

Turtle Creek Valley COG Director's Report

TCVCOG Board Meeting
January 22, 2026

Upcoming Meetings – Please HOLD these dates:

Friday, Feb. 20, 2026: TCVCOG Annual Dinner, Edgewood Country Club, 5:30pm

Thursday, March 26, 2026: TCVCOG Board Meeting, 6:30pm

4/9-4/12: ALOM Conference

Newly Elected Officials and Board Members

Welcome!! We'd welcome the opportunity to introduce our services to new borough council members, managers, and/or administrative staff. Please reach out to Amanda or Natalie to schedule some time to talk. We want to make sure you're aware of the value of tcvcog membership!

Utility Billing

Our utility billing program had a strong year, with over \$6 million collected. We appreciate the opportunity to take on new billing services and always welcome referrals to neighboring municipalities—especially if you're aware of communities considering new stormwater ordinances.

As we head into the first quarter of 2026, a large volume of bills is set to mail. Thank you to our staff for their consistency, flexibility, and dedication, particularly while navigating the recent office move. Our drop box remains available at the Monroeville Municipal Building for the convenience of all bill payers. There is also a significant amount of behind-the-scenes coordination with our partners that keeps the utility billing department running smoothly, including banking, software, phone systems, and website support.

Municipal Finance Shared Service

We are now using Accufund – a true fund accounting system - in our participating towns and at the COG. It's not easy to change systems, and the transition has been intense, but I'm relieved to report that everything is working well. Kudos to COG and Municipal staff as we continue to work through this time of transition.

CodeNforce (CNF)

We're excited to welcome Braddock Borough into CNF! They will be our 13th town! It's anticipated that the City of Duquesne will also be coming on board. Brian Lawrence from the Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority is pursuing philanthropic funding to assist Westmoreland County towns with user fees and onboarding. That's exciting because we all become stronger with more towns using the system.

ALIGN

The group convened on December 16th for its second meeting to explore how clean technology could serve as a long-term driver of economic opportunity in Mon Valley and the eastern suburbs. Data analysis indicates the region is well positioned to support a clean technology industry cluster, building on existing infrastructure, workforce potential, and geographic assets.

Participants discussed forming a collaborative network—provisionally called **ALIGN (Alliance for Local Growth Network)**—to better align government, nonprofit, and regional partners around shared economic and community development goals. The group agreed that **ALIGN's goal is to create a unified, investment-ready region where existing residents benefit from renewed growth.** The network is intended to emphasize coordination over competition, avoid duplicative efforts, and pursue joint strategies that strengthen

neighborhoods while delivering inclusive growth. Participants discussed the name, its goal and the values for the group all contained within the draft Fact Sheet and approved of them all. They emphasized the need to be sure that ALIGN focuses on accountability, clear timelines, and measurable outcomes. The group also acknowledged that ALIGN's goal is to align around specific tangible projects and to ensure that as plans are rolled out, all necessary partners are aligned and ready.

Participants also discussed establishing a working committee to define actionable items within a specific challenge area such as workforce development, site readiness, infrastructure, or transportation. The criteria for selection includes that it be:

- a. **Locally controlled.** Local leaders have authority to take necessary actions. This is not an advocacy or lobbying effort to seek change at the state or federal level.
- b. **Achievable within one year.** Although this is a multi-year project, it is important that the coalition show that it can make transformative changes within its first year.
- c. **Clear visible early success.** The reform action must be politically feasible and have a measurable impact.
- d. **Resource-aligned.** Can be achieved with existing or readily accessible funding, staffing, and capacity.
- e. **Capacity-building.** Strengthens collaborative infrastructure for future work.

An Lewis presented upcoming work based on research into what communities must provide to be investment ready that will include an asset inventory and their was excitement about sharing this through a data dashboard.

The group identified the COGs as the internal coordinators who will staff the initiative and recognizing that they have the strongest regional connections.

Participants stressed that success in one community should be viewed as a regional benefit and the need for strong communications, visibility and celebrating wins. The group identified next steps that include developing working committees, creating a shared data dashboard to assess investment readiness, expanding participation to additional regional partners, and setting achievable one-year goals supported by strong communications and visible early wins. The next convening is planned for late February or early March.

Other

The TCVCOG team has the opportunity to present at the ALOM conference on the topic of code enforcement. We would love to have your feedback in the next few days. What kind of information would draw you to a session on this topic?

I will be working on recommendations to update our By-Laws and plan to have those revisions ready for discussion at our meeting in March.

If they haven't already done so, please remind your municipal manager/secretary to forward the municipal contact 2026 spreadsheet officially designating your municipality's tcvcog board delegate and alternate. We communicate via email, so it's important that your reps have access to that technology.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Settelmaier