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## **EcoDistricts Honors 12 Sustainable Development Practitioners & Cutting Edge Neighborhood Projects** **First annual Citymakers Awards winners announced at the 2019 EcoDistricts Summit in Pittsburgh**

**Pittsburgh, PA:** To celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EcoDistricts Summit, EcoDistricts launched a new recognition program called **EcoDistricts Citymakers Awards** to acknowledge and celebrate a select number of sustainable development leaders and catalytic district- and neighborhood-scale projects that are working towards a more equitable and sustainable future in urban communities.

The Citymakers Awards program was held during the EcoDistricts Summit on Monday, November 4 from 6:30-8:30 pm at Phipps Conservatory in Pittsburgh. Receiving awards were key individuals, organizations and neighborhood projects that are fueling the EcoDistricts movement of regenerating urban neighborhoods by prioritizing equity, climate action and resilience. EcoDistricts CEO Rob Bennett and Brionté McCorkle, ED of Georgia Conversation Voters, presented the awards.

“The EcoDistricts movement is led by an inspiring number of urban changemakers. The work is hard and takes time. The work is critical to the future of our cities, communities and planet,” says Rob Bennett. “I’m thrilled to acknowledge their relentless effort and commitment, much of which is done quietly and behind the scenes on behalf of their communities.”

Citymakers Awards recipients include the City of Pittsburgh for leadership in advancing neighborhood and district-scale equitable and sustainable development; the Borough of Etna, PA for becoming the World’s first Certified EcoDistrict; Mithun (Seattle and San Francisco), Justice and Sustainability Associates (Washington DC), Rethink Advisors (Cleveland), evolveEA (Pittsburgh), and Biohabitats (Baltimore) for key contributions to the EcoDistricts movement; and Sun Valley EcoDistrict (Denver), Lloyd EcoDistrict (Portland), Millvale

EcoDistrict (Millvale, PA), and Clark-Fulton/MetroHealth EcoDistrict (Cleveland) for their innovative approach to neighborhood and district-scale sustainable development.

## **THE 2019 ECODISTRICTS CITYMAKERS AWARD WINNERS ARE:**

### **City of Pittsburgh PA**

Over the past two decades, Pittsburgh has shown tremendous leadership in the areas of urban planning and design, green building, and resilience. The result is a city full of passionate professionals, activists, academics, philanthropists, and political leaders who are methodically turning the City into one of the country's most vibrant metro regions. Over the past several years, Pittsburgh began turning its attention to neighborhood revitalization through the lens of sustainability and self-determination, creating innovative neighborhood plans for Larimer, Uptown, Homewood, Millvale, Etna, Sharpsburg, downtown, and the Lower Hill. This month, the City is deepening their commitment to sustainability by becoming the first city in the US to officially adopt the EcoDistricts Protocol to guide future neighborhood planning, with the goal of ensuring that every neighborhood redevelopment project develops ambitious goals and targets in the following areas: equity, resilience, carbon reduction, placemaking, economic development, health & wellbeing, mobility & digital connectivity, green infrastructure, and resource regeneration. The result of the City's leadership is a growing commitment from local NGOs, public agencies and developers to embed and track sustainability in all phases of planning and project implementation. Grant Ervin, the City of Pittsburgh Chief Resilience Officer says, "The EcoDistricts Protocol helps sharpen the City's commitment to bringing racial equity and environmental sustainability to all Pittsburgh neighborhoods. We are proud to be an EcoDistricts leader and hope our commitment inspires other cities to follow suit."

### **Christine Mondor | evolveEA | Pittsburgh PA**

Christine Mondor, Principal at evolveEA, has been active in shaping places, processes and organizations nationally and internationally for twenty-five years through her work as a registered architect, educator, and activist. Christine has volunteered her time to create the EcoDistricts Protocol and shape the EcoDistricts Incubator program, which has advised over 90 projects in five countries. As one of the leading EcoDistricts practitioners in the country, Christine developed the award winning Millvale Ecodistrict Pivot Plan and helped the borough of Etna become the world's first Certified EcoDistrict. Christine has taught architecture, landscape design and sustainability at Carnegie Mellon University, Slippery Rock University, and Chatham College. She currently serves as Chair of the Pittsburgh Planning Commission and is a member of the EcoDistricts Protocol Global Advisory Committee, the Penn State University Stuckeman School Advisory Board. Christine received her Bachelor of Architecture degree from Carnegie Mellon University and recently became a 2019 AIA Fellow.

### **Don Edwards | Justice & Sustainability Associates | Washington DC**

Don Edwards, founder, CEO and a principal of Justice and Sustainability Associates (JSA), a for-profit management consulting firm in Washington, DC, is a leading facilitator-mediator-negotiators and civic engagement designer in the field of land use and development. Don served as a founding Board member and the organization's first treasurer – setting the tone for engaged board membership. Under his leadership, the organization doubled in size and

built strong financial management systems. An early leader to the sustainability movement, he participated in the Earth Summit in 1992 and the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul. From 1993-96, Don served on President Clinton's Council on Sustainable Development. As a long-term resident (over 30 years) of the District of Columbia, Don has facilitated/mediated complex development projects in DC and elsewhere, including the District's Anacostia Waterfront Initiative, the African Burial Ground National Monument in Lower Manhattan, the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall, Detroit Works Project, and DC's 11th Street Bridges.

**Donzell Robinson | Justice & Sustainability Associates | Washington DC**

Donzell Robinson, COO of Justice and Sustainability Associates (JSA), has established a distinguished career as a nationally recognized Alternative Dispute Resolution professional. Donzell has become an integral member of the EcoDistricts faculty, leading trainings in Pittsburgh and South Africa and advising Portland's Innovation Quadrant. Donzell is currently helping to expand the EcoDistricts capacity building programs in the areas of project governance and engagement. In addition to his role as COO at JSA, Donzell designs and facilitates many of JSA's most complex projects, including engagement and governance, sustainable development, and transportation and infrastructure. Donzell has served as President of the Association of Conflict Resolution, the leading organization for professionals in the dispute resolution field.

**Irwin Lowenstein | Rethink Advisers | Cleveland, OH**

Irwin is a Principal with ReThink Advisors and has been a tireless advocate for sustainable, equitable, and resilient neighborhoods. Irwin came to EcoDistricts four years ago and has helped advance the EcoDistricts agenda throughout the City of Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. Irwin became one of the first EcoDistricts Accredited Professionals and has served as a faculty member for the organization, leading EcoDistricts trainings across the country and advising emerging districts and neighborhood groups on their sustainability efforts. Most importantly, Irwin has played an important role in the formation of the Clark-Fulton / MetroHealth and Slavic Village EcoDistricts in Cleveland, both of which are pursuing a EcoDistricts certification.

**Pete Muñoz | Biohabitats, Baltimore, MD, Charleston SC**

Pete Muñoz is an ecological designer with a focus on integrating green infrastructure and water management into some of the country's most seminal projects. He has been at the forefront of green building for years, helping cities, developers and designers execute complex projects that enhance ecological functionality and water efficiency. With degrees in Biosystems, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Pete lectures around the world on green infrastructure, regenerative design, and climate change solutions. Pete and Biohabitats joined the EcoDistricts movement early, lending critical technical and financial support to the development of the EcoDistricts Protocol and Living Infrastructure Guide and, as an EcoDistricts faculty member, facilitating project teams at 4 incubators, including two in South Africa.

**Mithun | Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles**

Since the founding of EcoDistricts, Mithun has been an advocate for equitable and sustainable district- and neighborhood-scale development. The Seattle-based firm, a longtime leader in green building and sustainability, was an early investor in the organization as a founding member and contributor to the development of the EcoDistricts Protocol. Mithun has a long track record of district and neighborhood scale sustainability including leading campus work at Ohio State, Mariposa and Sun Valley in Denver and the seminal Lloyd Crossing project in Portland that helped launch the Lloyd EcoDistrict a few years later.

### **Sun Valley EcoDistrict I Denver, CO**

The Sun Valley neighborhood is one of Denver's poorest and most underserved communities. This predominantly minority-majority neighborhood has been isolated by freeways and the Denver Broncos stadium from the booming redevelopment of Downtown Denver and adjacent neighborhoods. Looking to shift the narrative, the Denver Housing Authority (DHA) is overseeing Sun Valley's transformation. The Sun Valley EcoDistrict is focused on a comprehensive strategy that knits mixed income housing, transit oriented development, youth and education facilities and programs, international food and micro-business services, parks and open space together and a commitment to net zero energy and water. DHA launched the Sun Valley EcoDistrict Trust and secured \$30Million in financing from HUD to catalyze the redevelopment; with first phase of new housing begun in February 2019. Sun Valley participated in our inaugural Target Cities program in 2014-15, helped to host the 2016 Summit, and is currently pursuing EcoDistricts Certified.

### **Stats**

- **District Size:** 100 acres | 1,500 residents
- **Median Family Income:** \$9,874
- **Unemployment Rate:** 71%
- **Demographics:** White 8% | Black 26% | Latinx 54% | Asian 8% | Native American 1% | Multiracial 3%
- **Community Development:** The DHA set up the Sun Valley EcoDistrict as a nonprofit entity to help deliver projects with a social return and economic benefits.
- **Housing:** Redevelopment of 333 public housing units and the creation of 850 mixed income units, with 75% guaranteed to be public and affordable.
- **Green Infrastructure & Open Space:** Open Space Goals including different community access points to free, locally grown food. Goals include a community orchard, local art installation, food hub, rain gardens, public gathering space, picnic shelters, bike trails & bike amenities, playgrounds and a community park.
- **Mobility:** Plans to create a new street grid, complete street design, access to the new light rail station, better river crossings, and pedestrian access to the river.
- **Employment Programs:** Micro-Business Incubator, which will provide flexible space for micro-restaurants, micro-retail and community events.

### **Millvale EcoDistrict I Millvale PA**

From a volunteer-led initiative nearly a decade ago, the commitment of the borough, New Sun Rising, and other community partners has garnered the small borough national planning awards and recognition and helped launch the EcoDistricts movement. Their award-winning

Pivot Plan helps shape a long term strategy that focuses on six key areas: Water, Food, Energy, Air Quality, Mobility and Equity. Millvale's leadership became the inspiration for a broader partnership called the Triboro EcoDistrict with the adjacent boroughs of Sharpsburg and Etna. Each borough is now pursuing EcoDistricts certification and working together to leverage knowledge, resources and political will. Millvale has committed a tremendous amount of time and energy both to their neighborhood, as well as to EcoDistricts, helping us host and plan trainings, the EcoDistricts Incubator last April that was held at the Millvale Moose, and the 2019 EcoDistricts Summit. Millvale is currently pursuing EcoDistricts certification, with a target date of late 2019.

### Stats

- **District Size:** 448 acres | 3,692 residents
- **Median Family Income:** \$36,107
- **Poverty Rate:** 23.1%
- **Demographics:** White 93% | Black 5% | Other 2%
- **Community Development:** The Millvale Community Library supports the community through a variety of community programming and sustainability investments, including a 500 gallon cistern and onsite rain gardens that help reduce pollutants and flooding in Girby's Run, 83 solar panels that help the library achieve carbon neutrality, and onsite gardens that promote local food security.
- **Housing:** Millvale has entered into a partnership with the newly formed City of Bridges Community Land Trust to work towards stabilizing access to the housing and small commercial market.
- **Green Infrastructure & Open Space:** Millvale is developing an array of public green spaces, including the Gardens of Millvale, an educational community farm. Millvale is also working with the TreeVitalize project to plant 850 trees in the community. Additionally, Millvale has created four bioswales to help with stormwater mitigation.
- **Mobility:** Improved pedestrian infrastructure, a network of street trees, bike-friendly intersections and bike lanes, and improved public transit accommodations.
- **Climate Action:** The EcoDistrict is home to three solarized community buildings that democratize solar ownership and provide solar energy for community-based organizations and local businesses.

### METROHEALTH/CLARK-FULTON ECODISTRICT, CLEVELAND, OH

The MetroHealth/Clark-Fulton neighborhood in Cleveland, Ohio is the first EcoDistrict in the world anchored by a health system. Over the past several years, MetroHealth and their partners have embarked on an important and intentional community-building process, spurred by a \$1 billion redevelopment of the MetroHealth campus. With local leadership, a long-term partnership was formed among key institutional and neighborhood stakeholders to ensure the EcoDistrict systemically addressed the needs, challenges, and opportunities of the Clark Fulton neighborhood. MetroHealth is currently pursuing EcoDistricts certification, with a target date of early 2020.

### Stats

- **District Size:** 585 acres | 11,000 residents
- **Median Family Income:** \$22,900
- **Poverty Rate:** 32%
- **Demographics:** Latinx 46% | White 34% | Black 17% | Other 3%
- **Community Development:** Established nonprofit CCH Development Corp. to encourage development along the West 25th Street Corridor.
- **Housing:** Investing \$60 million to build at least 250 units of new affordable housing, to include retail, job training and other services. MetroHealth is also developing an employee housing plan to encourage families of 500 staffers to move to the neighborhood over the next 10 years.
- **Green Infrastructure & Open Space:** Developing new 12-acre park and 25 acres of total open space.
- **Mobility:** Partnered with Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority to create the MetroHealth Line bus-rapid-transit (BRT) system.
- **Public Safety:** MetroHealth plans to move the system's more than 75 officer police force into new headquarters constructed in the neighborhood on West 25th Street.
- **Digital Connectivity:** Plans to bring affordable internet access to up to 1,000 homes with free laptops and training in the neighborhood.
- **Certification:** Pursuing EcoDistricts and WELL Certification

### LLOYD ECODISTRICT, PORTLAND, OR

When the Portland Sustainability Institute launched the first EcoDistricts pilot program in 2010, the Lloyd District announced its intention to become the most sustainable commercial district in the US. The Lloyd EcoDistrict was formed soon after with the hiring of Sarah Heinicke and a board of directors that represented Portland's most influential business and public institutions. The Lloyd EcoDistrict became an early adopter of the EcoDistricts Protocol, using it to guide its strategic planning and program implementation. Lloyd is currently pursuing EcoDistricts certification, with a target date of early 2020.

#### Stats

- **Size:** 400 acres | 2,100 residents
- **Median Family Income:** \$53,555
- **Poverty Rate:** 6.8%
- **Demographics:** White 80% | Black 9% | Latinx 6% | Asian 3% Other 2%
- **Community Development:** Since 2009, Lloyd has evolved from a committee of business improvement district stakeholders to a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to the development, education and support of a resilient and equitable community.
- **Housing:** Lloyd has doubled its housing in 8 years, first with a 657 unit platinum LEED ND development, and in 2019 with the city's largest affordable housing project in 50 years—a 240 unit apartment with 20 units set aside for victims of domestic violence.
- **Green Infrastructure & Open Space:** The country's first closed loop water management system in a multi-block mixed use development; Multnomah pollinator protected bikeway kicked off the district wide pollinator place making project that engages Veterans and historic communities in support of pollinator habitat.

- **Mobility:** Long an advocate and leader for public transit investments, the Lloyd EcoDistrict also developed an e bike competition among residents and employees that raises awareness and usage of e bikes in the transportation mix.
- **Houseless Advocacy:** Lloyd EcoDistrict led the community in a fundraising, design and construction of 5 sleeping pod, 10 solar chargers and an ongoing friendship through the community good neighbor agreement with Right 2 Dream too, the Lloyd houseless rest area.

### **Etna EcoDistrict | Etna, PA**

Local sustainability advocates formed the Etna Community Organization in 2016 to incubate, facilitate, and steward the Etna EcoDistrict. Beginning in June 2018, ETO facilitated a six-month Etna EcoDistrict Education Series, with 2 community meetings per month. These meetings were open to everyone in the community and included attendance from Etna residents, organizational partners, municipal leaders, business owners, religious institutions, and other community stakeholders. The outcome was the *Etna EcoDistrict Plan* – a 10 year implementation plan that includes 25 goals, 113 actions, and 34 indicators in the areas of water, mobility, air quality, energy, food, and social equity. Due to the committed work of its district stakeholders, Etna became the world’s first Certified EcoDistrict in October 2019, completing a rigorous verification process that assessed the Borough’s project governance; commitments to equity, resilience and climate action; and integrated implementation roadmap.

District leaders Alexis Boytim, Robert Tuñon, and Anna Rosenblum have played an integral role in guiding months of intentional community engagement, learning, and planning. Says Robert Tuñon, “Being an outlying borough with a long history of environmental/economic traumas, this moment to be recognized for something positive, as a leader, and the first Certified EcoDistrict is so rare, so special, and so meaningful to us.”

### **Stats**

- **Size:** 5,200 acres | 3,400 residents
- **Median Family Income:** \$46,667
- **Poverty Rate:** 8.12%
- **Demographics:** White 92% | Black 3% | Asian 3% Other 2%
- **Green Infrastructure & Open Space:** Etna Riverfront Park, a major project to open up the once inaccessible waterfront, is currently under construction. Located on Allegheny River, it will reconnect residents to the riverfront and act as a key link on a regional trail system. Future phases of green streetscaping, including underground stormwater retention is planned throughout the borough to better manage stormwater using a district-scale approach.
- **Affordable Housing:** Four permanently affordable housing units are planned for Etna. These projects will accommodate approximately 16 additional Etna residents.
- **Economic Development:** Rear End Gastropub is building a restaurant and brewery with green infrastructure along the corner of a downtown street. This project will create about 20 new jobs.

- **Placemaking:** The Etna Community Library is currently being planned, which will include a lending library, enrichment classes, free wi-fi, and a pay-what-you-can-cafe. The building will be outfitted with solar panels to meet the building's energy needs and serve as a resource center during emergencies.
- **Certification:** Achieved EcoDistricts Certified status in October 2019.

## ABOUT ECODISTRICTS

EcoDistricts is advancing a new model of urban development to empower just, sustainable and resilient neighborhoods. Through an integrated suite of programs, convenings and project certification tools, we aim to mobilize, empower and accelerate sustainable and equitable urban development leadership throughout North America and beyond. Learn more about our approach at [ecodistricts.org](http://ecodistricts.org).

## ABOUT THE ECODISTRICTS SUMMIT

The EcoDistricts Summit is where community development leaders come to reimagine urban communities. On November 4-5, the Summit's 10th Anniversary was held at the August Wilson Center in Pittsburgh, a city that is experiencing a breakthrough in urban regeneration, fueled by a generation of leaders that are harnessing the city's civic and corporate entrepreneurship, thriving arts and culture community, regional approach, and dedication to creating opportunity for all. Since 2009, the Summit has welcomed 2,600 attendees from almost 350 cities and 17 countries. The 2019 Summit was supported by The Forbes Funds, Heinz Endowment, Richard King Mellon Foundation, HDR, Michael Baker International, The Pittsburgh Penguins, University of Pittsburgh, Clearway Energy and others.

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