

## **City of Bethlehem – Climate Action Plan**

The City of Bethlehem will develop a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to generate policies, recommendations, and public outreach on issues related to climate change and sustainability.

### **What is a Climate Action Plan?**

Climate Action Plans attempt to address climate change by promoting resilience through both mitigation and adaptation strategies. The purpose of climate mitigation initiatives is to reduce or prevent greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through methods such as increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy (for example, solar energy). The purpose of climate adaptation initiatives is to prepare for the impacts of climate change (increase in temperature and precipitation), through methods such as green infrastructure. The initial phase of the CAP focuses on municipal operations within the City. The next stage of the CAP will address energy consumption for the entire city, not just municipal operations, and attempt to enlist the efforts of citizens, businesses, and institutional partners in developing and implementing sustainable practices.

### **Who is responsible for leading the development of the CAP?**

Bethlehem City Council unanimously passed a Resolution endorsing the creation of a Climate Action Plan in February 2017. City Council and the Administration will ultimately decide which actions of the Plan can be supported and implemented.

### **What is the role of the Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)?**

The EAC consists of Bethlehem citizens appointed by City Council to provide recommendations to City Council and the Administration on environmental issues relating to the City. EAC meetings are open to the public. Some of these monthly meetings will provide a dedicated time for public engagement as the CAP takes shape in order to:

- Document the CAP process for transparency
- Develop a communication structure between the public and the City
- Provide a venue to enable the public to voice opinions and give input
- Identify members of the public who have expertise
- Provide opportunity to share progress reports and information as the CAP develops
- Generate excitement and buy-in for the plan

### **What has the City of Bethlehem already done so far?**

Mayor Callahan, along with the Mayors of Allentown and Easton, took up the mantle of conservation by signing a Three City Climate Protection Proclamation in August 2006. Under the leadership of Mayor Donchez and Bethlehem City Council, the City government has continued to make progress. The Proclamation established a goal of reducing the City's operational carbon footprint 20% by 2012. The City succeeded in surpassing this goal with a 23% reduction. In 2017, then City Council President J. William Reynolds proposed the creation of a climate action plan as part of his Bethlehem 2017 initiatives.

The City of Bethlehem has also committed to five national and international climate agreements in recent years, some signed following City Councilman Reynold's presentation of his Bethlehem 2017 initiatives. These are the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, Compact of Mayors/Global Covenant of Mayors, Sierra Club Ready for 100, Mayors National Climate Action Agenda and We Are Still In. The initial requirements of the

Compact of Mayors/Global Covenant of Mayors require the City to formally register its commitment, complete a community-wide greenhouse gas (ghg) inventory and identify climate hazards. The website for each of these initiatives is listed in the Resources section below.

### **What is the timeline for climate action milestones?**

- 2006 – Mayor Callahan signs “Three City Proclamation”
- 2006-2013 – City reduces carbon footprint by 23 percent through a series of energy saving and reduction initiatives
- February 2017 – City Council unanimously passes a Resolution endorsing the creation of a Climate Action Plan
- 2017 – City Administration working toward establishing “baseline” energy data for governmental operations
- 2018 -2019 – Develop Climate Action Plan

#### Phase 1

- Develop baseline GHG inventory for both municipal operations and community-wide emissions
- Determine and analyze commitments made in previously executed Climate Action Agreements
- Develop Green Bethlehem Initiative - ways for private citizens, businesses and institutions to set goals and reduce and track GHG emissions
- Work to identify opportunities for external assistance in developing the CAP, including formation of institutional partnerships and engaging an outside consultant

#### Phase 2

- Develop a Request for Proposal for the management of the climate action planning process and/or generation of a final Climate Action Plan
- Generate content and policy recommendations in sectors such as transportation, green building, land use, and infrastructure through community meetings, planning, implementation strategies, etc.

### **Resources**

Mayors Climate Action Agreement - <https://www.usmayors.org/mayors-climate-protection-center/>

Compact of Mayors -- <http://www.c40.org/programmes/compact-of-mayors>

Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy - <https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/>

Sierra Club Ready for 100 – <https://www.sierraclub.org/ready-for-100>

Mayors National Climate Agenda – <http://climatemayors.org/>

We Are Still In – <https://www.wearestillin.com/us-action-climate-change-irreversible>

### **EAC**

**Meetings are held the first Thursday of every month, 7:00 pm, at Illick’s Mill, 100 Illick’s Mill Road, unless otherwise indicated on the website\* or in the Express Times.**

Email: [eacbethlehempa@gmail.com](mailto:eacbethlehempa@gmail.com) Facebook: Search for “Bethlehem Climate Action”

Information regarding the EAC can be found on the City website\* under Authorities and Boards. \* <http://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/about/authorities/eac/index.html>