

Taking Action to 2030

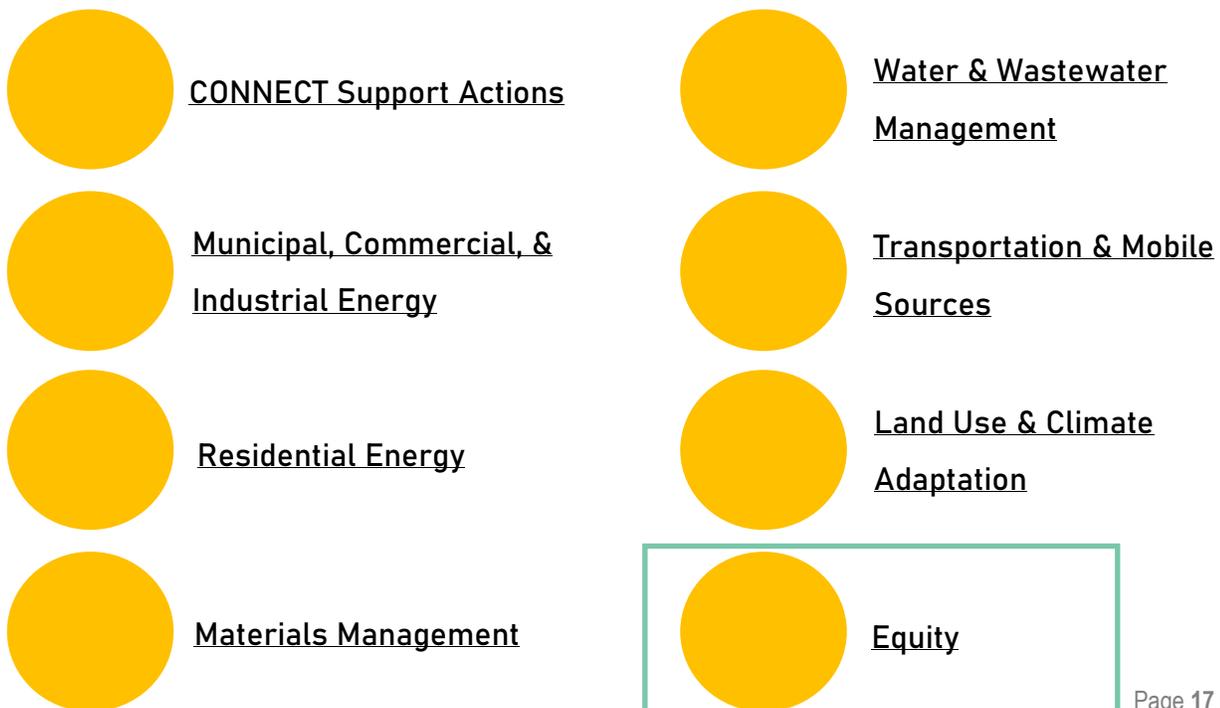
In the following chapters, CONNECT's goals and a series of objectives with actions are explored for each emissions sector. An "Objective" is an "end result", or target, and an "Action" is a means of realizing the objective. Noted on each objective is its emission reduction potential, and on each action is its [co-benefits](#) among other pertinent information. Links to resources are provided within each action. All community sectors draw on the potential actions of CONNECT, its partners, local government, residents, and businesses to achieve 30% emissions reduction by 2030, and subsequent reductions to 2050. Local governments should use and modify potential actions from these lists to implement in their own communities or climate planning efforts.

Symbol	GHG Reduction
	Small Reduction Potential
	Moderate Reduction Potential
	Large Reduction Potential

Symbol	Co-Benefit
	Supports jobs and economic prosperity
	Advances social equity
	Fosters resource security
	Improves public health and local environmental quality

Actions labeled as a "CONNECT Opportunity"  are considered climate actions that CONNECT may be able to implement in the form of a CONNECT-wide project to reduce our emissions or are actions from which members may find extra benefits when implementing together as a region.

Sectors covered will include:



Equity

Because regional inequalities undermine the prosperity and health for all residents of a community, climate planning in the CONNECT region must tightly incorporate equity measures when addressing climate change. There are a number of areas in the county where minority, vulnerable, and disadvantaged communities are disproportionately impacted by environmental issues, according to the ACHD.¹⁵ In its climate planning efforts, CONNECT looks to support climate actions that advance environmental justice - the idea that all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or income, have the right to a clean and healthy environment.

Over three quarters of surveyed CONNECT residents were moderately to extremely concerned about environmental justice in our communities, with level of extreme concern highest among non-white respondents.

Despite our engagement efforts so far, less than 5% of respondents to CONNECT's Regional Climate Survey identified as nonwhite - indicating that there is much more work to be done.

CONNECT will continue to engage with its partners, and encourage its members to reach out to key constituents and listen to their community on this issue. Members should consult with any organizations/departments who represent underserved/frontline populations in their communities, including seniors, low-income families, non-English speaking/English as a second language, people of color, people experiencing houselessness/housing insecurity, and/or people with disabilities/access and functional needs. Oftentimes sustainability projects by municipalities can receive additional funding consideration if they are located in environmental justice areas, designated by the state. There are over 140 such areas in CONNECT, 38 outside Pittsburgh, with over half of CONNECT members having at least one. Members can use the figure to the right to determine how many areas in their communities would receive special consideration and [where](#) to target those opportunities.

Over 75% of CONNECT residents are concerned about environmental justice in our communities...

EJ Areas in CONNECT

Municipality	Number of	
	EJ Census Tracts	EJ Block Groups
Bellevue	2	3
Carnegie	3	3
Castle Shannon	1	1
Clairton	3	6
Duquesne	3	7
Edgewood	1	1
Forest Hills	1	1
Homestead	1	3
Ingram	1	1
Jefferson Hills	1	1
McKees Rocks	2	5
Millvale	1	3
Munhall	1	1
Pittsburgh	103	213
Ross Twp	1	1
Sharpsburg	1	4
Swissvale	4	7
West Mifflin	3	3
Wilkins Twp	1	1
Wilkinsburg	7	15
Grand Total	141	280

Figure: Shows number of state-designated EJ areas in CONNECT as of 2015. Municipalities can visit [data source](#) to determine which census tracts/block groups to target.

There are dozens of environmental justice opportunity areas in CONNECT municipalities...

CONNECT's community-driven planning process generated many potential actions across multiple sectors that concurrently address both GHG emissions reductions and equity. Such actions include developing, promoting, and using financing options to encourage energy efficiency by low-income residents, implementing sustainable transportation planning and practices, and addressing risks in climate vulnerable communities - often those disadvantaged or left out of the climate discussion. This

chapter highlights those actions that local governments can implement to reduce their emissions while advancing environmental justice in the CONNECT region.

The following table contains CONNECT's objectives and potential actions that help promote equity across sectors.

Objective EQ 1 – Equity

Advance environmental justice in CONNECT communities by ensuring equity in climate actions



Action Number	Action	Regional CONNECT Opportunity?	Reduces Climate Risk?	Action Number	Action	Regional CONNECT Opportunity?	Reduces Climate Risk?
EQ-1A	Advocate for Allegheny County to be designated as part of a EJ Hub Region, or EJ Community Hub to help activate and sustain EJ activities in the region.		Y	EQ-1J	Target public charging infrastructure to multi-unit dwellings and environmental justice areas in your municipality to receive higher consideration (pg11) for grant funding.	-	-
EQ-1B	Partner with an organization like EJGP or UrbanKind and their networks to gather community context and needs, and support advocates in your community	-	-	EQ-1K	Implement an equitable fare program through Port Authority to increase ridership among lower income areas in CONNECT communities		Y
EQ-1C	Explicitly incorporate PADEP's environmental justice areas into municipal language, plans, and projects	-	-	EQ-1L	Expansion of Port Authority routes/frequency in CONNECT communities		Y
EQ-1D	Highlight PADEP's Environmental Justice Participation Policy in your community to encourage involvement of minority/low income populations in projects/operations that could affect the community.	-	Y	EQ-1M	Engage in ALCOSAN flood education for residents and businesses, notify residents of flooding resources and any activities impacts on stormwater		Y
EQ-1E	Help low income, high energy burden homes take advantage of energy bill assistance during winter	-	Y	EQ-1N	Ensure municipal eligibility for funded floodplain insurance for residents by creating floodplain maps and enrolling in CRS	-	Y
EQ-1F	Target energy affordability services to EJ areas and high energy burden areas within CONNECT, especially		Y	EQ-1O	Build and support community gardens , urban farms, and	-	-

	those above the county average of 3%				alternative growing platforms like green rooftops in your community.		
EQ-1G	Increase accessibility to free utility and regional weatherization programs to increase efficiency of lower income homes	-	Y	EQ-1P	Partner with an organization to target green projects on vacant land	-	Y
EQ-1H	CONNECT and partners help to create municipal sites to link residents with trusted regional contractors for energy audits/retrofits/etc		-	EQ-1Q	Target trees in high-risk areas, such as those with low cover or prone to urban heat in order to improve air quality	-	Y
EQ-1I	Pursue a ACHD Air Quality Ambassador Mini-Grant to fund air quality outreach in CONNECT communities, particularly in the Mon Valley		Y	EQ-1R	Join other CONNECT communities to implement transit oriented development and equitable zoning in your community.		Y