



## Abstract

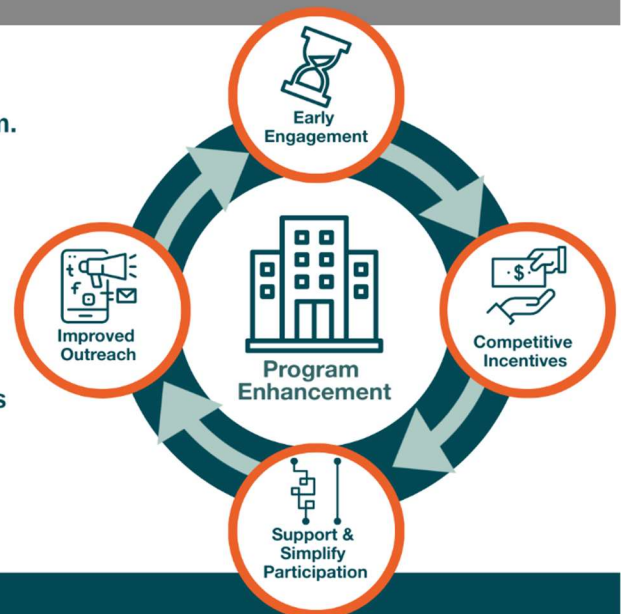
This report details the findings of a process evaluation of Rhode Island Energy's Commercial and Industrial (C&I) New Construction Program. The Program provides incentives and technical assistance to Rhode Island C&I customers to improve the efficiency of their new or renovated buildings or new equipment. To learn about the Program's current design, operations, and incentive levels, as well as customers' experiences with the Program, the evaluation team talked with participating and non-participating customers and design teams that completed projects during 2022 or 2023. The team also completed a targeted literature review to compare the Program's incentives and structure to similar programs in other states.

## Evaluation Objectives

- 1 | Investigate ways to engage early in the project development process, helping the Program drive deeper savings.
- 2 | Identify ways to better assist customers and design teams with decision-making related to energy efficiency.
- 3 | Understand why some design teams do not routinely work with the Program and explore ways to get them engaged.
- 4 | Benchmark the Program's incentives against peer programs to explore whether the incentive model should evolve.
- 5 | Examine ways to maximize the budget allocation to incentives by reducing other project costs.
- 6 | Identify additional opportunities to streamline the process and better align it with customer and developer needs.
- 7 | Explore how the Program has evolved since decoupling from the related program offered in Massachusetts.

## Key Findings

- Participating customers are generally satisfied with the Program.
- Early engagement with the Program drives deeper energy savings; gaps in program awareness limit early engagement.
- Continuing to simplify the Program's design and requirements will support future program participation and satisfaction.
- Customers would like the Program to simplify the detailed sequence of project steps and requirements.
- Project designers would benefit from more support and process streamlining.
- Documenting program processes and focusing on staff development would support future program success.



## Recommendations



Promote program awareness and education to drive early project engagement and deeper savings.



Use strategies to support customers and design teams with decision-making.



Encourage design team engagement with the program through supportive program features, education, and incentives.



Consider increasing incentive levels and/or revising incentive structures.



Review, streamline, and document program processes and requirements.