



## **Quaker Valley Council of Governments 2023 Annual Report**

### **What is a COG?**

Councils of Governments, enabled by the Pennsylvania Constitution and the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, are a vehicle for local communities to review, discuss and respond to regional needs. COGs promote the development and implementation of shared municipal services, as well as the overall concept of intergovernmental cooperation. Such a partnership of like-minded communities can leverage resources to help each other form and sustain the programming and services necessary to better serve their respective constituents.

### **About the Quaker Valley Council of Governments**

The Quaker Valley Council of Governments (QVCOG) is a network of communities along Route 65 & the Ohio River as it heads north from its confluence in downtown Pittsburgh. Starting at the Pittsburgh city line, the QVCOG municipalities form a string of municipalities until they reach Beaver County. A non-profit organization, the QVCOG facilitates multi-municipal efforts and provides cost-effective programming on behalf of its 15 member communities. The organization operates under a set of written by-laws and is governed by a Board of Delegates with each member community having one voting delegate.

**2023 Year in Review** - This year the QVCOG has worked to develop and build upon the following initiatives:

### **Sustainable Initiatives**

#### Glass Recycling Success

Since March 2022, the QVCOG has successfully diverted over 148 tons of glass away from landfills and into the recycling stream through CAP Glass. All QVCOG residents may drop-off their glass at our two designated sites that have been established at **Sewickley Borough's Riverfront Park** ([300 Chadwick St, Sewickley, PA 15143](#)) and **across from Avalon Borough's Public Works Facility** ([629 New Brighton Road, Avalon, PA 15202](#)). Due to the ongoing success of the program and the growth of the joint recycling fund the QVCOG Board of Delegates unanimously voted to take over financial responsibility for the both glass recycling dumpsters at its August 16th meeting.

#### Yard Waste Drop Off Program

Following its September 21, 2022 meeting, the QVCOG Board of Delegates approved a drop-off yard waste program in partnership with the Michael Brothers Company. Beginning immediately, and free of charge, residents of QVCOG member communities may drop off yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves, and more at Michael Brothers' Reserve Township facility located at 408 Hoffman Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15212. The guidelines of the Program can be found below as well as in the provided illustration.

*Program hours of operation:* Tuesday - Friday from 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. & Saturday from 7:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

*Do's and Don'ts:* Patrons may drop-off materials such as grass clippings, leaves, brush, wood chips, small logs (under 12" in diameter), Christmas trees, concrete chunks (clean), and dirt (clean). Items such as stumps (greater than 12" in diameter) and food items (such as pumpkins, etc.) will not be accepted.

#### WM Recycling Center Tour

On June 7th the QVCOG organized a site visit and tour of the GreenStar Recycling Center located on Neville Island. Municipal Officials and Staff were able to observe the single-source separation and recycling process and engaged with WM representatives to better understand proper recycling techniques specific to the curbside recycling program.

#### Tree Pittsburgh Adoption Event

With our organization's advocacy, the QVCOG region was selected by Tree Pittsburgh for an adoption event that took place on May 13th in conjunction with the Sewickley Civic Garden Council's annual Sewickley May Mart. Hundreds of young trees were adopted (free of charge) for residents to plant on private property in the region.

#### Purple Air Monitors

Following its presentation to the Board of Delegates on April 19, 2023 the Group Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) awarded two Purple Air Monitors to the QVCOG to promote air quality awareness in our region. Edgeworth Borough (salt shed) and Ben Avon Borough (municipal Building) agreed to host the devices. Regional air quality levels can be viewed at <https://map.purpleair.com/>.

### **Police Chiefs Committee**

Being developed in 2022, the QVCOG's Police Chiefs Committee has progressed into a comprehensive work-shop group which convened seven times throughout 2023 to discuss a variety of issues facing our regional police departments. A few of the accomplishments of the group include the following:

#### Mobile Fingerprint Scanner

Initially notified of the award through the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association last year, in September 2023 the Edgeworth Borough Police Department (host department) took delivery of a shared mobile fingerprint scanner. All QVCOG member communities and their affiliated police departments are encouraged to utilize the device when needed. Please note, the mobile fingerprint scanner requires a cellular connection and software maintenance package totaling \$1,025 annually. The QVCOG has budgeted accordingly and has/will pay for the required services in 2024.

#### Keystone Communities Grant

With the help of advocacy from Representative Valerie Gaydos (PA-44) the Quaker Valley Council of Governments was awarded \$100,000.00 through the Keystone Communities Program for the procurement, installation, and maintenance of traffic cameras and associated license plate identification technology. Per DCED's website, "The Keystone Communities Program (KCP) program is designed to encourage the creation of partnerships between the public and private sectors that jointly support local initiatives such as the growth and stability of neighborhoods and communities;

social and economic diversity; and a strong and secure quality of life. The program allows communities to tailor the assistance to meet the needs of its specific revitalization effort.” The QVCOG Police Chiefs Committee identified several regional intersections that would be appropriate for the aforementioned technology. In the coming year the QVCOG will solicit a public bid seeking a qualified vendor to procure and install the Automated License Plate Reader infrastructure and affiliated software.

### **Public Works Training**

On December 14, 2023 the QVCOG partnered with Mr. Tyler Lukart of Optimus Risk Services to provide a comprehensive flagger certification course for member communities and their public works departments. A total of 13 attendees registered from the event representing 4 QVCOG member communities.

### **Route 65 Flyer**

At its September 20th regular meeting the QVCOG Board of Delegates received a presentation from Mr. Peter Quintanilla of Michael Baker International which included the finalization of a two-page illustrative and informative “flyer” outlining the QVCOG’s regional impact and involvement in studying Route 65. The finished product can be found at [QVCOG.org](http://QVCOG.org). This flyer is anticipated to be an essential tool in bringing awareness to past initiatives and building a consensus for future work regarding the regional corridor.

## **Ongoing Programming & New Initiatives**

### Zoning Technical Assistance Program

Proper zoning administration is a challenge for both small and large communities alike. Zoning is an often misunderstood and underutilized community development tool that leaves many communities with the challenge of hiring a qualified professional to implement and oversee its given set of rules. The QVCOG’s Zoning Technical Assistance Program is a service offered to member communities that provides a AICP certified expert that will work with Municipal Staff and officials (i.e. Planning Commission & Zoning Hearing Board, etc.) throughout the permitting/plan review and approval process. Currently Leet and Aleppo Townships both utilize this program.

### Proactive Code Enforcement Program

The QVCOG has developed a professional solution for member communities concerning the procurement of a Code Enforcement Officer with its Proactive Code Enforcement Program. This program provides municipalities with a qualified professional to pursue a progressive code enforcement solution within their community.

### QVCOG Grant Map

A new GIS map has been developed with the assistance of Civic Mapper and is available for all QVCOG member municipalities. The map highlights CDBG & GEDTF projects that have been awarded through the QVCOG dating back to 2018 as well as all recent grant applications that were recently submitted through the QVCOG (CDBG, GEDTF, and LSA). This resource provides a “one stop shop” for municipal staff and engineers to evaluate prior grant applications and awards helping them develop future projects with tangible data and examples. Data points on the

map include each project's scope and award amount. More info can be found at [qvcog.org/cog-wide-gis](http://qvcog.org/cog-wide-gis).

### **Annual Dinner**

2023 saw the return of the QVCOG's Annual Dinner which took place at the Edgeworth Club and saw over 60 attendees convene to celebrate the spirit of intergovernmental collaboration. Mr. Tom Baker served as the event's keynote speaker highlighting the rewards of public service. The event included a 50/50 raffle with proceeds benefiting Animal Friends of Pittsburgh, who seeks to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome animals in crisis, ensure healthy pets through education, advocacy and affordable services, and inspire a community where the animal-human bond is celebrated and nurtured. Ms. Diane Vierling, Municipal Secretary for Glen Osborne Borough, was recognized for her many years of Public Service to the Borough. Additionally, the QVCOG received 11 financial sponsorships for the event.

### **The QVCOG welcomes the Sewickley Borough Water Authority**

At its July 19, 2023 meeting the QVCOG Board of Delegates unanimously approved the Sewickley Water Authority's application to the organization as an Associate Member. Per the organization's Bylaws, any institution is eligible to apply for Associate Membership including without limitation: firms; corporations; non-profit organizations; and political subdivisions, including authorities; school districts; police departments; and fire departments. As an Associate Member the Sewickley Water Authority may participate in the following QVCOG activities through a single individual representative: Board of Delegates meetings (as a non-voting member); committees (i.e. Managers and Secretaries); and Community forums.

## **Grants**

### CDBG Year 49 Awards

During 2023 the QVCOG was awarded several Community Block Development Grants for the Year 49 cycle (2023-24). A summary of the projects as well as the grant award amount can be found below:

- Leetsdale Borough - 189 & 300 Beaver Street Blight Remediation Project - \$36,000.00
- Leetsdale Borough - Municipal Building ADA Parking Pad Project - \$29,422.00
- Sewickley Borough Water Authority - Center-South Waterline Replacement Project - \$185,000.00
- Sewickley Borough - ADA Sidewalk Ramp Project - \$110,670.00

Please note that every QVCOG member community is eligible to apply for CDBG funding for "non-income based" projects such as ADA accessibility improvement projects and blight remediation. Communities may also conduct targeted household income surveys in pursuit of CDBG funding for other project types (i.e. road reconstruction, water & sewer, recreation, etc.). All project requests must total at least \$20,000 and municipalities may submit multiple applications each year for consideration. Projects that do not receive funding in a given year may be reconsidered the following year. Pre-Applications are due annually in the month of September.

### Act 152 Award

The QVCOG is proud to announce that it was selected for an Act 152 grant for its application on behalf of Bell Acres Borough. The Act 152 Program provides funding for demolition and blight remediation planning. The selected project involves the demolition and site restoration of 109 North Avenue. The total grant award is \$29,500.00.

Recycling Performance Grant

The QVCOG has aggregated residential and commercial recycling data for the 2022 calendar year for 14 participating member communities for the submission of a joint Act 101 Section 904 Recycling Performance Grant through the PA Department of Environmental Protection. Please note, In August of 2023, the QVCOG received an award in the amount of \$26,133.62 for its 2021 application. Of that amount, \$8,194.21 was sent directly to participating communities with the remainder being allocated towards the QVCOG's Joint Recycling Fund (used to sponsor activities such as the glass recycling program).

**In preparation for the next cycles of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Gaming Economic Development & Tourism Fund (GEDTF), and Local Share Account (LSA) funding, the QVCOG has submitted 31 applications on behalf of 11 member communities and 3 affiliated organizations for consideration.**

2023 QVCOG Delegates

Aleppo Township  
Arthur Williams

Glenfield Borough  
Paul Carmody  
Joel Kaminski\*

Avalon Borough  
Roberta Edwards

Haysville Borough  
Amy Paff  
Amanda Muzichuck\*

Bell Acres Borough  
Carmee Murphy  
Lane Grafton\*

Kilbuck Township  
Daryl Hartman

Bellevue Borough  
Dan McKelvey

Leet Township  
Marty McDaniel  
Dan Peluso\*

Ben Avon Borough  
Rick Wagner  
Tavia Washington\*

Leetsdale Borough  
Jeff Weatherby

Edgeworth Borough  
John Schwend, Treasurer

Sewickley Borough  
Julie Barnes, Vice President

Emsworth Borough  
Paul Getz

Sewickley Heights Borough  
Nate Briggs

Glen Osborne Borough  
Barbara Carrier, President

Staff  
Patrick Conners, Executive Director

\*Alternate Delegate