



NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**With Support from Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund  
Green Building Alliance Launches Resilient Communities Initiative in  
Meadville and Reading, Pa.**

PITTSBURGH – (July 23, 2024) – [Green Building Alliance](#) (GBA) will launch its newest program, **Resilient Communities**, in Meadville and Reading, Pa., providing both communities with a range of services to help reduce energy demand, cut utility costs, and increase energy efficiency and resiliency for the municipal buildings, commercial facilities, and nonprofit and educational institutions within each region.

The Resilient Communities program is made possible through support from the [Metropolitan Edison/Pennsylvania Electric Company Sustainable Energy Fund](#) (Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund).

Offered at no cost to participating community partners, the three-year Resilient Communities program of services will augment larger community and economic goals by enabling buildings, infrastructure, and the entire communities of Meadville and Reading to be more resilient to the effects of extreme weather and emergency events; reduce energy and water utility costs; and facilitate making each community safer, more affordable, and attractive to residents, business owners, and prospective investment.

Working with Meadville and Reading project partners, GBA will:

- Provide tailored technical support and guidance to assess opportunities for energy and water efficiency improvements in municipal buildings, saving on utility costs and freeing up dollars to be reinvested elsewhere;
- Facilitate growth of quality jobs in fields that support resiliency and energy efficiency initiatives, such as operating engineers, facilities managers, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVAC/R) technicians, electricians, and renewable energy technicians;
- Increase community vitality by reducing operational costs and improving the health and quality of small businesses, community anchor institutions, local government buildings, schools, and commercial facilities;
- Open doors to new financial resources by providing grant writing assistance to pursue community resilience and energy-efficiency funding opportunities.

“We are grateful to the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund for making this expansion of GBA’s work into the communities of Meadville and Reading possible,” says GBA COO Chris Cieslak. “By investing in building infrastructure, this project will equip both communities for energy and resource stability in the face of unforeseen emergency events and market volatility. It will also

facilitate modifications to reduce utility costs and make each community's buildings safer, more affordable and more attractive to residents, business owners, and to capital investment."

GBA will work with community partners, including Generation180 who also was awarded 2024 support under this fund. Generation180 inspires and equips K-12 schools in PA communities to adopt clean, renewable energy and improve energy reliability. With support from the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund, Generation180 offers free technical assistance to schools in PA communities interested in exploring solar energy. Schools can utilize solar energy systems with battery storage to create resilient campuses that can keep schools operating and support community needs during grid outages and extreme weather events.

"Generation180 is thrilled to work with GBA and Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund to help K-12 schools in Reading, Meadville, and throughout Pennsylvania access the benefits of clean, affordable energy," stated Shannon Crooker, Generation180 Pennsylvania Director. "There's never been a better time for schools to take advantage of the historic federal grants and incentives to install clean energy technologies that support healthy, resilient communities."

The Resilient Communities program builds on GBA's successful work in Erie, which has logged a shared utility savings of over \$17 million across 20 public-private partners since partnering with GBA. GBA provided technical guidance and support for the development of the City of Erie Central Fire Station's solar grid and battery project, allowing the fire station to serve as a community resilience hub in the event of climate disaster or grid outages. The fire station's on-site solar array produces over 100% of the station's energy needs, while battery storage guarantees uninterrupted emergency management operations during an outage. GBA has also partnered with Forest Hills Borough, which enacted a net-zero ordinance for their community. Forest Hills is leading the way for other communities by conducting wide-scale energy retrofits in its eight-property portfolio and recently completed one of Southwestern Pennsylvania's first net-zero buildings.

"We're excited to support GBA and Generation180's work to expand energy efficiency and renewable energy throughout Pennsylvania," says Davitt Woodwell, chair of the advisory committee for the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund and former president of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. "The committee wanted to drive sustainable energy solutions that will leave a positive impact on our communities and saw no better way than to make grants to two organizations that are already making huge impacts across the state."

"The City of Meadville is excited to be named a Resilient Community and for the good work that is sure to result from the partnership with GBA," says Autumn Vogel, City of Meadville Councilmember and liaison to the City's Environmental Advisory Committee. "This program will help us achieve goals set in our Climate Action Plan for a safer, healthier, more resilient Meadville. Through this partnership, we'll get much needed support to make improvements to our aging building stock, making the people of Meadville safer and more comfortable in their homes and buildings, while helping residents, community partners, and local businesses save money. It's a win-win-win. We're eager to get started and grateful for the opportunity."

"I'm very excited to partner with the Green Building Alliance. This partnership will increase our capacity and provide critical technical assistance to our community partners, businesses, schools, and our staff as we are working towards our Reading for 100 goal of 100% clean,

renewable energy by 2050,” says Reading Mayor Eddie Morán. “The City of Reading and many of our community partners have begun the transition process, and working with GBA will help facilitate and expedite a just transition. We are big fans of Erie’s success and are looking to duplicating it in Reading.”

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**About Green Building Alliance:**

Green Building Alliance (GBA) positively transforms the world through the built environment to create a sustainable, healthy, and just future for everyone. As Western Pennsylvania’s authority on sustainable design, GBA drives the market for healthy communities while equipping designers, manufacturers, developers, and policymakers to catalyze systemic change. GBA manages the largest 2030 District in North America (the Pittsburgh 2030 District), and in 2019, established Pittsburgh as the 2nd International Center of Excellence on High Performance Building in the world. GBA partners across Western Pennsylvania, with strategic alliances including the 2030 District Network, United Nations and International Living Future Institute.

**About The Metropolitan Edison/Pennsylvania Electric Company Sustainable Energy Fund**

The Sustainable Energy Funds were created as a result of electric utility deregulation and subsequent settlement agreements by Pennsylvania Electric Utilities. The funds are designed to promote the development of sustainable and renewable energy programs and clean-air technologies on both a regional and statewide basis. Two of those funds, the Metropolitan Edison Company Sustainable Energy Fund of [Berks County Community Foundation](#) (Met-Ed Sustainable Energy Fund) and the Pennsylvania Electric Company Sustainable Energy Fund of the [Community Foundation for the Alleghenies](#) (Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund), began distributing money in the form of grants, loans, and equity investments for a variety of projects within the territories originally served by the two electric companies. The two funds share an advisory committee and are commonly referred to in the singular as the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund. Since inception in 2000, the Met-Ed/Penelec Sustainable Energy Fund has approved 279 grants totaling \$7,209,518; 51 loans totaling \$25,161,087; and three equity investments totaling \$1,600,000. Total funding since inception is more than \$33.9 million.