

# IMPROVING BUILDING PERFORMANCE: HARNESSING MARKET FORCES TO SAVE ENERGY AND DRIVE INVESTMENT IN EXISTING BUILDINGS



## THE GOALS

1. **Save Money** – Lower operational energy costs for New Orleans’ building owners and tenants
2. **Create Local Jobs** – Support growth of the energy efficiency industry in New Orleans
3. **Protect Our Health** – Reduce harmful pollution by using less energy
4. **Lead the Nation** – Promote New Orleans’ position as a leading sustainable city to attract new businesses and succeed in the global marketplace

## THE OPPORTUNITY

In New Orleans, building emissions make up 61% of the city’s total emissions, the largest of any sector. Reducing energy and water use in our built environment could provide, by 2030, **\$278 million in utility bill savings, \$59 million in air quality benefits, 81 billion gallons of water savings, 1,500 new jobs, and 33% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.**

The first step to reaping these rewards is obtaining consistent and accurate building data. Building energy and water information benefits many groups:

- Building owners and managers can use the data to make informed decisions on how to improve energy use
- Prospective building tenants can make leasing decisions based on a full understanding of their potential energy costs and environmental impact
- High quality and consistent data on building performance allows energy efficiency programs to target rebates and incentives to buildings where there is the most potential for savings

## THE SOLUTION

### **PROVIDE THE MARKETPLACE WITH CURRENT, ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT BUILDING ENERGY AND WATER PERFORMANCE AND REQUIRE COMMONSENSE ACTION ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY OPPORTUNITIES**

The City of New Orleans has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2030. To accomplish this goal, increased energy efficiency activity in buildings is critical. Benchmarking and transparency, which provides the marketplace with consistent, accurate information about how buildings are performing across the county, as well as periodic audits and retuning, which can identify and spark action on commonsense energy efficiency opportunities, are essential components of New Orleans’s plan.

- **WHAT: A Building Performance Ordinance to Create Information and Drive Action.** New Orleans’s proposed Building Performance Ordinance requires (1) that large commercial and residential buildings **use a free benchmarking tool called ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager** to assess energy performance of buildings compared to similar buildings; (2) that critical information derived from the benchmarking efforts **is made public to drive greater awareness and valuation of building efficiency in the marketplace;** and (3) that low-performing buildings periodically take advantage of commonsense energy efficiency opportunities such as energy audits and building retuning measures to improve performance over time.
- **HOW: Benchmarking Is Easy and Beneficial.** The ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager tool is **simple to use, free,** and provides **standardized and easily understood information** by which building performance can be compared.
- **WHY: Knowledge is Power.** Tracking data through Portfolio Manager helps drive energy efficiency improvements. In a study of 35,000 buildings that used the tool to benchmark energy performance from 2008 to 2011, **average energy use declined by an impressive 7 percent.**
- **WHY NOW: Saves Money While Growing the Economy and Protecting Our Community.** Buildings often discover that they can cut energy use by 20 to 30 percent with very short payback periods. Across the buildings that would be subject to the ordinance, this level of energy savings means **big money and a big impact to our economy, environment, and public health.**

**SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:**

**ENGINEERING AND  
ENERGY SERVICES**

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
ORGANIZATIONS**

**PROFESSIONAL  
ASSOCIATIONS**

**PUBLIC INTEREST  
COMMUNITY**

**REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY**

**LABOR INTERESTS**

**ARCHITECTURE FIRMS**

**HEALTH INDUSTRY**