



## WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE.

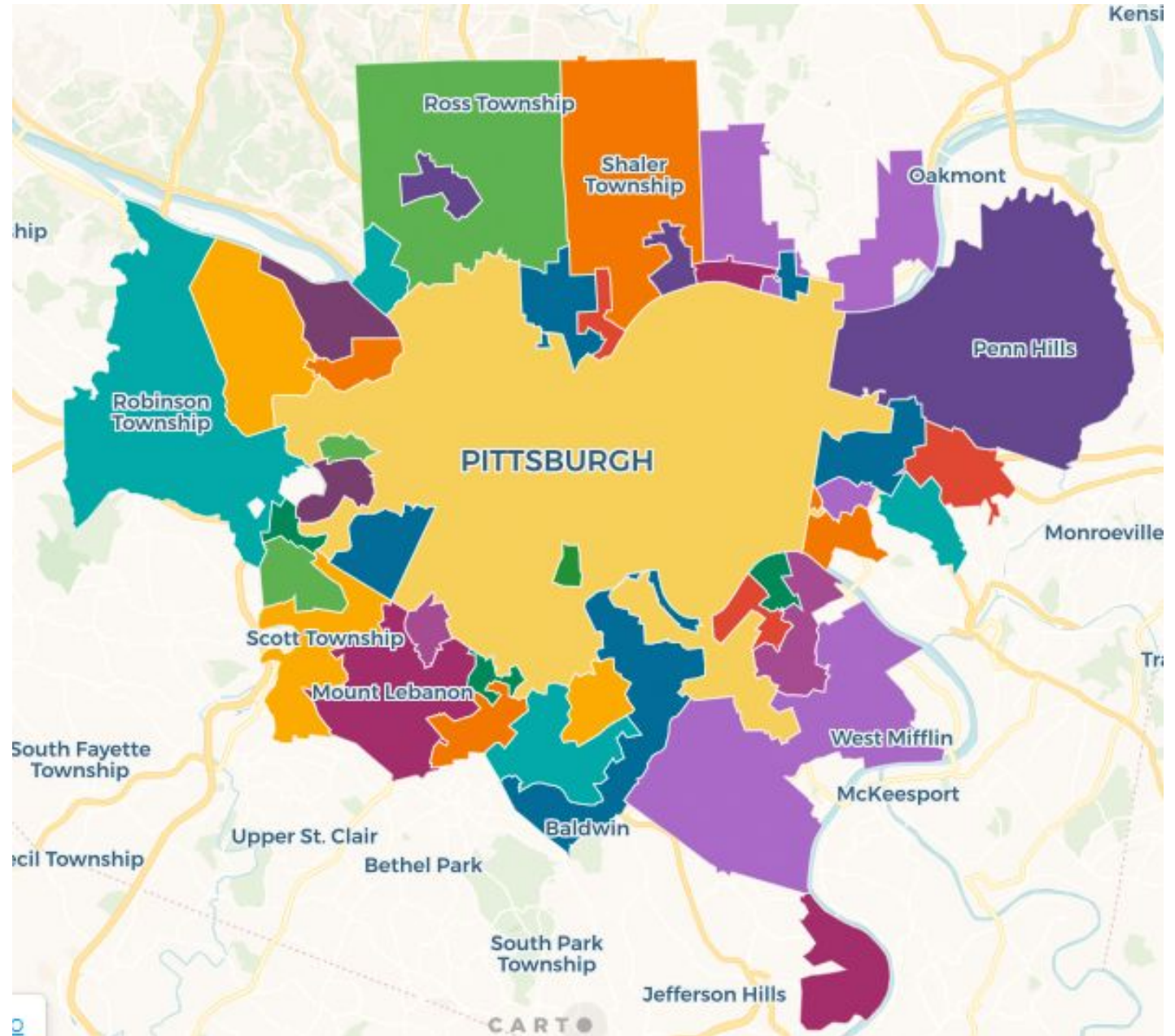
### Mission

The Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT) brings together the City of Pittsburgh and surrounding municipalities to identify common public policy challenges and advocate for collective change on behalf of Allegheny County's urban core.

### A national model

CONNECT is the only collaborative organization comprised of local governments in the United States that features a major metropolitan city at its core. This model makes CONNECT uniquely effective, and a national model for excellence in intergovernmental cooperation.

[connect.pitt.edu](http://connect.pitt.edu)



<https://bit.ly/2kAnyin>

# Who is CONNECT?

CONNECT members are municipalities, not individuals. Each member municipality designates 1-3 elected and appointed officials to be representatives of the municipality to CONNECT on the **Executive Committee**.





# Who is CONNECT?

CONNECT has seven representatives who sit on the **Board of Officers**: the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, Manager Representative, City of Pittsburgh Representative (always the Mayor), Allegheny County Representative (always the County Executive), and Immediate Past Chair.



# What is CONNECT?

- The Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT) is hybrid of all things intergovernmental affairs, policy think tank, incubator and membership organization.
- CONNECT is the flagship initiative of GSPIA's Center for Metropolitan Studies and a point of access and pipeline for public administrative talent and best practices in the region.



University of  
**Pittsburgh**

**Center for Metropolitan Studies**

Graduate School of Public and International Affairs

# Why CONNECT?

- Southwestern Pennsylvania is a very fragmented region; we have the country's most local governments per capita.
- We are immersed in the latest best practices and cutting-edge research for governments at GSPIA and our region is full of expert practitioner leaders working in silos.
- To collaborate across sectors and political boundaries in public and private partnerships to co-develop well-informed models and decision-making processes built on strong relationships and trust.

# What does CONNECT do?



- Convenes and communicates for its regional membership,
- Co-develops research and advocacy agendas,
- Incubates and pilots policies programs,
- Represents the CONNECT agenda on multiple policy-oriented working groups and committees throughout the region and with state officials,
- Engages faculty and graduate students to participate in, contribute to, and learn from all facets of the work.



# A Brief Policy Timeline of CONNECT 2009-2019

**2009** Founded with first slate of Officers & Established at GSPIA Center for Metro Studies

**2010** Bylaws developed and adopted; Partnership with 3 Rivers Wet Weather begins and maintains to present,

**2011** EMS funding crisis evaluated by CONNECT & City Controller

**2012** Sun Shot DOE Grant with PennFuture developing model zoning for rooftop solar

**2013** CONNECT Community Paramedic Program work begins

**2014** Sewer Regionalization Implementation Committee (SRIC) convenes

**2015** Two Utility Summits to begin infrastructure coordination work; Second Executive Director transition; Development of CoordinatePA begins with PA1Call

**2016** Health Working Group convenes to work on opioid/heroin epidemic, CONNECT Community Paramedic Program Ia

**2017** Transit-Oriented Development Zoning Project begins

**2018** Funded partnership with County Health Department on opioid/heroin response

**2019** Third Executive Director transition; Working Group Activation; LCAPs (Local Climate Action Plans) and Volunteer Fire Crisis introduced

**2020** Funding through ACHD LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) to both reduce opioids deaths and engage police;



# Working Groups

- **Infrastructure & Utilities Coordination Working Group:** Stormwater regionalization & governance; Implementing Coordinate PA software.
- **Economic & Economic Development Working Group:** Recycling Coordination, Transit-Oriented Development, Lead safety.
- **Public Safety, Health, & Human Resources Working Group:** Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion; the 2020 Census, Volunteer fire; Community Policing.

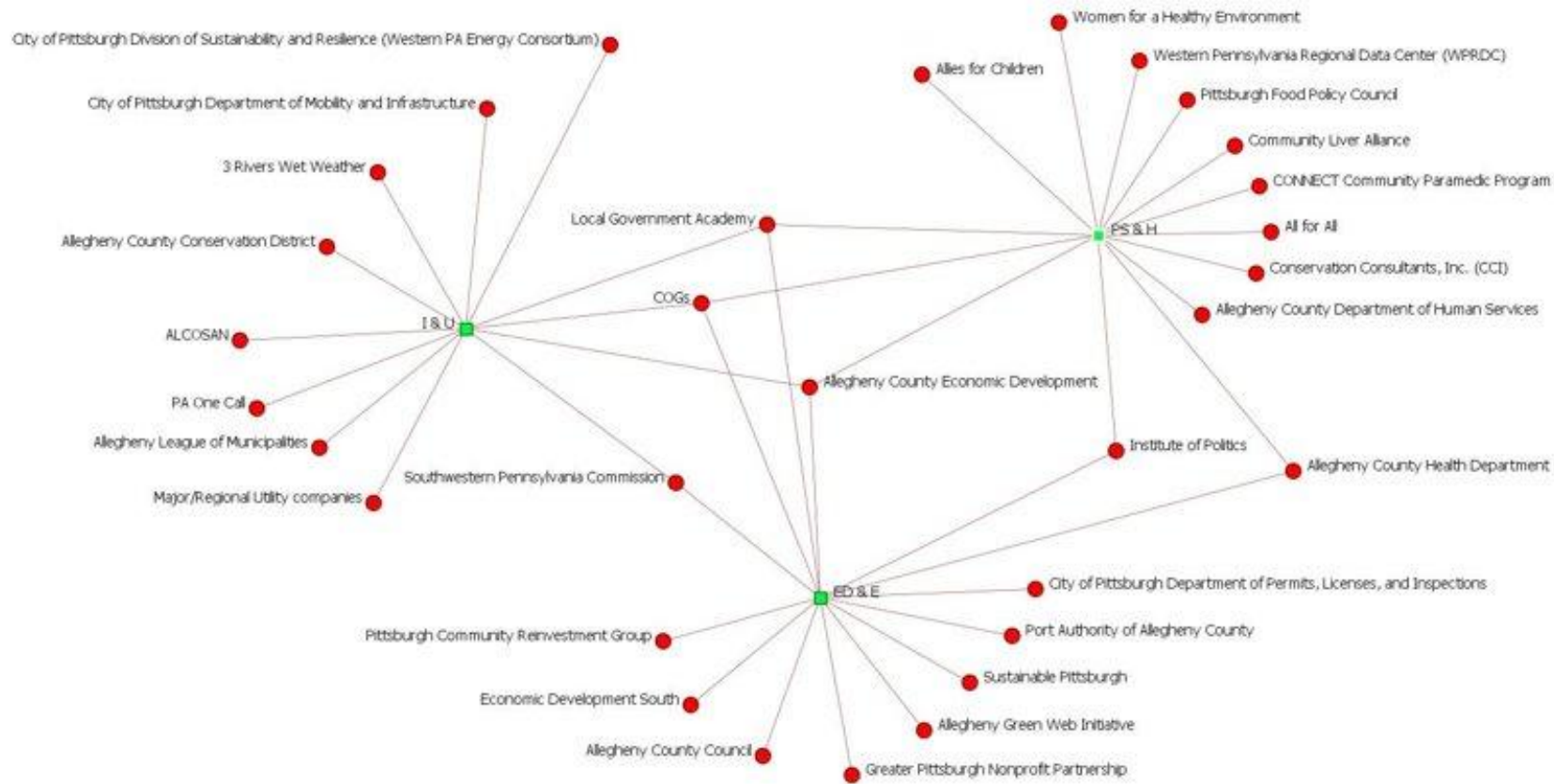




# Who are partners?

We partner with nonprofits, authorities, and business whose missions align with our work. We also work with governments and governmental agencies at the county and state level.

CONNECT Partners



# 2018 Membership Survey Results

- Highest rated policy priorities:
  - Water/sewer
  - Infrastructure coordination
  - Transportation
  - Opioid epidemic
  - Volunteer firefighter shortage crisis
- Many other policy issue areas identified that have been added to list at working group tables!
  - Tree Canopy/Green Space
  - Emergency Medical/Response Services
  - Gun Violence
  - Human Services
  - Food Access

# Break-out Activity: Stages of Engagement

<u>Stages of Engagement</u> →	<u>Exploring</u> <i>Introducing a new topic</i>	<u>Monitoring</u> <i>Utilizing student groups/active research and monitoring</i>	<u>Implementing</u> <i>Funded pilots and active projects; technical assistance; utilizing more staff support</i>
<i>(Top Priority)</i>			
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<i>(Low priority)</i>			



# PANEL PROMPTS

- How did you form and sustain your successful partnership?
- What are the significant driving and restraining forces affecting your partnership?
- What lessons learned could be transferred to other organizations?