

Indianapolis Carbon Mitigation Report

In 2008, Mayor Greg Ballard challenged Indianapolis to become “the most sustainable city in the Midwest” and set up the Office of Sustainability. As per usual, Indianapolis holds its own unique conception of sustainability. One that is best explained by the following vision statement: “Indianapolis residents will live in a city with easy access to mass transit, bikeways, and trails, and a healthy urban environment absent of harmful air pollutants.”

Future sustainability actions should focus on increasing the city’s accessibility and avoiding the release of harmful air pollutants. This report identifies three policies—Transit-oriented development, energy efficiency programming, and combined heat and power—that align with the vision statement and that could significantly reduce the city’s carbon emissions under proper management and planning.

The Hestia Project’s visualization and quantification of the hourly fossil fuel carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions for all road segments and buildings in Indianapolis acts as the report’s main point of reference. This data source can support and complement economic and social policy analyses with targeting carbon intensive buildings and roads for mitigation. Most importantly, this model can provide benchmarking services to help the city keep track of its carbon emissions and meet reduction goals that it may set.

With Indianapolis serving as a pilot city for the STAR Communities Rating System, a partnership between Hestia and the stakeholders involved in the two policy sessions on Monday, April 20th can grow into a potential climate change advisory group for the city. We discussed information presented in the attached 20-page report and future action points to ensure future collaboration with the 30 stakeholders who attended the policy sessions.

Any questions of the work conducted in Indianapolis and future plans can be directed to
Ryan Anderson, rcanders2@gmail.com.