



MVPC Newsletters

MVPC Progress Update

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Progress Council proposes new concept for Pittsburgh leg of the PA Route 51 to I-376 Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway // Progress Council Fall Quarterly meeting to focus on Obamacare // Three-session program on fighting blight in communities held in partnership with the Local Government Academy wraps up - future partnership with LGA explored // SCORE services via email – and even SKYPE!

PROGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

Progress Council proposes A Expressway/Busway Alternative for the PA Route 51 to I-376 Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway

The Progress Council has proposed a new strategy to advance the 24-mile, four billion dollar PA Route 51 to I-376 Expressway project. The last section of the Mon Valley/Fayette Expressway has been on hold for years due to a lack of funding and ongoing community and political controversy.

The Progress Council proposed Expressway/Busway Alternative has three basic components. The first component would involve constructing the 13-mile leg of the Expressway project from PA Route 51 to I-376 in Monroeville. The second component is constructing a 2.8-mile extension of the Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway from the current busway terminus in Swissvale to the proposed Expressway alignment in East Pittsburgh near the Keystone Commons complex. The extension would be designed to also serve as an HOV similar to the I-279 HOV lanes. The third component would involve a joint Port Authority and PennDOT effort to convert the Busway into a busway/HOV facility.

The most costly and controversial segment of the Expressway, from East Pittsburgh to Bates Street in Oakland, would be eliminated by the alternative. And, based on very preliminary cost estimates, the alternative has the potential to reduce the four-billion-dollar cost of the Expressway project by one-half.

The proposed alternative would meet core economic development objectives to improve access to industrial brownfield sites in the Allegheny County section of the Mon Valley and would improve traffic congestion in the Parkway East corridor. The Progress Council is scheduling meetings and will continue to monitor feedback on the concept.

Fall Quarterly Board Meeting to focus on Obamacare

The Fall Quarterly Meeting to be held on October 11, 12:00 noon at Monongahela Valley Hospital's Lombardi Education Center will feature a panel discussion on the Affordable Care Act. You can register by calling the Progress Council at 724-684-3381 or by faxing the attached registration form.

Despite derision, delay and confusion, the Affordable Care Act continues to move toward implementation. By October 1, all employers must distribute a notice to employees informing them of certain health coverage options under the new public health exchanges called for under the Act. And in 2015, businesses face considerable fines for non-compliance.

What does all of this mean for your business? Will the Affordable Care Act meet the goals of extending insurance to the uninsured and managing costs? Or will it result in an unmanageable, costly and complex bureaucracy? What to companies need to do to comply with the law? How do individuals learn about coverage options?

We've put together a panel of experts to provide information and insights on the Affordable Care Act. Please join us on October 11, 12:00 noon at the Mon Valley Hospital's Lombardi Education Center for what should be a lively panel discussion – **we'll make sure that there's plenty of time for questions.**

Sessions on fighting blight may promote future partnership efforts

The Pittsburgh-based Local Government Academy's (LGA) three-part series on Flight and Blight issues wrapped up on July 12. The luncheon sessions, held at Mon Valley YMCA from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. included a full review of community and legal strategies to fight blight. We appreciate the attendance of all local government officials and staff.

Planning is underway for future sessions that would include the full array of LGA training programs for elected official and staff. The Local Government Academy is a Pittsburgh-based independent non-partisan organization that promotes excellence in local government.

Advancing Regional Initiatives

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New direction for Mon-Fay?

Joe Kirk, executive director of the Mon Valley Progress Council and longtime advocate for the Mon-Fayette Expressway, has advanced a new idea for completing it. His plan eliminates the expressway leg to Pittsburgh, substituting an extension of the Port Authority's Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway to connect with the expressway near East Pittsburgh. He would allow HOV traffic to use the busway into Pittsburgh.



SCORE services via email -- and even SKYPE!

You might have heard of SCORE (Service Core of Retired Executives). It's now known as "SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Business". SCORE, which is supported by the SBA, provides free counseling for those seeking to go into business as well as established businesses.

Until recently, counseling has been through one-to-one in person counseling sessions provided by local SCORE volunteers. But now through technology, sessions include email exchange and even SKYPE (computer-based live video communication). What does this mean for you? Now SCORE can link you up with anyone in the United States through their national database of counselors on a broad range of technical business issues. Need help on logistics? There are SCORE volunteers in Buffalo, Minneapolis and other cities ready to talk with you about how to improve the logistics operations of your firm.

Just visit the Pittsburgh SCORE website to request services. It's free and you may find someone who can give great advice. Visit <http://pittsburgh.score.org/> and click on mentoring.

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The Mon Valley Progress Council

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