

# Alert



The **Alert** newsletter provides monthly updates on transportation and air quality planning activities within the Delaware Valley.

September 2024

## Climate Change Action

### EPA Awards \$27 Billion to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

On August 16, 2024, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [announced](#) that \$27 billion from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund has been obligated to initiatives intended to spur investments in clean energy and energy efficiency across the country. The recent awards are the product of three funding programs created by the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022: The National Clean Investment Fund, the Solar for All program, and the Clean Communities Accelerator.

The \$14 billion [National Clean Investment Fund](#) (NCIF) aims to catalyze private investments by “establishing national clean financing institutions that deliver accessible, affordable financing for clean technology projects nationwide.” Via the fund, three nonprofit coalitions, Climate United Fund, Coalition for Green Capital, and Power Forward Communities, were each awarded between \$2 and \$6.97 billion in capital that will allow them to offer affordable financial products for clean energy projects, especially in low-income and disadvantaged communities. Much of this funding will go to the establishment or expansion of green banks, which are mission-driven financial institutions that specialize in investments that address climate change.

A local example of a green bank is the [Philadelphia Green Capital Corporation](#) (PGCC) which was launched in September 2021 to support the work of the Philadelphia Energy Authority’s (PEA) Philadelphia Energy Campaign. PGCC, a member of the Coalition for Green Capital, provides financing for building renovations such as upgrading HVAC systems, improving insulation, and installing solar panels at commercial and multifamily buildings in the city. PGCC also supports PEA’s [Built to Last program](#), which helps low-income homeowners pay for critical repairs that make their homes healthier and more affordable to live in, as well as PEA’s [Solarize Philly](#) program, which aims to make going solar more affordable by allowing property owners to purchase solar together and benefit from lower prices.

The NCIF is complimented by the \$6 billion [Clean Communities Investment Accelerator](#) program, which will provide technical assistance and build capacity for financing clean technology projects at green banks, community development financial institutions, credit unions, and other community lenders across the country.

Lastly, \$7 billion in federal funding was allocated to organizations across the country as part of the [Solar for All](#) program which aims to make installing solar more accessible to low-income and disadvantaged communities. The funding will enable the 60 grant recipients to provide subsidies, low cost capital, and technical assistance to residential and resident-serving community solar projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several U.S. territories and tribal nations. EPA expects that over 900,000 households will get solar installed through the Solar for All program, amounting to over 4 gigawatts of distributed energy and avoiding the release of greenhouse gases equivalent to 30 million metric tons of carbon dioxide. Locally, the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities were each awarded \$156 million, and in addition to the programs from their respective states, residents in the Delaware Valley may also be able to benefit from multi-state projects being operated by nonprofit organizations.



## Save the Date

Friday

October 11, 2024

**Draft PennDOT NEVI  
Community Charging  
Framework**

Public Comment Period  
Closes

For more information visit:  
[www.penndot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/EVs/Pages/PA-NEVI.aspx](http://www.penndot.pa.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/EVs/Pages/PA-NEVI.aspx)

Wednesday

February 5, 2025

**NJ DEP Green Acres  
Grants**

Applications Due

For more information visit:  
[dep.nj.gov/grantandloanprograms/green-acres-nonprofit-acquisition-](http://dep.nj.gov/grantandloanprograms/green-acres-nonprofit-acquisition-)

# Electric Vehicles

## Federal Highway Administration Funds 51 Additional Vehicle Charging and Fueling Projects

On August 27, 2024, the United States Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced it has awarded an additional \$521 million in funding to [51 projects](#) submitted as part of the first round of the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant Program. The most recent round of additional awards, referred to as Round 1b, came after a highly competitive Round 1a in which much more funding was requested than available, leading FHWA to reevaluate the applications submitted. The funding awarded in Round 1b includes both categories of grants offered by the CFI Program: Corridor Grants, which fund infrastructure along federally designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs), and Community Grants, which fund publicly accessible infrastructure not on an AFC.

Two projects in the DVRPC region, both in the City of Philadelphia, were selected as part of Round 1b. As part of the community program, the City will receive \$6.8 million “to expand access to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and improve access to EV charging in communities with multifamily housing” through the installation of chargers in underserved neighborhoods, including at recreation centers. Additionally, \$2.2 million from the corridor program will be used to establish an EV charging hub at Philadelphia International Airport along the Interstate 95 AFC.

# Climate Change Resilience

## New Jersey Releases Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan

The State of New Jersey recently published its [Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan](#) which lays out over 100 specific actions to be taken by state agencies in order to protect people and infrastructure from the effects of extreme heat. The plan’s actions are categorized into five priorities. The first and most expansive priority is to “build resilient and healthy communities,” which addresses equitable access to air conditioning, emergency preparedness, worker safety, electrical grid reliability, urban forestry, and transportation. The remaining four priority categories focus on strengthening the resilience of the state’s ecosystems, promoting coordinated governance, investing in information and increasing public understanding, and promoting climate-informed investments and innovative financing.

The plan was developed by the [Interagency Council on Climate Resilience](#) (Interagency Council), a group of New Jersey State departments and agencies established in 2019 to develop the state’s strategy for coping with the effects of climate change. The Interagency Council is comprised of 22 state organizations including the Board of Public Utilities, New Jersey Transit, and the Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection.

The action plan’s publication comes as extreme weather events, including heat waves, are becoming more frequent in the state. According to the plan, the number of days over 90°F has increased from an average of 14 days per year in 2000 to 23-29 days per year in the 2020s. Furthermore, the changing climate has not affected all areas equally with average temperatures in New Jersey increasing 3.5°F over the past 125 years, outpacing the global average temperature increase of 1.5-2°F over the same time period. Unfortunately, New Jersey’s climate is expected to continue warming faster than other states due to its high rate of urbanization contributing to the urban heat island effect where artificial materials, such as asphalt and concrete, absorb and reemit more of the sun’s heat than the natural landscape causing “islands” of heat around densely developed areas.

In addition to environmental damage, extreme heat can have serious effects on human health. According to the National Weather Service, between 2013 and 2022, heat killed more Americans than floods, winds, or winter weather. Even when not fatal, hotter and sunnier days can result in the increased formation of ground-level ozone, also known as smog, which can exacerbate conditions such as COPD and asthma.



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