



DECLARATION OF COLLABORATION

INTENT

The Etna EcoDistrict Plan is the guiding document for the Etna EcoDistrict and shall be stewarded primarily by the Etna Community Organization (ECO) in strong collaboration with the Borough of Etna, partner organizations, and residents. This Declaration of Collaboration, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is a non-binding commitment to take the actions necessary to implement the Etna EcoDistrict Plan successfully.

DISTRICT & BACKBONE ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Etna EcoDistrict represents the people, places, and processes of Etna, including residents, businesses, and friends of the borough. Through a multi-year community engagement process, the Etna EcoDistrict emerged as a grassroots movement to define a future where everyone in Etna has the opportunity to thrive and live healthy, fulfilling lives. Through the process, the community collaborated with evolveEA to develop the Etna EcoDistrict Plan.

In 2016, ECO, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, began formation for the sole purpose of incubating, facilitating, and stewarding the Etna EcoDistrict work. Today, ECO operates as a community group dedicated to improving the quality of life for those that live, work, and play in Etna, PA. As a steward for the Etna EcoDistrict work, ECO will act as EcoDistrict Backbone Organization while closely collaborating with the Borough of Etna, partner organizations, and residents. Through continuous community engagement, ECO activates Etna's citizens to take ownership over their futures by supporting projects and programs that integrate social equity, community resiliency, and environmental stewardship into the fabric of the community.

BACKBONE ORGANIZATION: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Backbone Organization and primary steward of the Etna EcoDistrict Plan, ECO commits to:

Organizational Structure

- Employ at least one (1) full-time staff person in support of the organization;
- Include at least one (1) representative from Borough Council on the ECO Board of Directors; provide an open invitation to the Etna Borough Manager for ECO Board of Directors meetings with the option of serving on the ECO Board of Directors;
- Provide full transparency of ECO operations and initiatives to the Borough with the Council representative responsible for communication and information sharing.

Advancing the Etna EcoDistrict Plan

- Adopt the Etna EcoDistrict Plan as the guiding document for the organization;
- Seek funding to support ECO staff and operations and EcoDistrict project implementation when appropriate;
- Serve as fiscal agent when ECO is directly responsible for project planning and implementation;
- Support the stakeholder organization best suited to lead specific Etna EcoDistrict project implementation and/or programming;
- Incubate projects and programs not within the most current version of the EcoDistrict Plan but are in support of the EcoDistrict Imperatives and Quality of Life Goals;
- Update the Etna EcoDistrict Plan on a biannual basis guided by community feedback and indicator data reporting.

Community Engagement

- Host quarterly community meetings related to the EcoDistrict with open invitations to stakeholder organizations;
- Clearly communicate all EcoDistrict meetings, planning, and implementation efforts to the Borough and the public;
- Commit to continuous learning, relationship building, and leadership development;
- Actively collect and share relevant, relatable, and understandable data pertaining to the Etna EcoDistrict to guide decision-making and demonstrate progress.

DECISION-MAKING PROTOCOL

Decision-making Principles

The Etna EcoDistrict is our vehicle for sustainable community development by which stakeholders have opportunities to participate in shaping a collective future that benefits the community equitably. The following principles are to be employed in the decision-making process:

- **Public.** Meetings and events are to be all-ages and open to the public. The locations of meetings are to be accessible and connected by public transportation. Meetings are to be advertised in multiple forms of print and digital media.
- **Independent.** An independent facilitator is to develop agendas and meeting content that responds to and builds on stakeholder input.
- **Non-hierarchical.** All participants are to have equal points of input at meetings and events with a non-hierarchical participation structure.
- **Iterative.** Proposals for the Etna EcoDistrict are not to have a single point of decision-making but are to be developed over multiple rounds of presentation, comment, and revision through an iterative process.
- **Transparent.** Feedback sessions for the Etna EcoDistrict are to be conducted in open forum settings and shared publicly. The iterative process through the independent facilitator is to demonstrate how and why proposals are updated and refined at each public event. Progress for the Etna EcoDistrict's Implementation Phase is to be reported transparently to establish accountability.
- **Living.** The Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to be continuously refined at each public meeting and event. Once published, the Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to be updated on a biannual basis and be managed as a living document.

Decision-making Body

In the Roadmap phase, the Etna EcoDistrict decision-making body is to represent a series of community meetings and public events, rather than a formalized structure, where input is collected and responded to by an independent consultant. Decisions are not singular, but iterative. The Roadmap phase will help define which organization is best suited for each particular implementation project. Project implementation will then be stewarded by the selected organization through the rules that govern their organization.

In the Implementation phase, projects for the Etna EcoDistrict are to conduct a public process and obtain input from stakeholders. As the primary steward of the Etna EcoDistrict Plan, ECO is to report out on progress at a quarterly community meeting. Projects that are designated to be implemented by ECO or in collaboration with ECO are to form committees where participation is open to all.

Decision-making Procedures

The Etna EcoDistrict is to be defined through an iterative process with a diverse range of opportunities for stakeholder input rather than singular decisions. As community input often reflects a full spectrum of responses to proposals, the Etna EcoDistrict Planning Phase is to be facilitated by an independent consultant. The independent consultant is responsible for scheduling meetings, setting the agenda, collecting input, reporting feedback, and developing points of consensus. Opportunities for stakeholder input and levels of engagement include but are not limited to:

- Community Planning & Input Activities - public meetings, consensus decision-making, captured by an independent facilitator
- Quality of Life Vision Statements - public meetings, consensus decision-making, authored by stakeholders and shared publicly at a community meeting
- Selection of Objectives - public meetings, consensus decision-making, captured by an independent facilitator
- Selection of Indicators & Targets - public meetings, consensus decision-making, captured by an independent facilitator
- Selection of Strategies & Projects - public meetings, consensus decision-making, captured by an independent facilitator
- Selection of Place-based Interventions - public meetings, consensus decision-making, captured by an independent facilitator
- Prioritization of Initiatives & Programs - public meetings, consensus decision-making, captured by an independent facilitator
- Facilitation of Strategies, Implementation, & Funding - project or program dependent on which organization is leading the effort.

During the implementation phase, ECO is to hold Etna EcoDistrict Community Meetings with the following guidelines:

- Schedule: Meetings to occur on the first Wednesday of the month on a quarterly basis. Meetings will be held at Fugh Hall or other accessible, public venue.
- Agenda: Meeting topics to be focused on Etna EcoDistrict implementation work. Items will be collected a month in advance from each of the stakeholder organizations and will be prioritized based on urgency of implementation task. Meetings will be held to a two-hour time frame.
- Decision-making will take the form of consensus and feedback. Each organization is accountable to their own support networks. ECO will document input and share transparently with each stakeholder organization. Decisions are to be reported at the following community meeting on how feedback and input were incorporated.
- Community input and feedback drive decision-making, however projects and programs in the Etna EcoDistrict Plan may be elevated and pursued due to funding opportunities. Implementation decisions are to be reported transparently.

Meetings that have occurred before the signing of this document held the principles and procedures outlined in this section and have been captured in "Community Engagement Schedule, Agenda, and Record" (DoC Exhibit F). ECO's organizational decision-making and appointment procedures are outlined in ECO's "Corporation Bylaws" (DoC Exhibit B).

STAKEHOLDERS: DESCRIPTIONS, ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, & RESOURCES

Residents and Businesses of Etna

Etna, PA has a population of approximately 3,400 residents and 160 businesses that make up the core constituency of the Etna EcoDistrict. Select individuals from this group serve in the community's stakeholder groups and volunteer their time to advance the community and assist with Borough functions. In service to the Etna EcoDistrict, the greatest resource offered by the residents and businesses is their volunteer hours put into both planning and project work.

Borough of Etna Municipal Government

The Borough of Etna has an elected Mayor and a nine-person Borough Council that has legislative authority in the community. In addition to the elected officials, the Borough has a Manager, office staff, Police Department, Volunteer Fire Department, and Public Works. The Borough of Etna is dedicated to the safety and welfare of the community and provides a range of services related to the management of Etna. The inspiration for the Etna EcoDistrict grew out of the Borough's work in Green Infrastructure and Stormwater Management. The Borough's relationship and responsibility to the Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to steward select projects and programs in the Etna EcoDistrict Plan as designated by the Etna Borough Manager and approved by the Etna Borough.

Etna Economic Development Corporation

EEDC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is dedicated to the economic development and revitalization of Etna's Business District. The EEDC currently serves as the fiscal sponsor for the Etna EcoDistrict Plan. EEDC's relationship and responsibility to the Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to steward select projects and programs in the Etna EcoDistrict Plan as designated by their Board of Directors.

Etna Neighborhood Association

ENA is an all-volunteer organization that focuses on enriching and enhancing the life of our community, particularly as it relates to our residents and youth. ENA's relationship and responsibility to the Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to support select programs in the Etna EcoDistrict Plan as designated by their Officials.

Garden of Etna

The Garden of Etna is both a place and a group of gardeners that collaborate on sustainable community agriculture. The Garden of Etna's responsibility to the Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to

support select projects and programs in the Etna EcoDistrict Plan as designated by the Garden of Etna Manager.

Triboro Ecodistrict

The Triboro Ecodistrict is an initiative to advance sustainable community development in Millvale, Etna, and Sharpsburg through partnership and collaboration. Formally, the Triboro Ecodistrict is a program of New Sun Rising, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Millvale, and is led by a Director and six community representatives. The initial community engagement, education, and planning stages of the Etna EcoDistrict were supported by a joint grant awarded to the Triboro Ecodistrict. The Triboro Ecodistrict's responsibility to the Etna EcoDistrict Plan is to support select projects and programs in the Etna EcoDistrict Plan as designated by Etna's two community representatives.

IMPERATIVES COMMITMENT ALIGNMENT

This Declaration of Collaboration is a key step in embracing and advancing Etna's Imperatives Commitment.

Through this document, we are advancing our Social Equity Commitment by:

- Identifying ECO as the backbone organization, which serves to represent the Etna community to its fullest extent;
- Identifying ECO's responsibility as a decision-making body to lead decision-making through non-hierarchical public meetings, consensus building, and transparency;
- Identifying ECO's role to steward the Etna Ecodistrict Plan through an equitable process driven by community input.

We are advancing our Community Resilience Commitment by:

- Sharing ownership and responsibility of Ecodistrict planning with residents, the Borough, and key stakeholders thereby creating a strong governance foundation;
- Identifying ECO's role to engage with residents and key stakeholders in an inclusive and collaborative planning process where community members take on leadership roles to craft Etna's visions and advance specific initiatives;
- Identifying ECO's role in seeking financial resources to carry out Ecodistrict projects and programs, as well as support organizational operations.

We are advancing our Environmental Stewardship Commitment by:

- Establishing a commitment to maintain community engagement and planning around our Quality of Life Goals (Water, Mobility, Air Quality, Energy, Food, and Social Equity).

SIGNATORIES

This declaration will renew each year without notice or review unless a majority of signatories requests that the declaration be reviewed. In the event that a signatory wishes to terminate this declaration, termination requires a majority vote from ECO's Board of Directors.

Signed on: September 18, 2019

ALEXIS BOYTIM

Alexis Boytim, EcoDistricts AP
Director, Etna Community Org.

KENDRA CLARKE

Kendra Clarke, EcoDistricts AP
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, Third Ward
Equity Champion

JESSICA KIRIN

Jessica Kirin, EcoDistricts AP
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, First Ward
Food Champion

LYDIA MORIN

Lydia Morin, EcoDistricts AP
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, Third Ward
Water Champion

JOSH PURVIS

Josh Purvis
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, Third Ward
Energy Champion

MARY ELLEN RAMAGE

Mary Ellen Ramage
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, Second Ward
Manager, Borough of Etna
Member, Etna Economic Dvt. Corp.
Representative, Triboro Ecodistrict
Water Champion

MEGAN TUÑÓN

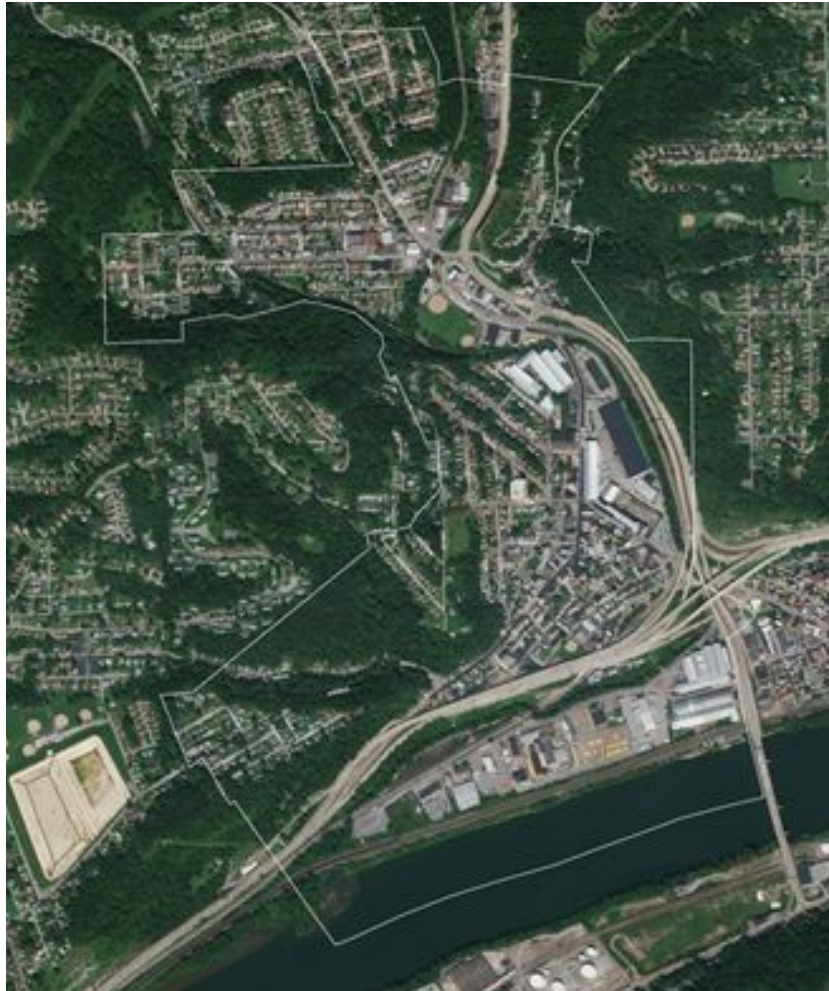
Megan Tuñón, EcoDistricts AP
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, First Ward
Councilmember, Borough of Etna
Member, Etna Neighborhood Assoc.
Member, Garden of Etna
Etna Business Owner
Mobility Champion

ROBERT TUÑÓN

Robert Tuñón, EcoDistricts AP
Board Member, Etna Community Org.
Resident of Etna, First Ward
Member, Etna Economic Dvt. Corp.
Member, Etna Neighborhood Assoc.
Member, Garden of Etna
Etna Business Owner
Representative, Triboro Ecodistrict
Air Champion

EXHIBITS

- A. **District Boundary:** The EcoDistrict Boundary aligns with the legal municipal boundary of the Borough of Etna (see below), an area of approximately 0.8 sq. mi.



- B. Etna Community Organization's [Articles of Incorporation](#), [Additional Provisions](#), and [Corporation Bylaws](#)
- C. [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the Borough of Etna
- D. Letters of Support from Stakeholder Organizations
1. [Borough of Etna](#)
 2. [Etna Economic Development Corporation](#)
 3. [Etna Neighborhood Association](#)
 4. [Garden of Etna](#)
 5. [Triboro Ecodistrict](#)
- E. [Community Asset Map of Etna](#)
- F. [Community Engagement Schedule, Agenda, and Record](#)
- G. [Verification Review Response Letter to EcoDistricts Certification Team](#)