



CITY OF ITHACA
108 East Green Street, Ithaca, New York 14850-5690
MAYOR'S OFFICE



TOWN OF ITHACA
215 North Tioga Street, Ithaca, NY 14850
OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR

For information contact:
Nick Goldsmith
Sustainability Coordinator
ngoldsmith@town.ithaca.ny.us
Cell: 917-270-1683

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CITY AND TOWN OF ITHACA TO STUDY GREEN BUILDING POLICIES
WITH NATIONAL AND LOCAL GRANT FUNDING

Ithaca, NY - The City of Ithaca and the Town of Ithaca, New York are pleased to announce that they have been awarded grant funding for a collaborative project that will set the stage for the creation, adoption, and implementation of green building policies. The project, titled *Building for Energy Efficiency: Developing New Construction Standards for Ithaca*, will involve conducting a comprehensive examination of policy tools that Ithaca can use to incentivize or mandate green building standards for new commercial and residential construction.

“This project is extremely important. Over half of Ithaca’s greenhouse gas emissions come from our buildings, so if we’re going to meet our goal of reducing emissions 80% by 2050, it’s critical we address buildings,” says Nick Goldsmith, Sustainability Coordinator for the City and the Town. “It’s also a very timely project given the local building boom, and the increasing pressure we are getting from our residents to address efficiency in buildings. It is my hope that this project will pave the way for adopting green building policies in both the City and the Town.”

The 10-month project will involve four major activities. A Community Advisory Committee will be convened, ensuring that a diverse array of voices is represented throughout the project. Funding is set aside to provide stipends on an as-needed basis, to better enable low-income community members to participate on the committee. A report will be produced that provides an overview of the existing building stock and forecasts future development scenarios in both the City and the Town. The heart of the project is the green building policy feasibility study, which will examine policy tools that Ithaca can use to incentivize or mandate green building standards for both residential and commercial buildings. A major component of the feasibility study will be a thorough examination of the potential social impacts of the policies, and the implications for equity. The final component of the project is an education and outreach campaign to share information about, and solicit feedback on, the various building energy standards and policies being studied. This work will help to assess and increase the level of support for the policies, support which will be critical in preparation for policy development and adoption in the future. A contract position will be created to oversee the project; the contractor will work out of City Hall, but will coordinate with both Ithaca municipalities.

Funding is being provided by Partners for Places - a project of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. Partners for Places is a successful matching grant program that improves U.S. and Canadian communities by building partnerships between local government sustainability leaders and place-based foundations.

“From helping low-income households benefit from solar energy to preparing coastal cities for climate change, Partners for Places brings together city officials with local funders to develop some really dynamic sustainability projects,” said Arturo Garcia-Costas, the New York Community Trust’s program officer for the environment. “This kind of collaboration can form the lasting relationships that help create vibrant, thriving communities.”

Partners for Places awarded \$51,970 to Ithaca, which was matched by the local partner, Park Foundation, for a total award amount of \$103,940.

“We encouraged the City to apply for this grant,” stated Jon Jensen, Executive Director of Park Foundation, “the project is a great fit with our Sustainable Ithaca grantmaking program, which supports efforts to increase the energy efficiency of buildings in Tompkins County.”

“We have been working for years to make our city more walkable by increasing density and promoting mixed-use development,” said City of Ithaca Mayor, Svante Myrick, “I am excited by the idea of enacting green building standards for new construction to make our future development even more sustainable. We are grateful to Partners for Places and to the Park Foundation for granting us this important opportunity.”

To stay up to date on this project and other sustainability initiatives, sign up for the Ithaca Sustainability monthly e-newsletter at <http://tinyurl.com/IS-subscribe>, or visit the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/IthacaSustainability.

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