

Village of Oak Park Building Assessments and Energy Efficiency Education for Tenants & Landlords



Scope of Work

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

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Project Performance Period:

May 15, 2025 – May 14, 2026

Introduction

As of June 2023, buildings at or above 10,000 square feet in the Village of Oak Park must benchmark their energy usage with the Village annually. Benchmarking utility data provides an opportunity for building owners and managers to review their energy usage annually, tracking increases or reductions over the years. The Village would like to increase the number of buildings reporting and engage them in energy reduction opportunities, aligning with their goal to reduce commercial, residential, and/or industrial energy use annually. Because building owners are reporting energy data, there is an opportunity to promote energy reduction and efficiency to those reporting and provide education that can help more building owners connect to the benchmarking program.

Building owners and managers, as well as tenants, are often interested in energy efficiency, but frequently do not know where to begin and have limited time and resources to invest in evaluating potential opportunities. There are many programs and incentives available for commercial, residential, and/or industrial property owners and tenants, but awareness of these opportunities is low and often are not pursued when an energy-related project is implemented. Additionally, tenants of commercial, residential, and/or industrial spaces contribute to a building's overall usage, but the split incentive between a tenant and building landlord or owner can be challenging to navigate.

Energy assessments and education can help businesses identify, implement, track, and measure sustainable business practices. Assessments can also help building owners and tenants plan and document their sustainability efforts, reporting progress to key stakeholders or customers. Through the Village, buildings and tenants can also be recognized for their energy reduction and partnership, encouraging other businesses to join and adopt green practices.

Objective

The University will work with the Village of Oak Park to provide energy assessments and develop tenant/landlord energy efficiency educational materials for commercial, residential, and/or industrial properties within the Oak Park community. Through an application process, we will assess 5 diverse building types to investigate common energy efficiency measures for these properties. Based on our assessment findings, we will develop educational sessions for landlords and building tenants around key energy efficiency and tenant-landlord collaboration topics. Our intention is to help the Village connect with more building owners and tenants, while encouraging how energy benchmarking can help building owners/landlords reduce utility costs and use.

Tasks

Task 1: Energy Assessments

The University will provide energy assessments to 5 commercial, residential, and/or industrial buildings that have applied for an assessment or have been recruited by the Village of Oak Park. We will work with building landlords and tenants to investigate common energy efficiency measures for commercial, residential, and/or industrial properties. The Village of Oak Park will be responsible for recruiting

identified buildings from the benchmarking program to receive energy assessments. We will provide additional outreach and engagement support as needed to meet our target number of assessments.

Energy assessments will include:

- Utility benchmarking: review of electric and natural gas data.
- An in-person assessment: Each building will receive an in-person assessment to identify energy efficiency opportunities for both building owners and tenants.
- An energy assessment report: Reports will be delivered for each participant outlining energy efficiency recommendations, cost and environmental savings, and resources to implement recommendations.

Task 2: Building Owner and Tenant Energy Education Events

Based on energy assessment findings, the University will develop energy education events for landlords and building tenants around key energy efficiency and tenant-landlord collaboration topics. We will deliver 4 educational events (in-person workshops, webinars, and/or listening sessions) focusing on connecting commercial, residential, and/or industrial property tenants and property owners around energy reduction and efficiency topics. The events will be an opportunity to bring building owners and tenants together to network around energy efficiency opportunities and identify how they can collaborate. It will also increase conversations with building owners and managers around energy topics with the Village.

The University will work with the Village of Oak Park to identify energy-related topics for the education events. A priority topic will be discussing split incentive opportunities when applying energy efficient projects to commercial, residential, and/or industrial properties. Additional topics will be based on energy assessment findings, but may also include utility incentives and programs, right-sizing building equipment, or renewable energy and electrification. We will also highlight business successes and engagement strategies during each session. We will record the educational events and make them available for later viewing.

Task 3: Project Summary Report

The University will provide a summary report of activities completed under Task 1 and Task 2. The report will provide a summary of energy assessments and educational session outcomes. The report will also recommend future commercial, residential, and/or industrial building energy efficiency and green business support opportunities for the Village of Oak Park to develop beyond the project period.

Deliverables

- Task 1: Complete energy assessments with comprehensive reports for 5 buildings.
- Task 2: Four (4) energy education events.
- Task 3: One (1) final performance report with a summary of project activities, work products, and program recommendations.

Timeline

- May/June 2025: Project kick-off meeting; energy benchmark data analysis
- June/July 2025: Building assessments begin.
- July 2025: First energy educational session.
- November 2025: Second energy educational session.
- February 2026: Third energy educational session.
- March 2026: Completion of building energy assessments and assessment reports.
- April 2026: Final energy educational session.
- May 31, 2026: Program and assessment summary submitted to the Village of Oak Park