

Adopted July 2026

TOWNSHIP OF MONTCLAIR COMMUNITY ENERGY PLAN



Developed by Montclair's Dept. of Sustainability

Acknowledgments

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- Sustainable Jersey
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Township of Montclair in Essex County is committed to advancing a sustainable and resilient energy future by reducing environmental impacts and improving energy efficiency, electrification, and renewable energy use across municipal operations and the broader community. This commitment is reflected in adopted policies, planning and engineering practices, and ongoing investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy projects at municipal facilities.

To support these efforts, Montclair received a grant through the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Community Energy Plan (CEP) Grant Program. This CEP identifies priority energy goals, strategies, and actions that the Township can pursue to reduce energy consumption, lower greenhouse gas emissions, generate long-term cost savings for taxpayers, and expand access to clean energy in alignment with State programs and incentives. The CEP builds on progress already achieved by the Township and the Department of Sustainability and is intended to inform future climate action, capital planning, and sustainability initiatives.

Consistent with CEP program requirements, the Plan is structured using Sustainable Jersey's Community Energy Plan Workplan Template, which identifies high-impact, implementation-ready initiatives for municipalities. Grant funding supported a professional services contract with Harris Energy Solutions (H.E.S.) to evaluate Montclair's solar resource potential and assess municipal facilities for photovoltaic (PV) solar feasibility. Findings from this analysis informed the selection and prioritization of renewable energy initiatives included in the Plan.

This Community Energy Plan provides a practical roadmap for implementation over the coming years, outlining prioritized initiatives, anticipated challenges, and phased strategies for action. Initiatives are assigned low, medium, or high priority based on community impact, implementation timeline, feasibility, cost, and anticipated barriers. It also includes a community profile and identifies technical and financial resources available to support implementation, particularly through State and utility programs.

Plan development included multiple rounds of review and coordination among the Department of Sustainability, the Montclair Environmental Commission, and Township administration, as well as public and municipal stakeholder outreach to gather input on initiative priorities. Feedback received during this process informed the final selection of initiatives. Initiatives not included in this Plan were determined to be previously completed, not applicable to Montclair's context, or appropriate for future consideration.

GLOSSARY

- **ADI:** Administratively Determined Incentive Program
- **Alternative Fuel:** Vehicle propulsion fuels other than diesel or gasoline and which have a lesser net environmental impact than those traditional fuels.
- **BESS:** Battery Energy Storage System
- **BEV:** Battery Electric Vehicle - A vehicle that is powered entirely by an electric battery which is exclusively energized by electricity from the grid. These are also referred to as Plug-in Electric Vehicles (PEVs).
- **BIL:** Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- **BMP:** Best Management Practices
- **BPU (or NJBPU):** New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
- **CAP:** Climate Action Plan
- **CEP:** Community Energy Plan
- **CFI:** Charging and Fueling Infrastructure
- **CHP:** Combined Heat and Power
- **CO₂:** Carbon dioxide
- **CSI:** Competitive Solar Incentive Program
- **Community Solar:** One or more solar installations providing energy to buildings and uses on other properties, typically through a subscription service.
- **Complete Streets:** A transportation planning and urban design principle favoring street and road design that accommodates multiple modes of travel rather than prioritizing single-occupancy vehicles.
- **DCFC:** Direct Current Fast Charger
- **DER:** Distributed Energy Resources
- **DCS:** The Township of Montclair's Department of Community Services
- **EECBG:** Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program
- **EMP or NJ EMP:** 2019 New Jersey Energy Master Plan
- **EPA:** The United States Environmental Protection Agency
- **EV:** Electric Vehicle - Generic term for a vehicle that is propelled partially or entirely by an electric powered motor in lieu of or in addition to an engine powered by gasoline or another combustible fuel. Synonymous with Plug-In Electric Vehicle (PEV)
- **EVCS:** Electric Vehicle Charging Station
- **EVSE:** Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment – an alternative for EV charging equipment.
- **GHG or Greenhouse Gases:** Gases emitted through both natural and anthropogenic processes which contribute to the greenhouse effect in the Earth's atmosphere, most commonly in reference to CO₂ and methane.
- **HEV:** Hybrid Electric Vehicle - A vehicle that is primarily propelled by a combustible fuel which can be propelled to a limited extent by an electric battery that is typically charged by the act of braking.
- **IAFF:** The International Association of Firefighters
- **ICE:** Internal combustion engine - a vehicular engine which uses combustible fuels like gasoline for propulsion. Typically, it does not include HEVs.
- **IPCC:** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

- **LEED:** Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design - a program hosted by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) which grants certification to buildings, neighborhood developments, and cities that meet the minimum standards for one of four levels of efficient design, and which offers a credential program to professionals interested in demonstrating proficiency in green building design and operation.
- **Level 2:** A low-power form of charging based on a standardized plug that provides Alternating Current (AC) up to ~20kW. Most PEVs include a standard Level 2 connector.
- **LGEA:** Local Government Energy Audit
- **LMI:** Low- and/or Moderate-Income (may refer to Residents, Households, and/or Communities) as defined by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and NJDEP.
- **MCAP:** Montclair Climate Action Plan
- **MCEP:** Montclair Community Energy Plan
- **Microgeneration:** Any small-scale production of heat or electricity through a low- or no-carbon source, including solar photovoltaic systems, small wind turbines, and other on-site systems typically powering a single property.
- **MRI:** Municipal Revitalization Index
- **NEVI:** National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program
- **NFPA:** The National Fire Protection Association
- **NJ CEP:** New Jersey Clean Energy Program
- **NJ DCA or DCA:** New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
- **NJ DEP or DEP:** New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- **NJ DOT:** New Jersey Department of Transportation
- **NJEVA:** New Jersey Electric Vehicles Association
- **NJ Transit:** New Jersey Transit
- **PHEV:** Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle - A vehicle that can be propelled by an electric battery for a greater distance than an HEV and propelled by a combustible fuel when the battery is drained. Unlike HEVs, the electric battery of a PHEV can be charged by EVSE.
- **Private Solar:** Any form of solar installation intended to provide energy to the buildings or uses located on the same property as the installation.
- **PSE&G:** Public Service Electric & Gas
- **PV:** Photovoltaic
- **REC:** Renewable Energy Credits - tradable commodities that prove 1 megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity was generated from a renewable source like solar or wind and fed into the grid
- **RFP:** Request for Proposals
- **RFQ:** Request for Qualifications
- **SEM:** Strategic Energy Management
- **SuSi:** Successor Solar Incentive Program
- **US DOE or DOE:** The United States Department of Energy
- **VMT:** Vehicle miles traveled - a measure of the number of miles traveled by one or more vehicles over a specified period

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

The Township of Montclair recognizes the localized impacts of climate change and is committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to mitigate associated environmental, public health, and economic risks. Montclair's Community Energy Plan (MCEP) provides a coordinated framework of short- and long-term strategies focused on reducing energy consumption and improving energy efficiency across municipal operations and the broader community. The MCEP emphasizes practical actions within municipal authority that lower energy demand, reduce emissions, and support cost-effective, reliable energy systems.

The MCEP is informed by established international and state climate frameworks, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which calls for a 50 percent global reduction in GHG emissions by 2030, and New Jersey's Global Warming Response Act, which mandates an 80 percent reduction in statewide emissions by 2050. The MCEP also aligns with New Jersey's 80 x 50 Report and the 2019 New Jersey Energy Master Plan.

Consistent with these frameworks and the priorities of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU), Montclair's local energy goals emphasize improving energy efficiency across all sectors as the primary and most cost-effective means of reducing emissions. The Township has prioritized strategies that reduce energy use in existing residential, commercial, and municipal buildings; improve the efficiency of municipal and community transportation systems; and support electrification and renewable energy deployment where they further reduce overall energy demand. Emphasis is placed on participation in state and utility energy efficiency programs, targeted outreach to low- and moderate-income households, and reducing barriers to efficiency improvements in older buildings and rental properties.

Municipal operations are used to evaluate and implement scalable energy efficiency measures, including building upgrades, fleet efficiency improvements, and operational best practices, consistent with available funding and incentive programs. Renewable energy initiatives, including rooftop and community solar, are pursued where feasible to complement efficiency measures and increase access to clean energy, particularly for residents who are unable to install solar on their own properties. Equity, affordability, reliability, and alignment with State programs guide the selection and implementation of all initiatives.

The MCEP was developed by Montclair Township's Department of Sustainability, which leads the Township's sustainability strategies through policy development, project implementation, and public engagement. Plan development followed the award of a NJBPU Community Energy Plan Grant and builds upon Montclair's Climate Action Plan (MCAP), released in 2024, which was authorized by Township Council Resolution R-21-162. The MCAP provides the broader emissions reduction framework, while the MCEP focuses specifically on actionable energy strategies supported by existing programs and funding mechanisms.

The MCEP was developed using the Sustainable Jersey Guide for Sustainable Energy Communities and the Community Energy Plan Workplan Template to identify high-impact, achievable initiatives. Supporting data was drawn from Sustainable Jersey Data Resources and

local sources. Stakeholder engagement and public input were incorporated during plan development, where the MCEP was presented for review by the Montclair Environmental Commission (MEC) and Community Stakeholders at the MEC public meeting held on May 6, 2026. The final Plan was adopted by Township Council Resolution R-26-247 on July 14, 2026.

The MCEP establishes a practical roadmap for improving energy efficiency, reducing emissions, and increasing resilience over the coming years. Initiatives were selected based on demonstrated effectiveness, applicability to Montclair's building stock and transportation patterns, and community-wide benefits, including reduced energy costs, improved indoor and outdoor air quality, increased access to clean energy programs, and enhanced energy reliability. As New Jersey faces increasing climate-related risks, local action focused on efficiency and demand reduction is a critical component of meeting statewide clean energy and emissions reduction goals.

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of heat waves, droughts, intense storms, and sea-level rise in New Jersey (NJDEP, Scientific Report on Climate Change). The sustainable energy transition presents an opportunity to deliver broad benefits to our community and beyond. Beyond reducing greenhouse gas emissions, implementation of this Plan can provide the following benefits:

- improved public health;
- reduced concentrations of ground-level air pollutants;
- reduced sources of indoor air pollution;
- more affordable transportation options;
- expanded access to renewable energy;
- increased household and municipal cost savings;
- improved resilience; and
- reduced reliance on imported energy.

New Jersey can mitigate the local and global impacts of climate change by transitioning from the current GHG-intensive energy system to one that optimizes energy use and produces energy with minimal GHG emissions. Recognizing New Jersey's role in climate change mitigation, the State of New Jersey has established the goals of an 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050, and 100% clean electricity sales by 2035. The New Jersey Energy Master Plan: Pathway to 2050 outlines the state's strategies for achieving that goal while also addressing issues of social and economic inequity.

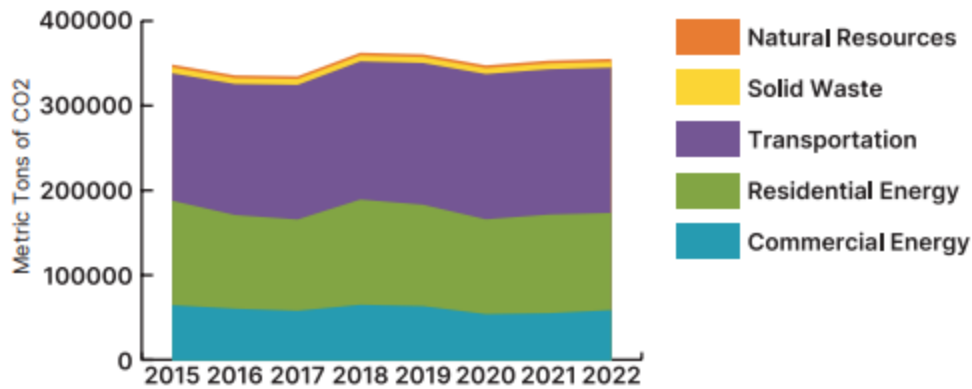


Figure 1. Montclair CO₂ Emissions Trend 2015-2022

Source: Sustainable Jersey; PSE&G

Montclair's Climate Action Plan specifies that the majority of our GHG emissions come from transportation (48.1%), residential energy use (32.3%), and commercial energy use (16.8%). Combined, these sectors account for 97.2% of all GHG emissions in Montclair and clearly identify the key areas the Township must prioritize to achieve meaningful reductions. The Community Energy Plan Grant Program supports municipalities like Montclair in advancing these objectives through locally tailored, implementation-ready planning.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

History: Montclair Township is located in Essex County, New Jersey. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the township had a total area of 6.25 square miles (16.17 km²), including 6.24 square miles (16.16 km²) of land and 0.01 square miles (0.02 km²) of water (0.11%). Situated on the cliffs of the Watchung Mountains, Montclair is a commercial and cultural hub of North Jersey and a diverse bedroom community of New York City within the New York metropolitan area.

Montclair was initially formed as a township on April 15, 1868, from portions of Bloomfield Township. After a referendum held on February 21, 1894, Montclair was reincorporated as a town, effective February 24, 1894.

Population: According to U.S. Census Bureau data, Montclair's population increased from 38,634 in 2020 to 39,873 in 2023, while occupied housing units increased from 14,097 to 15,118. Population density increased from approximately 6,181 to 6,380 people per square mile during the same period.

Race and Ethnicity: U.S. Census data indicates that Montclair is a racially and ethnically diverse community. In 2020, the population was approximately 56.2% White, 24.3% Black or African American, 10.1% Hispanic or Latino origin, 4.9% Asian, and 4.3% identifying with two or more racial groups. More recent 2023 Census estimates reflect continued diversity, with the community identifying as approximately 57% White, 18% Black or African American, 11% Hispanic or Latino, 5% Asian, and 8% identifying as two or more races. While these changes are modest, they reflect Montclair's long-standing identity as a diverse and inclusive community.

Income: Sustainable Jersey community profile data shows that Montclair's median household income increased from \$134,308 in 2020 to \$166,765 in 2023, while the share of residents living below the poverty line declined slightly from 6.8% to 6%, respectively. The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJ DCA) uses the Municipal Revitalization Index (MRI) to rank municipalities based on eight social, economic, physical, and fiscal indicators, with lower scores and higher rankings representing lower levels of distress. Montclair's MRI score was 20 in 2020, ranking 379th out of 564 New Jersey municipalities. In 2023, Montclair's MRI score increased to 22, ranking 417th statewide, reflecting a lower level of municipal distress relative to prior years.

Housing: In 2020, there were 15,276 total housing units of which 14,097 were occupied, resulting in an occupancy rate of 92%. Of the 14,097 housing units occupied, 61% were owner occupied and 39% were renter occupied. As of 2023, Montclair's occupancy rate increased slightly to 94%, with a distribution of 60% owner-occupied and 40% renter-occupied properties. The majority of Montclair's housing structures are 1-unit detached residences, representing 8,088 units, while buildings with 20 or more units form the second largest category at 2,297 units. Additionally, Montclair has a disproportionately high share of housing (over 9,000 units) constructed in 1939 or earlier, reflecting an aging building stock that often lacks modern energy standards and highlights the importance of programs such as residential energy efficiency audits, weatherization assistance, and building performance improvements to reduce energy costs and improve comfort for residents.

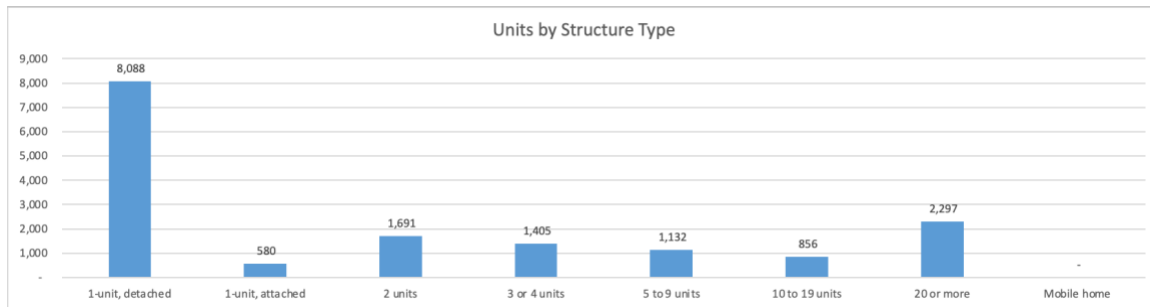


Figure 2. Housing Units by Structure Type

Source: Sustainable Jersey, Community Profile Data by Municipality.

Original source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

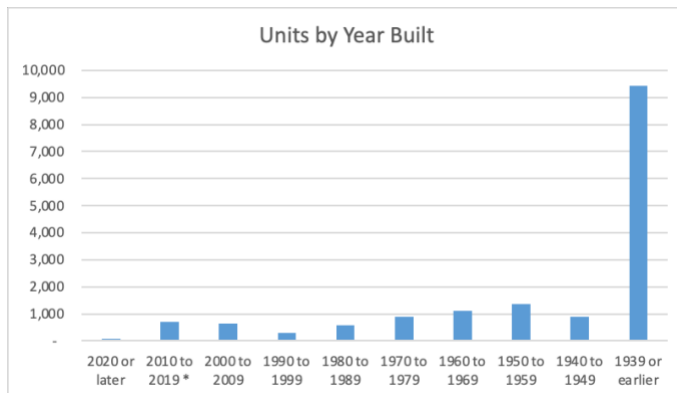


Figure 3. Housing Units by Year Structure Built

Source: Sustainable Jersey, Community Profile Data by Municipality.

Original source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Transportation: As of 2023, 44% of the Montclair workforce drove alone (in a car, truck, or van), 32% worked from home, and 16% utilized public transportation. Of 15,118 households, 1,112 do not have access to a vehicle for transportation, exemplifying the need for reliable and accessible multimodal transportation. Lifelong Montclair, in partnership with Essex County, offers transportation services for Montclair residents aged 60+ and residents with disabilities to meet the needs of residents who are unable to safely or independently reach their destinations. The EZ Ride program provides qualified riders with 20 rides per month free, on demand. Montclair also recognizes the Montclair Bike Bus, a community-led program in which volunteer adults coordinate scheduled group bicycle rides to support safe travel for children commuting to school along designated routes. Currently, ten Bike Bus routes operate throughout the Township, providing consistent bicycle access to schools across the community.

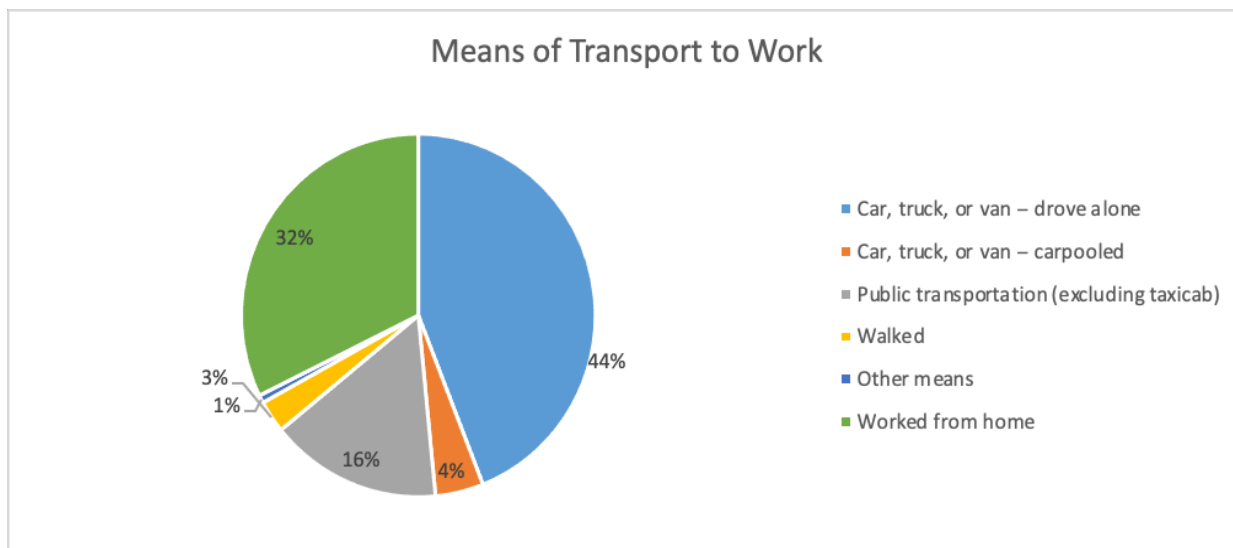


Figure 4. Means of Transportation to Work
Source: Sustainable Jersey. Community Profile Data by Municipality.
Original Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 1. Vehicles Available by Occupied Household.
Source: Sustainable Jersey. Community Profile Data by Municipality.
Original Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Total Vehicles Available by Occupied Household				
Total Households	No Vehicles Available	1 Vehicle Available	2 Vehicles Available	3 Vehicles Available
15118	1112	6769	5662	1575

Strategy 1: REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND EMISSIONS FROM THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

Transportation accounts for nearly half of Montclair’s greenhouse gas emissions, making it the Township’s largest opportunity for emissions reductions. Achieving Montclair’s climate goals requires a dual approach: accelerating vehicle electrification while also reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Expanded EV adoption and charging infrastructure are critical, particularly for renters and residents of multi-unit dwellings. Simultaneously, shifting trips to walking, biking, and public transit can further reduce emissions and support a safer, more connected community.

Montclair has a long-standing commitment to climate-friendly transportation and land use policies, reaffirmed in the recently adopted Sustainability and Resilience Amendment to the Master Plan. The Township has supported EV charging on both public and private property for many years, with stations now located in public parking lots and parking decks and required as part of redevelopment projects. Local EV adoption has grown rapidly, with approximately 1,900 registered EVs in Montclair by 2025, compared with 395 in 2020. The Township has also led by example through public EV charger installations, EV-ready development requirements, and the transition of its municipal fleet, which currently includes four fully electric vehicles and one hybrid vehicle.

Strategy 1 builds on this momentum by accelerating municipal fleet electrification, expanding equitable access to charging infrastructure, and supporting safe, low-carbon transportation options. Key goals include increasing EV adoption; meeting EV charging targets for multi-unit dwellings; transitioning residents, municipal fleets, and school buses to battery electric vehicles using available funding; and ensuring sufficient charging access for renters and visitors. Together, these actions position Montclair to advance a low-emission, multimodal transportation system.

In alignment with CAP Objectives 2.1 through 2.6, the CEP prioritizes the following initiatives under this strategy:

- 1.1 Adopt Supportive Zoning and Regulations for EV Infrastructure
- 1.2 Train First Responders on EVs and EVSE
- 1.3 Train Non-Emergency Staff on EVs and EVSE
- 1.4 Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicles
- 1.5 Improve Municipal Fleet Efficiency
- 1.6 Install Public EV Charging Infrastructure
- 1.8 Encourage Workplace & Multi-Unit Residential EV Charging Infrastructure
- 1.9 Support Shared Mobility Programs

Table 2. Total Electric Vehicles Registered in Municipality

Source: Sustainable Jersey, Electric Vehicle Ownership Data.

Original sources: NJDEP, New Jersey State EV Registration Data, September 2025; U.S. Census

Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Total Electric Vehicles Registered in Municipality								
			Vehicle Class **				Vehicle Type **	
Estimated Total Passenger Vehicles	# of EVs Registered	% Electric	Light Duty Vehicle (Class 1-2A)	Medium-Duty Vehicle (Class 2B - 6)	Heavy-Duty Vehicle (Class 7-8)	Unknown	BEV	PHEV
22,818	1,868	8.20%	1,796	69	0	3	1,298	569

Table 3. Alternative Fuel Electric Vehicles Owned in Municipality

Source: Sustainable Jersey, Electric Vehicle Ownership Data.

Original source: NJDEP, Alternative Fuel Report, June 2025.

Alternative Fuel Vehicles Owned by Municipality				
Total AFV	Battery Electric Vehicle	Hybrid Electric Vehicle (non plug in)	Hybrid Electric Vehicle (plug in)	Natural Gas Vehicle
	Light Duty Truck	Light Duty Truck	Light Duty Vehicle	Light Duty Vehicle
9	2	5	1	1

As shown in **Figure 4**, the majority of Montclair residents commute by car, although the Township also has comparatively high levels of public transit use and active transportation.

1.1 Adopt Supportive Zoning and Regulations for EV Infrastructure

Description: Adopt an ordinance based on the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDEP) Model Statewide Municipal EV Ordinance. The ordinance will establish electric vehicle charging stations as a permitted accessory use, define a clear permitting process, and require Make-Ready infrastructure and EVSE (Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment) parking in new multifamily developments and parking facilities. The Township may modify model ordinance provisions as needed to address local conditions, including safety, signage, and accessibility requirements.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Code, DCS, Planning

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: High

Anticipated length: 6 months

Funding sources: No direct funding required

Obstacles/barriers: Potential concerns from developers regarding additional requirements and the need to align local standards with evolving State regulations.

Community notes: Montclair has not yet enacted a municipal ordinance in response to P.L. 2021, c. 171; however, demand for electric vehicles (EVs) within the community has grown exponentially over the past decade. While federal tax incentives may change over time, continued growth in EV adoption is expected due to State, local, and utility incentives, as well as broader market trends. The Department of Sustainability has actively supported EV adoption through public education and community outreach, including partnerships with organizations such as Drive Electric to showcase EV models at local events. To date, EV charger installations have been approved on a project-by-project basis. Establishing a standardized policy or framework would streamline future installations and support continued growth in EV adoption throughout Montclair.

Table 4. Electric Vehicle Registrations in Montclair, 2015–2025

Source: Atlas Public Policy, EvaluateNJ. Data for ZIP codes 07042 and 07043.

Year	Total Personal Vehicles	# of EVs	% of EVs
2015	21,455	39	0.18%
2020	21,667	395	1.82%
2025	24,098	1,956	8.1%

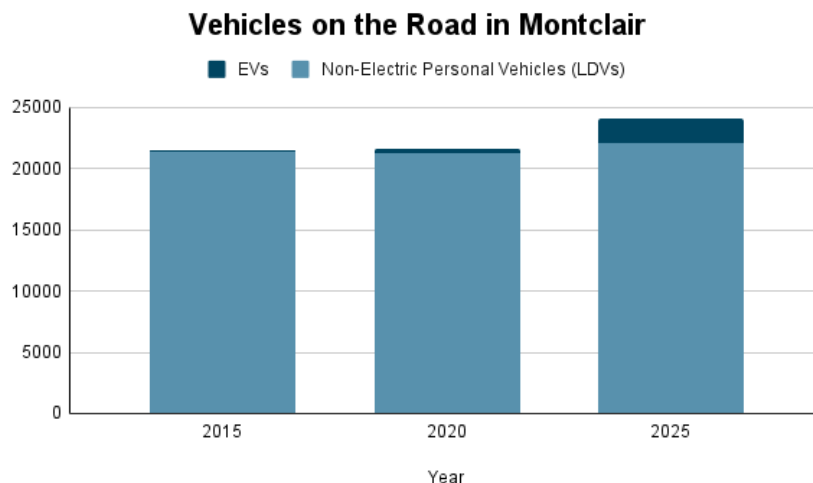


Figure 5. Vehicles on the Road in Montclair

Source: Atlas Public Policy, EvaluateNJ. Data for ZIP codes 07042 and 07043.

Next steps:

- Review the NJDCA Model Statewide Municipal EV Ordinance and adapt it for local conditions

- Establish a clear and consistent permitting process for EV charging infrastructure
 - Integrate Make-Ready and EVSE requirements into new multifamily developments and parking facilities, as appropriate
 - Submit the draft ordinance to the Planning Board for consistency review with the Master Plan
 - Advance the ordinance to the Township Council for adoption
 - Develop guidance materials for developers, property owners, and residents outlining permitting requirements and design standards
-

1.2 Train First Responders on EVs and EVSE

Description: Support training for local first responders on electric vehicles (EVs) and associated charging infrastructure (EVSE) to maintain emergency preparedness and public safety. Training should address EV-specific risks, including battery systems, charging equipment, and incident response protocols.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Fire, Police, EMS

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: Annual

Funding sources: State and federal grants and technical assistance

Obstacles/barriers: Staff time and scheduling constraints; need for ongoing training as EV technologies evolve; and coordination across departments to ensure consistent adoption of updated safety protocols.

Community notes: Montclair recognizes the importance of ensuring that first responders are prepared to safely respond to incidents involving electric vehicles and charging infrastructure. As EV adoption increases, Fire, Police, and EMS personnel must be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to address incidents involving vehicle collisions, charging equipment, and battery-related hazards.

To support this effort, the Township will coordinate with established organizations such as the New Jersey Electric Vehicles Association (NJEVA), the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), to source appropriate training programs tailored for local first responders.

Next steps:

- Identify and evaluate training programs from NJEVA, IAFF, NFPA, and other qualified providers
- Schedule and deliver recurring EV and EVSE safety training sessions for Fire, Police, and EMS personnel

- Integrate EV-related safety protocols into existing emergency response procedures and standard operating guidelines
- Evaluate training effectiveness and update materials as EV technologies and infrastructure evolve
- Explore grant, state, or federal funding opportunities and technical assistance to support ongoing training and professional development.

1.3 Train Non-Emergency Staff on EVs and EVSE

Description: Provide cross-training for non-emergency municipal staff—including code officials, inspectors, facilities staff, and other relevant personnel—on electric vehicles (EVs) and associated charging infrastructure (EVSE). Training should focus on permitting considerations, basic safety awareness, inspection protocols, and coordination with emergency services.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Communications

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Limited staff time for training; varying levels of technical familiarity among staff; and the need to update training materials as EV technologies and regulations evolve.

Community notes: Montclair is experiencing continued growth in electric vehicle adoption and charging infrastructure. As EV-related installations increase, non-emergency municipal staff - including those involved in permitting, inspections, facilities management, and public communications - will play an important role in supporting safe and consistent implementation.

Providing cross-training for municipal staff will improve internal coordination, ensure consistent application of permitting and inspection standards, and enhance the Township's ability to support residents, businesses, and developers navigating EV infrastructure requirements.

Next steps:

- Identify relevant staff roles across departments that would benefit from EV and EVSE training
- Develop or source training materials covering permitting, inspection considerations, and basic EV safety awareness
- Coordinate training sessions in partnership with utilities, State agencies, or technical organizations where appropriate
- Integrate EV-related considerations into existing staff training programs and operational procedures

- Periodically update training materials to reflect evolving technologies, codes, and best practices
-

1.4 Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicles

Description: Transition the municipal fleet by replacing existing vehicles with plug-in hybrid, battery electric, or other alternative fuel vehicles, using fleet inventory data and lifecycle analysis to inform procurement decisions. Prioritize replacements where operational needs, cost-effectiveness, and available incentives align.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Purchasing, all other departments with fleet vehicles

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2023

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: NJBPU Clean Fleets Electric Vehicle Incentive Program; NJEDA Zero-Emission Incentive Program.

Obstacles/barriers: Uncertainty regarding long-term availability of funding and incentives; departmental budget constraints; limited familiarity with EV performance and operational requirements; and organizational resistance to transitioning existing fleet practices.

Community notes: Montclair maintains an actively updated municipal fleet inventory; however, historical fleet data has not been consistently archived, limiting the ability to benchmark long-term progress. As of 2026, the Township's fleet consists of 228 heavy- and light-duty vehicles, including four fully electric vehicles and one hybrid vehicle.

Note: The municipal fleet figures presented here are based on the Township's internal 2026 fleet inventory. Table 3 reflects June 2025 NJDEP/Sustainable Jersey data and uses broader alternative-fuel vehicle classifications; therefore, totals may differ due to differences in reporting date and vehicle category.

Efforts are underway to improve fleet benchmarking and data tracking systems to establish baseline conditions for initiatives such as the Community Energy Plan and municipal greenhouse gas inventory development. The Township plans to utilize the Atlas Public Policy DRVE Fleet Analysis Tool to support data-driven fleet transition planning, identify cost-effective replacement strategies, and align with available federal and state incentive programs.

Next steps:

- Continue to expand implementation of charging stations on municipal property

- Provide training and education for department heads and staff regarding EV performance, total cost of ownership, and available incentives (see Initiatives 1.2 and 1.3)
- Utilize stacked State, federal, and utility incentives to reduce upfront vehicle costs where available
- Incorporate EV and hybrid options into standard procurement processes and replacement schedules
- Prioritize electrification of vehicles where operational requirements and infrastructure availability support transition
- Improve fleet data tracking and archiving to support benchmarking, reporting, and long-term planning

1.5 Improve Municipal Fleet Efficiency

Description: Improve the efficiency of the municipal fleet through coordinated vehicle replacement planning, preventive maintenance, and driver behavior strategies. Utilize fleet data - including vehicle age, duty cycle, fuel use, and utilization patterns - to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, optimize operations, and inform long-term fleet management decisions across all departments.

Departments involved: Sustainability, all departments with fleet vehicles, Purchasing

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: NJBPU Clean Fleets Electric Vehicle Incentive Program; NJEDA Zero-Emission Incentive Program; municipal capital funds.

Obstacles/barriers: Uncertainty regarding future funding and tax incentives; competing departmental budget priorities; limited familiarity with EV performance and lifecycle costs; organizational resistance to fleet transition; and difficulty accessing consistent fleet data and analysis tools.

Community notes: Building on the fleet inventory described in Initiative 1.4, the Township is focused on improving fleet efficiency through stronger benchmarking, data tracking, and strategic vehicle replacement. Efforts include establishing baseline data to support the Community Energy Plan and municipal carbon footprint calculations and using Atlas Public Policy's DRVE Fleet Analysis tool to guide strategic vehicle replacements. This approach will help align fleet upgrades with federal guidelines, maximize opportunities for rebates and incentives, and transition vehicles to more efficient hybrid and electric models.

Next steps:

- Develop detailed fleet inventory reporting aligned with Sustainable Jersey guidelines
 - Establish standardized criteria for vehicle replacement prioritizing efficiency, utilization, and emissions reduction
 - Improve data tracking systems to support benchmarking and long-term fleet planning
 - Update employee travel reimbursement processes to capture vehicle make, model, and year in addition to mileage to improve emissions reporting accuracy
 - Coordinate with HR and the Township Manager's Office to implement data collection updates while minimizing administrative burden
 - Explore centralized data management systems to support annual reporting, analysis, and long-term planning
-

1.6 Install Public EV Charging Infrastructure

Description: Install and expand publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, including Level 2 and DC fast chargers, along with associated signage, safety features, and accessibility improvements. Prioritize installations in locations that maximize public access, support local economic activity, and align with broader transportation and sustainability goals.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning Department

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2024

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: EECBG, Capital, state/federal incentives

Obstacles/barriers: Electrical capacity constraints and grid infrastructure limitations; coordination with utilities for interconnection and upgrades; siting challenges; and capital costs associated with installation and long-term maintenance.

Community notes: Montclair currently has a growing public electric vehicle (EV) charging network. Within a three-mile radius of the Township, there are 29 Level 2 public charging stations and 7 DC fast charging stations available for public use. EECBG funds are being utilized to support both the purchase and installation of EV chargers, alongside other funding sources such as capital funds and state or federal incentives. The Township is planning to install a DC fast charger at the Midtown Parking Deck to improve access for residents and visitors and will continue to expand public charging infrastructure as demand grows. Prioritizing chargers in business districts can expand public access while supporting local economic activity. Installations will include necessary signage, safety features, and accessibility considerations to ensure equitable and safe access. This expansion aligns with Montclair's broader sustainability goals, including reducing transportation-related emissions and supporting the transition to electric mobility.

Next steps:

- Complete installation of the DC fast charger at the Midtown Parking Deck and monitor utilization to inform future siting decisions
- Coordinate with PSE&G and other utilities to evaluate local grid capacity and identify necessary infrastructure upgrades
- Identify additional public locations for Level 2 and DC fast charger installations based on demand, accessibility, and equity considerations
- Coordinate with the Planning Department to ensure installations align with zoning, safety, and accessibility requirements
- Secure and leverage available funding sources, including EECBG, capital funds, and State and federal incentives, to support ongoing deployment
- Evaluate opportunities to integrate EV charging infrastructure into municipal facilities, parking assets, and redevelopment projects

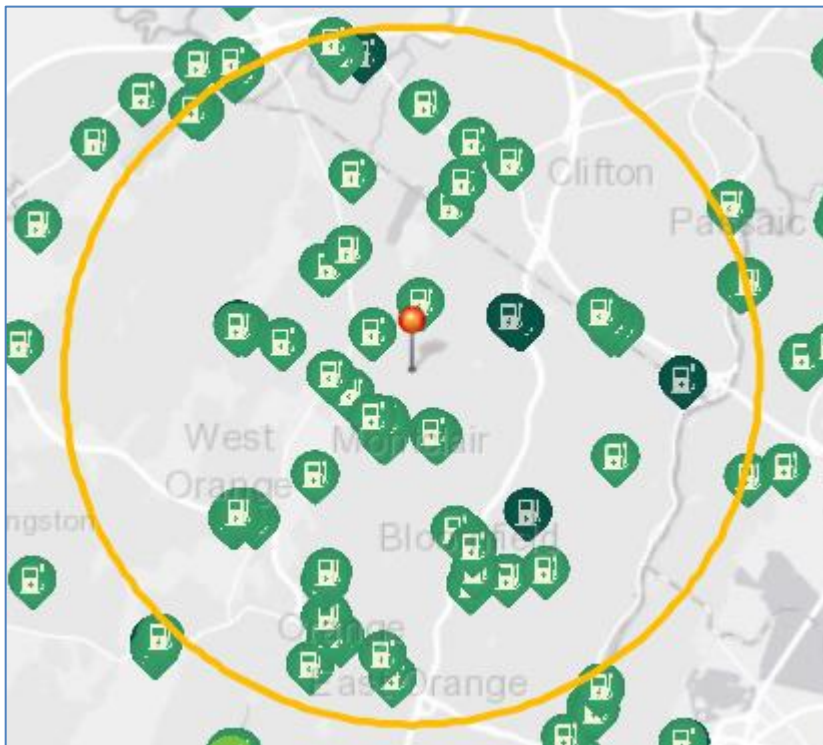


Figure 6. Public EV Charging Infrastructure in Montclair and Surrounding Municipalities.

Source: New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

1.8 Encourage Workplace & Multi-Unit Residential EV Charging Infrastructure

Description: Encourage installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure at workplaces and multi-unit residential properties through targeted outreach, technical assistance, and recognition programs. Where feasible, support adoption of Make-Ready infrastructure requirements through local policy to facilitate long-term expansion of EV charging access.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Construction

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Difficulty identifying and engaging property owners; split incentives between tenants and building owners; limited site capacity or electrical infrastructure; and competing priorities for employers and developers.

Community notes: In alignment with Montclair's CAP identified priorities, Montclair has expanded this initiative to include multi-unit residential buildings, which comprise a significant share of the Township's built infrastructure, totaling 4,285 units with five or more units (see **Figure 2**). At the State level, P.L. 2021, c. 171 establishes requirements for EV-ready infrastructure in certain new developments, including multi-unit residential buildings and parking facilities. While Montclair has not yet adopted a local Make-Ready ordinance, developers are required to comply with applicable State standards for EV charging infrastructure in new construction projects.

The Township will build on these State requirements by encouraging voluntary installation of workplace and residential EV charging through outreach and partnerships with employers, property owners, and developers. Resources such as the NJDEP Workplace Charging Toolkit provide guidance on best practices and available incentives to support implementation.

Table 5. Parking Spaces / Make-Ready or EV Charging Stations Required

Source: New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Model Statewide Municipal Electric Vehicle Ordinance / P.L. 2021, c. 171.

Number Of Parking Spaces	Number Of Make-Ready or EV Charging Stations Required
≤50	1
51-75	2
76-100	3
101-150	4
> 150	4%

The following next steps align with initiative 1.1 and support development of a Montclair-specific Make-Ready ordinance.

Next steps:

- Integrate requirements for Make-Ready infrastructure and EVSE (Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment) parking in new multifamily developments and public or private parking lots.
- Submit the draft ordinance to the Montclair Planning Board for review to ensure consistency with the Master Plan and local zoning requirements.
- Refer the ordinance to the Township Council for adoption following Planning Board review.
- Develop guidance materials for developers and property owners to ensure clarity on the permitting process and ordinance standards.
- Roll out a promotional campaign and provide information on rebates and other resources to aid implementation.

1.9 Support Shared Mobility Programs

Description: Promote and expand shared mobility and alternative transportation options, including public transit, bicycling, walking, and shared transportation services, with an emphasis on improving affordability, accessibility, and safety for low- and moderate-income residents. Encourage transportation programs and infrastructure improvements that expand mobility access, reduce reliance on personal vehicles, and support equitable transportation options throughout the community.

Departments involved: Montclair's Vision Zero Task Force, Planning, Police Department, Department of Sustainability, Senior Services/Lifelong Montclair

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: Ongoing

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: State and federal grant programs

Obstacles/barriers: Funding limitations for long-term infrastructure improvements; coordination with county and regional transportation agencies; roadway design constraints; and ensuring equitable access and participation across all neighborhoods and demographic groups.

Community notes: Montclair has a long-standing commitment to shared mobility and safe, accessible transportation options for all residents. The Township benefits from a strong network of community organizations that advocate for safer streets and alternative modes of travel and is also served by NJ Transit rail and bus service, providing residents with regional transit connections. Bike & Walk Montclair advocates for policies, programs, and street designs that

make Montclair a better place to bike, walk, and live. In addition, Montclair's Bike Bus program offers adult-led, scheduled group bike rides along designated routes and timetables to provide children in our community with safe routes to school. The program currently includes 10 routes serving Bradford, Bullock, Buzz, Edgemont, Glenfield, Hillside, Nishuane, Northeast, Renaissance, and Watchung. The Township also supports mobility for older adults through the Senior Services Department's EZ Ride program, a free car service that provides seniors with up to 20 rides per month anywhere within Montclair. To further advance street safety, the Township hired a Vision Zero Director, who convened and led a Vision Zero Task Force. The Task Force identified and mapped crash data from 2021 through 2023, analyzing high-crash and high-injury corridors to pinpoint Montclair's most dangerous streets and intersections, as well as the communities most impacted by traffic violence. Montclair's Planning Department, with assistance from the Task Force, also secured a \$400,000 Safe Streets for All federal grant to support the development of action plans and demonstration projects focused on safer street design. Communication and transparency have been strengthened through the launch of a dedicated Task Force website, social media presence, and newsletter. Significant policy and infrastructure changes have already been implemented to reduce speeding and improve safety. Speed limits have been lowered across the Township, with all Township roads now set at 25 mph and school zones reduced to 20 mph. The Township has also worked with Essex County to reduce speed limits on Upper Mountain Avenue, Valley Road, and Grove Street to 25 mph. Traffic calming measures have been installed at key locations, including new four-way stop signs at five priority intersections, restriping on Harrison Avenue to narrow travel lanes and create wider shoulders for bicyclists and pedestrians, and the installation of reflective delineators at nine locations to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety.

Next steps:

- Advance Safe Streets for All action planning and transition demonstration projects into permanent, capital-funded safety improvements
- Continue collecting and analyzing crash, speed, and injury data to evaluate existing interventions and prioritize high-risk corridors and vulnerable communities
- Expand and refine traffic calming and speed management strategies based on data and community feedback
- Coordinate with Essex County and NJ Transit to align street design, speed reductions, and safety improvements on county roads and near transit corridors
- Maintain ongoing promotion of shared mobility programs, including Bike Bus, EZ Ride, and NJ Transit rail and bus service, through Township communications, schools, community events, and local partners
- Engage residents through surveys, meetings, and targeted outreach to increase participation, identify barriers, and ensure equitable access to mobility options
- Pursue additional grant funding to support long-term implementation

Strategy 2: ACCELERATE DEPLOYMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY AND DISTRIBUTED ENERGY RESOURCES

Strategy 2 focuses on expanding the adoption of solar energy and other forms of distributed renewable generation across Montclair's municipal, residential, and commercial sectors. This strategy emphasizes removing zoning and permitting barriers to private and community solar projects, evaluating opportunities for renewable energy installations on municipal properties, and improving access to clean energy programs, particularly for low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents.

Expanding in-state renewable energy generation supports greenhouse gas emissions reductions and advances New Jersey's clean energy goals. Solar energy is the State's most readily deployable renewable resource, and declining costs, coupled with the growth of community solar programs, have increased access for residents and businesses. Sustainable Jersey data indicate that Montclair has significant solar potential, and between 2022 and 2025 the Township recorded 446 solar installations across residential, nonprofit, and commercial sectors. This existing activity provides a strong foundation for continued growth through streamlined policies and targeted outreach.

The initiatives under this strategy align with Montclair's Climate Action Plan objectives related to expanding rooftop solar, increasing participation in community solar, and increasing renewable energy use in municipal facilities. Consistent with Resolution R-25-178 and MCAP Objectives 1.11 and 1.12, the Township will prioritize actions that improve access for LMI households, including evaluating opportunities to host a community solar project on municipal property.

To lay the groundwork for rapid deployment of private and community solar, Strategy 2 advances the following initiatives:

- 2.1 Adopt Supportive Zoning and Permitting for Private Solar
- 2.2 Post Solar Permitting Checklist
- 2.3 Adopt Zoning and Permitting for Community Solar
- 2.6 Install On-Site Municipal Renewable Generation/ 2.13 Host a Community Solar Project on Municipal Property
- 2.7 Buy Renewable Electricity for Municipal Facilities
- 2.11 Support Community Solar as Project Ambassador

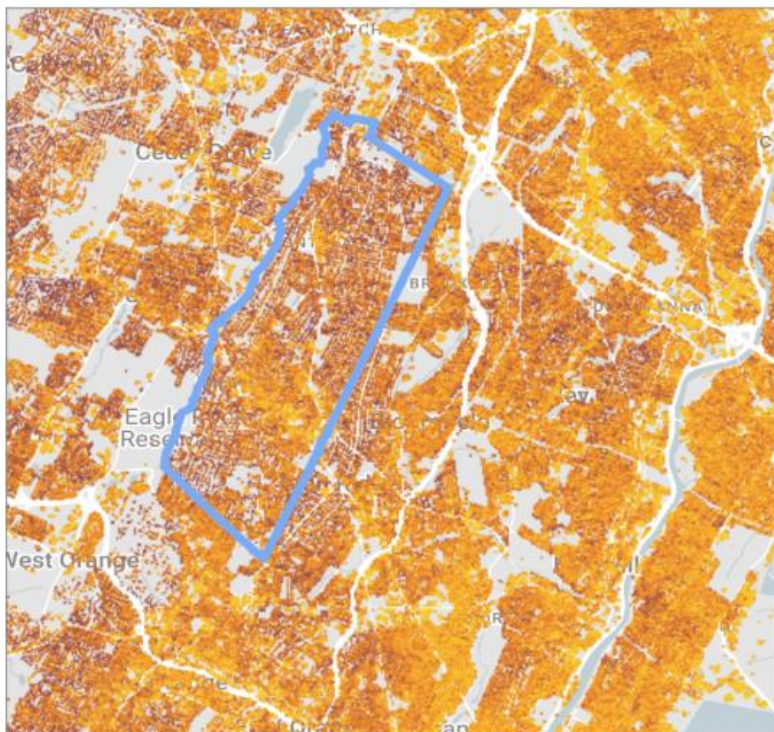


Figure 7. Solar Potential by Property. Darker shades indicate shady rooftop area and lighter shades indicate sunny rooftop area.

Source: Project Sunroof – Data Explorer

2.1 Adopt Supportive Zoning and Permitting for Private Solar

Description: While New Jersey has identified local permitting as a barrier to solar adoption, Montclair’s current process generally aligns with standard municipal requirements. However, there is an opportunity to further streamline approvals by providing clearer guidance and reducing multi-step reviews.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Building/Construction, Code

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: 6 months

Funding sources: No direct funding required

Obstacles/barriers: Potential inconsistencies in permitting interpretation; coordination across departments and review bodies; and the need to align local standards with evolving State guidance and utility interconnection requirements.

Community notes: The 2025 Sustainability and Resilience Amendment to the Master Plan includes several recommendations supporting renewable energy and energy-efficient building practices, with a particular focus on building design and rooftop utilization. Key recommendations include:

- Encouraging energy-efficient building design, siting, and operation through updated zoning standards for green buildings and infrastructure, including renewable energy systems
- Promoting alternative energy sources such as solar and geothermal to reduce reliance on the grid and improve resilience through paired solar and battery storage systems
- Encouraging or requiring high-albedo roofing materials in multifamily and non-residential development to mitigate heat absorption
- Exploring development incentives and policy tools to support green roof installations

Montclair Township is well positioned to expand rooftop solar due to available solar capacity across much of the electric distribution system. Available solar capacity refers to the ability to interconnect additional solar generation without requiring upgrades to existing infrastructure; where such capacity exists, projects are more likely to be approved quickly and at lower cost. In alignment with Master Plan recommendations and existing system capacity, the Township is well suited to pursue adoption of a solar-supportive ordinance, consistent with Sustainable Jersey's Guidance for Creating a Solar Friendly Zoning Ordinance. This would ensure that zoning and permitting standards proactively facilitate solar installation on private properties while minimizing regulatory and infrastructure barriers.



Figure 8. Solar Available Capacity. The dots represent the estimated accommodation limit for that location: ● <100 kW AC; ○ 100 to 1000 kW AC; ● >1000 kW AC
Source: FirstEnergy, Availability Capacity Map

Next steps:

- Review the Master Plan to identify and address any provisions that may unintentionally discourage solar installations
 - Draft a solar-supportive zoning and permitting ordinance for private properties based on Sustainable Jersey guidance and best practices
 - Submit the draft ordinance to the Planning Board for review to ensure consistency with the Master Plan
 - Advance the ordinance to the Township Council for adoption
 - Develop guidance materials for property owners, developers, and contractors outlining permitting requirements and review processes
 - Train municipal staff and relevant boards on updated permitting procedures and standards
-

2.2 Post Solar Permitting Checklist

Description: Develop and publish a clear, user-friendly solar permitting checklist to guide property owners, developers, and contractors through the application process. The checklist will be made easily accessible on the municipal website and periodically updated based on user feedback and changes to local regulations.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Building/Construction, Code

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Contingent upon adoption of initiative 2.1

Funding sources: No direct funding required

Obstacles/barriers: Ensuring the checklist remains current with evolving regulations and utility requirements; coordination across departments to maintain consistency; and limited staff capacity to regularly update and manage materials.

Community notes: In conjunction with Initiative 2.1, Montclair Township will adopt a solar-supportive ordinance following Sustainable Jersey's *Guidance for Creating a Solar Friendly Zoning Ordinance*. To further assist developers and streamline permitting, a solar permitting checklist will be developed and included as an appendix to the ordinance. This checklist will provide clear, accessible guidance for solar applicants and will be posted on the Township's website, with updates made as needed based on user feedback.

Next steps:

- Draft a solar permitting checklist in coordination with the Planning Department, Department of Sustainability, and Building/Construction staff

- Publish the checklist on the Township website in a clear, accessible format following adoption of the solar-supportive ordinance
- Incorporate the checklist into permitting workflows and reference it during application review to ensure consistency
- Conduct outreach to property owners, contractors, and developers regarding the checklist, ordinance requirements, and available incentives
- Establish a process for periodic review and updates to ensure alignment with ordinance standards, utility requirements, and Sustainable Jersey guidance

2.3 Adopt Zoning and Permitting for Community Solar

Description: While Montclair has limited availability of large, open sites suitable for utility-scale solar development, the Township can support community solar by ensuring that local zoning and permitting frameworks do not create unintended barriers to participation. This includes allowing community solar-related infrastructure where feasible, supporting rooftop or smaller-scale installations, and facilitating partnerships with developers and neighboring municipalities. The Township may also consider streamlining permitting processes and providing clear guidance to support community solar implementation.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Building/Construction, Code

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: February 2024

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: NJCEP

Obstacles/barriers: Limited availability of suitable land for large-scale solar installations; high tree canopy and shading across residential areas; reliance on off-site project siting.

Community notes: In February 2024, Montclair adopted R-24-034, authorizing the Township's application to the NJCEP Grant Program. In June 2025, Montclair adopted R-25-178, accepting a professional services contract with Gabel Associates to implement a Community Solar Program. Due to limited suitable land within the Township, this effort is focused on identifying and advancing community solar projects located outside of Montclair. While Montclair maintains areas of available electric system capacity, site constraints limit large-scale solar potential. These conditions reinforce the importance of community solar as a complementary strategy to expand access and support the Township's clean energy goals.

Next steps:

- Confirm sufficient eligible LMI participation to support program implementation and coordinate with Gabel Associates to identify a viable community solar developer and project.

- Complete the developer solicitation and selection process and finalize the necessary agreements for program implementation.
- Draft zoning ordinance/amendments that explicitly permit community solar and allow solar canopies and other large-scale PV installations in appropriate zones.
- Coordinate with Planning, Building, and Code to simplify and, where appropriate, expedite the permitting process for community solar installations.
- Conduct targeted outreach to potential subscribers, particularly LMI households

2.6 Install On-site Municipal Renewable Generation/ 2.13 Host a Community Solar Project on Municipal Property

2.6 / 2.13 Description: Evaluate and pursue installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on municipal properties, including parking decks and other suitable facilities, to generate renewable energy for municipal operations. Where feasible, the Township may explore opportunities to support community solar participation through municipal assets; however, given site constraints, the primary focus will be on on-site generation for municipal use.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Construction, DCS

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2024

Priority: High

Anticipated length: 1 year

Funding sources: NJCEP

Obstacles/barriers: Limited availability of suitable municipal sites for large-scale solar installations; structural and engineering constraints (e.g., parking decks); interconnection limitations; and feasibility considerations for hosting community solar projects.

Community notes: Grant funding supported a professional services contract with Harris Energy Solutions to evaluate Montclair's solar resource potential and assess municipal facilities for photovoltaic (PV) feasibility. The analysis identified opportunities for solar installation on municipal assets, particularly parking decks, with the potential to significantly offset municipal energy use.

Next steps:

- Utilize the solar resource and feasibility analysis to identify priority municipal sites for PV installation, in coordination with Planning.
- Issue RFQs to qualified developers/contractors for on-site municipal solar projects.
- Apply for NJCEP implementation grants to support project development and installation.

Table 6. Breakdown Comparing Proposed PV Layout Production to Historical on-site Consumption.
Source: Harris Energy Solutions, Montclair Solar Feasibility Report, 2025

Site	Phase	PV Estimated Production (kWh)	Historical Consumption (kWh)
DCS Building	1	93,463.8	296,553.0
DCS Building V2*	1 V2	120,475.5	296,553.0
DCS Building Expanded	2	198,729.2	296,553.0
DCS Building Expanded*	2 V2	169,684.5	296,553.0
Crescent Parking Deck	2	280,386.0	316,800.0

* Represents the DCS Rooftop Phase 1 and 2 layout with the changes due to the potential additional approx. \$66,600 funding for the project Phase 1

2.7 Buy Renewable Electricity for Municipal Facilities

Description: Buy renewable electricity for municipal facilities directly from a green energy supplier or participate in a buying pool that supplies electricity with high renewable content. The accompanying renewable energy credits (RECs) should be certified as PJM Class I.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Purchasing

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: 1 year

Funding sources: Municipal operating funds

Obstacles/barriers: Depending on energy market prices, this initiative may not be feasible. Montclair previously withdrew from the R-GEA SEA program because costs outweighed the benefits.

Community notes: Historically, Montclair has purchased electricity for municipal facilities through PSE&G, as reflected in **Figure 9**, which shows purchased electricity by sector from 2015 through 2023. According to the NJDEP, "New Jersey has one of the most ambitious Renewable Portfolio Standards in the country, requiring 35% of the energy sold in the state to come from qualifying renewable energy sources by 2025 and 50% by 2030." In alignment with these state goals, Montclair may evaluate opportunities to procure electricity with higher renewable energy content through third-party suppliers or energy aggregation programs. While renewable electricity procurement may not always result in cost savings depending on market conditions, it can support the Township's clean energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals while reducing reliance on fossil fuel-based electricity sources.

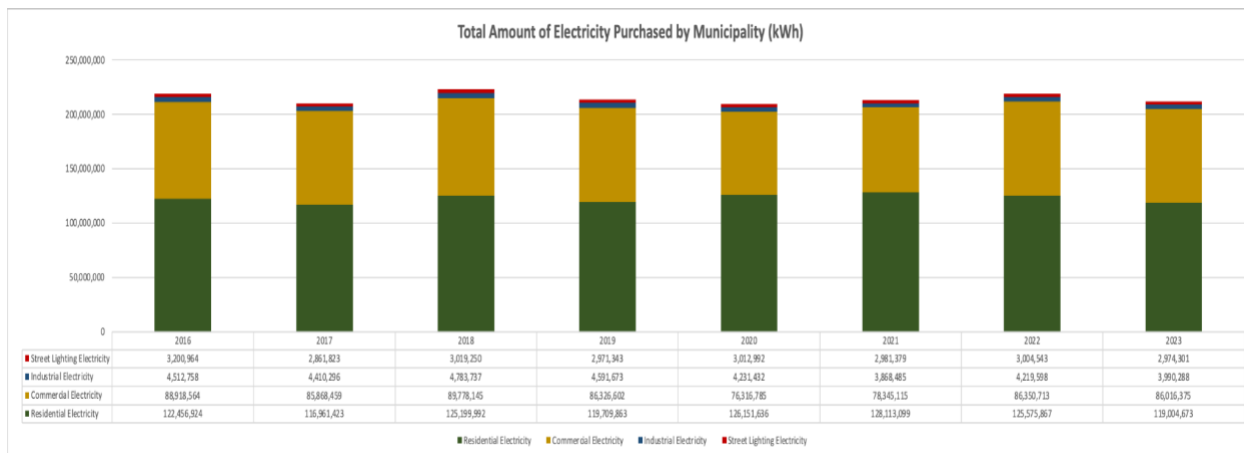


Figure 9. Amount of Electricity Purchased by Sector

Source: Sustainable Jersey, Aggregated Community-Scale Utility Energy Data. / Original source: PSE&G.

Note: electricity values represent purchased electricity and do not include customer-generated electricity, such as from rooftop solar. In 2016 and 2017, there was a reporting issue with data sourced from JCPL. No data is available, but since the municipality is a split utility, usage jumps may appear on the chart.

Next steps:

- The Department of Sustainability will coordinate with municipal leadership to evaluate renewable electricity procurement options.
- The Department of Sustainability will work with the Purchasing Department to identify aggregated energy buying pool options, particularly any pre-existing pools to expedite the process.
- If participation in an existing aggregation pool is not feasible, evaluate procurement of renewable electricity through a competitive solicitation.
- Submit the proposed electricity supply agreement and program terms to the Township Council for review and adopt any required authorizing resolution or ordinance.
 - The electricity supply contract must include renewable energy content that is at least 5% above the prevailing NJ Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) in force at the time the energy contract is executed.

2.11 Support Community Solar as Project Ambassador

Description: Facilitate connections between community solar developers and the local site owner, anchor subscribers, nonprofit sponsors, and/or affordable housing property owners. Municipalities can help build public awareness, support subscriber enrollment, and lend credibility to community solar initiatives that provide environmental and economic benefits to residents.

Departments involved: Sustainability

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2024

Priority: High

Anticipated length: 1 year

Funding sources: Selected community solar developer.

Obstacles/barriers: Reliance on off-site project development and third-party developers; ensuring sufficient low- and moderate-income (LMI) participation; subscriber outreach and enrollment; and maintaining long-term affordability and program participation.

Community notes: In June 2025, Montclair adopted R-25-178, authorizing a professional services contract with Gabel Associates to support implementation of a Community Solar Program and issuance of an RFP for community solar developers. The RFP seeks proposals to fund, install, own, operate, and maintain a photovoltaic energy system that would provide low-cost renewable energy to participating Township subscribers through a Master Performance Agreement.

Next steps:

- Evaluate proposals and select a developer using criteria that prioritize LMI participation, subscriber discounts, and long-term affordability, and finalize the Master Performance Agreement with defined LMI protections.
 - Set clear LMI participation requirements in the agreement, including reserved capacity and/or minimum bill-credit discounts.
 - Coordinate LMI-focused outreach and enrollment with the selected developer, leveraging local partners and community organizations.
 - Track and report program performance over time, including LMI enrollment levels, customer savings, and overall program outcomes.
-

Strategy 3: MAXIMIZE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION AND REDUCE PEAK DEMAND

Energy efficiency is a foundational strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, lowering energy costs, and improving long-term resilience in Montclair. Taken together, residential and commercial buildings represent a substantial share of Montclair's community-wide emissions. Residential energy use ranks second only to transportation, followed by commercial energy use. Approximately 60 percent of Montclair's homes were constructed in 1939 or earlier, contributing to higher energy use and an increased need for efficiency improvements. As shown in **Figure 3**, a substantial share of Montclair's housing stock predates modern energy codes. With approximately 15,000 occupied housing units - roughly 60 percent owner-occupied and 40 percent renter-occupied - effective energy strategies must address both homeowners and rental property owners.

Residential and multifamily buildings present the greatest opportunity for emissions reductions through energy efficiency improvements and building system upgrades. Improving insulation, air sealing, and mechanical systems, combined with the gradual adoption of high-efficiency electric appliances where feasible, can significantly reduce overall energy demand. As climate change contributes to more frequent and prolonged heat events, electricity demand - particularly for cooling - is expected to increase, reinforcing the importance of measures that reduce peak demand and dependence on fossil fuels. Some residents and businesses have already begun replacing older gas-fired heating, water heating, and cooking equipment with electric alternatives.

Montclair's urban tree canopy also contributes to energy conservation by providing shade that reduces building cooling demand and moderates neighborhood temperatures during periods of extreme heat. Maintaining and expanding tree canopy, particularly in densely developed areas with limited existing coverage, provides a passive, cost-effective complement to building energy efficiency improvements while supporting broader climate resilience goals. The Township is advancing this objective through several ongoing initiatives, including residential tree planting and distribution, individualized consultations to help residents identify appropriate species and planting locations based on site conditions, preservation and expansion of the public tree canopy, targeted planting in commercial areas and other locations with limited canopy, and implementation of grant-funded urban forestry programs. Together, these efforts support strategic tree placement, expand canopy where it is most needed, and complement building-focused energy efficiency strategies by reducing heat exposure and cooling demand at both the property and neighborhood scale.

While municipal operations account for a relatively small share of total community-wide emissions, municipal buildings play an important role in demonstrating cost-effective approaches and supporting broader community adoption. Energy efficiency upgrades, electrification where appropriate, and the procurement of renewable electricity for municipal facilities can support emissions reductions while improving building performance and controlling long-term operating costs. Programs such as the Local Government Energy Audit (LGEA)

provide a structured framework for identifying priority improvements, evaluating cost-effectiveness, and informing long-term capital planning.

Aligning with objectives 1.0-1.9 of Montclair’s Climate Action Plan, Montclair has selected the following initiatives as high priority actions under Strategy 3:

- 3.1 Upgrade Energy Efficiency in Municipal Facilities
- 3.2 Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach Campaign
- 3.3 Commercial Energy Efficiency Outreach Campaign

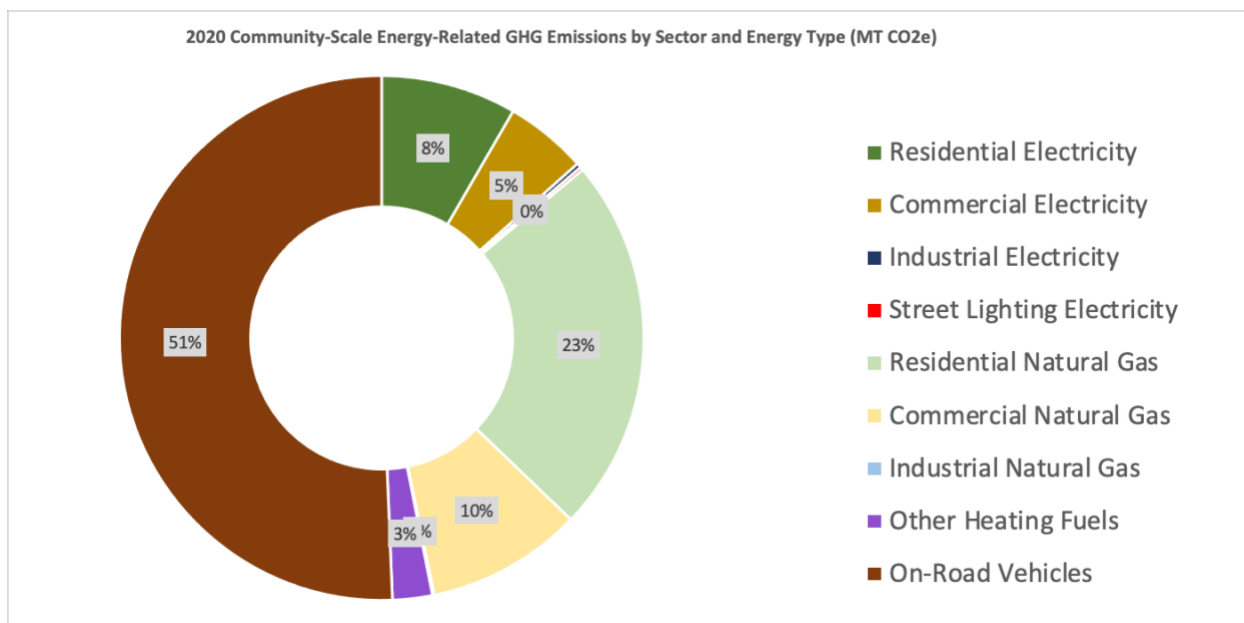


Figure 10. 2020 Community-Scale Energy-Related GHG Emissions
Source: Sustainable Jersey; U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 7. Housing and Occupancy Summary
Source: Sustainable Jersey; U.S. Census Bureau.

Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	% Occupied	% Owner-occupied	% Renter-occupied
16,053	15,118	94%	60%	40%

3.1 Upgrade Energy Efficiency in Municipal Facilities

Description: Upgrade municipal facilities to be more energy efficient, reduce operating costs, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program and regional

electric and natural gas utilities offer incentive programs that support municipalities through the upgrade process, beginning with energy audits that identify the most cost-effective opportunities to reduce energy consumption. Completed upgrades may also serve as demonstration projects to support broader community energy efficiency outreach and education efforts.

Departments involved: Sustainability, all other municipal departments

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2016

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: NJCEP/Capital funds

Obstacles/barriers: Availability of funding for implementation of recommended upgrades following completion of energy audits; competing capital priorities; and staff capacity to coordinate long-term project implementation.

Community notes: Montclair has participated in the Local Government Energy Audit (LGEA) program since 2016, reflecting a sustained commitment to improving energy efficiency and reducing operating costs in municipal facilities. Through this program, the Township receives detailed energy audits identifying cost-effective upgrade opportunities, along with guidance regarding available grants, incentives, and financing mechanisms.

In 2024 - 2025, LGEAs were completed for ten municipally owned buildings, including the Montclair Public Library and its Bellevue Avenue branch, Fire Headquarters and Fire Station No. 2, the Fullerton and Crescent parking decks, Town Hall, the Department of Community Services, Clary Anderson Arena, and the Township Animal Shelter. These audits identified opportunities to reduce energy consumption, lower utility costs, improve building performance, and support more efficient municipal operations while advancing the Township's broader emissions reduction goals.

Next steps:

- Continue participation in the LGEA program for municipally owned facilities
- Evaluate completed audits to prioritize implementation of recommended measures based on feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and emissions reduction potential
- Develop implementation plans and incorporate priority projects into long-term capital planning
- Identify and pursue grants, incentives, and financing opportunities to support recommended upgrades
- Track and document outcomes of completed improvements for inclusion in future updates to the MCEP

3.2 Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach Campaign

Description: Implement an outreach effort to help residents take advantage of energy efficiency incentive programs offered by New Jersey's electric and natural gas utilities, including Home Performance with ENERGY STAR and Comfort Partners.

Departments involved: Sustainability

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: October 2023

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G

Obstacles/barriers: Difficulty engaging landlords and property managers to promote programs within multifamily buildings; limited program capacity and delays in scheduling assessments through utility-administered programs; and challenges reaching renters, new residents, and income-eligible households.

Community notes: In 2023, Montclair was awarded a grant to support a targeted community outreach campaign promoting Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G energy efficiency programs. The Township has successfully renewed this partnership grant annually, allowing outreach efforts to continue and expand. The campaign connects residents with key resources, including free or reduced-cost home energy assessments, depending on program eligibility. These assessments provide residents with detailed recommendations regarding energy-saving improvements, rebates, and incentive opportunities that can help reduce household energy use and utility costs.

The Department of Sustainability promotes these programs year-round through community events, direct mail, and digital outreach. Grant funding supported the development of Montclair-specific materials, including community spotlight articles and targeted advertisements on local media platforms. When the Township first received the grant, approximately 5.37 percent of households had participated in the program, totaling 608 completed projects. By 2025, participation increased through continued outreach and an additional partnership with JPI to promote the Whole Home Energy Assessment (WHEA) track, resulting in 294 residents scheduling assessments during this period.

Outreach efforts included two direct mail campaigns: one in April promoting Earth Fest and offering in-person program support, and a second mailing in September/October targeting new residents. The new resident mailing alone generated 55 program sign-ups and was followed by measurable increases in campaign website traffic.

The Department of Sustainability also promotes tree planting and canopy preservation as complementary strategies for reducing residential cooling demand and improving climate resilience.

Next steps:

- Reapply annually for the Sustainable Jersey–PSE&G partnership grant to sustain long-term outreach, maintain program visibility, and build community trust.
- Expand targeted outreach to priority populations, including renters, new residents, income-eligible households, and overburdened communities.
- Continue and deepen partnerships with PSE&G, JPI, and community-based organizations, including property managers and landlords, to increase participation in the Whole Home Energy Assessment program.
- Track participation rates, referral sources, and audit completion outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach strategies and inform future program development.
- Leverage high-traffic community events such as Earth Fest to provide in-person assistance, answer resident questions, and support real-time scheduling of energy assessments.
- Periodically update Montclair-specific outreach materials to reflect current incentives and rebates and incorporate participation metrics and lessons learned into future Climate Action and Community Energy Plans.

Population	Units in Structures with 4 units or less	Total Residential Project Participation	Lifetime Participation Rate %	Total Residential Projects that Resulted in Energy Savings	Participation Rate % of Projects Resulting in Energy Savings	HPwES Project Count	Moderate Income Weatherization Total Project Count	Moderate Income Weatherization Energy Savings Project Count	Comfort Partners Total Project Count	Comfort Partners Energy Savings Project Count
39,873	11,764	213	1.80%	204	1.70%	104	16	16	93	84

Lifetime Participation in Residential Energy Efficiency Incentive Programs

Source: Sustainable Jersey. Energy Efficiency Program Participation (2017-2023) Lifetime Residential Participation Data
Original Source: New Jersey's Investor Owned Utilities, ACS 2022

3.3 Commercial Energy Efficiency Outreach Campaign

Description: Implement a targeted outreach campaign to help local businesses take advantage of commercial energy efficiency incentive programs offered through New Jersey Clean Energy Program and regional electric and natural gas utilities, including PSE&G's Direct Install Program. These programs help eligible businesses reduce energy consumption and operating costs through subsidized energy audits and equipment upgrades.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Office of Small Business Advocacy

Community Stakeholders: The Montclair Business Improvement District

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: January 2024

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G

Obstacles/barriers: Businesses leasing commercial space may be reluctant to participate when building owners control capital improvements; difficulty identifying effective outreach channels to reach business and property owners; and limited staff time among small businesses to pursue participation in energy efficiency programs.

Community notes: In 2024, Montclair was awarded a grant to support a targeted outreach campaign for local small businesses focused on Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G energy efficiency programs. Through PSE&G's Direct Install Program, eligible businesses can receive a no-cost energy audit of their facility. At the time of the grant award, approximately 9.21 percent of Montclair businesses had participated in the program, totaling 19 completed projects.

The Department of Sustainability, in partnership with the Office of Small Business Advocacy, will continue promoting these programs to increase participation. As part of the initiative, Sustainable Jersey developed a tailored webpage for Montclair business owners and produced a testimonial video featuring local participants. Outreach efforts included Montclair-specific materials distributed through business canvassing and business-district events designed to connect owners with available resources and incentives.

In commercial districts, where tree canopy is comparatively limited, the Department also promotes street-tree planting to reduce heat exposure and cooling demand.

Future outreach will incorporate targeted engagement tools, including modest participation incentives designed to encourage businesses to schedule energy audits and increase enrollment in available efficiency programs.

Next steps:

- Reapply for the Sustainable Jersey–PSE&G partnership grants to support continued outreach and long-term visibility to Montclair's business community.
- Expand district-based outreach efforts through canvassing, digital engagement, and business-focused educational events, including Lunch and Learn programs.
- Identify and compile building owner contact information to support direct engagement in cases where businesses lease their space.
- Strengthen coordination between the Department of Sustainability, the Office of Small Business Advocacy, and local business organizations to streamline outreach and increase participation
- Continue to develop and promote Montclair-specific resources for businesses, including the dedicated webpage, testimonial videos, and print materials that clearly outline program benefits and participation steps.
- Utilize business-facing events and in-person engagement opportunities to provide direct assistance and facilitate scheduling of energy assessments
- Track participation rates, referral sources, and business district engagement metrics to evaluate outreach effectiveness and inform future program development and funding applications

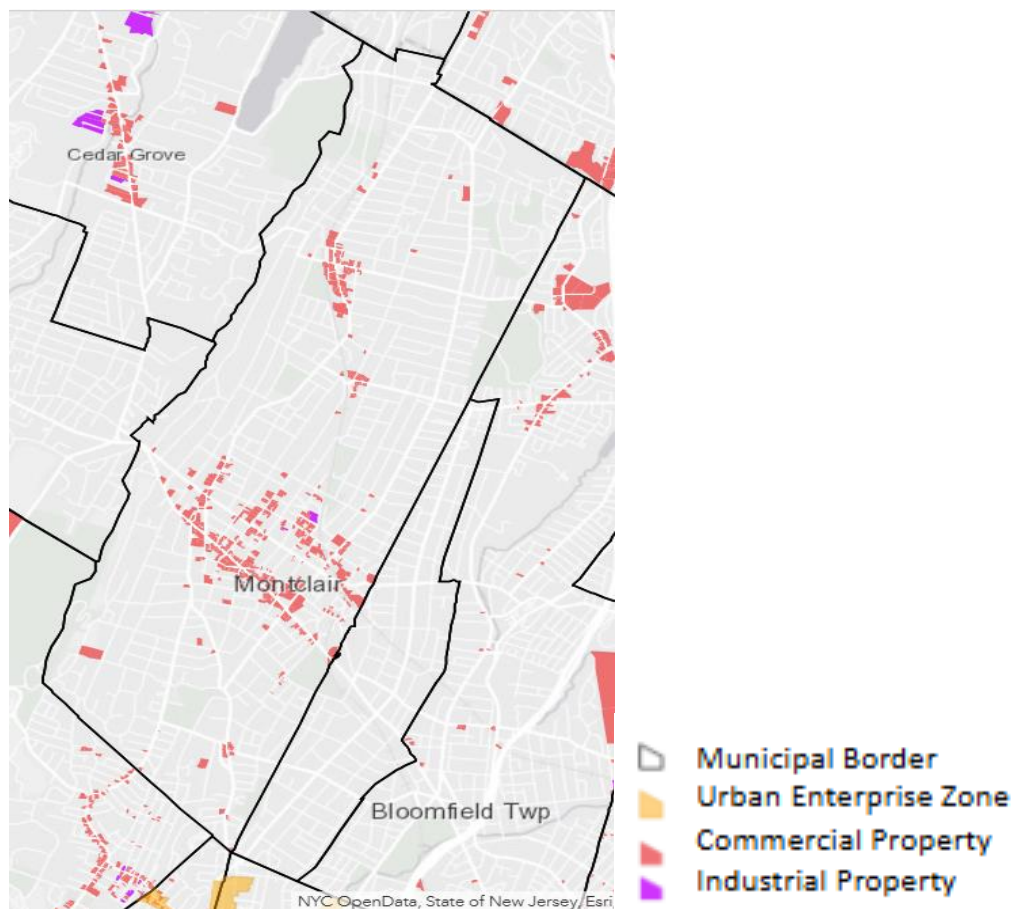


Figure 11. Commercial-property / energy-efficiency outreach map

Table 8. Commercial Energy Efficiency Participation

Lifetime Participation in Commercial Energy Efficiency Incentive Programs

C&I Taxed Parcels	Total Completed Projects	Current Lifetime Rate %
609	19	1.30%

Source: Sustainable Jersey. Lifetime Commercial Energy Efficiency Program Participation Rate (2017-2023),
Original Source: New Jersey's Investor Owned Utilities, ACS 2022

Strategy 4: REDUCE ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND EMISSIONS FROM THE BUILDING SECTOR

New construction and redevelopment present important opportunities to reduce long-term energy use and greenhouse gas emissions while improving building performance and occupant comfort. High-performance buildings reduce resource consumption, lower operating and maintenance costs, lessen demand on municipal infrastructure, and support healthier indoor environments.

Montclair has integrated green building practices into multiple redevelopment areas, reinforced by the Sustainability and Resilience Amendment to the Master Plan. Several redevelopment plans require new construction to meet recognized standards such as LEED, with emphasis on energy efficiency, renewable energy readiness, green infrastructure, and access to low-emission transportation. These policies establish a strong framework for improving building performance and reducing emissions.

This strategy builds upon existing municipal efforts by promoting energy-efficient design, benchmarking, and commissioning, and sustainable construction practices for both public and private development projects. Consistent use of green development checklists, coordination with energy efficiency and clean energy programs, and targeted education for developers, property owners, and design professionals will support continued reductions in building-related energy use while maintaining flexibility to align with evolving State standards, technologies, and incentive programs.

Initiatives under this strategy that the Township is pursuing:

- 4.1 Construct New Municipal Buildings as Model Green Buildings
- 4.2 Encourage Benchmarking and Commissioning for Existing Buildings
- 4.3 Require Developers to Complete Green Development Checklist
- 4.4 Conduct Outreach Targeting New Construction in the Community

4.1 Construct New Municipal Buildings as Model Green Buildings

Description: Encourage new municipal construction projects to incorporate high-performance green building practices and utilize applicable NJCEP New Construction Energy Efficiency incentives. Municipal projects should serve as demonstration sites for energy-efficient design, renewable energy readiness, green infrastructure, and climate resilience.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Building, Code

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: Capital and NJCEP incentives

Obstacles/barriers: Higher upfront construction costs associated with certain green building measures; competing capital improvement priorities; evolving building code and energy standards; and staff capacity required to coordinate implementation and long-term performance tracking.

Community notes: Montclair has incorporated green building and energy efficiency principles into both municipal planning efforts and redevelopment policy. The Conservation Element of the Master Plan promotes reduced energy consumption in municipal buildings and operations, goals already supported through initiatives such as LED lighting upgrades and the transition toward electric municipal fleet vehicles. The Master Plan also encourages incorporation of LEED principles and other sustainable design standards in public buildings and redevelopment projects. Green building requirements and sustainability objectives are further reinforced through the Township's Sustainability and Resilience Amendment to the Master Plan and associated redevelopment plans, including the Montclair Center Gateway Phase 1 Redevelopment Plan, Eastern Gateway Redevelopment Plan, Seymour Street Redevelopment Plan, HUMC/Mountainside Hospital Redevelopment Plan, Amended Hahne's Redevelopment Plan, and the Lackawanna Plaza Redevelopment Plan. Collectively, these policies support environmentally responsible design, energy efficiency, renewable energy readiness, green infrastructure integration, clean mobility, and climate resilience in future development projects. The next steps outlined below are consistent with the Township's pre-established Sustainability and Resilience Amendment.

Next steps:

- Reduce impervious coverage by establishing maximum impervious coverage limitations for all zoning districts.
- Encourage energy-efficient building design, renewable energy integration, and sustainable site practices through future zoning and redevelopment standards.
- Encourage using alternative energy sources, such as solar and geothermal, to help reduce reliance on the electricity grid for power. Support the use of solar power and battery storage on public and private properties to provide backup power supply.
- Amend the checklist for development applications to include green infrastructure Best Management Practices (BMP) improvements.
- Explore policies and incentives supporting green roofs, renewable energy systems, battery storage, and geothermal technologies
- Utilize municipal buildings and redevelopment projects as demonstration sites for sustainable design and climate resilience practices

4.2 Encourage Benchmarking and Commissioning for Existing Buildings

Description: Educate local building owners and property managers about the benefits of energy benchmarking and building commissioning. Promote awareness of utility and state-supported building management programs that provide benchmarking, retro-commissioning, strategic energy management, and related technical assistance services.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Building/Construction, Code, and Planning Departments

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Challenges reaching building owners and property managers through effective outreach channels; limited response rates and voluntary participation; and limited staff capacity to support ongoing education and engagement efforts.

Community notes: In Montclair, the Building/Construction, Code, and Planning Departments review all development projects, making them key points of contact for building owners and managers. Integrating information regarding benchmarking, commissioning, and energy management programs into existing permitting and review workflows provides an efficient opportunity to increase awareness of these practices and their associated benefits. Outreach efforts should prioritize practical guidance, accessible educational materials, and clear communication regarding available utility and State-supported programs to maximize participation and long-term engagement among building owners and managers.

Next steps:

- Provide targeted educational materials on benchmarking and commissioning to building owners and managers via the Building/Construction and Planning Departments, including brochures for PSE&G's Retro-Commissioning and Strategic Energy Management programs, NJCEP's Benchmarking service, and other relevant programs
- Make educational resources available through the Township website for easy access by building owners and property managers
- Track engagement and participation levels to evaluate outreach effectiveness and refine communication strategies over time
- Develop partnerships with local organizations, professional associations, and utility providers to expand program reach and participation
- Pursue grants, incentives, and technical assistance opportunities through Sustainable Jersey, utilities, and other organizations to support outreach efforts
- Utilize best practices such as direct mail, coordinated outreach campaigns, and collaborative partnerships to encourage participation

4.3 Require Developers to Complete Green Development Checklist

Description: Adopt a Green Building Policy or Resolution requiring developers to submit a completed Green Development Checklist as part of applicable site plan and redevelopment applications. The checklist should encourage consideration of sustainable site design, energy efficiency, renewable energy readiness, stormwater management, low-impact development practices, and green infrastructure. The checklist should also direct applicants to available incentives and technical assistance programs offered through New Jersey's Clean Energy Program, including Commercial and Residential New Construction Energy Efficiency programs.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Building/Construction, Code, Planning

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Concerns from applicants and the public regarding additional permitting and documentation requirements; staff capacity to administer and review checklist submissions; and the need to balance sustainability objectives with project flexibility and development feasibility.

Community notes: Montclair has incorporated sustainability and resilience principles into multiple redevelopment plans and planning documents, including the Sustainability and Resilience Amendment to the Master Plan. The Township's aging building stock, continued redevelopment activity, and diverse housing mix create important opportunities to improve long-term building performance, reduce energy consumption, and integrate sustainable design practices into future projects.

Montclair is primarily composed of single-family homes, along with a substantial number of townhomes and apartment buildings. Many older buildings, particularly those constructed prior to modern energy codes, are less energy-efficient due to poor insulation, high air infiltration, and outdated heating, cooling, and water systems. Incorporating sustainable building strategies and energy efficiency considerations into redevelopment, renovation, and new construction projects can help address high energy costs, improve indoor comfort and air quality, and support long-term environmental and public health goals.

To support environmentally responsible development, the Township requires the submission of an Environmental Assessment Form as part of all site plan applications, as adopted by O-19-029 in 2019, under Chapter 202, Land Use Procedures, Article III, § 202-29.2. The form's checklist requires developers, property owners, and project teams to evaluate sustainability considerations during project planning and design and helps align development proposals with Montclair's sustainability and resilience objectives.

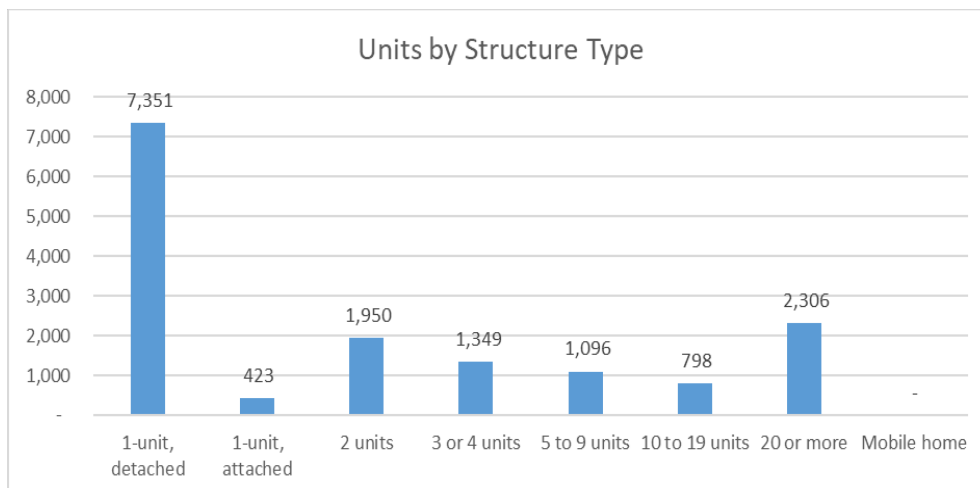
Montclair recognizes the importance of this form, as it addresses a range of ecological and sustainability considerations, including the incorporation of sustainable stormwater management

systems (such as bioswales, rain gardens, permeable surfaces, grey water systems, retention and detention facilities, and continuous trenching), as well as the use of native and well-adapted plant species in landscaping. These requirements encourage project teams to think holistically about a development's environmental footprint from the outset. To further support applicants, the Department of Sustainability provides resources on native plants and trees, linked directly on the site plan applications page, helping developers and property owners make informed, ecologically sound landscaping decisions that benefit both individual sites and the broader community.

The next steps to strengthen this initiative are in alignment with Sustainable Jersey guidelines.

Next steps:

- Streamline centralized access to site plan applications for reporting purposes.
- Evaluate current checklist and its implementation using Sustainable Jersey's Recertification Requirements Questionnaire.
- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of site plan applications submitted from 2022 through 2027 to evaluate checklist implementation and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Strengthen the checklist to align with Sustainable Jersey guidance, LEED principles, and evolving State sustainability standards.
 - Determine whether amendments to the existing ordinance are required to implement recommended checklist revisions.
- Periodically evaluate and update checklist criteria to reflect emerging sustainability best practices, technologies, and resilience strategies.



4.4 Conduct Outreach Targeting New Construction in the Community

Description: Conduct targeted outreach to developers, property owners, architects, and project teams to encourage participation in NJCEP Commercial and Residential New Construction Energy Efficiency programs. Outreach efforts should promote awareness of available

incentives, technical assistance, and energy-efficient building strategies applicable to new construction and major renovation projects.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Building/Construction, Code, and Planning

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: NJCEP incentives

Obstacles/barriers: Limited awareness of available incentive programs among developers and property owners; competing project cost and scheduling priorities; and staff capacity required to maintain consistent outreach and program coordination.

Community notes: The NJCEP offers financial incentives to support the construction of energy-efficient residential and commercial buildings. NJCEP's Commercial and Industrial New Construction Program applies to both new construction and major renovation projects, including gut rehabilitations and substantial renovations. In Montclair, the Building/Construction, Code, and Planning Departments review all development projects. Integrating information about NJCEP incentives into existing permitting, redevelopment, and approval workflows provides an effective opportunity to increase awareness of available resources and encourage incorporation of energy-efficient building strategies into future projects.

Next steps:

- Promote NJCEP new construction programs through Township social media platforms and the municipal website
 - Add NJCEP program information and links to the Land Use Board and Building Department webpages
 - Include NJCEP materials as attachments to the Green Building Checklist, development application forms, and other required submission documents
 - Encourage incorporation of NJCEP participation language into future redevelopment plans and redevelopment plan amendments
 - Coordinate with developers, architects, engineers, and property owners during the development review process to increase awareness of available incentives and technical assistance opportunities
-

Strategy 5: Support Community Energy Planning and Action with an Emphasis on Encouraging and Supporting Participation by Low- and Moderate-Income and Environmental Justice Communities

Improving access to energy efficiency and clean energy programs for low- and moderate-income (LMI) households, environmental justice communities, and residents who may face financial, language, or informational barriers is a key component of Montclair's Community Energy Plan. Many energy efficiency and clean energy measures require upfront investment or program navigation, making targeted outreach and coordinated support essential to ensure that all residents can benefit from lower energy costs, improved comfort, and improved energy resilience.

As a municipality that includes designated LMI communities, Montclair prioritizes inclusive engagement across its energy initiatives. The Township advances this objective through coordination among municipal departments and community partners to deliver targeted energy efficiency outreach to LMI households and community-serving institutions. These efforts focus on increasing awareness of available incentives, energy assistance programs, and cost-saving opportunities that help reduce household energy burden while expanding access to clean energy resources. Tree canopy expansion in LMI communities further supports these goals by reducing urban heat island effects and lowering summer cooling demand, helping ease household energy burden for LMI residents alongside direct program and outreach efforts.

Complementary transportation and mobility efforts further support equity and affordability by expanding access to safe, low-cost travel options. In Montclair, shared mobility and active transportation are supported through a combination of municipal initiatives, regional transit service, and community-based programs that provide alternatives to personal vehicle use. The Township's Vision Zero Initiative prioritizes safety, health, and equitable transportation access, while community-led programs such as Bike & Walk Montclair, the Montclair Bike Bus, and EZ Ride shuttle services expand mobility options for residents of all ages and abilities. Together, these efforts support Climate Action Plan objectives and contribute to broader community access to transportation and sustainability initiatives.

The initiatives outlined in this Plan align with CAP objectives across multiple sectors, including objectives 1.7, 1.11, 1.12, and 2.8 - 2.19:

- 5.1 Make Community Energy Planning Inclusive
- 5.2 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach to Low- and Moderate-Income Residents
- 5.4 Support Low- and Moderate-Income Community Solar Subscriptions
- 5.5 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach to Community-Serving Institutions

5.1 Make Community Energy Planning Inclusive

Description: Ensure that low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents, environmental justice communities, and other underrepresented groups are meaningfully included in community

energy planning processes. Engagement strategies may include scheduling meetings at accessible times and locations, varying meeting formats when appropriate, coordinating with community organizations that help elevate underrepresented voices, and utilizing diverse outreach methods and media platforms to encourage broad participation.

Departments involved: Sustainability, MEC, Councilors-at-Large

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2026

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Challenges engaging residents who may face time, language, transportation, or informational barriers; maintaining long-term community participation; and ensuring outreach efforts effectively reach underrepresented populations.

Community notes: As Montclair's first Community Energy Plan, establishing a strong and inclusive baseline was a priority. To engage residents and elevate diverse community perspectives, the Department of Sustainability held a stakeholder engagement session in the Council Chambers at Town Hall, in conjunction with a Montclair Environmental Commission meeting. This approach allowed the Department of Sustainability to reach residents who may not otherwise participate in energy planning processes. During the session, the Department of Sustainability presented key community data and provided an overview of the initiatives proposed for inclusion in the inaugural CEP. Community members were invited to offer feedback and share priorities related to energy affordability, access, and sustainability. Documentation of this stakeholder engagement can be found on Montclair Township's municipal YouTube page. Feedback was generally supportive, with participants emphasizing concerns regarding rising energy costs and strategies to reduce household energy consumption.

Next steps:

- Establish a regular schedule of stakeholder engagement sessions, including at least one public engagement meeting prior to each Community Energy Plan update
- Provide opportunities for residents to review implementation progress, comment on proposed plan modifications, and identify emerging community priorities
- Continue coordinating with community organizations, boards, and commissions to expand outreach and improve participation among underrepresented populations
- Utilize a combination of in-person meetings, digital outreach, and accessible communication materials to broaden public engagement opportunities
- Document stakeholder feedback and incorporate relevant recommendations into future Community Energy Plan updates and implementation efforts

5.2 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach to Low- and Moderate-Income Residents

Description: Promote State and utility energy efficiency programs for low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents through targeted outreach conducted in partnership with community-serving institutions, local organizations, and trusted community messengers. Outreach efforts should incorporate multilingual materials where appropriate and emphasize the co-benefits of energy efficiency improvements, including reduced utility costs, improved indoor comfort, health and safety benefits, and increased climate resilience.

Departments/Community Partners involved: Sustainability, Township Council, Community-Serving Institutions

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: 2023

Priority: High

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G

Obstacles/barriers: Limited awareness of available programs and incentives; financial and time constraints faced by LMI households; challenges navigating application and enrollment processes; and the need for trusted, community-based outreach to encourage participation.

Community notes: Montclair has participated for several years in outreach programming supporting residential and commercial energy efficiency initiatives through the Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G partnership program. In 2023, the Department of Sustainability received grant funding through this initiative to support targeted outreach promoting energy efficiency programs to low- and moderate-income households within the Township.

NJDEP-designated overburdened communities within Montclair were used to help identify priority outreach areas, particularly neighborhoods with higher concentrations of low- and moderate-income households and historically underserved populations (see **Figure 12**). As part of this effort, the Township conducted direct mail campaigns and partnered with community-serving institutions to participate in local events and engage residents through trusted community-based outreach.

Complementing these efforts, the Township also utilizes its Tree Removal and Replacement Fund to support targeted tree planting within these same neighborhoods. Expanded tree canopy coverage helps reduce urban heat island impacts and summer cooling demand while advancing environmental equity, climate resilience, and public health objectives.

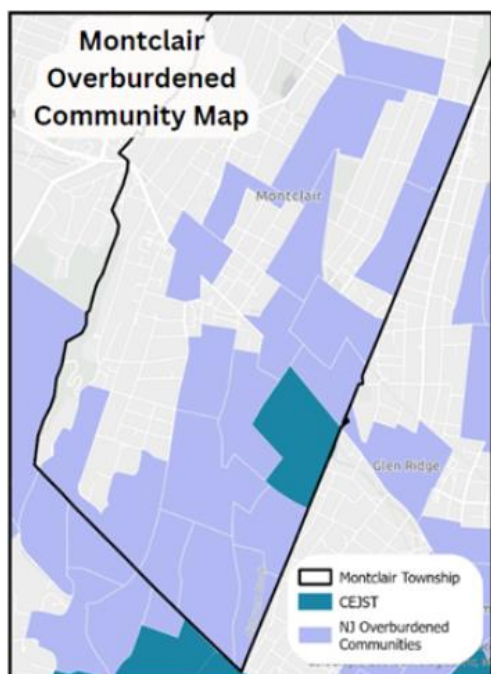


Figure 12. NJDEP Map of Montclair's Overburdened Communities.

Next steps:

- Expand outreach strategies and communication channels that directly target NJDEP-designated overburdened communities
- Reapply for Sustainable Jersey–PSE&G partnership grants to sustain long-term outreach efforts and build community awareness and trust
- Strengthen partnerships with community-serving organizations and trusted local institutions to improve program participation and engagement
- Incorporate multilingual outreach materials and culturally appropriate communication strategies where needed
- Solicit feedback from participating LMI households regarding barriers, program experiences, and opportunities for improving outreach and enrollment efforts
- Track participation and engagement metrics to inform future program design and Community Energy Plan updates

5.4 Support Low- and Moderate-Income Community Solar Subscriptions

Description: As a partner of future community solar initiatives, support participation by low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents through reserved subscription capacity, discounted subscriber rates, targeted outreach, and coordination with community partners. Community solar participation can help reduce household energy costs while expanding equitable access to renewable energy resources.

Departments involved: Sustainability

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: Contingent upon Community Solar implementation

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Ensuring sufficient LMI enrollment and long-term participation; navigating subscriber outreach and enrollment processes; dependence on third-party project development; and maintaining affordability and customer savings over time.

Community notes: The next steps below build upon those identified in Initiative 2.11 and focus specifically on LMI participation and affordability. Montclair adopted R-24-034 in February 2024, authorizing the Township's application to the NJCEP Grant Program. In June 2025, Montclair adopted R-25-178, which accepted a professional services contract with Gabel Associates to implement a Community Solar Program and issuance of an RFP for community solar developers.

The Community Solar initiative is intended to incorporate low- and moderate-income participation through an opt-out subscriber structure designed to provide direct energy cost savings to eligible residents. Consistent with New Jersey's community solar objectives, the Township intends to prioritize equitable participation and long-term affordability as part of program development and implementation.

Next steps:

- Evaluate proposals and select a developer using criteria that prioritize LMI participation, subscriber discounts, and long-term affordability
- Finalize a Master Performance Agreement incorporating defined LMI participation and consumer protection provisions
- Establish clear LMI participation requirements, including reserved subscription capacity and/or minimum bill-credit discounts
- Coordinate targeted outreach and enrollment efforts in partnership with community organizations and trusted local institutions
- Track and report program performance metrics, including LMI enrollment levels, subscriber savings, and overall program participation outcomes
- Periodically evaluate program effectiveness and identify opportunities to improve equitable participation and long-term affordability

5.5 Conduct Energy Efficiency Outreach to Community-Serving Institutions

Description: Conduct targeted outreach to community-serving institutions and organizations that support low- and moderate-income residents in order to increase awareness of State and utility energy efficiency programs. Outreach efforts should emphasize the financial, operational,

and community benefits of participation, including reduced energy costs, lower maintenance expenses, improved building performance, and increased occupant comfort and resilience. Communication strategies should be tailored to different organization types and community needs.

Departments involved: Sustainability

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: Ongoing

Priority: Medium

Anticipated length: Ongoing

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Limited staff capacity among community organizations; varying levels of awareness regarding available programs and incentives; and challenges maintaining long-term engagement and participation across diverse organizations and constituencies.

Community notes: For several years Montclair has partnered with Sustainable Jersey and PSE&G to conduct outreach for residential and commercial energy audits, including a 2023 grant awarded to the Department of Sustainability to promote energy efficiency resources to moderate- and low-income households. Using NJDEP's overburdened-community data, Montclair identified priority neighborhoods for targeted engagement. Additionally, Montclair has compiled a directory of local non-profit organizations as a project of the Non-Profit Committee of the Mayor's COVID-19 Task Force and the Kiwanis Club of Montclair. These community-serving organizations span faith, arts and culture, advocacy, education, senior services, business and housing, health and human services, and other sectors, providing established networks through which the Township can expand targeted outreach. Collaborating with community-serving organizations provides an opportunity to expand outreach through trusted local networks and improve participation among residents who may be less likely to engage through traditional government outreach efforts.

Next steps:

- Conduct outreach to community-serving organizations to identify opportunities for collaboration and coordinated energy efficiency education efforts
- Participate in community meetings, events, and outreach activities hosted by local organizations to increase awareness of available programs and incentives
- Develop outreach materials tailored to different organizational audiences and community needs
- Expand partnerships with trusted local institutions to strengthen long-term engagement and improve participation in energy efficiency and clean energy programs
- Evaluate opportunities to establish local funding mechanisms or financial assistance programs that support low- and moderate-income households pursuing energy efficiency, renewable energy, or energy storage improvements after available rebates and incentives are applied

- Explore whether future PILOT revenue allocations or other funding sources could support revolving loan, grant, or rebate programs advancing energy affordability and resilience goals
-

Strategy 6: EXPAND THE CLEAN ENERGY INNOVATION ECONOMY

Strengthening the clean energy economy includes supporting innovation, evaluating emerging technologies, and building local capacity to implement advanced energy solutions. In Montclair, this strategy focuses on assessing opportunities for resilient and distributed energy systems, monitoring regulatory developments, and preparing the policy and technical foundation needed to support future clean energy deployment.

Montclair has made progress in evaluating advanced energy solutions, including completion of a microgrid feasibility study funded by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU). The study - one of the few in the State to incorporate a transportation component - identified regulatory barriers related to required crossings of public rights-of-way, which currently limit implementation under existing rules.

In the near term, the Township will continue monitoring regulatory and market developments, evaluating opportunities for energy storage and distributed energy resources where appropriate, and coordinating future clean energy planning efforts with evolving State programs and incentives. These actions support long-term resilience, responsible electrification, improved energy system coordination, and fiscally prudent expansion of clean energy infrastructure.

Initiatives under this strategy that the Township is pursuing:

- 6.1 Adopt Energy Storage Policies
- 6.3 Develop Local Microgrid

6.1 Adopt Energy Storage Policies

Description: Develop a municipal policy and permitting framework for battery energy storage systems (BESS) that addresses appropriate siting, safety, installation, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning requirements. Provide clear guidance to applicants and ensure relevant municipal staff and land use boards are trained on applicable standards.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning, Code, Fire

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: Future

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: 1 year

Funding sources: N/A

Obstacles/barriers: Limited space available for larger-scale BESS installations; evolving safety and regulatory requirements; staff training needs; public perception and safety concerns; and integration of storage systems with solar and other distributed energy resources.

Community notes: Montclair currently does not have any policies or permitting processes specific to battery energy storage systems. Because these systems require dedicated space, they may be challenging for many commercial properties to implement; however, establishing clear policies and an implementation framework for homeowners and municipal properties would support future deployment. This initiative also aligns with Initiative 2.1 related to solar-supportive zoning and permitting.

Residential and municipal sites are more likely candidates for solar installations and can benefit from pairing solar with energy storage, allowing excess electricity generated onsite to be stored for later use. As costs have declined, residential storage has become more accessible. Paired systems can provide backup power during outages, help reduce electricity costs through load management or time-of-use programs, and may qualify for applicable federal tax incentives.

Next steps:

- Invite energy storage system developers and installers to meet with Township officials and involved departments to differentiate among BESS categories, particularly between systems used for on-site storage by residents, businesses, or municipal facilities and utility-scale systems.
- Adopt a municipal resolution or policy statement establishing the Township's strategy for community-wide battery energy storage system (BESS) development. This resolution will include direction to develop a comprehensive plan outlining the goals, policies, and framework for the installation, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of BESS. The comprehensive plan will be developed in accordance with NYSERDA's model permit and model checklist to ensure safe and consistent implementation.
- Consider adoption of a local ordinance permitting residential and municipal BESS consistent with the NYSERDA Model Law.
- Utilize available state and federal technical assistance and grant funding to support staff and land use board training.
- Coordinate with adjacent municipalities and county or regional planning agencies, where appropriate, to promote compatible approaches to BESS siting and regulation.

6.3 Develop Local Microgrid

Description: Evaluate future opportunities to advance the Town Center Distributed Energy Resource Microgrid concept based on the completed feasibility study, regulatory developments, and available funding. Reassess project feasibility if existing right-of-way and utility regulatory barriers are modified, while continuing to evaluate smaller-scale distributed energy and resilience opportunities for critical facilities.

Departments involved: Sustainability, Planning

Lead: Department of Sustainability

Start date: October 27, 2017

Priority: Low

Anticipated length: N/A

Funding sources: NJ BPU

Obstacles/barriers: Existing New Jersey utility franchise and right-of-way regulations currently limit implementation of microgrid systems requiring multiple public right-of-way crossings; additional barriers include high infrastructure costs, interconnection complexity, and long-term operational coordination among participating entities.

Community notes: In 2017, Montclair received a grant from the BPU for \$142,000 to conduct a Town Center Distributed Energy Resource Microgrid Feasibility Study. Montclair submitted a microgrid application with core partners including Hackensack UMC – Mountainside Hospital, the Montclair School District, United Methodist Communities, and New Jersey Transit. The project's critical facilities could include Montclair Fire Department headquarters (the Township's emergency management center), Mountainside Hospital, Glenfield Middle School, Pine Ridge Senior Living housing, and NJ Transit's Bay Street Station and Garage. The Montclair project was the only feasibility study approved by the BPU with a transportation component. Montclair's feasibility study evaluated approximately 2.3 MW of new power capacity that could include solar and dispatchable generation such as combined heat and power (CHP), battery storage and other new electric infrastructure to allow the proposed project to operate during normal and emergency conditions. The feasibility study prepared by the BPU found that implementing a microgrid would require crossing two rights-of-way, which is not legally permitted under current New Jersey microgrid policy. This restriction stems from existing utility franchise and regulatory laws, as reflected in the BPU's microgrid framework, which prohibit such configurations without a specific waiver or tariff provision (NJEDA).

Next steps:

- Continue monitoring regulatory developments related to microgrid implementation and public right-of-way requirements in New Jersey
 - Reevaluate project feasibility if future regulatory changes permit additional flexibility regarding right-of-way crossings and distributed energy interconnection
 - Explore smaller-scale resilience and distributed energy projects that may support critical facilities without requiring full microgrid implementation
 - Continue integrating distributed energy resource planning into future municipal resilience, emergency preparedness, and sustainability initiatives
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CONCLUSION

Montclair Township's Community Energy Plan provides a strategic framework for reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions while strengthening community resilience and expanding access to clean energy solutions. The initiatives prioritized in this Plan reflect Montclair's land-use context, municipal operations, and commitment to ensuring that the benefits of clean energy investments are shared equitably across the community.

Over the next three to five years, the Township will prioritize actions that address emissions from transportation and buildings, expand renewable energy deployment, and modernize local policies to support clean energy adoption. Initiatives such as improving municipal fleet efficiency, expanding public EV charging, upgrading energy efficiency in municipal facilities, and supporting community solar advance these goals while delivering long-term operational savings and public benefits. Policy-focused actions - including supportive zoning and permitting, standardized checklists for development review, and targeted staff training and public outreach - enable progress without requiring significant upfront capital investment and position the Township to scale future initiatives as infrastructure and capacity allow.

The CEP places strong emphasis on inclusive implementation. Targeted outreach to low- and moderate-income residents, environmental justice communities, and community-serving institutions is essential to improving access to energy efficiency programs, shared mobility options, and community solar opportunities. Integrating equity considerations across strategies supports reduced energy burdens, strengthens community engagement, and improves overall program effectiveness.

While some initiatives will require initial investment, Montclair Township is well positioned to leverage state and federal funding opportunities to offset costs and reduce financial risk. Current incentive programs, grants, and rebates present a time-sensitive opportunity to advance implementation. Early action will allow the Township to secure external funding, reduce long-term costs, and build momentum toward longer-term climate and energy objectives.

The strategies outlined in this Community Energy Plan establish a practical and adaptable pathway toward a cleaner, more efficient, and more equitable energy future for Montclair Township. Continued coordination among municipal departments, community partners, and residents will be essential to ensuring that implementation remains responsive, effective, and measurable over time.

Next Steps

Following adoption of the Community Energy Plan, the Department of Sustainability will lead coordination, benchmarking, and tracking of the actions outlined throughout the Plan. The Department will work closely with the Montclair Environmental Commission, Township Council, municipal departments, and community partners to align priorities, establish implementation timelines, and integrate initiatives into existing operational, capital planning, and policy frameworks.

As funding opportunities, grants, rebates, and utility incentives become available, Township staff and professional partners will advance applicable actions, with particular emphasis on initiatives that support Sustainable Jersey certification, greenhouse gas reduction, resilience planning, and alignment with State and utility clean energy programs.

The Township will periodically evaluate implementation progress, monitor participation and performance metrics where feasible, and update priorities as technologies, regulations, funding opportunities, and community needs evolve.