBA 504 lender. There are numerous advantages associated with the program including subordinate lien position; fixed interest rates that are market based; and longer repayment terms with a maximum 25-year loan maturity. The loan structure of a 504 loan 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 106 entrepreneurs and small businesses**
- **Closed 61 loans for a total of \$24,539,850**
- **Leveraged \$37,358,905 in private/public financing**
- **Retained/created 295 jobs**



NEPA partnered with Ashley Machine & Tool Co. owners, John and Michele Mulhern, to secure funding for the purchase and renovation of their facility. NEPA provided two loans: one from its EDA COVID-19 Relief funds and another through the PIDA loan program administered by the DCED.



NEPA provided Tom's Flooring Shop with a loan through the SBA 504 program to assist the borrowers with the purchase of the real estate associated with the business purchase.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE (PREP)



In 2023-2024, 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 104 training workshops that were attended by 6,009 individuals;
- 1,057 new clients were assisted by PREP Partners and 1,733 clients received counseling;
- 66 loans were closed;
- 148 business plans/projections/research were developed; and
- 75 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 program year 2023/2024 the APEX Accelerator received funding in the amount of \$411,163 from DLA with matching funds from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for a total funded award of \$483,721.



The APEX Team, working with our economic development partners, participated in several speaker/exhibitor event opportunities during the 2023/2024 program year including Tobyhanna Army Depot Industry Day, NEPIRC's Manufacturing Day, EMPOWER, ESU Economic Summit and SBDC Black Women's Fireside Chat.



Tobyhanna Army Depot Industry Day



NEPIRC Manufacturing Day

Maintaining an average annual active client base of 260 businesses, for the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, the APEX Team achieved the following performance metric results:

• Client Counseling Sessions:	1,217
• One-on-One Counseling Hours:	762
• DoD Contract Awards:	\$100,149,820
• Other Federal Contract Awards:	\$12,614,877
• State/Local Government Awards:	\$947,499
• Subcontract Awards:	\$6,186,210
• Total of all Client Awards:	\$113,712,195
• Events	22
• Jobs Supported:	446

The APEX Team, throughout a year of changing federal certification conditions, continued their success supporting regional businesses in the government and defense contracting spaces. The APEX Team achieved the following performance metric results:

- 94 - System for Award Management Registrations/Updates
- 7 - Service Disabled/Veteran Owned Small Business Certifications
- 7 - Women Owned Small Business Certifications
- 38 - Pennsylvania Vendor Portals Small Business Registrations/ Certifications
- 38 - Solicitation Bid Proposal Client Review Sessions

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 the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Office of International Business Development's (OIBD) Export Assistance Program, NEPA serves as the first point of contact for international trade in the region.

2023-2024 Outcomes

Companies Assisted	60
New Companies Assisted	12
International Projects	96
Export Clients Reporting Sales	20
Export Sales Reported	\$81,999,205
Export Actions	156
Percentage of Goals Achieved	119%
Jobs Supported	603

BRINGING THE WORLD TO NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

In conjunction with OIBD, NEPA hosted the annual "Bringing the World to Northeastern Pennsylvania" event on Monday, March 11, 2024. This is the International Business Development Program's premier annual event, during which NEPA hosts Pennsylvania's Authorized Trade Representatives (ATRs) for one-on-one meetings with companies. Eighteen businesses participated, resulting in more than 80 individual meetings with the ATRs.



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 2023-2024

Organization	Project	ARC Grant Amount	Funding Leveraged
NEPA Alliance	PREP	\$461,425	\$461,425
Lehigh Valley Child Care Center	Carbon County Child Care Expansion	\$138,000	\$290,000
Lackawanna County	Montage Mountain Economic Development Plan	\$100,000	\$100,000
NEPA Alliance BFC	Community Advantage Loan Program	\$200,000	\$200,000
Salem Township	Salem Township Public Water Expansion Project	\$129,350	\$129,350
Lackawanna County & Lackawanna College	Lackawanna College - Center for Technology Innovation	\$1,000,000	\$1,610,000
Mid Valley School District	STEAM Education Advancement – Biomedical Science	\$250,000	\$250,000
Dunmore Borough (LAR)	Keystone Industrial Park Road Improvement	\$1,604,325	\$200,000
Keystone College	LEEP	\$150,000	\$200,000
Total		\$4,033,100	\$3,440,775

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 2022-2023

Program	Totals
Nonprofit Counseling Sessions	249
Customized Funding Searches	66
Grant Proposal Reviews	19
Nonprofit Start-Up Assistance	14
Demographic & Statistic Assistance	12
Total Assistance Provided	360

Schuylkill County COVID-19 ARPA Nonprofit Support Grants: In 2024, NEPA Alliance was tasked with the administration of \$460,000 in grant funding for nonprofit organizations in Schuylkill County for organizations impacted by COVID-19. Over 40 received grants that ranged from \$1,000 to \$20,000.

Monroe County Community Foundation: The Community Foundation public launch was held on October 19, 2023. NCAC assisted with the formation of the foundation leveraging ARC funding. The foundation has over \$1M in funding committed to the endowment.

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 recently launched a membership campaign to raise funds that will be used to help sustain and grow Tobyhanna Army Depot. NEPA has partnered with local consulting firm Edwards+Strunk to help manage the campaign. Tobyhanna Army 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.



ENGAGE! AND GET CONNECTED PROGRAMS

NEPA serves as the Northeast Regional Coordinator for the Engage! program, which is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED). The Engage! program is a Pennsylvania statewide business retention and expansion program designed to interact with targeted companies regularly and proactively. Get Connected is a DCED funded program that provides businesses with either the development of a new website or the enhancement of an existing one in terms of adding the capability of conducting online transactions. During FY 2023 – 2024, there were:

- 204 Engage! surveys completed
- 3 Engage! focus groups with over 20 businesses participating
- 32 businesses receiving assistance from the Get Connected program

NEPA GRANTMAKERS INITIATIVE

The NEPA Grantmakers initiative brings grantmaking organizations and agencies together to more efficiently and effectively address the grantmaking needs of the communities in Northeastern Pennsylvania.



Activities through this initiative included:

- Successfully launched the Community Foundation of Monroe County in October 2023.
- NEPA Grantmakers Forums: Hosted two Grantmakers Forums.

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NEPA 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.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

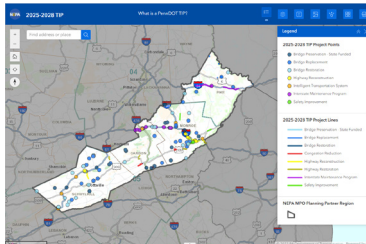
The NEPA MPO 2025-2028 TIP totaling \$548 million dollars was approved in June 2024. The TIP was developed by the MPO committees in collaboration with PennDOT, FHWA and the region's transit partners. The 2025-2028 TIP includes:

- 103 Bridge and Highway Projects Totaling \$244.1 million
- 17 Transit Projects Totaling \$45 million
- 8 Interstate Projects Totaling \$258.9 million



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 2023-2024 year, NEPA has completed and continued several GIS projects including:



- NEPA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan Story Map
- 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Map
- Environmental Justice Minority and Low Income Population Map
- Drone Mapping and Visualization Program

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

The Long Range Transportation Project (LRTP) for the four-county MPO identifies the major transportation projects, programs and policies needed for the next twenty-five years. The LRTP establishes the vision and goals that guide future decisions affecting transportation facilities, infrastructure and services in the region. The NEPA MPO committees approved the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan in January 2024.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, TITLE VI PLAN AND LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN

In April 2024, the NEPA MPO updated its Public Participation Plan, Title VI Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan. These plans outline the NEPA MPO's ongoing efforts to provide opportunities for public participation in the transportation planning and decision-making process and ensure compliance with federal transportation laws and regulations.



L RTP Open House in Monroe County

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. LTAP offers in-person and virtual classes and workshops.

2023-2024 LTAP Training

Individuals Trained: 244



LTAP Chainsaw Safety Class in Delaware Township, Pike County

THANK YOU ALAN!



Alan Baranski

NEPA Alliance would like to recognize Alan Baranski who retired on June 30, 2024, after 22 years of service. Thank you for your service and dedication to our organization and the region.

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 Phil Condon, CEO, Condon Sweda Advertising, for his contribution to the regional economy and involvement in the regional community of Northeastern Pennsylvania.



From left: Mary Beth Wood, WEDCO and NEPA Alliance Board Chairperson; Phil Condon, Condon Sweda Advertising; and Jeffrey Box, 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 25 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

FUNDING PARTNERS



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