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EnergyFitNYC

FINAL REPORT



PRATT CENTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Bringing health, comfort and savings home

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EnergyFit NYC's standard package approach and streamlined process offer an opportunity to dramatically scale residential retrofits in NYC's dense low- and moderate-income communities.

I. Executive Summary

For more than a decade, Pratt Center for Community Development has worked with low-and moderate-income (LMI) homeowners to promote energy efficiency in New York City's small homes market. From this experience, we have concluded there is a critical need to significantly redesign energy efficiency programs for small homes, defined as 1-4 family residential buildings, because many homeowners, even highly motivated homeowners, find it too difficult to participate.

Despite the hard work of community-based organizations, contractors, and other stakeholders, moving homes through the retrofit process has been exceedingly challenging. Recent data released by New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) underscores this point: although the two main home performance programs offered in the state—Home Performance with ENERGY STAR (HPwES) and Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR (AHPwES)—have seen significant traction upstate, these programs are not working in New York City. **Only 1.73% of all NYS retrofits that have occurred since 2010 have taken place in New York City,¹ despite having over 860,000 eligible small residential buildings.²**

If New York is to meet both its climate action goals and its commitments to ensuring equitable access for LMI communities to the economic, environmental and health benefits of clean energy (highlighted by both the New York State Energy Plan and NYC's OneNYC sustainability plan), new ideas are required. **It is time for a NYC-focused residential energy efficiency program, specifically designed to leverage the opportunities that arise from NYC's unique 1-4 family housing stock, and crafted for the families who live in and own these buildings.**

Pratt Center piloted EnergyFit NYC as a way to test program design features that we believe can have a transformative impact on the marketplace, namely a streamlined process coupled with a standardized package of energy efficiency measures developed for specific building types. From this experience, we recommend the following program elements:

- 1 Offer a Standard Package of retrofit measures
- 2 Simplify the homeowner engagement process
- 3 Elevate the importance of Health & Safety in program design and communication
- 4 Address additional barriers particular to moderate income households

The negative impacts of climate change and the continued rising cost of living in New York City make it imperative that we quickly transform the way energy efficiency programs are designed and implemented for low-and moderate-income households. This report provides recommendations on what a New York City focused program can incorporate to rapidly scale the retrofit marketplace for NYC's 1-4 family homes.

1. New York State Open Data, Residential Existing Homes (One to Four Units) Energy Efficiency Projects with Income-based Incentives by Customer Type: Beginning 2010, <https://data.ny.gov/Energy-Environment/Residential-Existing-Homes-One-to-Four-Units-Energy/fph5-fqtr>, accessed June 1, 2018.
2. NYC DCP PLUTO 2017 v1