

# CONNECT

## Climate Action Plan



### Local Actions & Strategies to Reduce CONNECT Members' Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Increase Our Resilience

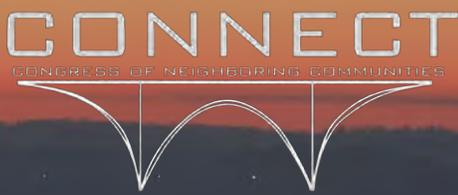
Pending Vote at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Session of The Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT)

5/19/2022

Reference: Resolution 22-05

Produced by: CONNECT Infrastructure & Utilities Coordination Working Group





## A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We, the Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT), are thrilled to present the CONNECT Climate Action Plan (CAP) and help our local governments develop strategies to address climate change. A huge thank you and the highest commendation to the profoundly committed Infrastructure & Utilities Working Group, Environmental & Economic Development Working Group, and the Climate Action Plan Subcommittee members for dedicating their time and energy to a lengthy and detailed multi-year process that is only just beginning. This continued work is being facilitated by our dedicated Community Project Manager, Eric Raabe, and our growing team of CONNECTers – if you are reading this, you are invited to join us to advance this work to our collective success.

The CONNECT CAP is a living document that hopes to engage and empower our members to reduce our emissions and adapt to the climate impacts to our shared region. Local governments and other stakeholders can search for funding, partners, strategies, tactics and case studies throughout this Plan to achieve these goals. The Plan will also serve as a detailed playbook for the CONNECT team to use over the next few years to lead, facilitate, and support the partnerships, ideation, and effort necessary to make our bold ideas a reality for our communities. We are so grateful for all the support from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, The Heinz Endowments, The Jefferson Regional Foundation, and all our partners. We look forward to our continued partnerships and more like them as we move toward implementation of the Plan.

This kind of cross-boundary, cross-sector, innovating, and activating work is exactly why the founders of CONNECT came together nearly fourteen years ago. Over the course of CONNECT's existence since then, we have tackled the persistent issues of energy, recycling, stormwater, transportation, and utilities coordination in our region. With the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 6th Assessment Report detailing just how far we have to go to address this crisis, our belief in being *stronger together* is now more important than ever. Our members recognize that the environmental, economic and social challenges we face do not respect municipal borders – so our solutions must be rooted in collaboration and cooperation to better serve our nearly 900,000 residents. We are not yet on track, but I know we can get there together.

The chills of possibility, hope, and inspiration I get from reading this incredibly useful tool is compounded with the knowledge that over 1500 people across dozens of municipal borders in our region were engaged in this process. With this Plan, I hope you are compelled to engage with us on this work, take advantage of the unprecedented funding for these long-term investments, and build the project-ready teams and plans to create a more equitable, resilient, sustainable, and successful future here in the CONNECT region and beyond.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lydia S. Morin". The signature is written in a dark color, likely black or dark blue ink, and is positioned to the right of the portrait photo.

Lydia Morin  
Executive Director, CONNECT

# CONNECT

## CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

### About CONNECT

The Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT) brings together the City of Pittsburgh and surrounding municipalities to identify common public policy challenges and advocate for collective change on behalf of Allegheny County's urban core.



### Why Regional Climate Action?

CONNECT members emit **5x** our fair share of emissions recommended to limit warming. Climate change threatens the health, safety, and overall well-being of communities across the globe - and here at home, too. Our regional vulnerabilities, such as adverse air quality, landslides, and flooding risk are exacerbated by climate change and overlap with policy areas of concern to CONNECT.

Although participation in CONNECT's work is always optional - **climate change does not respect municipal borders** - so our solutions must be rooted in collaboration and cooperation.

### More Information:



 [CONNECT.PITT.EDU/CAP](http://CONNECT.PITT.EDU/CAP)



# CONNECT Takes Climate Action

CONNECT resolves to address climate change by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening our resilience to natural hazards. We extend an invitation to all local governments of Allegheny County and Southwest PA to help advance this work as we implement these solutions and adapt to a changing climate.

## The CONNECT Climate Action Plan:

- Highlights our shared vulnerabilities
- Includes the first inventory of CONNECT's greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from each member's community-wide activities
- Establishes a feasible emissions reduction target of a 30% reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050,
- Outlines potential actions identified by members, for members to achieve emissions reduction and resilience goals

## OUR WORK SO FAR

For years, CONNECT members have taken actions to improve the sustainability of their communities. Through its Resolution 20-04, CONNECT and its member local governments each committed to address their contribution to global climate change and create more sustainable and resilient communities.

The CONNECT Climate Action Plan hopes to support our member's existing plans, coordinate additional meaningful action in this space, and build on the efforts we're already working on together - like:

**Model Solar Zoning** to enable renewable energy in our communities

**Stormwater Coordination** to reduce our risks to flooding and rain events

**Recycling Coordination** to better manage our materials and their environmental impact

**Transit-Oriented Development** to increase accessibility and encourage cleaner transportation

## SOLUTIONS

The CONNECT Climate Action Plan establishes an emissions reduction target and outlines a menu of opportunities for taking action. No matter what stage or situation your community is in - there are 4 simple goals and over a hundred specific actions you can take tomorrow or further in the future to achieve your sustainability goals while improving your community.

Start exploring options in this Plan



30%  
by  
2030

## 4 GOALS



**REDUCE** energy use in our local governments and communities



**REPLACE** current energy sources with renewables



**STRENGTHEN** resilience through land, water, and materials management



**MOTIVATE** cleaner and more accessible modes of transport by residents and in our cities



## BENEFITS OF CLIMATE ACTION



### Improving Public Health

Climate change mitigation activities help to clean the air by reducing vehicle emissions and can therefore improve public health. Climate actions, like limits on idling, increased adoption of electric vehicles, or preservation of the tree canopy helps to reduce exposure to air pollutants and heat in our communities. Enabling more alternative and accessible modes of transport is linked to reduced risk for respiratory & chronic lifestyle diseases.



### Saving Money and Promoting Jobs

Efficiency, electric vehicle use, and building improvements are measures that can reduce costs from energy, fuel, and maintenance. Actions that strengthen the community against flooding and other risks can prevent costly damage from extreme events. Sustainable tourism, green construction/planning, and urban agriculture can spur business and job growth through the installation of energy efficient and renewable technologies.



### Enhancing Resource Security

Climate actions can make service disruptions to power systems, food and water sources, and critical facilities less likely. Stormwater management and water conservation can help reduce runoff, ensuring rivers and water supplies remain clean and safe. Tree canopy management can reduce heat and demand for air conditioning.

### Fostering Social Equity



Socially vulnerable populations are often disproportionately in harm's way from climate risks, like flooding, heat, and air quality. When planned thoughtfully, climate actions can address both emissions, resilience, and equity simultaneously - ensuring a better quality of life for CONNECT's communities of color and low-income communities.

# How To Use This Plan

1

## Use as a "Menu of Opportunities" for Local Governments to Act

Explore  
[options](#)

There are countless ways a local government can address climate change while improving the community. This Plan contains over 100+ options suggested by our members, for our members. Each is organized by factors like impact, cost, and difficulty, and provides links to local resources, funding, and other opportunities. Note that many of these actions earn local governments points toward a [Sustainable PA Community Certification!](#) Start exploring actions [here](#).

## Use To See Your Community's Contributions To, & Risks From, Climate Change

2

This Plan includes a [vulnerability assessment](#), a climate [survey](#) of our residents, and the [first regional inventory](#) of community greenhouse gas emissions in Allegheny County. Community specific Information was compiled for each local government in CONNECT (2018) and is [available upon request](#).

Learn  
[more](#)

3

## Use as a Template to Create your Own Local Climate Action Plan

Reach  
[out](#)

Many sections of this Plan are explicitly designed to be used by local governments when creating their own local climate action plan, comprehensive plan, or sustainability plan. Adopting, copying, or otherwise using parts of this document will save local governments considerable time and effort. Reach out to [ejr73@pitt.edu](mailto:ejr73@pitt.edu) for more information.

## Use to Guide Member Participation & Next Steps by CONNECT

4

Following passage of the Plan, CONNECT will evaluate the "CONNECT Opportunity"  actions found in this Plan based on emissions reduction potential, potential to increase resilience, cost/feasibility, and other criteria. Participate in our Working Groups to lend your perspective on what we should pursue together. Join us [here](#).

Join us  
[here](#)

# Taking Action to 2030

In the following chapters, CONNECT's goals and a series of objectives with actions are explored for each emissions sector. This represents a “menu of opportunities” for climate action by a local government – all proposed and workshopped by member governments and partners of CONNECT. An “Objective” is an end result, or target, and an “Action” is a potential means of realizing the objective. Noted on each objective is its relative emission reduction potential and co-benefits, and within each action is pertinent information such as relative cost, difficulty, and lead actors. Links to funding and resources are also provided within each action to help. All actions will help CONNECT, its partners, local government, residents, and businesses to achieve a 30% emissions reduction by 2030, and to be net-zero by 2050. Local governments should use and modify potential actions from these lists to implement in their own communities or climate planning efforts.

Actions labeled “” are considered climate actions that CONNECT may be able to implement as a CONNECT-wide project or are actions from which members may find extra benefits when implementing together as a region. Actions **highlighted** are those in progress or already completed. Sectors covered include:

Legend	
Symbol	Co-Benefit
	Improves public health
	Saves money and promotes jobs
	Enhances resource security
	Fosters social equity

Symbol	GHG Reduction
	Small Reduction Potential
	↓
	Large Reduction Potential

Symbol	Meaning
	No Cost → High Cost
	Low → High Difficulty
	CONNECT Opportunity



CONNECT Support Actions



Municipal, Commercial, & Industrial Energy



Residential Energy



Waste & Materials Management



Water & Wastewater Management



Transportation & Mobile Sources



Land Use & Climate Adaptation



Equity

**Click on Each Action for Info From Full Plan**

# Recommended Climate Actions

**X4 = highest emissions reduction potential**

**X1 = greatly improves climate resilience**

Support	Commercial Energy	Residential Energy	Waste & Materials	Transportation	Water & Wastewater	Land Use	Equity
Receive your custom community GHG summary	Benchmark municipal buildings for free	Publicize existing energy efficiency, solar, and weatherization incentives	Ensure consistent language on municipal sites and contracts	Make a list of fleet vehicles and enter in savings tool	Incorporate expected climate vulnerabilities into plans	Implement a steep slope ordinance limiting disturbance	Explicitly incorporate PADEP's environmental justice areas into municipal language and plans
Make a voluntary commitment to address climate	Install low-cost timers, sensors and LEDs in buildings and streetlights	Assess current enforcement of building energy codes, train officials	Benchmark municipal waste for free	Join DLC Fleet Advisory Program	Encourage rain barrel use in community	Increase waterway buffer zones up to 150ft setbacks	Form a DEI task force or community group
Form a committee or internship to advance work	Certify facilities staff in energy efficiency	Model Solar Zoning	Recycling public education campaign	Pass and enforce an ordinance limiting idling	Engage in routine flood education	Moratorium on high-risk areas using CoordinatePA	Ensure increased access to energy efficiency and weatherization services and incentives
View results or distribute your own climate survey	Contract an energy audit/technical assistance for building improvement	Educate residents on Power Choice	Pass a ban on harmful materials like coal tar	Install air quality monitors and dashboards	Replace water fixtures with low-flow models	Form or reactivate a shade tree committee	Conduct air quality outreach and education
	Publicize existing energy efficiency and solar incentives	Work with partners to create a site linking residents and contractors	Build/support community gardens/alternative growing platforms	Form a biking/walking committee	Muni water utility joins WPEC	Implement an official tree ordinance to protect and plan high value trees	

## Actions You Could Take "Tomorrow"

These are "low-cost" or "no-cost" actions that local government can take to lead to appreciable reductions in emissions. Most governments in CONNECT can implement these without much effort. Many times, these serve as the foundation for future, deeper cuts to emissions.

## Actions You Could Take During "Business As Usual"

These are opportunities that local government can take before or during already scheduled projects, such as a building renovation, or comp plan update. These actions lead to higher emissions reductions if implemented.

Support	Replacing/Renovating a Building?	Using ARPA Funds?	Buying Energy or Materials?	Replacing a Fleet Vehicle?	Updating a Comp. Plan or Zoning?	Expecting Development?
Source decision data from utilities, audits, etc.	Construction/Demolition Reuse	Remove blight and increase greenspace	Procure sustainable office materials	Join EV Purchasing Collaborative	Ensure ADA Accessible and heat resilient stops and sidewalks	Promote Environmental Justice Participation Policy
Use a Priority Based Budgeting Tool to align funds towards sustainability	Install green roofs, impervious surfaces, etc.	Build green stormwater infrastructure	Buy local renewable energy offsets	Assess siting for public EV chargers	Incorporate expected climate vulnerabilities into plans	Require developer stormwater management
Get your work recognized by Sustainable Pennsylvania	Replace gas appliances and heating with electric	Build trails and complete streets	Construction/Demolition Reuse	Join DLC Charging Program	Include codes requiring EV charging/parking	Require compact and Complete Streets development
Work with University research to clear barriers	Install renewable energy systems to power buildings	Improve Efficiency of buildings	Partner with org. to offer glass/hard to recycle collection	Use federal, state, or local incentive to purchase EV and charger	Prioritize compact and Complete Streets development	Encourage home energy labelling/audits at time of sale
		Install renewable energy systems on buildings	Join WPEC for lower cost clean energy	Advertise search and purchase to community	Incorporate TOD into zoning	Increase density and array of housing types

## Actions You Could Take with "Active Planning"

These are actions that require the most active planning and effort, but lead to the highest emissions reductions and benefits local governments can achieve.

Support	Commercial Energy	Residential Energy	Waste & Materials	Transportation	Water & Wastewater	Land Use	Equity
Engage in EcoDistrict or CAP Planning Process	Create local energy incentives	Solar feasibility study on community roofs	Enforcement of Recycling Ordinances	Update/create an active transportation plan	Ensure resident access to floodplain insurance	Target tree preservation planting in urban areas	Protections for vulnerable populations during climate hazards
Train staff in climate leadership and awareness	Enter a PPA with a power producer	Form a Solar Co-op	Create a Composting Program	Create municipal incentives for EV's/charging	Build green infrastructure in the community	Consider LEED /etc. design standards	Target a project in an EJ area of your community for grant funding
Hire a sustainability manager	Require electric in new construction	Launch energy use challenge	Recycling ordinances for Multi-family/Commercial Buildings	New bike infrastructure, walking paths, and lanes	Work with surrounding municipalities for a "One Water" Plan	Implement vegetation recovery and reclamation on vacant land	Target tree preservation and planting to urban areas
	Community Energy Disclosure Ordinance	Create local energy incentives	"Pay as you throw program"	Reduce or eliminate parking minimums	Use incentives for impervious surfaces	Work with land trusts to conserve land and carbon offsets	

# Our Members' Success

## in Sustainability & Climate Action



### Commercial/Industrial/Municipal Energy FOREST HILLS NET-ZERO MUNICIPAL BUILDING

**Action:** When the Borough building was in need of replacement – rather than continuing with inefficient repairs and adjustments to an existing building first built in 1922, Forest Hills Borough used this as an opportunity to save the borough energy, money, and promote sustainability throughout the community

The Borough partnered with Volpatt Construction and EIS Solar to construct a new solar powered, net-zero energy municipal building to serve the community's needs. The passive design is fitted with HVAC geothermal heating and additional energy conserving measures – all powered by a 125 kW photovoltaic solar array on the roof for a total net zero energy operation. Green infrastructure and permeable pedestrian walkways were also employed at the site to manage stormwater. In a community wide planning process – cost efficiency and sustainability were highlighted as top priorities in the design

**Funding:** The sale of the existing properties and expected energy and maintenance savings contributed to financing. The solar array was funded through a loan by Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF), covering 70% of the initial installation cost. SEF is a PA non-profit who provides individuals and small businesses assistance in overcoming financial and educational barriers to a more sustainable energy future.

**Benefits:** The solar array generates an estimated 213,000kWh of energy annually, and through a power purchase agreement, generates power revenues for the Borough up to \$25,000 annually. Compared to the previous building, the new 13,000 sq. ft building saves the Borough \$1.24 per square foot in operational costs, greatly reduces the water discharge rate into the watershed even during storm events, and sees increased patronage by residents. The project continues to be a positive for Borough staff, the community, and the environment – proving a green, emissions reducing design can also be cost effective.

Contact: Patty DeMarco - demarcop6@gmail.com

### Residential Energy Multi-municipal Solar Co-op

**Action:** In an effort to increase renewable power and address the largest source of emissions in their communities, Etna, Millvale, and Sharpsburg Boroughs, along with Millvale Community Development Corporation, and New Sun Rising joined with Solar United Neighbors to form a Triboro Solar Co-op that helps to bring solar panels to residents' homes. Following educational sessions and recruitment of residents, SUN and their chosen installer leverages the co-op's power as a group to make buying residential rooftop solar panels easier and less expensive for members. Interested residents throughout Allegheny County were also invited to join.

**Funding:** Solar United Neighbors did not charge a fee for their services, with no cost to start or participate in the solar co-op. Promotion, education, and outreach material, including info sessions, yard signs, and door hangers were provided at no cost. Purchasing is voluntary with individuals who pursue solar installation funding their own system and using a federal tax credit to further lower the cost.

**Benefits:** Since launch, the co-op has gathered 102 members total from a handful of boroughs. By going solar as a group and choosing a single installer, members will save off the average cost of going solar and have the continued support of fellow group members and solar experts at Solar United Neighbors. Since 2018, SUN has hosted a dozen solar co-ops in Pennsylvania, resulting in 79 homes and businesses with solar panels, resulting in 19 million pounds of lifetime carbon offsets.

Contact: Talia O'Brien - tobrien@etnaborough.org



### Waste/Materials Management LOCAL GOVT. AND PRC GLASS RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP

**Action:** As harder to recycle materials, such as glass, are removed from curbside recycling programs as a result of market shifts and increased processing costs, municipalities have turned to public-nonprofit partnerships to keep recyclable materials out of landfill. Since 2019, a series of glass-only drop-off collections, travelling glass bins, and permanent drop-off locations offered by Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) and hosted by municipalities has served as the much needed temporary "recycling infrastructure" for our region. PRC's glass goes directly to a sorting facility and is then prepared for glass mills and manufacturers in the Western PA and Ohio.

**Funding:** These locations, along with maintenance and hauling services, are "rented" for a fee by municipalities and advertised to allow residents to ensure their glass is being recycled. Collaboration is encouraged between neighboring communities, COGs and counties to engage in cost-share arrangements.

**Benefits:** A 5-hour, Saturday pop-up event in 2019 saw anywhere from 350-800 households participate in one day, with a municipality expecting to collect approximately 4 - 6 tons of glass in a week, depending on demand in the given location. Events in 2020 collected around 540,000 pounds of glass bottles, jars, and jugs from over 15,000 households. Recycling has emissions benefits too. For every 6 tons of recycled container glass used in manufacturing, 1 ton of carbon dioxide emissions is avoided. The success of pop-up and travelling glass collection events, now with sponsors and partnerships in 30 communities in PA and CONNECT, has moved several communities to request permanent container placement in their area. To keep up with demand, PRC is continuing to pursue a region-wide network of glass recycling drop-off sites in partnership with southwestern PA municipalities, councils of government (COGs), and county partners.

Contact: Pennsylvania Resources Council - glass@prc.org



Point State Park

Makes Field

## Transportation

### Electric & Cleaner Fleet Vehicles in Allegheny County

**Action:** In response to local air quality concerns and a commitment to reduce its carbon footprint, Allegheny County has successfully transitioned a number of county fleet vehicles, including employee, police, and public works vehicles to electric or other cleaner fuels. In early 2020, the county installed chargers near the downtown building and purchased four all-electric Chevy Bolts. The county also plans to purchase more cleaner dual-fuel garbage and dump trucks for public works and parks staff this year to add to their fleet of hybrid electric vehicles currently used by Public Works. Additionally, the Allegheny County Sheriff's Office recently purchased an all-electric police cruiser, making them the only department in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to have an all-electric vehicle in its fleet. The vehicle is all-wheel drive, tolerant of Pittsburgh's winter weather conditions, and rated to drive over 200 miles per charge.

**Funding:** Although typically more expensive than a traditional gasoline powered vehicle, in many cases the County's replacements were made possible by grant funding, like the Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant, that offsets the cost. In many cases, EVs are best procured during the scheduled replacement of older vehicles or in lieu of a future purchase of a gasoline powered fleet addition.

**Benefits:** Electric vehicles and cleaner fuel vehicles are beneficial to the climate and local air quality, emitting far fewer greenhouse gas emissions and harmful particulates than traditional fuel vehicles. Due to the grant and lower maintenance costs compared to those of a gas vehicle, the purchase of the Chevy Bolts are expected to result in cost savings for the County. According to the Sheriff's Office, the electric police cruiser is expected to save the County at least \$26,000 in fuel and maintenance costs per electric vehicle. The Sheriff's Office plans to add a second, and is considering buying solar-powered charging stations, hoping to eventually make their entire fleet electric.

Contact: Brittany Prischak – Allegheny County Website



## Water/Stormwater

### Green Stormwater Infrastructure in Etna

**Action:** In response to major flooding and sewer overflows, the Borough of Etna is turning its main street into a green street and constructing other green infrastructure projects to control the costly water and stormwater issues that come with being the most downstream community in a large watershed. Etna partnered with EPA, PADEP, and Buchart Horn to plan and construct Green Streetscape Infrastructure Projects in its business district. These include continuous trench drains, tree grates, and street trees as well as roof drain collection and green inlet bump-outs on its main streets. A rain park, vacant lot turned rain garden, and parking lot green stormwater management system were also constructed for the community through the project and with other partnerships.

**Funding:** Design and construction of Green Streetscape Projects were funded through the EPA's and PADEP's 319 Nonpoint Source Grants program for the first two phases of the planned six-phase project. Other community green infrastructure projects were funded by RK Mellon Foundation, and 3RWW. The Borough's Green Master Plan, which identifies locations for potential green infrastructure projects in the community was funded by a Pennsylvania Environmental Council grant (PEC).

**Benefits:** Each of these projects reduces runoff, removes stormwater from the combined sewer system and reduces the energy used to manage wastewater. Green Streetscape Projects completed thus far remove over 2 million gallons of runoff annually and have improved the aesthetic appeal and health of the business district with 5000 sq ft of pervious pavers, 4500 cubic feet of underground storage, and over 20 street trees. Upon completion, the green system will be able to fully contain the runoff generated from five-year storm events, or close to 5 million gallons of water – at a significant cost savings to alternative "grey" infrastructure.

Contact: Mary Ellen Ramage – meramage@etnaborough.org



## LAND USE

### Dormont Transit Oriented Development

**Action:** The Borough of Dormont sought to update their zoning code to integrate transit-oriented development planning concepts. Dormont is home to several light rail stations and bus stops, making it a hub for frequent, high-quality transit in a suburban area. Because the zoning code had not been updated since 1995, becoming outdated in several ways to the current needs of the borough, Dormont partnered with Yard and Company to oversee the community engagement process of developing and proposing zoning changes. Through the initiative, known as Code Dormont, staff were able to conduct multiple engagement programs with stakeholders, such as a chalk walk and a walk & tell. The project connected with over 1000 Dormont residents. In 2021, the Borough adopted Ordinance 1641, which repealed and replaced the existing zoning code with the proposal that was developed through the Code Dormont project. The new code better aligns with the borough's comprehensive plan goals. It also creates two zoning districts around three light-rail stops which encourage buildings of three to eight stories with an emphasis on pedestrian access to the stops and other walkable amenities in the area.

**Funding:** The project received a Municipal Assistance Program (MAP) grant from Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development, which funds up to 50% of eligible costs. The rest of the funding came from local revenue.

**Benefits:** Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) recognizes the importance of proximity to transit as it relates to future development. Higher density, mixed-use development within walking distance of transit hubs supports more mobility and vitality in the area. TOD also helps mitigate against the negative consequences of single-occupancy vehicle use such as traffic congestion and increased emissions per capita, thus lessening the dependency for vehicles in such areas and increasing more efficient land use. The new code is also form-based, meaning the emphasis of the build environment is in a structure's form rather than location or use. Form-based zoning encourages maintaining character and considers a building's relationship to the street.

Contact: Ben Estell – bestell@boro.dormont.pa.us



## EQUITY

### Targeted Home Repairs for Sharpsburg Homeowners in Need

**Action:** The Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization established a new program for low-income renters and homeowners to access up to \$250 in funding for critical home repairs or upgrades that also increase energy efficiency in their homes. Applicants may also take advantage of the organization's free home energy assessment program in partnership with Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh (RTP). The assessment will provide project ideas for the home repairs and may provide up to an additional \$100 in funding.

**Funding:** The Home Repair Fund program is funded through a community impact grant from Duquesne Light Company. The Home Energy Audit and Repair program is funded by Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh which leverages Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) funding to sponsor home repairs. These are banks which have pledged at least 10% of their earnings to Affordable Housing Programs.

**Benefits:** These critical home repairs and energy audits serve to improve the quality of life of homeowners and to strengthen resilience in the face of weather events, such as flooding and extreme heat and cold temperatures. Home repairs have decreased the energy burden of low-income households by increasing energy efficiency and insulation. Weatherization improves overall indoor air quality, having a lasting impact on the health and wellness of residents. An increase in resilience and energy efficiency also saves homeowners money from energy and damage costs.

Contact: Brittany Reno – brittany@sharpsburgneighborhood.org



# CONNECT REGIONAL CLIMATE SURVEY

## What Our Residents Think About Climate Change

A successful climate action plan ensures that all stakeholders have a part in shaping it. In the summer of 2021, CONNECT launched a corresponding survey to all residents in Allegheny County to garner feedback on their concerns, priorities, and ideas on how our local governments can address the effects of climate change.

Since then...

**1,484** people have completed the survey in Allegheny County\*

**1,123** are residents of CONNECT communities



**34%**

of respondents are under 40



**18%**

of respondents are over 65



**8%**

of respondents are nonwhite

Along with over **800** (844) responses from similar surveys by our local governments:

**Carnegie Etna Forest Hills Sharpsburg Swissvale**

CONNECT and its members have consulted over

**2,000** residents on climate action in our region.

Our communities are in consensus on what they'd like to see

### TOP 10 COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

- 1** Improve **regional & indoor air quality**.
- 2** Build up local **recycling/composting** infrastructure.
- 3** Build **green stormwater infrastructure** and encourage water management.
- 4** Expand existing local **public transportation**.
- 5** Incentivize business **energy efficiency improvements**.
- 6** Expand local **tree planting** and urban tree canopy.
- 7** Work with **communities uphill in our watershed** to build better storm water infrastructure.
- 8** Incentivize **residential energy efficiency** improvements.
- 9** Adopt more sustainable local development **zoning policies**.
- 10** Highlight and negotiate cheaper **green power purchasing** options.

## Community Concerns

Survey responses showed several areas of high priority for our community members:

### Air Quality

Over **75%** of respondents are concerned with poor air quality. A third (**32%**) have or know someone with a respiratory condition.

### Flooding

Over **60%** are concerned about flooding. Over **31%** have experienced flooding in their home.

### Landslides

Over **60%** are concerned about landslides. **18%** have experienced erosion or landslides around their home.

### Environmental Justice

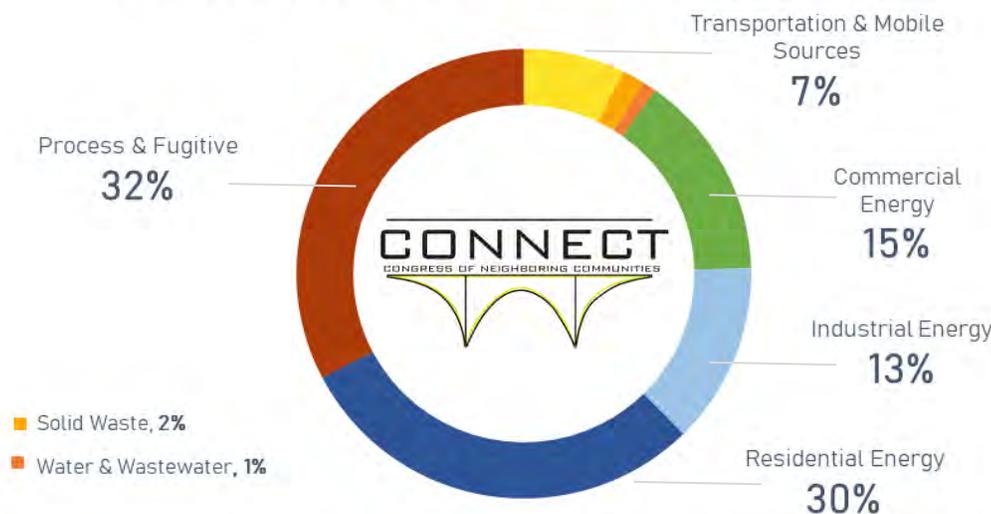
**74%** of respondents are concerned about environmental justice. Non-white residents report higher concern for certain vulnerabilities, such as poor air quality.



# Official CONNECT Region GHG Emissions Inventory

The following figure summarizes the first region-wide emissions inventory for CONNECT communities. Note that emissions from each municipality are embedded within the region-wide totals. Emissions from strictly local government operations are embedded within each sector. For example, emissions from government buildings are included in the “Commercial” sector and emissions from municipal fleet vehicles are included in the “Transportation” sector. Individual community emissions, both absolute and per capita, can be seen in the chart to the right.<sup>78</sup>

## CONNECT's 2018 Greenhouse Gas Emissions



Sector	Total Emissions (tons CO2e)
Process & Fugitive	1,428,000
Residential Energy	1,299,728
Commercial Energy	645,847
Industrial Energy	568,244
Transportation & Mobile Sources	314,443
Solid Waste	72,996
Water & Wastewater	42,768

In 2018, CONNECT Members outside Pittsburgh emitted: **4,372,026** tons CO2e

Mainly from large industrial sources and energy use in the Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Sectors

This amount is equal to **over 90%** of what Pittsburgh emits in a year\*.

Municipality	Emissions	
	Total	Per Cap.
Clairton	996,660	151.6
West Mifflin	985,809	50.1
Ross	284,348	9.3
Mt. Lebanon	265,607	8.2
Collier	233,390	29.0
Shaler	199,376	7.1
Wilkinsburg	116,108	7.6
Jefferson Hills	115,126	10.3
Munhall	98,904	9.0
Green Tree	85,361	17.6
Brentwood	63,575	6.8
Bellevue	61,605	7.6
Castle Shannon	59,961	7.3
Carnegie	59,040	7.5
Dormont	58,717	7.1
Wilkins	58,511	9.4
Swissvale	58,486	6.7
Fox Chapel	56,428	11.1
Forest Hills	51,202	8.1
McKees Rocks	50,770	8.6
Homestead	46,939	14.8
West View	44,093	6.7
Crafton	43,417	7.5
Duquesne	41,398	7.5
West Homestead	35,432	18.9
Etna	31,433	9.5
Churchill	28,861	9.8
Millvale	28,588	7.8
Edgewood	28,216	9.3
Sharpsburg	25,037	7.5
Ingram	20,070	6.2
Aspinwall	19,386	7.2
Reserve	18,336	5.6
Baldwin	12,883	6.7
Heidelberg	9,042	7.5

Figures: Total GHG inventory compiled using 2018 data requested from utilities, haulers, and other service providers that serve each CONNECT community. CO2e emissions output associated with the raw usage data for each community and sector was calculated using ICLEI's ClearPath Tool. \*Note that a comparison to the City of Pittsburgh is using their most recent available inventory year, 2013. Additionally, some accounting methodologies may differ, influencing any comparison.

# Credits and Acknowledgments

This Plan was made possible through the consistent support of CONNECT's Infrastructure and Utilities Coordination Working Group, its Climate Action Planning Subcommittee, the Environmental & Economic Development Working Group, and all the members, partners, and other stakeholders who provided valuable expertise, perspective, and feedback through these and other forums. Special thanks to all of those listed below.

## Plan Authors & Contributors

- Eric J. Raabe – [CONNECT](#)
- Lydia Morin – [CONNECT](#)
- Ellen Cadden – [GSPIA](#), [CONNECT](#)
- Eric Macadangdang – [GSPIA](#), [CONNECT](#)
- CONNECT Staff & Interns
- Heidi Kunka – [PADEP](#)
- Eli Yewdall – [ICLEI](#)
- Jesse Carpentier – [ICLEI](#)

## University of Pittsburgh

- Dr. Michael Blackhurst – [UCSUR](#)
- Dr. LuAnn Brink – [ACHD](#)
- Dr. George Dougherty Jr. – [GSPIA](#)
- Samantha Chan – [Pitt Sustainability](#)
- Bob Gradeck – [WPRDC](#)
- Dr. Aurora Sharrard - [Pitt Sustainability](#)

## Utilities & Data Providers

- Sara Walker – [DLC](#)
- [People's Gas](#)
- [First Energy](#)
- [Columbia Gas](#)
- [Waste Management](#)
- [PA Municipal League](#)
- City of Pittsburgh [DPW](#)
- Chuck Imbrogno – [SPC](#)
- Grace Gartman – GIS Mapping

## Local Government Officials and Staff

- Shawn Alfonso-Wells – [Swissvale](#)
- Phyllis Anderson – [Oakmont](#)
- Melany Arriola – [Pittsburgh](#)
- Cindy Bahn – [Bellevue](#)
- Steve Beuter – [Carnegie](#)
- Darla Cravotta – [Allegheny County](#)
- Patricia DeMarco – [Forest Hills](#)
- Grant Ervin – [Pittsburgh](#)
- Ben Estell – [Dormont](#)
- Andrew Flynn – [Mt. Lebanon](#)
- Alex Graziani – [Churchill](#)
- Brittany Reno – [Sharpsburg](#)
- Katie Malsch – [Swissvale](#)
- Adam McDowell – [Churchill](#)
- Tim McLaughlin – [Aspinwall](#)
- Ian McMeans – [Mt. Lebanon](#)
- Herschel Merenstein – [Pittsburgh](#)
- Jessica Mooney – [Allegheny County](#)
- Mt. Lebanon [ESB](#)
- John Novak – [Green Tree](#)
- Brittany Prischak – [Allegheny County](#)
- Mary Ellen Ramage – [Etna](#)
- Mark Sampogna – [Green Tree](#)
- Joy Smallwood – [Allegheny County](#)
- Mandy Steele – [Fox Chapel](#)
- John Stephen – [Aspinwall](#)
- Deneen Underwood – [Carnegie](#)
- Tara Yaney – [Edgewood](#)
- Sarah Yeager - [Pittsburgh](#)

## External Agencies and Partners

- Dr. Dan Bain – [Pittsburgh Water Collaboratory](#)
- Christopher Beichner – [ALT](#)
- Jason Beery – [UrbanKind](#), [EJGP](#)
- Marcos Bernal – [PaOneCall](#)
- Chris Cieslak – [GBA](#)
- Jeanne Clark – [ALCOSAN](#)
- Lucyna de Barbaro – [RTP](#)
- Jenni Easton – [Pashek+MTR](#)
- Alyson Fearon – [ALT](#)
- Megan Guy – [Pittsburgh Water Collaboratory](#)
- Ernie Hogan – [PCRG](#)
- Erin Kepple-Adams – [SPC Water Resource Center](#)
- Jennifer Lasser – [SPC Water Resource Center](#)
- Alyssa Lyon – [GBA](#)
- Breen Masciotra – [Port Authority](#)
- Kinsey Miller – [TreePittsburgh](#)
- Talia O'Brien – [Etna ECO](#)
- [Pittsburgh Water Collaboratory Staff](#)
- Talor Musil – [WHE](#)
- Joylette Portlock – [Sustainable Pgh](#)
- Jim Price – [Sustainable Pgh](#)
- Annie Quinn – [3RWW](#)
- Chris Sandvig – [Mobilify](#)
- Sawyer Sidelinger – [Sustainable Pgh](#)
- Jennifer Slagle – [Gateway Engineers](#)
- Shreyas Vasudevan – [PCRG](#)
- Allison Walker – [Sustainable Pgh](#)
- Scott Wolovich – [New Sun Rising](#)

The ICLEI Climate Action Plan Template, a basis for the current report, was made possible through a grant agreement between ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the PA Department of Environmental Protection, which was funded by the US Department of Energy State Energy Program. The original template was published in Apr. 2018, edited by the PA Department of Environmental Protection in Dec. 2019, and further edited by CONNECT in 2020–2022.



*Climate Action Plan 2022*