



*Pittsburgh's 'green story' is a remarkable tale still being written about one of the most dramatic environmental transformations in American history.*

## HISTORY

Pittsburgh established itself as a center for industry due, in part, to its strategic location at the confluence of three rivers and the region's abundance of coal, oil, limestone, and sand. These assets paired with the ingenuity of early industrialists and entrepreneurs, the skills and manpower afforded by a large and diverse immigrant workforce, and a tenacity for hard work forged Pittsburgh's success as a manufacturing powerhouse. By 1911, Pittsburgh was producing half the nation's steel, but that progress came at a price.

Steel mills, factories and coal mines contributed to air and water pollution, creating smoke and grime that settled with such thickness that streetlights were lit by 3 p.m. and workers changed their sooty shirts after returning to their offices from lunch. Visiting the city in 1868, James Parton, writing for *Atlantic Monthly*, described the city as "...Hell with the lid taken off."

Civic and business leaders recognized that the city's image would impact future growth, launching efforts in 1946 to clean and revitalize the region's urban center through smoke control, restoration and redevelopment projects, and brownfield site reclamation. After the collapse of the steel industry in the late 1970s, Pittsburgh continued the hard work of reinventing itself. As a result, the city is well recognized and widely ranked for many reasons, including being a center for finance, education, healthcare, technology, energy, and sustainability – and one of the Most Livable Cities.

The stories about the people, places and projects that continue Pittsburgh's international contributions to transformation towards a more sustainable world include:

## A RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE CITY

Since 2014, Pittsburgh has been part of **100 Resilient Cities**, an effort pioneered by The Rockefeller Foundation (100RC). These efforts align with commitments Mayor William Peduto announced in 2015 for City government-owned facilities, infrastructure, and fleet to achieve by 2030. These include:

- 100% Renewable Energy Supply
- 50% Energy Consumption Reduction
- 50% Water Use Reduction
- 100% Fossil Fuel Free Fleet
- 100% Diversion from Landfill
- 50% Citywide Transportation Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction
- Creating a Fossil Fuel Divestment Strategy for City of Pittsburgh Funds

The **Pittsburgh 2030 District** comprises 470 buildings that have voluntarily committed to 50 percent reductions in energy use, water consumption and transportation emissions (below baselines) by the year 2030. The Pittsburgh 2030 District is the largest of 13 North American 2030 Districts.

## UNIVERSITY RESEARCH IN SUSTAINABILITY & GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

As an energy-producing region with its roots in fossil fuels, Pittsburgh is on the forefront of change as the world begins to make fundamental transformations in how energy is used and produced. With 12 colleges and universities in the City limits alone, top minds are figuring out now how to create a sustainable future with a wide variety of approaches, including **traditional environmental cleanup**, →



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**energy efficiency, renewable energy, microgrids, smart traffic signals, autonomous vehicles, greener products,** and even **new business models.** This research is also feeding the innovative technologies of the future.

### STARTUPS

From startups to offices for big name tech companies, Pittsburgh has a wealth of talent looking to solve the environmental and social challenges of our age. These include companies seeking to create energy from more renewable sources: **WindStax, Thar Geothermal,** and **SolePower; Interphase Materials, Hyliion, Hibernsense,** and others making systems more efficient; and **Thread,** making fabric from discarded plastics while creating jobs around the world.

### (RE)DEVELOPMENT

Pittsburgh's sustainable and progressive redevelopment of buildings and brownfields made it a known green building leader, with continued place-based innovation in the works. Pittsburgh boasts one of the world's few **Living Buildings** (at **Phipps Conservatory**)—with three more shaping up—is home to at least three local **ecodistricts.** Funding is also in place to reweave Pittsburgh's urban fabric sustainably by creating park land that reconnects downtown with the Hill District, an adjacent neighborhood previously fragment by urban renewal. At 178 acres, Pittsburgh's **Almono** site is one of the largest urban brownfields -- now renamed after the first syllables of Pittsburgh's rivers — the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio. Envisioned as a carbon neutral community, the former steel mill site is just 15 minutes from Downtown Pittsburgh.

### RIVERFRONTS, PARKS, AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Pittsburgh riverbanks once choked by industry are still being (re)developed in a way that reinstates riparian ecology and increases habitat. Over the past 15 years, **\$130 million** has been invested in the **13-mile Three Rivers Park,** which comprises at least six other local parks or commons. Efforts are underway to continue trails and greenways through other neighborhoods. Pittsburgh has **five urban parks totaling almost 2,000 acres.** In 2016, 660 acres of Hays Wood parkland were added to the City's asset list, elevating Pittsburgh's parkland tally into the top five of peer cities.

In Frick Park, a living, breathing building now serves as a hub for immersive environmental education for Pittsburgh city school children and as a gathering place for community programs. The newly completed **Frick Environmental Center** has been built to meet the rigorous standards of both LEED Platinum and the Living Building Challenge™ and is the world's first municipally owned, free and open to the public, Living Building Challenge-targeted project.

**PittsburghGreenStory.com** is your resource for history, story leads, and the latest developments in the ongoing story of Pittsburgh's environmental transformation.

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