



Indianapolis Office of Sustainability Receives Equity Capacity Building Funding for Thriving Buildings Program

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Paid focus groups and questionnaires will lead to better understanding of community needs for the energy benchmarking program Thriving Buildings.

INDIANAPOLIS – The Indianapolis Office of Sustainability today announced that new funding from the American Cities Climate Challenge Equity Capacity Building Fund will allow project staff to better integrate equity considerations into the future of the Thriving Buildings benchmarking program. The program will contract local consultant Engaging Solutions to seek paid feedback from community members who own buildings or businesses, and/or who may be interested in benchmarking their energy and water usage. The project work will involve consultations with interested parties from the most economically and socially marginalized areas of the city, where questions or challenges regarding program compliance and reporting requirements are likely to be most acutely felt.

“By benchmarking their utility data, local businesses will have a unique opportunity to serve as a community leaders in sustainability,” said Mayor Joe Hogsett. “Through participation in Thriving Buildings, organizations can identify ways to save money on utility costs while improving air quality for Indianapolis residents—helping us create a more competitive, livable, and resilient city. This new funding will allow us to increase participation and improve program experience.”

Buildings in Indianapolis account for 66% of community-wide greenhouse gas emissions. Maximizing the efficiency of how buildings use energy and water is a critical step in efforts to ensure that Indianapolis is a resilient and competitive community. In collaboration with stakeholders from across the city, the Office of Sustainability developed a local Benchmarking and Transparency Ordinance passed by the Indianapolis City-County Council in July of 2021. In March of 2022, Thriving Buildings was officially launched. Now, with additional funding from the Equity Capacity Building Fund via Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Indianapolis Office of Sustainability can extend the positive impact of this program across the city in collaboration with Engaging Solutions and the Public Policy Institute.

“Engaging Solutions is extremely excited to be a part of the monumental work happening in the city within the Office of Sustainability,” said the Chief Strategist for Engaging Solutions Kelli Lester. “The integration of diverse voices into the future of the benchmarking program through the Equity Capacity Fund will allow communities of color to actively participate in shaping city programming where we may have historically been left out of the discussion. This effort will also bring awareness around climate-related issues and mitigation strategies that ensure sustainability.”

Building owners interested in participating in focus groups or questionnaires can sign up [here](#) or email benchmarking@indy.gov. For more information about the Thriving Buildings energy benchmarking program, click [here](#).



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