The Road to 2030

A strategic initiative of Green Building Alliance, the Erie 2030 District is an interdisciplinary private-public-nonprofit collaborative working to create a groundbreaking high performance building district. Buildings which have committed to the District strive to meet 50% reductions in energy use, water use, and transportation emissions from baselines. New construction and major renovation projects commit to the same water and transportation goals, while driving towards carbon neutrality. The 2030 District provides Partners a roadmap and the support they need to own, manage, and develop high performance buildings by leveraging Community and Resource Partners, Green Building Alliance’s members and stakeholders, market resources, and by creating new tools, partnerships, and opportunities to overcome current market barriers. This type of collaborative action is not only a strategic undertaking to keep Erie competitive and innovative, but also represents a major investment in Erie’s future and reflects the collaborative nature of our region.

92 BUILDINGS COMMITTED

3.9M SQUARE FEET COMMITTED

A Community-Based Solution

In 2017, Green Building Alliance began working with the City of Erie, Erie County, and a group of regional building owners to develop the Erie Emerging 2030 District. By the Fall of 2019, the District acquired enough Property Partners to officially become the 22nd Established 2030 District in the world. Currently, Erie has 14 Property Partners spanning public and private organizations that make up 92 buildings and 3.9 million square feet. The Erie 2030 District offers free education opportunities through its bimonthly Partner Meetings. The District has partnered with local universities like Mercyhurst, Gannon, and Penn State Behrend to work with students and conduct vital data collection to help create energy and water baselines for the city. Erie’s commitment to the 2030 Challenge Goals positions the region for economic growth, facilitating new investment now and in the future.

ERIE 2030 DISTRICT

2019

14.8% ENERGY REDUCTION

$1.7M DOLLARS SAVED (ENERGY)

33.8M LBS OF CO2 EMISSIONS AVOIDED
What are the 2030 Challenge Goals?

The Erie 2030 District follows the 2030 Challenge for Planning,¹ a framework created by Architecture 2030 to drastically improve buildings’ environmental impact by 2030. Through separate goals for new construction and existing buildings, the 2030 Challenge sets rigorous but achievable reduction targets in five-year increments. New construction and major renovation projects commit to carbon neutrality by 2030, while existing buildings pursue 50% reductions in energy use below national baselines. Both new and existing buildings commit to 50% reductions in water use and transportation emissions below regional baselines.

A Performance-Based Model

According to the United Nations, the urban built environment is responsible for 75% of annual global greenhouse gas emissions, with buildings alone accounting for 39%.² In response, OBA adopted the 2030 District Challenge model, which sets specific targets for buildings’ use reduction. The 2030 Challenge aligns with the timeline created by the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, providing a roadmap for partners to meet the 50% reduction goals. Property Partners join community organizations, utilities, and government officials to find solutions to current obstacles and create tangible improvements throughout the region.

LeAnn Nieratko
Whole Foods Cooperative

The Co-op joined the 2030 District in pursuit of our quest to be environmentally responsible. Since joining we have appreciated the insights into our current operation, as well as the suggestions and resources to continue to work towards a greener operation.
Measuring Performance

To measure progress toward 2030 Challenge goals, the Erie 2030 District relies on comprehensive data collection and analysis. Individual property’s performance metrics are aggregated to find District reductions in energy, water, and transportation emissions. For this year, the District has aggregated and is reporting on energy data, with local water and transportation baselines to be created in the future.

Each building’s performance is determined by pairing contextual factors with metric-specific data. While property-level performance is held in confidence, the aggregate data set has the potential to drive policy and planning in Northwest Pennsylvania.

Baseline & Performance Metrics

Determining a building’s resource reduction requires an initial point of comparison, known as the building’s baseline. Using the best available data, each building is assigned an initial baseline value, which takes into account various features depending on the metric. In cases with specific use types, such as public event facilities, custom baselines are developed referencing document past Wuse.
A Network of Influence
The Erie 2030 District’s success stems from its close-knit network of partners and sponsors. Partners are invited to bimonthly meetings that feature presentations from technical experts, service providers, and building owners which showcase successful projects. These sessions are framed through a regional lens in which Partners share best practices and challenges with other local public and private organizations. Partners gain direct access to policymakers, regional thought leaders, university researchers, and financial organizations.

Join the Erie 2030 District

Individual Technical Evaluations
GBA consults with Property Partners on a one-on-one basis to identify critical investments toward achieving their individual reduction targets. Partners receive a confidential annual performance report that analyzes their progress toward the 2030 Challenge goals. These reports highlight Partners’ current and former performance while GBA staff provide context and ideas for specific building upgrades. Where possible, reports also compare a building’s performance to similar, anonymized local buildings.

Become a Property, Community, or Resource Partner
Distinguish your organization or school district by joining Erie’s most influential network of building owners and developers. Upon commitment to the 2030 Challenge goals, Property Partners gain access to technical meetings, in addition to individualized property benchmarking and evaluation.

Working with the entire Erie community toward a common goal gives support to all who are working toward a sustainable Erie.

Deb Seng
Sisters of St. Joseph

Image courtesy of VisitErie
Property Partner Organization

Community Partner:
PA Sea Grant

Resource Partners:
Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance (KEEA)
Architecture 2030

Property Partners:
Allegheny Health Network St. Vincent Hospital
Benedictine Sisters of Erie
City of Erie
DCNR
Emmaus Ministries Inc.
Erie Art Museum
Erie City Mission
Erie County
First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant
Mercyhurst University
PA Performing Artists Collective Alliance (PACA)
Professional Development Associates, Inc
Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania
UPMC Hamot
Whole Foods Co-op

References:


Special Thanks to Guy McUmber

This report — and the progress of the Erie 2030 District thus far — was made possible by the hard work and dedication of Guy McUmber. Guy served as a volunteer with Green Building Alliance from 2007 to 2014, helping to encourage green building throughout the region and guide sustainability within K-12 schools. When he retired from his long-time post at the Department of Environmental Protection, he accepted the position as GBA’s Northwest PA Director. In this role, Guy provided incredibly useful technical assistance to energy-saving projects around Erie, secured critical funding to support the program, and is responsible for the launch of the Erie 2030 District, which is sure to have lasting environmental, economic, and social impacts throughout the region. As Guy retires — again! — and plans to spend more time serving his community and spoiling his grandchildren — we would like to express our heartfelt thanks for his work, his passion, and his friendship.

Guy: Good luck and happy retirement (again)!!

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