

SHARPSBURG ECODISTRICT



DECLARATION OF COLLABORATION

Adopted on
January 4, 2021

by the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative and
Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization

Principal Authors

Brittany Reno, Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization
Anna Rosenblum, evolveEA

Sharpsburg Collaborative Members

Brittany Reno, SNO Executive Director
Kathleen Stanley, Roots of Faith Outreach Director
Bonnie DeMotte, Second Harvest Executive Director
Sara Mariacher, Sharpsburg Community Library Branch Manager
Katie Power, Volunteers of America Youth Empowerment Project Lead Teacher & Youth
Coordinator

SNO Board Members

Shanna Carrick, SNO Board President
Kacie Cope, SNO Secretary
Nanci Goldberg
Nathan Pearce, SNO Vice President
Paul Perowicz
Sydney Rabinovitz
Mayor Matthew V. Rudzki, Mayor of Sharpsburg Borough
Rev. Scott Shaffer, SNO Treasurer
Charles Smith

INTENT

The Sharpsburg Ecodistrict represents a vision for the community that is defined by the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan (SCVP). Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization (SNO) is the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict's backbone organization, and is responsible for convening residents and organizations who are committed to supporting and fulfilling the SCVP. This Declaration of Collaboration, or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is a non-binding commitment between SNO and a coordinated team of individuals and organizations to take the actions necessary to implement the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan successfully.

DISTRICT & BACKBONE ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Sharpsburg Ecodistrict boundary aligns with the legal municipal boundary of the Borough of Sharpsburg. Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization (SNO) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization who acts as the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict's backbone organization.

BACKBONE ORGANIZATION ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Backbone Organization and primary steward of the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan, SNO commits to:

Organizational Structure

- Employ at least one (1) full-time staff person in support of the organization;
- Convene Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative representatives in quarterly meetings. SNO will set the agenda and will provide interim updates via email as needed.

Advancing the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan

- Adopt the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan as the guiding document for SNO;
- Lead development of the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Roadmap;
- Seek funding to support SNO staff and operations and Ecodistrict project implementation when appropriate;
- Serve as fiscal agent when SNO is directly responsible for project planning and implementation, except for specific instances where a different organization is better suited for this role;
- Support the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative member organization who is best suited to lead specific Sharpsburg Ecodistrict project implementation and/or programming;
- Incubate projects and programs not within the most current version of the SCVP if they are aligned with the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Roadmap, the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Imperatives Commitment, and/or the six Sharpsburg Quality of Life vision statements;
- Update the SCVP on a biannual basis guided by community feedback and indicator data reporting.

Community Engagement

- Convene the Sharpsburg community in quarterly community meetings that are open to all and provide updates on Ecodistrict activities;

- Clearly communicate all Ecodistrict meetings, planning, and implementation efforts to the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative and the public;
- Commit to continuous learning, relationship building, and leadership development;
- Actively collect and share relevant, relatable, and understandable data pertaining to the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict to guide decision making and demonstrate progress.

ECODISTRICT COLLABORATIVE MEMBERS ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Ecodistrict Collaborative members and primary implementers of the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan, Roots of Faith, Second Harvest, Sharpsburg Community Library, and Volunteers of America commit to:

Organizational Structure

- Designate one person employed by the organization, chosen by the Board of Directors or Council of each organization that holds a leadership role within their respective organization, to act as the organizational representative and primary point of contact for the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative;
- The Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative representative will provide updates to SNO in advance of and participate in quarterly meetings.

Advancing the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan

- Recognize the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan, as the guiding document for the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict;
- Adopt the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Roadmap as the implementation plan to achieve the vision described in the SCVP;
- Seek funding and steward projects described in the SCVP and Ecodistrict Roadmap that best align with their own organizational mission and existing initiatives;
- Serve as fiscal agent for projects where the organization is directly responsible for project planning and implementation, except for specific instances where a different organization is better suited for this role;
- Communicate joint funding opportunities for Sharpsburg Ecodistrict initiatives via email or at quarterly meetings;
- Support Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative member organizations who are leading other Sharpsburg Ecodistrict projects or programming;
- Incubate projects and programs not within the most current version of the SCVP if they are aligned with the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Roadmap, the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Imperatives Commitment, and/or the six Sharpsburg Quality of Life vision statements;
- Contribute to a biannual update of the SCVP guided by community feedback and indicator data reporting.

Community Engagement

- Participate in quarterly community meetings that are open to all and provide updates on Ecodistrict activities;

- Promote all Ecodistrict community meetings, planning efforts, and implementation efforts to their organizational network;
- Commit to continuous learning and relationship building;
- Actively collect and share relevant, relatable, and understandable data pertaining to the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict to guide decision making and demonstrate progress.

DECISION MAKING PROTOCOL

During the Roadmap phase, the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative will collectively decide which organization is best suited for each project described in the SCVP. Project implementation will then be stewarded by the selected organization through the rules that govern their organization.

Decisions relevant to jointly funded collective efforts of the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict are to be made by Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative representatives at regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. In this case, Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative representatives are also the decision making body. Collective funding opportunities for joint efforts are to be communicated via email or at quarterly meetings. The decision to move ahead with funding opportunities can be made through email, in-person, or virtual voting at quarterly meetings. Any changes to planned fund uses are to be approved through majority vote via email or at quarterly meetings.

Projects impacting public spaces and infrastructure must be approved by Sharpsburg Borough Council during regularly scheduled monthly Council meetings. Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative representatives must provide any relevant documents as needed for approval of requests made to Council.

Individual organizational efforts that have a positive impact on Sharpsburg Ecodistrict goals are to be communicated with the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative as needed, but do not require collective approval.

Quarterly reports of relevant Ecodistrict efforts are to be created by SNO following the quarterly meetings, stored in a shared Google Drive folder, and reported to the public during quarterly community meetings. Reports are to be developed with information provided by the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative.

The organizational representatives of each Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative member organization are to be chosen by the Board of Directors or Council of each organization and must hold a leadership role within their respective organization. The terms of their appointment are not limited and will be decided by the Board of Directors or Council of each individual member organization.

All activities conducted as part of the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict are to support the advancement of the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan, Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Imperatives Commitment, and/or

Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Roadmap. As potential projects are reviewed, they will be tested against these three documents to assure alignment. Projects not aligned with these three documents will not be considered an Ecodistrict project.

SHARPSBURG ECODISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS

Backbone Organization

Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization (SNO) is the backbone organization for the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict. SNO is responsible for convening residents and the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative to support and fulfill the SCVP.

Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative

The Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative are the primary implementers of the SCVP. They are independent nonprofits with separate fiduciary responsibilities who work in support of the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict as members of the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative. In addition to implementing Ecodistrict projects and programs, the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative provides fundraising support as well as technical assistance. The Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative includes:

- **Roots of Faith (ROF)** is an outreach ministry of Faith UMC in Sharpsburg. They seek to build community by reconciling people with God and one another. They host a variety of programs in support of their vision, including The Neighborhood Table (a free community dinner program) and Circles (which supports individuals and families as they work toward financial stability), among several others.
- **Second Harvest (SH)** is a community thrift store and gathering place opening in Sharpsburg in 2021. Second Harvest seeks to meet the material and relational needs of its surrounding community by providing quality goods at affordable prices in a bright, modern, and welcoming space. Their operating model centers on engaging a diverse family of volunteers and employees to glean gently used clothing, housewares, and furniture and sell them affordably where they are needed most, and invest the proceeds into living wage jobs and ultimately grants to strengthen existing neighborhood programs.
- **Sharpsburg Community Library (SCL)** is a branch of the Cooper-Siegel Community Library offering a full range of library services: computers for public use, new fiction, non-fiction, DVDs and books on CD, programs for adults including art classes and book groups, and programs for children including story times, homework help, and STEAM programs.
- **Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization (SNO)** is a nonprofit community based organization who works to improve quality of life for all Sharpsburg residents by empowering community partners and resident volunteers to fulfill the Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan.
- **Volunteers of America (VOA)** is a national, nonprofit, spiritually based organization providing local human service programs and opportunities for individual and community involvement. In Pennsylvania they focus on providing affordable housing and offer a variety of services such as pregnancy counseling, shelter for homeless women in need, child care, elderly transportation, limited volunteer programs, and many other services.

SIGNATORIES

This Declaration of Collaboration will renew every two years without notice or review unless a majority of signatories requests that the Declaration of Collaboration be reviewed. In the event that a signatory wishes to terminate this Declaration of Collaboration, termination requires a majority vote from Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative members.

Signed by Sharpsburg Ecodistrict Collaborative members:

KATHLEEN STANLEY

Kathleen Stanley, Outreach Director, Roots of Faith

BONNIE DEMOTTE

Bonnie DeMotte, Executive Director, Second Harvest

SARA MARIACHER

Sara Mariacher, Manager, Sharpsburg Community Library

BRITTANY RENO

Brittany Reno, Executive Director, Sharpsburg Neighborhood Organization

KATIE POWER

Katie Power, Volunteers of America Youth Empowerment Project

APPENDICES

A. [Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan](#)

The Sharpsburg Community Vision Plan presents the community's vision for the next ten years, and includes development principles, urban systems recommendations, and placemaking projects to guide Sharpsburg's future. The document also acts as the basis for the Sharpsburg Ecodistrict's Roadmap and for SNO's five-year work plan.

B. [Sharpsburg Priority-Based Asset Map](#)

C. **District Boundary**

The Sharpsburg Ecodistrict boundary aligns with the legal municipal boundary of the Borough of Sharpsburg (see Figure 1), an area of approximately 0.63 square miles of land area.



Figure 1: Map of Sharpsburg highlighting the district boundary in a white outline.