

Executive Summary

In 2014, the Mayor's Office of New York City (NYC) released "*One City: Built to Last*", an elaborate plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80 percent from 2005 levels by the year 2050. One of the plan's major strategies, the Retrofit Accelerator, focuses on coordinated outreach and assistance to encourage private building owners to participate in energy efficiency programs. Multifamily buildings comprise nearly half of the building sector's energy usage, and have tremendous potential for energy savings. In response, the team examined existing multifamily programs in New York City and compared them with programs in six North American cities to identify challenges and best practices. Moreover, the team conducted interviews with 16 industry stakeholders to identify opportunities for the retrofit accelerator.

The team arrived at four key findings:

1. Participation in multifamily programs is hampered by the complexity of the energy efficiency landscape and overlaps between programs;
2. Current regulatory changes in New York's energy industry are causing uncertainty and disruption;
3. Effective multifamily energy efficiency programs of other cities incorporate a single brand, one-stop shop, innovative financing options, and contractor incentives;
4. Failure to understand building owners' priorities and decision-making processes inhibit effective outreach efforts.

In recognition of these findings, the team recommends:

1. Unifying the branding of existing multifamily programs to reduce complexity and coordinate the messaging of energy efficiency projects in New York City.
2. Implementing a one-stop shop for multifamily programs in New York City to simplify the application process.
3. Designing the Retrofit Accelerator to emphasize consumer beliefs, confidence, control, and continuity.

This report begins with a short background on the importance of multifamily buildings to GHG reductions in New York City and the purpose and methodology of this project. Next, Section 1 provides an overview of multifamily programs available in NYC and their associated challenges before Section 2 delves into the impact of recent regulatory changes. This lays the foundation for the analysis of multifamily programs in other cities in Section 3 to derive best practices to remediate existing shortcomings. Finally, Section 4 aggregates the findings and presents the team's recommendations for strengthening NYC multifamily energy efficiency programs before concluding.

