

# COOK COUNTY: EQUITABLE SUSTAINABILITY

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# DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

## MISSION AND SCOPE

**Regulatory functions are 85% of the Depts. staffing and a larger % of the budget**

To foster healthy, resilient and thriving communities by improving the quality of life, protecting the natural environment, and promoting sustainability and environmental justice for all Cook County residents and stakeholders.

Inspect and Permit (Suburbs)

Monitor Air Quality across the County for US-EPA/IL-EPA.

Enhance Sustainability of County government operations, and County communities.



# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY 2022 SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY PERMITS ISSUED

8,759 Air Certificate  
of Operations -  
Commercial &  
Industrial Businesses

1,971 Asbestos  
Removal

1,620 Demolition

131  
Open Burn  
and Other

185 Equipment  
Registration

185 Solid Waste  
Facilities

171 Recycling  
Facilities

5,000 to 8,000  
Inspections per Year



# CLEAN ENERGY PLAN: WALKING THE TALK

President Preckwinkle announced new goals for County-owned facilities in this 2020 Plan, implemented by Bureau of Asset Management and Department of Environment & Sustainability

A reduction in carbon emissions by **45%** by **2030**



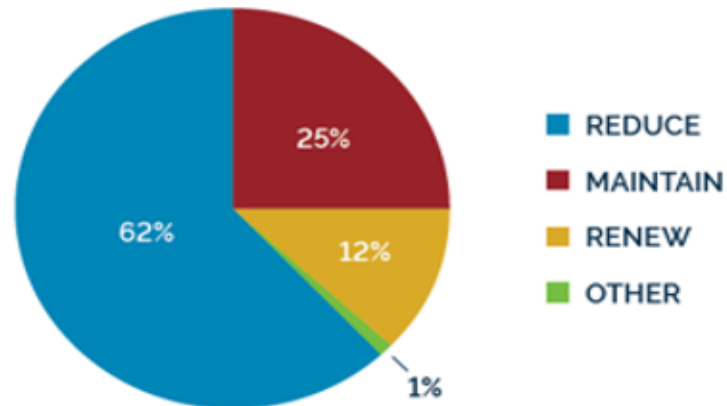
Achieving carbon neutrality by **2050**



**100%** renewable electricity by **2030**



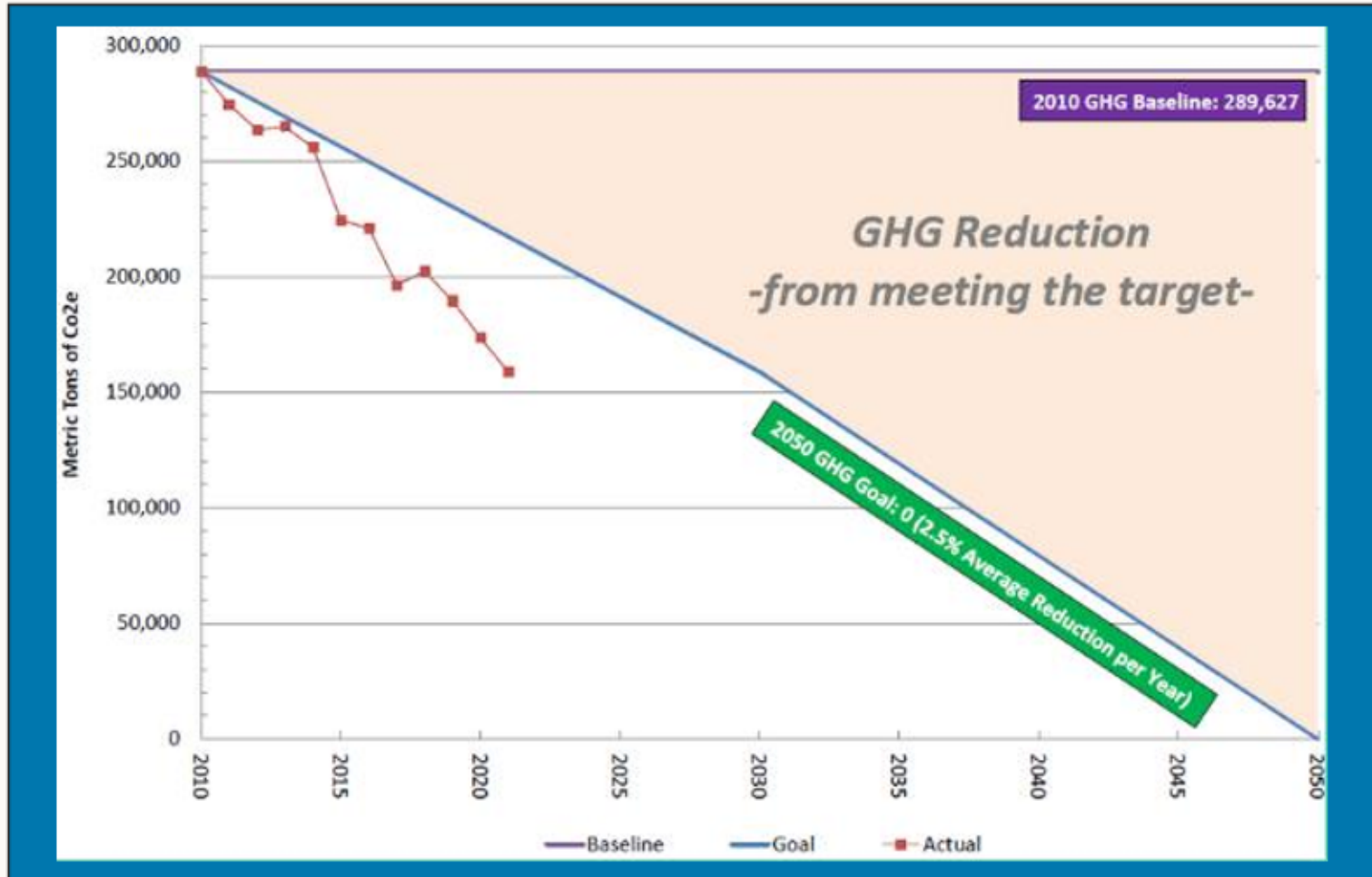
ESTIMATED IMPACT TOWARD CARBON NEUTRAL






# COOK COUNTY AHEAD OF ITS GOALS, PRIMARILY DUE TO ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS IN EXISTING BUILDINGS

County Building GHG Reductions and the 2050 GHG Goal



Sustainability ([cookcountyiil.gov](http://cookcountyiil.gov))



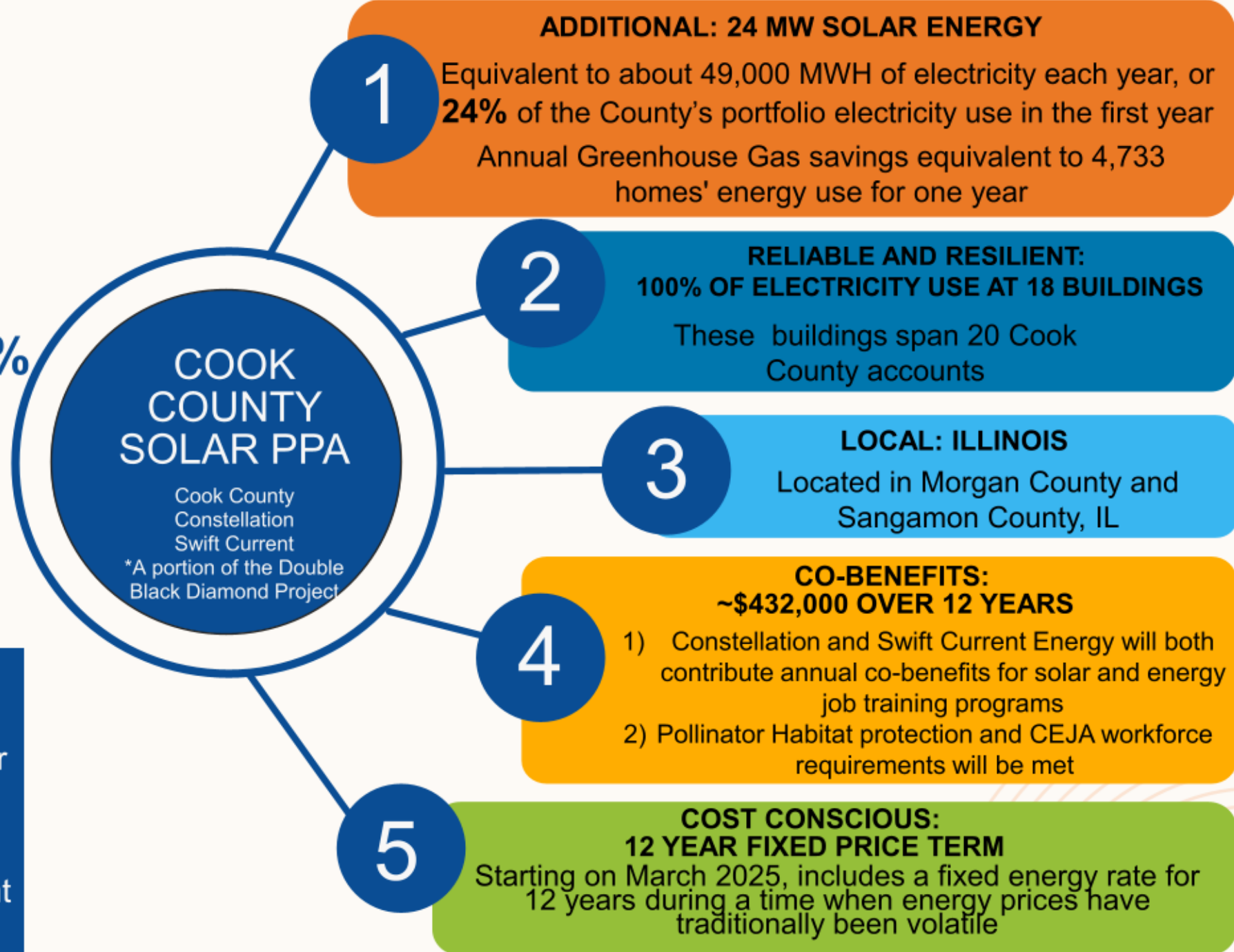
**COUNTY BUILDING  
GHG EMISSIONS**

↓ **9%**  
FROM 2020 TO 2021

↓ **45%**  
SINCE 2010

**Cook County has signed its first off-site renewable energy supply agreement, which will cover about 24% of its building portfolio electricity use starting in March 2025.**

- Cook County's First Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for renewable energy is part of a broader transaction with Constellation and Swift Current Energy.



# Policy Roadmap



Cook County uses an equity lens to guide its allocations to **promote racial equity and sustainable impacts** across the county.

## Equity

Cook County announced its **Racial Equity Policy** and **Racial Equity Action Plan** to ensure equity is operationalized through Cook County Offices Under the President. The policy defines equity as it relates to the formulation of policy, updating policy and the tangible delivery of government services and resources.





# CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT ARE EQUITY ISSUES FOR COOK COUNTY

Flooding disproportionately impacts communities of color – but payouts are less because of lower home prices

Low income residents spend 3 times more of their income on energy

10 mostly south suburbs do not have municipal curbside recycling services

African Americans are 75% more likely than Whites to be negatively impacted by pollution

Most EV Charging Stations are in the Loop, north or northwest



# OVER \$130M IN INVESTMENTS FROM COOK COUNTY'S \$1.1B IN AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS IN EQUITABLE SUSTAINABILITY

- Invest in Cook Expansion (transportation)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- Lead Pipe Removal at Vera Yates Homes and Richard Flowers Homes (Housing Authority of Cook County)
- Lead, Leaking and Obsolete Service Line Replacement Pilot Program
- RainReady Plan Implementation
- Stormwater Management Project



Smart Communities



Sustainable Communities

- Neighborhood Revitalization Brownfield Remediation
- South Suburban Hazardous Household Waste Facility and Satellite Collection Locations
- Businesses Reducing Impact on the Environment (BRITE) Fund
- Healthy Homes for Healthy Families
- Implementing the Southeast Cook County Land Acquisition Plan (Forest Preserve District of Cook County)
- Riparian Restoration (Forest Preserve District of Cook County)
- Climate Resiliency Planning for Communities Program
- Resilience Hubs
- Cook County Sun and Save

- Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund
- Capacity-Building Investments in Food Access Sites
- Good Food Purchasing Program (Cook County Department of Public Health)
- Urban Farming Initiative Gap Analysis



Healthy Communities



Vital Communities

- The Cook County Water Affordability Program
- Community Conservation Corps (Forest Preserve District of Cook County)

Emergency Operations Planning



Safe and Thriving Communities



# DES SUPPORTS COOK COUNTY COMMUNITIES & RESIDENTS: SAMPLE PROJECTS

Climate Resiliency Planning for Communities

Support 5 suburban communities to develop community-centered Climate Resiliency Plans and initial implementation

Businesses Reducing Impact on the Environment (BRITE)

Reduce pollution from business through free technical assessments to 1) identify pollution reduction opportunities and 2) determine implementation costs and savings. Provide grant funding for implementation to qualified businesses.

EV Charging Stations

Install up to 75 public charging stations including a mix of dual port Level 2 charging stations (5 within the Forest Preserves), DC Fast Chargers and Level 2 dual port Streetlight chargers in charging deserts in suburban Cook County

Healthy Homes for Healthy Families

Create healthier, safer, more efficient homes for residents most in need through whole-home assessments and upgrades to remove and remediate hazards, improve air quality, energy efficiency, water conservation, and reduce utility bills when feasible.

Municipal Recycling & HHW

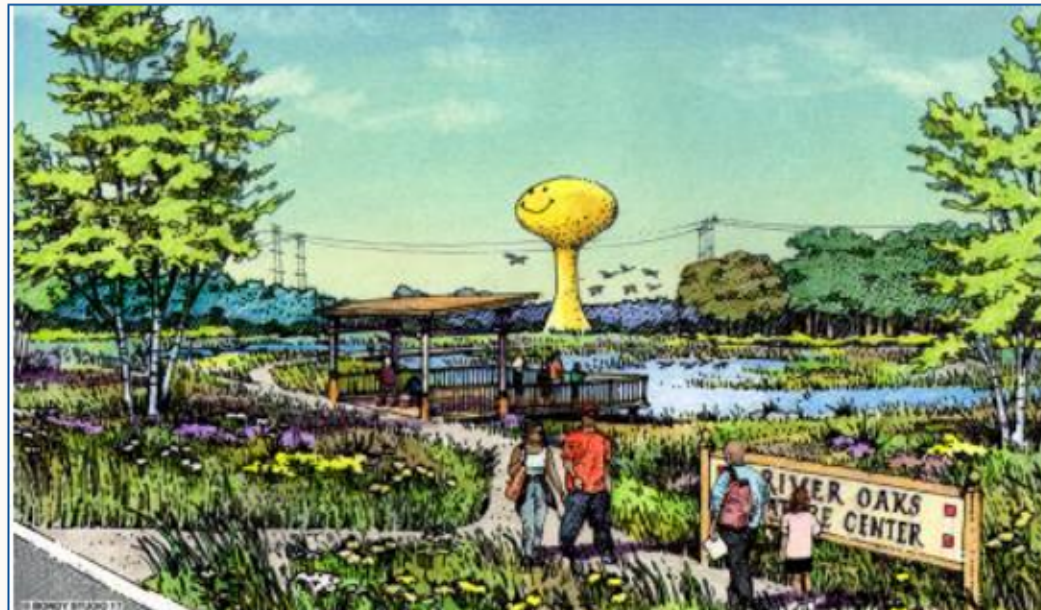
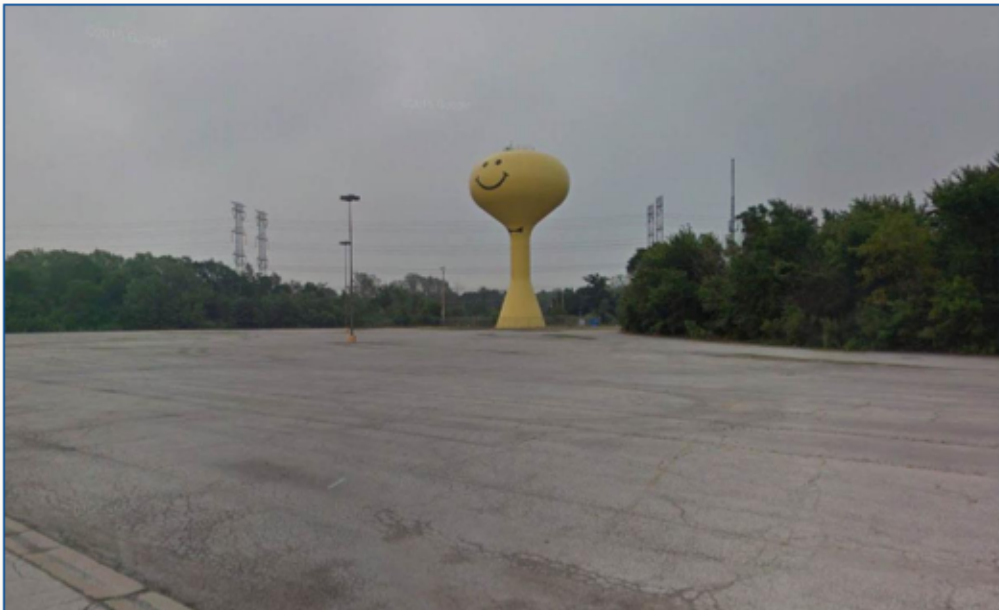
Improve South Suburban recycling and diversion rates and provide residents of the South Suburbs necessary education, outreach, programming, and infrastructure





# RAINREADY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- RainReady plans were developed in 2016 with six communities in the Calumet Corridor: Blue Island, Calumet City, Calumet Park, Dolton, Riverdale, and Robbins
  - Community-centered engagement to identify possible projects and priorities that will reduce negative impacts of flooding, better manage stormwater, and create green spaces
  - Completed by Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) with funding from Cook County CDBG funds
- Funding support will re-visit plans with communities, evaluate progress and priorities, and implement recommendations
- CNT identified as Subrecipient



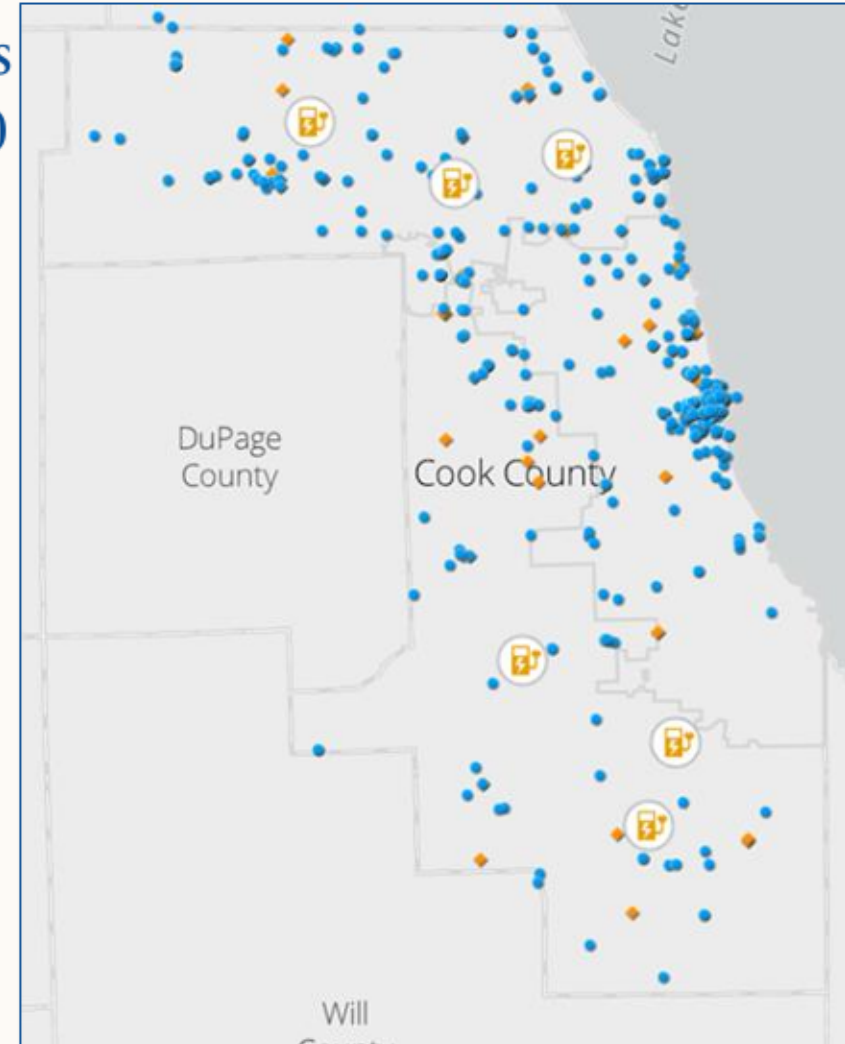


# ARPA: EV CHARGING STATIONS

Program Goal: Install 55 dual port Level 2 charging stations (5 within the Forest Preserves), 10 DC Fast Chargers, and 10 Level 2 dual port Streetlight chargers in charging deserts in suburban Cook County

Prioritize:

- Areas with no public EV chargers (charging deserts)
- Under-resourced communities
- Higher prevalence of multifamily dwelling units where there is no garage or off-street parking for charging
- COVID-19 Impacted areas that can benefit the most from air quality improvements



# MUNICIPAL RECYCLING & HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE<sup>13</sup>



**Why:** Many municipalities in Southland offer no recycling; nearest Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) recycling/disposal facility is located on Division St. in Chicago, approximately 19 miles from the south suburbs.



Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM Center) opened with partner South Suburban College (SSC)

Will accept electronics, styrofoam, clothing/textiles as well as general recycling – expect over 100 tons/year

County is funding a Sustainability Coordinator at SSC to manage the center, involve students, and provide technical assistance to municipalities in waste contracting

Permanent HHW facility scheduled to open Fall 2025 in S. Suburbs.



10/18/2023





# BROWNFIELD PROGRAM



## Success Stories: Former Gas Station Site, Bellwood



- 4901 and 4905 St. Charles Road in Bellwood
- Assessed and remediated between 2016 and 2022
- Significant excavation and disposal of petroleum-impacted soil
- Redeveloped with two single-family homes by Village of Bellwood
- USEPA Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) dollars used



# BROWNFIELD PROGRAM

- In 2022, ARPA funding allowed us to expand the program to form the *Neighborhood Revitalization Brownfield Remediation Program*
- Since September 2022, assessment and/or remediation initiated at 26 sites; nearly 70 properties nominated
- Property owners must not be responsible for causing contamination, must provide legal property access. Program is open to municipalities and private entities.
- For eligible properties, services at no cost:
  - Environmental assessment (Phase I ESA, Phase II ESA)
  - Asbestos and lead testing
  - Structure demolition
  - Contamination cleanup
  - IEPA reporting in pursuit of case closure



# BUSINESSES REDUCING IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT (BRITE)

16

**Program Goal:** Reduce pollution from business through free technical assessments to 1) identify pollution reduction opportunities and 2) determine implementation costs and savings. Provide grant funding for implementation to qualified businesses.

**Why:** Black Americans are 75% more likely than White Americans to live in communities negatively impacted by industry emissions. Non-Hispanic Black Americans are 40% more likely to have asthma than non-Hispanic White Americans.





# INITIAL FOCUS



Dry cleaners, autobody and auto repair shops, metal finishers, and food and beverage manufacturers.



Large environmental footprint



Primary focus of US EPA



Many are located in vulnerable areas throughout the County



# BRITE PROGRAM AND GRANT ELIGIBILITY

- Located in suburban Cook County
- No more than 500 full-time employees
- In operation prior to January 1, 2020
- Experienced negative economic impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrated by proof of revenue loss
- To receive grant support, must demonstrate that grants will be used to improve business practices identified through the pollution prevention technical assessment

For any questions about eligibility, please email [BRITE@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:BRITE@cookcountyil.gov).





# BRITE PROGRAM WORK FLOW



**SIGN UP FOR A FREE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT.**  
[Click here to complete the interest survey.](#)



# EXAMPLE CHECKLIST ITEMS

Use climate friendly refrigerant management.

Install strip or air curtains or automatic door closers for cooled rooms.

## ENERGY

Food and Beverage  
Manufacturers

Recover waste heat and water.

Use high pressure spray nozzles with automatic shutoff for cleaning.

## WATER

Brewery

Mechanically clean parts where possible to minimize use of acids.

Substitute less toxic chemicals for plating and cleaning.

## TOXICS

Metal Finishers

Replace PERC with professional wet cleaning or hydrocarbon machines.

Enroll customers in reusable hanger program.

## WASTE

Dry Cleaners

# AFTER THE ASSESSMENT



Our engineers will provide a full report on the business and the Top 5 recommended investments to save money, energy, and protect your community



This recommendation includes the cost of the upgrades and opportunities to fund it



The engineers will walk you through both the report and grant opportunities to help the business make the improvements



The engineer will follow-up after the installments as well to assess the impact of the equipment

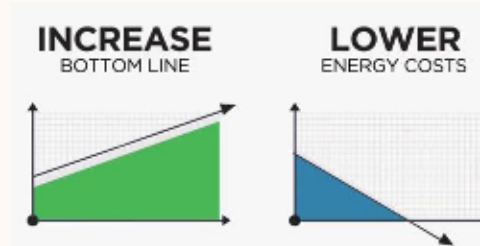
\*[Cook County Small Business Source](#) directly connects small business owners with expert guidance and support to take businesses to the next level.



# COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY (CPACE)

- Low-cost, long-term (20-30 years) financing for energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, and resiliency projects in commercial buildings
- Up to 100% upfront financing from private capital providers for upgrades such as HVAC, lighting and solar photovoltaic systems, and more, in existing buildings and new construction
- Annual utility savings are generally greater than the annual C-PACE repayments, positive cash flow from day one
- Offered by Bureau of Economic Development, created with DES

Clean Energy (CPACE) Program ([cookcountyl.gov](http://cookcountyl.gov))



Wilder Fields  
Hydroponics  
(above)  
Ramova Theater  
revitalization (left)



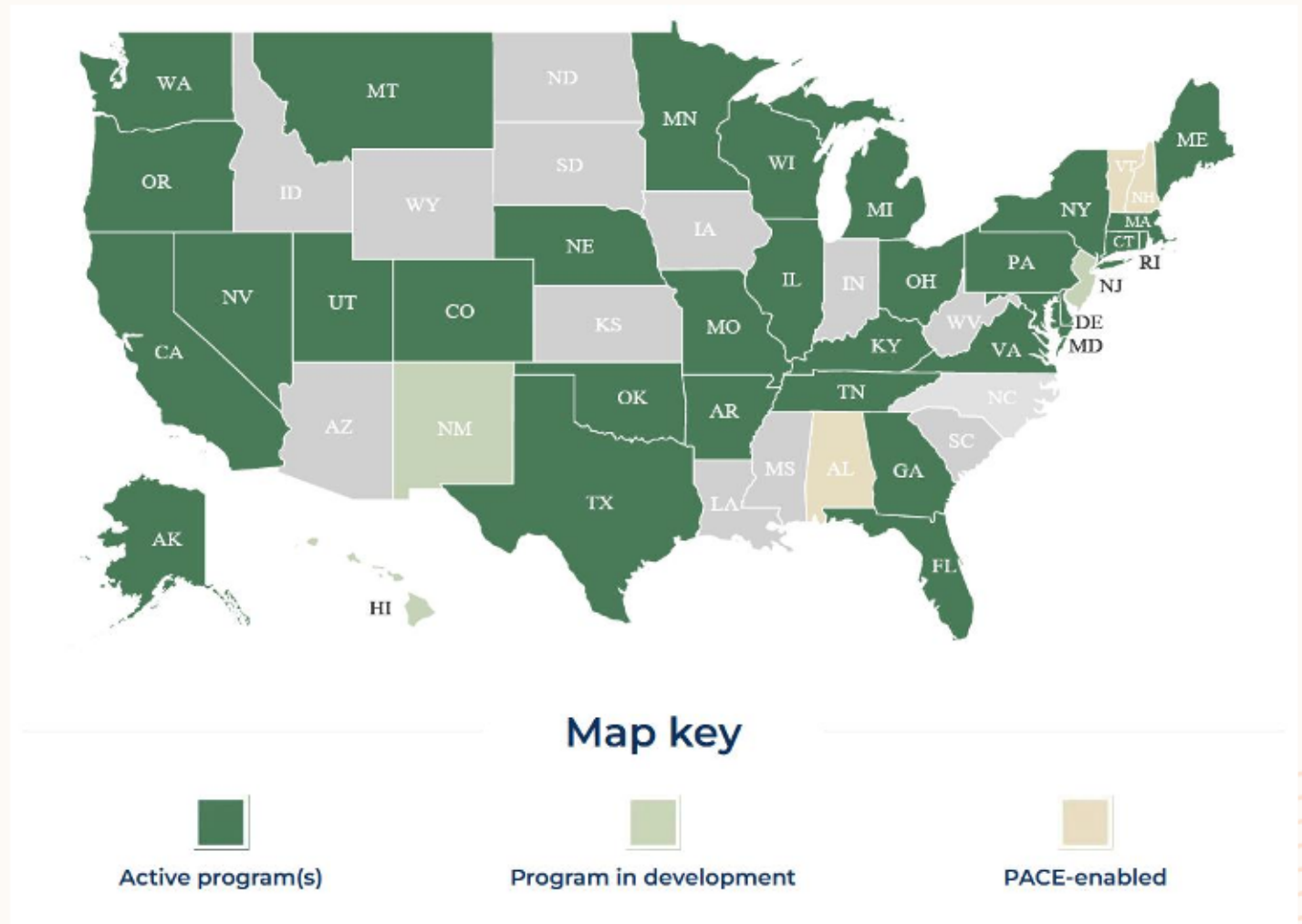


**C-PACE is enabled in 38 states and D.C.**

**Active programs in over 32 states.**

**C-PACE Activity (2011-22):**

- \*Over \$5.2 Billion financed
- \*Over 3,100 Projects completed
- \*approx. 65,000 Jobs created

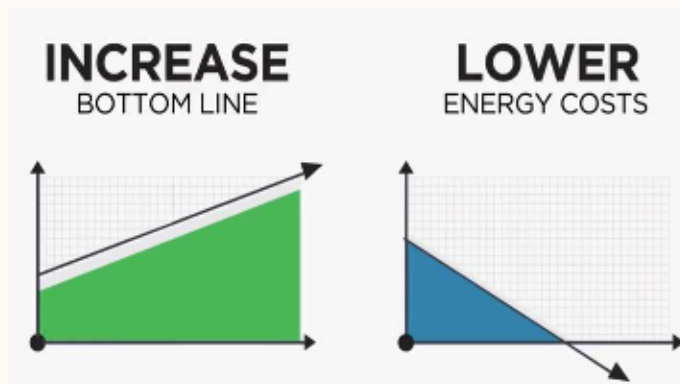


Information made available by:



# Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE)

- Assist commercial property owners with financing:
  - Energy Efficiency Projects
  - Water Use Improvements
  - Renewable Energy Installations
  - Resiliency Improvements
  - Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
- Authorizes voluntary assessment contracts that secure C-PACE financings for eligible projects (the Illinois PACE Act, 50 ILCS 50/1 et. Seq)
- Assessments “run with land” and do not accelerate, nor become due on sale of the property.
- C-PACE projects are funded with private capital and repaid on the property tax bill.



## Why PACE?

### Property Owner Perspective



- ✔ Finance up to 100% of eligible costs
  - ✔ No personal guarantees
  - ✔ Frees up equity for other priorities
- ✔ Fixed rate, long-term: up to 20 – 30 years
  - ✔ Yields positive cash flow
  - ✔ Boost Property Value
- ✔ Lien runs with property & transfers to new owner upon sale
- ✔ Tenants may share cost & savings
- ✔ Potential off-balance sheet treatment
- ✔ Reduce waste & improve experience





## Commercial Properties \*



OFFICE



INDUSTRIAL



MULTIFAMILY



RETAIL



HEALTHCARE



HOSPITALITY



NONPROFIT



AGRICULTURAL



MIXED USE

## Project Types

- Renovations
- Equipment Installation
- New Construction
- Adaptive Reuse
- Refinance

*\* Does NOT work for residential (1-4 units) and government owned properties*



# Eligible Improvements



## Energy & Water Efficiency

- Lighting Systems
- Building Controls
- Building Envelope Improvements
- Furnaces, Boilers & Chillers
- Heat Pumps
- Pumps, Motors & Variable Speed Drives
- Low flow fixtures
- Heat Recovery
- Fuel Switching



## Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

- Level 2 charging stations
- DC Fast Chargers



## Resiliency

- Flood mitigation
- Wind resistance
- Micro-grids -energy storage & backup systems



## Renewable Energy

- Solar PV
- Battery Storage
- Biofuel
- Wind
- Geothermal



## Water Use - Purification

- Water recycling systems
- Stormwater management
- Bioretention, green roofs, cisterns & porous pavement
- Lead pipe abatement





## **Financing Terms (Set by the Market)**

- Loan Term: 5 – 30 years (Full Amortization)
- Interest Rate: Market Rate
- Loan Size: \$50,000 - \$50.0 Million
- PACE Loan-to-Value (LTV): 5%-25%
- Pre-payable



## **Statutory & IECA Program Requirements**

- Maximum PACE LTV: 25%
- Energy Project Assessments
- Term limited to useful life of equipment
- Security: Assessment Contract
- Mortgage Lender must consent to PACE Financing
- Registered Contractors



# The IECA

## Illinois Energy Conservation Authority, NFP (IECA)

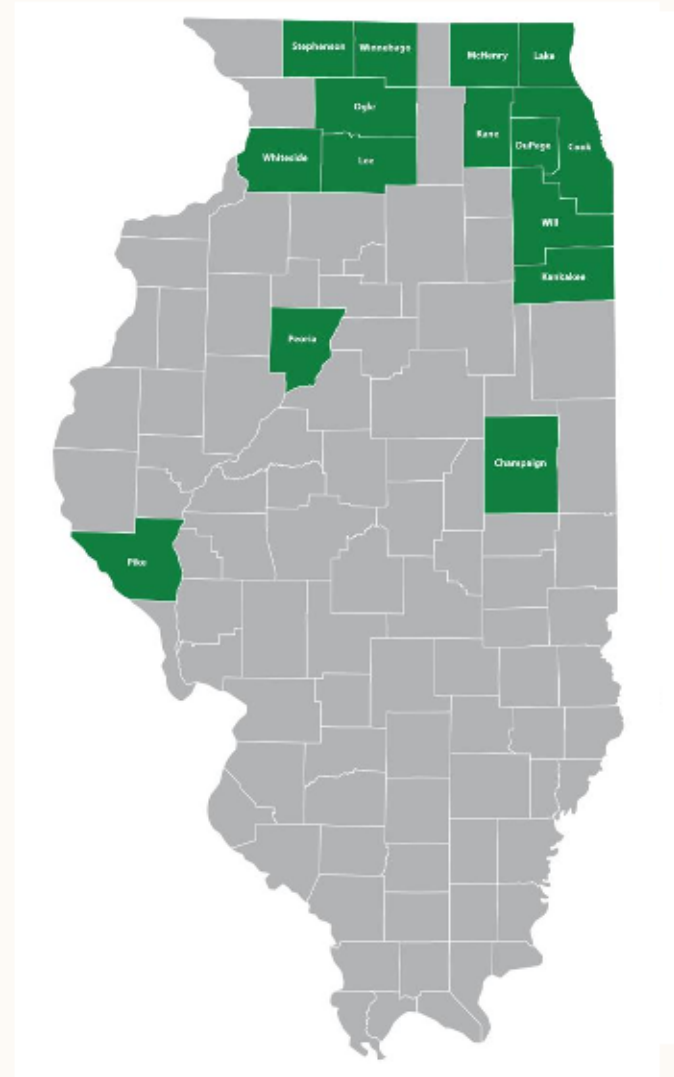
- Illinois 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation
- Program Administrator
- National PACE Program Expertise

### C-PACE is enabled and active in 15 IL Counties (to date 2023):

Champaign  
Cook  
DuPage

Kane  
Kankakee  
Lake  
Lee

McHenry  
Ogle  
Peoria  
Pike  
Stephenson  
Whiteside  
Will  
Winnebago





# *SUSTAINABILITY ISN'T A THING WE DO. IT'S A WAY WE DO THINGS*

## USE EXISTING POWER IN NEW WAYS

Public health, tax collection, capital projects, procurement, etc. can all be used to make our communities more sustainable

## NEW WAYS OF SERVING COMMUNITIES

Build Up Cook will address lack of capital capacity in hardest-hit suburbs, focusing first on water infrastructure

## NEW WAYS OF SHAPING EXISTING PROGRAMS

Environmental Justice Policy “lens” on programs, policies and investments





# COOK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

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