

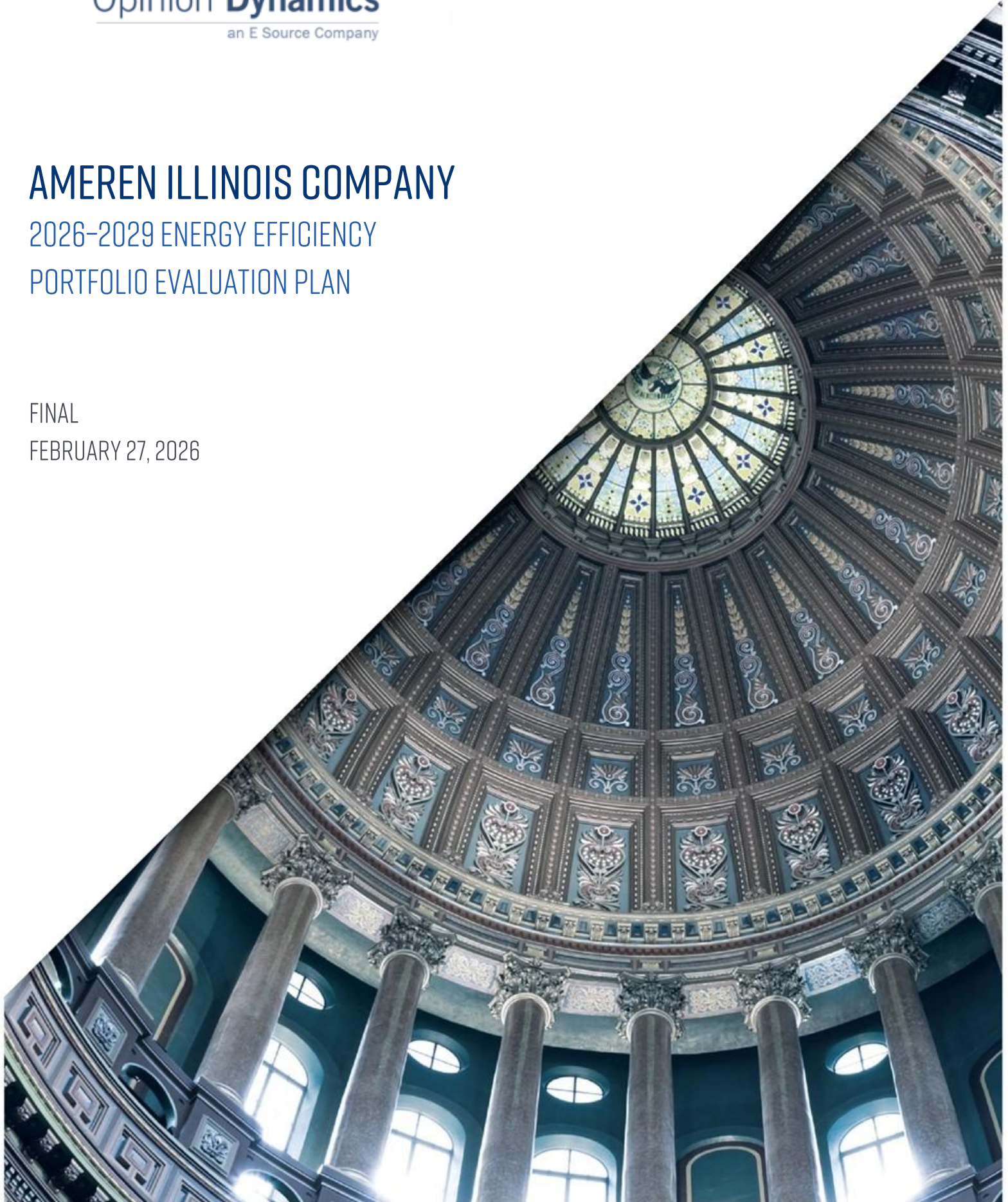


Opinion **Dynamics**  
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# AMEREN ILLINOIS COMPANY

## 2026-2029 ENERGY EFFICIENCY PORTFOLIO EVALUATION PLAN

FINAL  
FEBRUARY 27, 2026



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# I. INTRODUCTION

This document presents the evaluation plan for 2026–2029 Ameren Illinois Company’s (AIC) seventh Electric and Gas Energy Efficiency and Demand Response Plan, covering calendar years 2026–2029. Opinion Dynamics, along with its subcontractors Michaels Energy, INCA Energy Efficiency, Utilivate Technologies, Wilkins Research, and Ridge & Associates (“the evaluation team”), has been contracted by AIC to provide independent evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) services for the 2026–2029 (“Plan 7”) portfolio.<sup>1</sup> In this document, we provide an evaluation plan capturing the specific efforts planned to evaluate the 2026–2029 program years.

The primary goal of annual evaluation efforts is to determine the electric energy, electric demand, and gas savings from AIC’s energy efficiency program offerings, as well as what steps, if any, could be taken to optimize program performance from either an energy savings or customer satisfaction and engagement perspective. Findings from the evaluation process may be used by AIC and relevant stakeholders to demonstrate progress against savings targets, modify program design and operations, inform strategies to achieve deeper program savings, and ensure customer satisfaction and cost-effectiveness.

The following sections describe the AIC energy efficiency portfolio to be evaluated, as well as key evaluation considerations guiding the evaluation team’s approach and planned outcomes.

## I.1 LEGISLATIVE MANDATES INFORMING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND EVALUATION

AIC’s Plan 7 portfolio is governed by components of Illinois state law (220 ILCS 5/8-103B [“Section 8-103B”] and 220 ILCS 5/8-104 [“Section 8-104”]), which directs large, regulated utilities to offer electric and gas energy efficiency programs. Plan 7 was filed by AIC and approved by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) while versions of Section 8-103B and Section 8-104 that were revised as part of Illinois Public Act 102-0662 (the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, or “CEJA”), were in effect. Plan 7 was therefore designed to meet the requirements presented in CEJA. This evaluation plan was developed in accordance with the filed and approved Plan 7 and reflects that portfolio as well as the statutory requirements that currently govern it; those statutory requirements are described below.

In addition to these requirements, on October 30, 2025, the Illinois General Assembly passed the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability (CRGA) Act. CRGA will introduce changes to Section 8-103B and Section 8-104, effective on June 1, 2026, that will inform both the implementation and evaluation of Plan 7. We are actively engaging with AIC, ICC Staff, the SAG, and the IQ-S EE Committee to ascertain how this will impact the AIC portfolio evaluation.

Most immediately, to meet the requirements of CRGA, AIC will file a revised 2027-2029 plan no later than June 1, 2026 that will reflect an expanded portfolio budget, a revised portfolio goal structure, changes to the energy efficiency performance incentive mechanism (PIM) for electric programs, and more. We expect to file a new evaluation plan for the 2027-2029 period to reflect the details of AIC’s revised plan once it becomes available.

In the interim, this plan reflects only a small handful of considerations relating to CRGA. Two considerations are applied portfolio wide:

- We have cadenced discretionary evaluation activities (such as net-to-gross [NTG] research) to be cognizant that AIC’s portfolio and programs may change beginning in 2027. Where there is a risk that results from evaluation activities conducted in 2026 might not be applicable moving forward, or where we believe we need to see a

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by the ICC in Docket 25-0211: <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/docket/P2025-0211>.

program in the market for longer before conducting a given study, we have scheduled evaluation activities for 2027 and beyond to ensure responsible use of evaluation funds.

- In addition, we understand that CRGA will introduce a new PIM for AIC’s electric energy efficiency programs that considers coincident peak demand reductions as well as incremental electric energy savings. As a result, we have scoped Illinois Technical Reference Manual (IL-TRM) research to ensure that the robustness of the IL-TRM’s characterization of coincident peak demand savings aligns with the use of those results to determine a shareholder incentive for the utility.

Other considerations are incorporated sparsely throughout this plan where relevant.

The section below describes the existing statutory mandates from the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA) and Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) that are in the currently effective versions of Sections 8-103B and 8-104.

## 1.1.1 EXISTING REQUIREMENTS IN FEJA AND CEJA

FEJA introduced changes to utility electric savings targets, planning cycles, and requirements, and to PIMs that continue to be relevant to both the implementation and evaluation of electric energy efficiency programs:

- **Cumulative Persisting Annual Savings (CPAS):** Since 2018, electric energy savings goals for Illinois utilities have been primarily defined based on persisting savings as a percentage of sales. As such, annual evaluations of AIC’s electric energy efficiency programs must present both annual and persisting savings over the life of delivered measures. As a result, AIC and its program implementer have also sought to deliver programs that achieve savings that persist for a longer period of time.
- **Weighted Average Measure Life (WAML):** FEJA replaced the existing funding mechanism for electric energy efficiency in Illinois by allowing AIC to create a regulatory asset and amortize and recover the total expenditures of that regulatory asset “over a period that is equal to the weighted average of the measure lives implemented for that year that are reflected in the regulatory asset.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore, annual evaluations of AIC’s electric energy efficiency programs must present a WAML in accordance with the guidelines for calculation presented in the Illinois Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Advisory Group’s (SAG) WAML Report.<sup>3</sup>
- **Applicable Annual Incremental Goal (AAIG):** Section 8-103B allows AIC to earn a rate of return on their energy efficiency spending if they create a regulatory asset, as discussed above. The rate of return that is earned can be adjusted either up or down as a function of AIC’s performance relative to its AAIG. The AAIG is defined as the difference between the cumulative persisting electric savings goal for the year being evaluated and the cumulative persisting electric savings goal for the previous year. AIC must achieve sufficient savings through its programs to replace savings from measures at the end of their measure life before progress can be counted toward the AAIG. Therefore, annual evaluations of AIC’s electric energy efficiency programs must assess AIC’s performance against its AAIG.
- **Low-Income Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee (LIEEAC):** Section 8-103B directed the Illinois electric utilities to “convene a low-income energy efficiency advisory committee to assist in the design and evaluation of the low-income energy efficiency programs.”<sup>4</sup>

On September 15, 2021, CEJA was signed into law. CEJA introduced further changes to electric energy efficiency that inform both the implementation and evaluation of the 2026 program year, including:

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<sup>2</sup> Illinois Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Advisory Group. *Weighted Average Measure Life Report*. 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> 220 ILCS 5/8-103B(c).

- **Electrification:** CEJA included statutory language that enabled electric utilities to use their energy efficiency programs to offer and promote measures that electrify end uses, such as space and water heating, that would otherwise be served by fossil fuels.

As a result, AIC pursued program strategies in Plan 6 to begin limited electrification activities. In particular, the utility launched targeted efforts to electrify end uses for low-income customers currently served by delivered fuels, such as propane.

- **Large Customer Opt-Outs:** As a provision of FEJA, all nonresidential electric customer sites with peak 15-minute demand greater than 10 MW became ineligible to participate in utility energy efficiency programs as of June 1, 2017. This change significantly impacted AIC's electric energy efficiency programs, which had historically achieved significant electric energy savings from these customers. AIC made several changes to the Business Program in the 2018–2021 cycle to compensate, including significantly increased investment in small business-focused efforts.

CEJA modified this provision significantly. All previously exempt public sector customers are now eligible for AIC programs again. Previously exempt private sector customers have the option to opt out or participate in AIC programs. If they choose to opt out, they may also exempt any other sites associated with their business, even if their peak 15-minute demand is less than 10MW.

- **Savings Conversion:** A provision of FEJA allowed electric utilities to “convert” non-electric energy savings achieved to electric savings for the purposes of goal attainment in certain cases. The total amount of savings allowed to be converted was capped at a maximum of 10% of the utility's AAIG as part of FEJA. Updates in CEJA increased the conversion cap to 10% of the utility's annual applicable total savings requirement (a number significantly higher than the AAIG), which increased the ability of electric utilities to claim alternate fuel savings achieved through their programs against their goals.
- **LIEEAC:** Updates in CEJA further clarified the role, responsibilities, and makeup of the LIEEAC and allocated funding to support the LIEEAC. In particular, CEJA explicitly defined the LIEEAC as comprising two geographically differentiated subcommittees, one for stakeholders in northern Illinois and one for those in southern Illinois.

The southern Illinois subcommittee operates as the Income Qualified South (IQ-S) Energy Efficiency (EE) Advisory Committee (“IQ-S EE Committee”) and directly informs the design, implementation, and evaluation of AIC's energy efficiency portfolio.

## 2. EVALUATION POLICIES AND DEFINITIONS

This plan is informed by a thorough review of key documents guiding energy efficiency policy in Illinois, including:

- The governing statutes for electric and gas energy efficiency in Illinois, Section 8-103B and Section 8-104<sup>5</sup>
- The Illinois Statewide Technical Reference Manual for Energy Efficiency (IL-TRM) Version 14.0
- The Illinois Energy Efficiency Policy Manual (Policy Manual) Version 3.0
- The Policy Document for the Illinois Statewide Technical Reference Manual for Energy Efficiency (IL-TRM Policy Document) Version 4.0
- Documents in ICC Docket 25-0211, including the initial and revised AIC Plan 7 filings, the initial and revised settlement stipulations between AIC and stakeholders memorializing agreement on plan objectives, and the initial and revised final orders approving Plan 7
- AIC documents and communications relating to Plan 7 and the 2026–2029 program years

In this section, we outline key requirements around when evaluation-based information should become available. We also provide a set of key terms and definitions used throughout this document, ensuring stakeholders have a clear understanding of the planned activities.

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<sup>5</sup> As described above, this plan generally focuses on the versions of Sections 8-103B and 8-104 in effect at the time of the filing of this plan. We expect to revise this plan at a later date to reflect changes to these sections going into effect on June 1, 2026 as a result of CRGA.

## 2.1 EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

Table 1 outlines the dates by which the evaluation team must provide inputs to and outputs from its evaluation efforts. These include evaluation plans and reports, and research and evaluator recommendations related to NTG ratios (NTGRs) and the IL-TRM.

Table 1. Annual Evaluation Milestones

		2025		2026										...	2027				
		Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	...	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
		2026 Evaluation Activities																	
Eval Plan	Draft Evaluation Plan													...					
Eval Plan	Final Evaluation Plan													...					
Annual Reporting	Draft Annual Impact Evaluation Reports													...					
Annual Reporting	Final Annual Impact Evaluation Reports													...					
Annual Reporting	Final Annual Integrated Impact Report													...					
Annual Reporting	Draft Annual Cost-Effectiveness Report													...					
Annual Reporting	Final Annual Cost-Effectiveness Report													...					
		Forward Looking Activities																	
TRM	TAC Informs Evaluation Teams of IL-TRM V15.0 Measure Priorities													...					
TRM	Proposed Updates Submitted by Evaluation Teams													...					
TRM	Submission of Final IL-TRM V15.0													...					
NTG	Initial 2027 NTG Recommendations													...					
NTG	Presentation of 2027 NTG Recommendations													...					
NTG	Final 2027 NTG Recommendations													...					

Beyond the stipulated timelines presented in Table 1, it is important to note that the NTG policies included in the Policy Manual state that:

- Free-ridership must be assessed for each program when conducting NTG research;
- Spillover should be included whenever feasible, and the use of secondary sources should be considered if primary research is not possible; and
- Portfolio-level spillover analysis should be considered at least once during a Plan period if feasible.

## 2.2 EVALUATION TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Within this section, we outline and define the key terms used throughout this plan and in reporting on AIC’s energy efficiency achievements. The first set of terms, presented in Table 2 relates to gross and net energy (electric and gas) and peak demand savings.<sup>6</sup>

Table 2. Savings-Related Terminology and Definitions

Savings Terminology	Definition
Ex Ante Gross Savings	Gross savings present in the final program-tracking database provided by AIC
Ex Ante Net Savings	Net savings present in the final program-tracking database provided by AIC
Verified Gross Savings	Gross savings calculated by the evaluation team
Verified Net Savings	Net savings calculated by the evaluation team based on IL SAG-approved NTGRs (or approved research-based values applied retrospectively)

In Table 3, the evaluation team also defines each of the impact evaluation activities outlined in the evaluation plan. We have differentiated between activities applicable to prescriptive and custom measures and use this terminology consistently throughout the evaluation plan.

Table 3. Impact Evaluation Activity Definitions

Prescriptive Measures	Custom Measures
<p><b>Definition:</b> Measures with predetermined savings values or IL-TRM algorithms for use in determining savings</p> <p><b>Example:</b> Tier 1 Advanced Power Strip</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> Unique or complex measures for which there is not an IL-TRM algorithm</p> <p><b>Example:</b> Compressed air system resequencing</p>
Impact Evaluation Activity Definitions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Database Review:</b> This activity involves reviewing the program or initiative-tracking data to check that incentivized measures meet all program requirements.</li> <li>▪ <b>Engineering Desk Review:</b> This activity involves reviewing supporting project documentation, as well as initiative-tracking data to ensure that original data were entered correctly from invoices and documentation.</li> <li>▪ <b>IL-TRM Application Review:</b> This activity involves reviewing initiative-tracking data to see that the correct deemed input values and IL-TRM specified algorithms are used in calculating savings.</li> <li>▪ <b>On-Site Verification:</b> This activity involves on-site visits, typically with a sample of projects, to verify that incentivized measures are installed and operational.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Database Review:</b> This activity involves reviewing the program or initiative-tracking data to ensure incentivized measures meet all program requirements.</li> <li>▪ <b>Engineering Desk Review:</b> This activity involves reviewing project documentation and calculations, and making any associated revisions to account for analytical errors, incorrect assumptions, etc.</li> <li>▪ <b>On-Site Measurement &amp; Verification:</b> This activity involves conducting site-specific measurement and verification (M&amp;V) (e.g., metering equipment runtime), typically with a sample of projects, to estimate site-specific savings.</li> <li>▪ <b>Consumption Analysis:</b> This analysis involves the use of regression models with historic customer energy usage information to calculate annual energy savings.</li> <li>▪ <b>Modeling:</b> The use of building simulation models to estimate building-level energy savings.</li> </ul>

In alignment with Illinois policy, for the 2026–2029 evaluation, we will convert gross savings to net savings using SAG-approved NTGRs. For selected initiatives, we will conduct research to estimate NTGRs that will be used to update SAG-approved NTGRs prospectively.

<sup>6</sup> Gross savings are the change in energy consumption and/or demand that results directly from program-related actions taken by participants in an efficiency program, regardless of why they participated. Net savings are the change in energy consumption and/or demand that is attributable to a particular energy efficiency program (State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network [SEE Action] Energy Efficiency Program Impact Evaluation Guide).

## 3. MULTI-YEAR EVALUATION PLAN

In this section of the evaluation plan, we outline the anticipated evaluation activities by year during Plan 7 for the Residential, Business, and Voltage Optimization Programs, as well as AIC's planned Market Transformation (MT) initiatives. In addition, we highlight anticipated cross-cutting research activities.

To best serve AIC and stakeholders, we have considered the delivery strategy and unique characteristics of each AIC offering and organized our evaluation activities to most effectively use evaluation resources, minimize customer touchpoints, and provide research insights.

As a result, evaluation efforts are not always organized in direct alignment with the portfolio implementation structure. For example, we combine the three AIC multifamily offerings for evaluation purposes, despite AIC administering them as the Public Housing Initiative, Market Rate Multifamily Initiative, and the Multifamily channel of the Income Qualified (IQ) Initiative.

### 3.1 RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

#### 3.1.1 RETAIL PRODUCTS INITIATIVE

The AIC Retail Products Initiative offers discounts on a wide range of qualifying ENERGY STAR® products,<sup>7</sup> including advanced power strips, advanced thermostats, air purifiers, refrigerators, clothes washers, and more than a dozen other miscellaneous products and household appliances through several delivery channels.<sup>8</sup> The Initiative is designed to encourage customers to purchase energy-efficient versions of select retail products by offsetting the price difference from less efficient (and typically cheaper) alternatives, thereby helping customers reduce their energy usage, energy bills, and carbon footprints. The Retail Products Initiative is structured to engage a mix of market rate and IQ customers and offers three distinct incentive delivery formats:

- Point-of-Sale (POS) Discounts: By partnering with retailers and manufacturers, the offering provides in-store discounts that reduce the purchase price of select products.
- Downstream Rebates: AIC customers can apply for a post-purchase reimbursement to cover a portion of the cost of qualifying product purchases.
- Online Marketplace: A designated online store accessible via the AIC website allows customers to purchase products at discounted price points.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 4 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Retail Products Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, including interviews with program staff, review of program documentation and data, and application of appropriate Illinois TRM-recommended savings assumptions and SAG-approved NTGRs to produce verified gross and net annual savings estimates, and verify the number of participating customers to the degree practical.

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<sup>7</sup> All product or company names that may be mentioned in this publication are tradenames, trademarks, or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

<sup>8</sup> While Retail Products Initiative will continue to offer incentives on select LED lighting, the range of discounted products and associated participation is expected to be much more limited than in past years as a result of the Illinois Energy Efficiency Policy Manual and the Illinois TRM updates recognizing the impacts of the federal Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA).

Table 4. Retail Products Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis (IL-TRM Application)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis (SAG-Approved NTGR Application)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Participant Survey (NTGR, ISR, Process Feedback)		✓		✓

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- 2026:** In the first year of the program cycle, with the potential for upcoming program adjustments following the passage of CRGA, the evaluation team plans to conduct only core impact and process evaluation activities but may conduct additional research as needed based on changes to Initiative offerings or implementation strategies.
- 2027:** In addition to core impact and process evaluation activities, the evaluation team will conduct a participant survey aimed at updating in-service rate (ISR) and NTGR estimates for future application. We will prioritize product categories that are newly added or delivered through new channels with an emphasis on those expected to contribute to the offering in future years, to the extent that recent participation levels support survey sampling. The survey will also gather process-oriented feedback from recent participants based on their experience with the offering.
- 2028:** In the third year of the program cycle, following primary participant research in the year prior, the evaluation team plans to conduct only core impact and process evaluation activities, but may conduct additional research as needed based on changes to Initiative offerings or implementation strategies.
- 2029:** For the final year of the program cycle, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, as well as a participant survey aimed at updating ISR and NTGR estimates for future application. We will prioritize product categories that are newly added or delivered through new channels with an emphasis on those expected to contribute to the offering in future years, to the extent that recent participation levels support survey sampling. The survey will also gather process-oriented feedback from recent participants based on their experience with the offering.

### 3.1.2 MARKET RATE SINGLE FAMILY INITIATIVE

The Market Rate Single Family Initiative includes two distinct channels: the Midstream HVAC channel and the Home Efficiency channel.

The Midstream HVAC channel is designed to influence how distributors stock and sell high-efficiency HVAC and water heating measures, including air source heat pumps (ASHPs), ductless mini splits, advanced thermostats, and heat pump water heaters (HPWHs). The channel provides an incentive to distributors for approved sales of efficient equipment, helping to reduce the cost of efficient equipment for contractors. This encourages contractors to (1) pass savings onto their customers and (2) install more efficient HVAC and water heating equipment than they might otherwise. The channel also provides education and training at distributor events to increase contractor familiarity and acceptance of the equipment, further promoting customer adoption. Its goal is to address barriers such as upfront cost, customer awareness, contractor familiarity, and inventory availability, promoting the expansion of high-efficiency HVAC and water heating measures.

The Home Efficiency channel serves residential customers who do not qualify for the IQ Initiative, defined as those with an annual household income over 300% of the federal poverty level (FPL). The channel offers home energy assessments conducted by registered Program Allies (PAs) to identify opportunities for building shell retrofits, which can include air sealing, bathroom exhaust fans, and various types of insulation. As part of the assessment, PAs complete necessary testing, provide participants with educational materials on indoor air quality and American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) ventilation guidelines, and create a customized project report. The project report details the home’s current state, identifies options for building shell retrofits, summarizes available incentives, and estimates the total out-of-pocket costs for the proposed upgrades, allowing customers to choose whether to move forward with all or some of the project recommendations and associated incentives. Participants in the Home Efficiency channel are required to pay a portion of the project costs, which may include expenses associated with the assessment itself.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 5 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Market Rate Single Family Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, including interviews with program staff, review of program documentation and data, and application of appropriate Illinois TRM-recommended savings assumptions and SAG-approved NTGRs to produce verified gross and net annual savings estimates, and verify the number of participating customers.

Table 5. Market Rate Single Family Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – IL-TRM Application Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR Application	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Midstream HVAC Distributor Interviews (NTG, Market Effects, Process Feedback)		✓		
	Midstream HVAC Contractor Interviews (NTG, Market Effects, Process Feedback)		✓		
	Home Efficiency channel PA Interviews (Process Feedback)	✓			
	Home Efficiency channel Participant Interviews (NTGR, Process Feedback)			✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2026:** In the first year of the program cycle, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, as well as interviews with PAs involved in implementing the Home Efficiency channel to solicit their feedback on program coordination processes and customer needs.
- **2027:** The evaluation team will continue to conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, along with interviews of distributors and contractors who support the implementation of the Midstream HVAC channel. These interviews will build off research conducted in 2023 and 2024 to produce updated NTGR estimates and key inputs for market effects analysis, while also gathering process feedback regarding program operations.
- **2028:** In addition to core impact and process evaluation activities, the evaluation team will conduct a survey of recent Home Efficiency channel participants aimed at updating NTGR estimates for future application and soliciting feedback regarding their experience with the offering.

- **2029:** In the final year of the program cycle, the evaluation team plans to conduct only core impact and process evaluation activities, but may conduct additional research as needed based on changes to Initiative offerings or implementation strategies.

### 3.1.3 INCOME QUALIFIED INITIATIVE

The IQ Initiative includes seven distinct channels, as well as several parallel Kit offerings, all of which focus on providing no-cost services and measures to low- and moderate-income households. The IQ Initiative offers a combination of in-home energy audits, direct install (DI) measures, and building shell and HVAC upgrades through a range of delivery channels targeting specific IQ customer segments.

- **The Single Family (SF) channel** provides energy audits, DI measures, and building shell and HVAC retrofits to low- and moderate-income single-family customers. Walker-Miller Energy Services and Leidos work with BPI-certified AIC PAs to conduct audits, provide recommendations, and install measures. Moderate-income customers may qualify for additional retrofits in some cases, which may involve a customer copay.
- **The Community Action Agency (CAA) channel** partners with CAAs to deliver energy audits, DI measures, and building shell and HVAC retrofits to customers participating in the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP). Leidos and Walker-Miller Energy Services coordinate closely with CAAs, combining AIC and IHWAP funding to provide comprehensive energy efficiency and health and safety (H&S) improvements.
- **The Joint Utility (JU) channel** partners with Nicor Gas to provide energy audits, DI measures, and building shell and HVAC retrofits to low- and moderate-income customers in the shared utility territory of Bloomington-Normal. Leidos and Resource Innovations collaborate with BPI-certified AIC PAs to conduct audits, provide recommendations, and install measures for qualifying customers, which can include multifamily properties and mobile homes in addition to single-family homes.
- **The Healthier Homes (HH) channel** specifically serves households with a history of asthma or other respiratory ailments. The channel is implemented by Energy Infrastructure Partners in coordination with delivery partners (healthcare providers and local community organizations). In addition to in-home health and energy assessments and DI measures, the channel also offers indoor air quality (IAQ) measures, such as hypoallergenic bedding, mold remediation, IAQ monitors, and carbon monoxide detectors.
- **The Accessibility channel** is designed to enhance the lives of AIC residential customers with disabilities through the installation of various smart home devices meant to foster independence and improve home functionality and safety while also conserving energy. The Accessibility channel is implemented by Solutions for Energy Efficient Logistics (SEEL) in partnership with a small network of delivery partners to deliver advanced thermostats, smart speakers, video doorbells, smart lighting and electrical outlet controls, and water-saving measures, along with associated customer education.
- **The Mobile Homes & Air Sealing (MHAS) channel** specifically serves customers living in manufactured and mobile homes. Future Energy Enterprises collaborates with Leidos and PAs to deliver a combination of weatherization and HVAC upgrades specifically tailored for mobile homes, as well as energy education and H&S measures, as needed. Implementers also coordinate with CAAs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to facilitate community engagement and identify qualifying customers.
- **The Smart Savers channel** focuses on delivering advanced thermostats to customers residing in ZIP codes with high percentages of IQ customers. It often serves as an entry point for customers who have not previously benefited from AIC energy efficiency offerings. The channel is primarily implemented by i3 Energy, which coordinates with Leidos and PAs to recruit customers and install advanced thermostats. Customers can apply online or by phone and select a preferred PA, who will subsequently contact them to schedule the installation. Customers who prefer to self-install are redirected to AIC's Retail Products Online Marketplace.

- **The Electrification channel** targets AIC electric customers to replace propane and natural gas equipment with electric alternatives. The Electrification channel is cross-coordinated with the IQ Single Family channel and IQ Healthier Homes channel to identify qualifying electrification opportunities.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 6 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the IQ Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, including interviews with program staff, a review of program documentation and data, and the application of appropriate Illinois TRM-recommended savings assumptions and SAG-approved NTGRs to produce verified gross and net annual savings estimates, and verify the number of participating customers.

Table 6. IQ Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – IL-TRM Application Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Participant Survey		✓		
	PA Interviews (SF, CAA, JU, MHAS, and Smart Savers channels)	✓		✓	
	CAA Staff Interviews (CAA channel)			✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2026:** In the first year of the program cycle, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, as well as interviews with PAs to solicit feedback about coordination with program staff, engagement with customers, and how the IQ Initiative can most effectively meet customer needs and maximize energy efficiency opportunities for each customer engaged as part of the Initiative. These interviews will include separate parallel efforts focusing on distinct but overlapping PA networks supporting (1) the SF, CAA, and JU channels; (2) the MHAS channel, and (3) the Smart Savers channel.
- **2027:** In addition to core impact and process evaluation activities, the evaluation team will conduct participant surveys to explore participants’ recent experiences with the SF, CAA, JU, MHAS, and Smart Savers channels. Survey questions will focus on feedback regarding PA engagement, key drivers and barriers around adopting home energy audit recommendations, and non-energy impacts associated with weatherization and HVAC measures.
- **2028:** The evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, as well as interviews with PAs and CAA staff to solicit feedback about coordination with program staff, engagement with customers, and how the IQ Initiative can most effectively meet customer needs and maximize energy efficiency opportunities for each customer engaged as part of the Initiative. PA interviews will include separate parallel efforts focusing on distinct but overlapping PA networks supporting (1) the SF, CAA, and JU channels; (2) the MHAS channel, and (3) the Smart Savers channel. CAA staff interviews will explore customer intake efforts, contractor engagement and availability, and opportunities for improved coordination between implementer staff, CAA staff, and participating customers.
- **2029:** In the final year of the program cycle, the evaluation team plans to conduct only core impact and process evaluation activities, but may conduct additional research as needed based on changes to Initiative offerings or implementation strategies.

## 3.1.4 MULTIFAMILY OFFERINGS

The Multifamily Offerings include the Multifamily channel of the IQ Initiative, the Market Rate Multifamily Initiative, and the Public Housing Initiative. The offerings serve property managers, owners, and customers residing in subsidized or low-income housing, as well as non-subsidized (market rate) multifamily and mixed-use buildings, and publicly owned housing. All three offerings target multifamily properties and deliver comprehensive property assessments, H&S evaluations, in-unit and common area DI measures, as well as deeper energy-saving weatherization and HVAC measures. The offerings are implemented using a one-stop shop (OSS) model, where AIC provides property managers with an Energy Advisor ‘concierge’ to support them as they participate in one or more offerings across the AIC portfolio. Using this delivery strategy, AIC and its implementation partners strive to provide a seamless participation experience designed to overcome traditional barriers to participation and barriers to implementing a broad set of energy efficiency upgrades typically offered through multiple discrete AIC offerings.

### EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 7 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Multifamily Offerings over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, including interviews with program staff, review of program documentation and data, and application of appropriate Illinois TRM-recommended savings assumptions and SAG-approved NTGRs to produce verified gross and net annual savings estimates, and verify the number of participating customers.

Table 7. Multifamily Offerings Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – IL-TRM Application Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR Application	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	On-Site Verification (ISR and Process Feedback)	✓			
	Theory-Driven Process Assessment		✓		
	Property Manager Focus Groups (Process Feedback)			✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- 2026:** In the first year of the program cycle, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities, as well as on-site verification research with participating property managers and building owners to estimate ISRs associated with both in-unit and common area measures for future application. During the on-site installation verification process, we will also confirm building characteristics relevant to savings estimation and solicit feedback regarding measure distribution and installation processes.
- 2027:** In addition to core impact and process evaluation activities, we will conduct a theory-driven process assessment, which will include development of a program-theory logic model (PTLM), mapping how program theory informs existing implementation processes, and comparing current delivery strategies to approaches taken to multifamily program implementation approaches in other jurisdictions.
- 2028:** The evaluation team will conduct core impact and process evaluation activities and will build directly on the 2027 theory-driven process research to gather property manager feedback on their experience with the OSS

delivery model, the degree to which implementation processes are serving their intended purpose, and how the offering can best serve them and the occupants of their buildings.

- **2029:** In the final year of the program cycle, the evaluation team plans to conduct only core impact and process evaluation activities, but may conduct additional research as needed based on changes to Initiative offerings or implementation strategies.

## 3.2 BUSINESS PROGRAM

### 3.2.1 STANDARD INITIATIVE

The Standard Initiative offers AIC private and public sector business customers fixed incentives for the installation of prescriptive energy efficiency measures. The Initiative primarily focuses on lighting retrofits, lighting controls, motors, HVAC equipment, steam traps, and specialty applications such as agricultural and refrigeration measures. AIC also offers incentives to building operators in its service territory to attend Building Operator Certification (BOC) training through the Standard Initiative.

The Initiative offerings are grouped into three channels:

- **The Standard Core channel** consists of a collection of downstream incentives targeted at a variety of energy-intensive end uses. Incentive requests exceeding \$10,000 require pre-approval by AIC staff. For projects that do not exceed this cap, customers can apply for incentives following the purchase and installation of qualifying equipment.
- **The Online Store channel** is an e-commerce marketplace where AIC business customers can purchase energy-efficient equipment at a reduced price.
- **The Building Operator Certification (BOC) Training** is a nationally recognized certification training that educates building operators on a variety of topics, such as equipment operations, common low-cost operational improvements, performance benchmarking, and building commissioning.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 8 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Standard Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will quantify gross and net electric energy, electric demand, gas savings, and number of participating customers associated with the Initiative through a detailed engineering analysis and application of SAG-approved NTGRs.

Table 8. Standard Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – IL-TRM Application Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR Application	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Standard Core Desk Reviews / Verification Activities		✓		
	Standard Core NTG / Process Research		✓		
	Online Store NTG / Process Research		✓		

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2027:** In 2027, the evaluation team will also conduct research to update the SAG-approved NTGRs for future application. The Standard Core research will include a participant survey to estimate free-ridership and program ally research to estimate spillover. The Online Store research will estimate free-ridership and spillover through a

participant survey. In addition to NTG research, the evaluation team also plans to conduct desk reviews and verification activities for a sample of Standard Core projects to support the impact evaluation in 2027.

### 3.2.2 CUSTOM INITIATIVE

The Custom Initiative offers incentives to AIC Business Program customers for energy efficiency projects involving equipment not covered through other AIC initiatives. The Custom Initiative allows customers to propose additional measures and tailor projects to the specific needs of their facilities. It also provides an opportunity to pilot new measures before incorporating them into the Standard Initiative.

The Custom Initiative is delivered to customers through several different channels. Two core offerings are typically responsible for all the savings claimed through the Initiative:

- **The Custom Incentives channel** provides incentives for electric and gas measures not incentivized through other AIC offerings. Some examples of common Custom Incentive measures include compressed air improvements, energy management systems (EMS), and industrial process measures, including heat recovery, process heat, and improvements to steam systems.
- **The New Construction Lighting channel** offers additional incentives for lighting measures in new construction projects.

Additionally, AIC offers a number of smaller channels through the Custom Initiative, including Metering and Monitoring, Feasibility Studies, Strategic Energy Management, Staffing Grants, Agricultural Energy Audits, and Building Energy Assessments. These offerings aim to engage AIC’s business customers more deeply with energy efficiency.

### EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 9 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Custom Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will quantify gross and net electric energy, electric demand, gas savings, and number of participating customers through a detailed engineering analysis, including desk reviews and on-site measurement and verification (M&V). Additionally, the evaluation team will continue our ongoing NTG research with combined heat and power participants.

Table 9. Custom Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Engineering Desk Reviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Verification Activities	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Engineering Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Early Project Reviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Custom Incentives and New Construction Lighting NTG / Process Research			✓	
	Ongoing Combined Heat and Power NTG Research	✓	✓	✓	✓

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2028:** In 2028, the evaluation team will conduct research to update the SAG-approved NTGRs for future application, including participant research to estimate free-ridership and spillover.

### 3.2.3 SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVE

The primary objective of the Small Business Initiative is to deliver energy savings to small commercial and industrial customers by increasing access to energy-efficient products through financial and technical support. The Initiative targets private and public facilities through three channels, providing the same services at differentiated incentive levels:

- **The Standard channel** provides incentives in line with historical offerings for small businesses not located in disadvantaged communities.
- **The Enhanced channel** provides increased incentive levels offered to eligible nonprofit or public sector small business customers not located in disadvantaged communities.
- **The Disadvantaged Communities channel** provides further increased incentive levels offered to any eligible small business customer located in a disadvantaged community.

All three channels leverage a network of program allies to coordinate and install the incentivized measures in participating facilities. These program allies specialize in serving small businesses, nonprofits, schools, and local governments. Many projects are fully funded through channel incentives and require no out-of-pocket contribution from the customer. These three channels will be implemented as one initiative and will function similarly; however, they will offer differentiated incentive levels for customer types to provide expanded rebates, reducing the co-pay for those customers in need of greater assistance.

### EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 10 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Small Business Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process activities to quantify and understand gross and net energy, demand, gas savings, and number of participating customers from the Initiative.

Table 10. Small Business Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – TRM Application	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Desk Reviews / Verification Activities			✓	
	NTG / Process Research			✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2028:** In 2028, the evaluation team will also conduct research to update the SAG-approved NTGRs for future application, including a participant survey to estimate free-ridership and program ally research to estimate spillover. In addition to NTG research, the evaluation team also plans to conduct desk reviews and verification activities for a sample of projects to support the impact evaluation in 2028.

## 3.2.4 MIDSTREAM INITIATIVE

The Midstream Initiative provides incentives to distributors and wholesalers to reduce prices at the point of sale for efficient equipment. The goal is to increase the adoption of high-efficiency equipment without requiring the end customer to submit an incentive application. The Initiative includes two channels:

- **The Midstream Lighting channel** incentivizes the sale of linear LED lamps, wall packs, exit signs, and mogul-based LED lamps at the distributor level.<sup>9</sup>
- **The Midstream Food Service channel** incentivizes the sale of commercial food service equipment such as freezer/refrigerator doors, griddles, fryers, ovens, and broilers. The channel is implemented at a statewide level.

Public sector and nonprofit customers can receive an additional incentive to cover the cost of installation services if they hire a qualified program ally to install equipment purchased through the Lighting channel.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 11 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Midstream Initiative over the four-year plan period. Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process activities to quantify and understand gross and net energy, demand, gas savings, and number of participating customers from the Initiative.

Table 11. Midstream Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Gross Impact Analysis – (TRM Application)	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Midstream Lighting NTG / Process Research				✓
	Midstream Food Service NTG / Process Research				✓

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2029:** The evaluation team will conduct primary research to update the SAG-approved NTGR for the Midstream Lighting and Midstream Food Service channels. This will include both participant and trade ally research to estimate free-ridership.

## 3.2.5 RETRO-COMMISSIONING (RCX) INITIATIVE

The Retro-Commissioning (RCx) Initiative helps AIC business customers evaluate their existing mechanical equipment, energy management, and industrial compressed air systems to identify no-cost and low-cost efficiency measures that optimize existing energy-using systems.

Over time, deferred maintenance and changing operating directives and practices can lead to inefficient operation of building systems. Retro-commissioning is a process that examines current equipment operations in relation to the needs of both the equipment owners and those served by the equipment, and then determines opportunities for

<sup>9</sup> Incentives for Linear LEDs will be discontinued after the 2026 program year.  
Opinion Dynamics

increasing equipment efficiency through maintenance, system tune-ups, scheduling, and optimization of operations. Most of the identified improvement opportunities require little to no capital funds to implement.

The Initiative includes the following channels:

- **The Large Facilities RCx channel** provides incentives to defray the cost of a retro-commissioning study of industrial refrigeration equipment, leading to the implementation of low- and no-cost energy efficiency measures for existing industrial refrigeration systems.
- **The Industrial Refrigeration channel** has historically targeted two separate types of facilities: healthcare and large commercial facilities (primarily office buildings). Healthcare facilities represent a major opportunity for energy savings in AIC’s service territory and have historically driven this offering. Most savings achieved through this offering are from adjusting EMS settings to optimize the operation of HVAC systems, as well as other HVAC and lighting optimization activities.
- **The RCx Lite channel** is an option for smaller facilities that do not qualify for the Large Facilities channel.
- **The Virtual Commissioning channel** leverages the AMI data of small and medium businesses and public sector customers to identify low- and no-cost opportunities for energy savings improvements.
- **The Virtual Strategic Energy Management (Virtual SEM)<sup>10</sup> channel** targets customers previously engaged through the VCx channel and seeks to educate participants and enable them to manage their facility’s energy usage holistically.
- **The Monitoring-Based Commissioning (MBCx) channel** offers incentives for Monitoring-Based Commissioning of HVAC, industrial, and other systems.
- **The Business Informational<sup>11</sup> channel** will engage small businesses and attempt to influence behaviors at scale through an initial paper report and subsequent monthly emails that leverage site-specific AMI data and analytics to provide personalized recommendations that trigger action and ongoing engagement.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 12 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the RCx Initiative over the four-year plan period.

Table 12. RCx Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Engineering Desk Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Verification Activities	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Engineering Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	NTG / Process Research			✓	

<sup>10</sup> While the Virtual Commissioning offering is a component of the Retro-Commissioning Initiative, its evaluation plan is provided separately in Section 3.2.6 due to substantial differences in required evaluation activities.

<sup>11</sup> While the Business Informational channel is a component of the Retro-Commissioning Initiative, its evaluation plan is provided separately in Section 3.2.7 due to substantial differences in required evaluation activities.

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2026–2029:** Each year, the evaluation team will quantify gross and net energy, demand, and gas savings through detailed engineering analysis and verification activities. The evaluation team will also report the number of participating customers in each channel of the Initiative.
- **2028:** In 2028, the evaluation team will conduct research to update the SAG-approved NTGRs for future application, including participant survey research to estimate free-ridership and program ally research to estimate spillover.

## 3.2.6 VIRTUAL COMMISSIONING AND VIRTUAL SEM CHANNELS

Virtual Commissioning (VCx) is an approach that remotely targets the traditionally hard-to-reach customer segment of small and medium business customers to support low- and no-cost energy-saving measures. The VCx approach leverages advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) data to support targeted insights for hard-to-reach customers through the design, implementation, and evaluation phases of the channel.

Power TakeOff, the VCx channel implementer, uses its internal software to complete an initial analysis of AMI data from AIC's small and medium business customers to identify prospective participants. Power TakeOff then uses the outcomes of this analysis to remotely identify opportunities for low- and no-cost energy-saving improvements at the participants' facilities. These opportunities commonly include HVAC system modifications and lighting scheduling adjustments. Power TakeOff energy advisors then contact potential participants to share the results of the analysis, confirm the identified energy-saving opportunities, and verify facility characteristics. After participants implement the recommended changes, Power TakeOff develops facility-level savings estimates using the participants' pre-participation energy consumption and the algorithms in IL-TRM section 4.9.25 to estimate savings.

Building on the success of the VCx channel, AIC launched the Virtual Strategic Energy Management (Virtual SEM) channel in 2023. The Virtual SEM channel is designed in accordance with the Consortium for Energy Efficiency's minimum elements for effective strategic energy management (SEM). It aims to educate participants, enabling them to manage their facility's energy usage in a holistic manner. Participants receive the training, tools, and resources they need to develop and implement a continuous energy improvement plan. The implementation team targets recruitment activities at customers previously engaged through the VCx channel, focusing on low- and no-cost operational and maintenance improvements.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 13 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the VCx and Virtual SEM channels over the four-year plan period.

Table 13. VCx and Virtual SEM Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Impact Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Net Impact Analysis – SAG Approved NTGR	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	VCx NTG / Process Research				✓

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2026–2029:** Each year, the evaluation team will quantify gross and net electric energy and demand savings produced through the channels, as well as the number of participating customers in each channel.
- **2029:** The evaluation team will conduct research to update the SAG-approved NTGRs for future application, including participant survey research to estimate free-ridership and spillover.

### 3.2.7 BUSINESS INFORMATIONAL

In 2026, AIC expects to operate a Business Informational channel, designed to engage small businesses and influence behaviors at scale through an initial paper report and subsequent monthly emails. These communications will leverage site-specific AMI data and analytics to deliver personalized recommendations to encourage customer action and ongoing engagement. The recommendations will target operational efficiencies and other behavioral changes that drive energy savings.

### EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 14 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the Business Informational channel over the four-year plan period.

Table 14. Business Informational Channel Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Material and Database Review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Impact Analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- **2026–2029:** Each year, the evaluation team will conduct core impact and process activities to quantify and understand net electric energy and demand savings from the channel, as well as the number of participating customers.

### 3.2.8 BUSINESS PROGRAM PROCESS EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

AIC operates its Business Program in a coordinated manner to ensure continuity of customer service and conversion of opportunities wherever possible. In particular, the Standard and Custom Initiatives are operated in a closely integrated

manner with the same implementer and shared resources across initiatives. As a result, the evaluation team seeks opportunities to conduct process research for the Program in a cross-initiative manner wherever possible.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 15 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the cross-cutting Business Program evaluation activities over the four-year plan period.

Table 15. Cross-Cutting Business Program Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Phased	Pipeline Channel Process Evaluation Follow-Up	✓			
	Program Design Benchmarking		✓		
	Non-Participant Spillover			✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- Pipeline Channel Process Evaluation Follow-Up:** In 2026, the evaluation team will build upon the research completed in 2025 related to AIC’s suite of “pipeline” channels. These channels are designed to provide Business customers with the information and data needed to scope, plan, and fund energy efficiency projects. Among these channels are AIC’s SEM channel, Process Energy Advisor Assessments, Staffing Grants, Metering & Monitoring, and others. This follow-up research will focus on developing Program theory and logic models (PTLMs) or customer journey maps for the pipeline channels. It will also include primary research with peer utilities to gather more information on the pipeline channels offered by other utilities and insights into their performance. Collectively, these activities will support AIC in optimizing and clarifying program staff’s vision of how their various offerings (pipeline and energy-saving channels) fit together. They will also provide both customers and program staff with an intuitive, end-to-end view of what the participation experience looks like.
- Program Design Benchmarking:** In 2027, the evaluation team will review the Business offerings of other utilities to explore how AIC’s portfolio compares to others in the industry and identify opportunities to add new offerings or modify existing offerings to expand the reach of AIC’s portfolio. We will investigate topics relevant to AIC’s program staff at the time the research is scoped. Example topics could include the design of nonresidential direct-install programs and approaches to assessment-based programs, among others.
- Non-Participant Spillover:** In 2028, the evaluation team will update Business Program-wide non-participant spillover (NPSO) estimates by conducting a non-participant survey with eligible AIC business customers who have not participated in the Business Program within the past three years. The non-participant survey will focus on assessing NPSO resulting from the Program, as well as on barriers to participation that AIC can overcome to boost engagement among key market segments.

### 3.3 VOLTAGE OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM

Voltage optimization (VO) is a form of energy efficiency technology implemented by electric utilities at the distribution substation or circuit level. The technology optimizes voltage levels along distribution circuits to reduce electricity usage. There are two main VO technologies: Conservation Voltage Reduction (CVR) and Volt-VAR Optimization (VVO). CVR reduces customer energy consumption by reducing line voltage, and VVO improves the power factor to reduce line losses. Once implemented, VO technologies are intended to operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

AIC launched its VO Program in 2018, building on the experience gained from a 2012 VO pilot project. Since 2018, AIC has been installing hardware, software, and communications components on selected feeders on a phased basis. To date, VO technology has been deployed on 1,163 circuits through the VO Program. As part of AIC’s recently approved Multi-Year Integrated Grid Plan (MYIGP), the AIC VO program has been expanded to run through 2027 (with evaluation occurring through 2028).<sup>12</sup> Between program years 2026 through 2028, AIC aims to evaluate VO technology deployed across nearly 500 additional circuits, leading to approximately 75,000 MWh in total incremental first-year electricity savings.<sup>13</sup>

The 2026–2028 evaluation of the VO Program primarily focuses on estimating energy and peak demand saving impacts associated with VO implementation. As outlined in the initial 2018-2025 AIC Voltage Optimization Plan,<sup>14</sup> AIC is only allowed to claim savings for circuits that are operational during a full calendar year. Therefore, each year, the VO Program evaluation studies the circuits completed in the prior calendar year.

### EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 16 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the VO Program over the four-year plan period.

Table 16. Voltage Optimization Program Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Program Staff Interviews	✓	✓	✓	
	Data Request and Materials Review	✓	✓	✓	
	Electric Energy Impact Analysis (Modeling & IL-TRM Algorithm Application)	✓	✓	✓	
	Peak Demand Impact Analysis (Modeling & IL-TRM Algorithm Application)	✓	✓	✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- 2026–2028:** Each year, the evaluation team will quantify gross electric energy and peak demand savings through a combination of modeling and algorithmic approaches per the IL-TRM. The VO Program has historically contributed a significant share of AIC’s total achieved electric energy savings. Accordingly, the evaluation team will conduct an interim evaluation to provide AIC with early circuit-level savings estimates and forecasts of year-end savings from the VO Program. The evaluation team will also annually report the number of customers impacted by VO deployment to the degree practicable.

<sup>12</sup> Ameren Illinois’ Refiled Multi-Year Integrated Grid Plan - Appendix E: VO Program Expansion (2025-2027), filed in ICC Docket 22-0487 on March 13, 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/docket/P2022-0487/documents/348085/files/607907.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Personal communication from N. Warnecke, November 18, 2025.

<sup>14</sup> Ameren Illinois Voltage Optimization Plan, filed in ICC Docket 18-0211 on January 25, 2018. Accessed at: <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/downloads/public/edocket/463457.pdf>

## 3.4 MARKET TRANSFORMATION

In this cycle, AIC is continuing its sole extant commercial MT initiative, which began as a pilot in 2022. AIC intends to introduce a new residential MT program for High Performance Windows (HPW) as soon as 2026 and is considering launching additional MT initiatives during the cycle, including advanced rooftop units and the ENERGY STAR Retail Products Platform. The evaluation team will work closely with AIC and its partners to support the development of Business Plans (including evaluation plans) for any new MT initiatives and will participate in any needed collaboration or coordination with other MT work occurring in Illinois, such as Nicor's current HPW Initiative.

Unlike traditional resource acquisition (RA) programs, MT initiatives aim to change the behaviors and decision-making of individuals who are not directly affected by the program. This shift from focusing on individuals who receive rebates to changing the structure and function of entire markets introduces complexity to program design, evaluation, and savings estimations. MT initiatives affect an array of actors, such as entire supply chains for a particular product, and thus largely influence purchasing decisions indirectly. Such indirect influence generally requires much longer-term implementation than an RA program. Outcomes and savings are harder to measure, and attribution claims are more complicated and uncertain when initiative influence must cascade across supply chains before arriving at customers. Despite these complexities, MT initiatives have the potential to provide substantial benefits to society because they leverage market dynamics to influence the actions of a much broader pool of market actors than is possible with RA programs.

### 3.4.1 LUMINAIRE LEVEL LIGHTING CONTROLS PILOT

The Luminaire Level Lighting Controls (LLLC) Initiative enters its third year of full implementation and evaluation in 2026. This evaluation plan continues the activities originally presented to and approved by AIC, ICC Staff, and SAG through the AIC LLLC MT Initiative Business Plan in 2023, as well as introduces additional work in line with the initiative's maturing implementation.

While the LLLC Initiative is focused on transforming the market for LLLCs, it works in tandem with existing AIC prescriptive rebate programs (e.g., the Standard Initiative) that also offer financial incentives for LLLCs.

Every other year, the evaluation team will complete a formative review of the PTLM and market performance indicators (MPIs) to provide recommendations for refinement, if necessary, and to get oriented to new market interventions planned by AIC. Every year, the process evaluation will include pre-/post-surveys with training participants, in-depth interviews with a targeted sample of participants at least six months after they have attended a training, and a program materials review. The program materials review will also serve to document completed outputs and possible points of market influence (e.g., program staff engagement with key market actors).

The evaluation will gauge initiative outcomes by measuring short-, mid-, and eventually long-term MPIs, depending on the extent of the initiative's market engagement annually (e.g., the evaluation will only measure MPIs relevant to the actual activities conducted in a given year). Another crucial measure of outcomes will be the annual net savings estimation. Data collection for MPIs and savings estimates will involve annual market actor surveys of business customers and lighting trade allies, as well as distributor sales data or, possibly, stocking data. The evaluation team will work hand-in-hand with AIC's team to integrate data collection from distributors as much as possible into initiative engagement with these crucial supply chain members. Finally, the evaluation team will complete the net energy savings estimation, which removes incentivized LLLCs from the MT savings.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 17 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the LLLC MT Initiative over the four-year plan period.

Table 17. LLLC Initiative Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Participant surveys and interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Program materials review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Market actor surveys	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Sales and/or stocking data collection	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Savings estimation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phased	Review PTLM and MPis	✓		✓	

### 3.4.2 HIGH PERFORMANCE WINDOWS

In 2025, AIC expanded its work to design and complete baseline data collection for a residential HPW MT Initiative. As AIC concludes this foundational work in 2026, the evaluation team will support development of the HPW Business Plan by completing the initiative evaluation plan section of that document. We will begin preliminary evaluation activities after the Business Plan receives SAG approval.

The evaluation team will tailor the scope for work to be completed during 2026 based on AIC’s implementation plans for the year. First, we anticipate a formative review of the PTLM and MPis to provide recommendations for refinement. We also plan to conduct research necessary to set any unknown starting values for MPis and fill any critical information gaps related to the natural market baseline.

Next, the evaluation will begin in earnest with a process evaluation of market intervention activities (e.g., review of training and engagement materials created), an assessment of short-term MPis, and an estimation of net energy savings. Depending on the timing of SAG approval for the HPW Business Plan and the beginning of AIC’s implementation, these activities could begin in 2026; however, some may occur later. As such, the timeline below is an estimate that assumes a staggered launch with some evaluation work starting in 2027.

## EVALUATION APPROACH

Table 18 summarizes the evaluation activities planned for the HPW MT Initiative over the four-year plan period.

Table 18. HPW Evaluation Activities – Four-Year Plan

Timing	Activity	2026	2027	2028	2029
Annual	Participant surveys and/or interviews		✓	✓	✓
	Program materials review	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Market actor surveys	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Sales and/or stocking data collection		✓	✓	✓
	Savings estimation		✓	✓	✓
Phased	Review PTLM and MPis	✓		✓	

The rationale for these activities is as follows:

- 2026:** The evaluation team will lay the groundwork for a successful multi-year evaluation by supporting any needed revisions to the PTLM and MPis and determining pre-market intervention values for those MPis. If AIC needs additional information to inform or refine the natural market baseline, the evaluation team will conduct relevant research.
- 2027–2029:** Once the Initiative has begun market interventions, the evaluation will provide ongoing formative feedback for program continuous improvement and will annually measure market progress (including market share) and savings (taking into account any RA savings not attributable to the MT initiative).

### 3.4.3 ADDITIONAL MARKET TRANSFORMATION SUPPORT

As noted above, AIC is considering additional MT initiatives for advanced rooftop units and the ENERGY STAR Retail Products Platform. The evaluation team will work closely with AIC and its partners to develop evaluation plans for these MT initiatives, utilizing the following process for each:

- Meet with AIC and its partners to learn about the new initiative and its timeline for development, providing any needed input related to data collection and evaluation
- Collaborate with AIC and its partners to draft the initiative evaluation plan, which will be a section of the initiative business plan reviewed by the SAG
- After SAG review and approval of the business plan, provide annual evaluation plans that align with the business plan but incorporate any changes to the initiative’s rollout and implementation
- Complete annual evaluation studies

The evaluation team anticipates only preliminary evaluation work for these efforts will be needed during 2026, given time needed for initiative development. Additional activities in the 2027-2029 program years will be scoped for these efforts as needed and included in future multi-year evaluation plans as necessary.

## 3.5 CROSS-CUTTING EVALUATION RESEARCH

Cross-cutting research refers to studies designed to answer questions relevant to multiple initiatives, channels, or programs, such as questions about trade allies, residential or business customers in general, market trends, and opportunities to bundle measures. Such research questions often emerge organically as AIC and its partners observe market trends and patterns in program participation and engagement. Thus, each year we reserve a portion of evaluation resources to address these relatively fluid research needs. To ensure the studies are timely and relevant, we scope them with each new evaluation year. As such, this plan includes cross-cutting evaluation research scopes for 2026 only, presented in Section 4.5.

## 3.6 COMPLIANCE AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

As part of our 2026–2029 evaluation, we will provide several cross-cutting compliance and stakeholder engagement services to AIC that are not specific to any planned program evaluations. Each of these is detailed below.

### 3.6.1 GAS ADJUSTABLE SAVINGS GOALS REVIEWS

As outlined by the Policy Manual, during each year of the 2026–2029 plan period, AIC will file annual adjustments to its gas energy savings goals resulting from updates or changes to the IL-TRM.<sup>15</sup> As required by the Policy Manual, AIC’s independent evaluator must verify in advance of the filing that the adjustments to the energy savings goals have been performed accurately. To support this process, we will work with AIC to receive its updated adjustable goals tracker in December of each year and complete our review by January of the following year to align with the Policy Manual’s requirements for updating adjustable goals annually.

### 3.6.2 ANNUAL MACROECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT IMPACT ANALYSIS

Illinois statute requires Illinois program administrators to report estimates of job and macroeconomic impacts from their energy efficiency portfolios annually at the conclusion of each year’s annual impact reporting cycle (April 30 following the year of program implementation).<sup>16</sup> During 2018 and 2019, the evaluation team collaborated with the Commonwealth Edison evaluation team to develop a methodology for estimating these impacts, which was approved by the Illinois SAG.

This analysis is currently conducted using a plug-and-play multiplier-based approach, built in Microsoft Excel, that uses portfolio savings estimates and cost information to estimate job and macroeconomic impacts. We will provide these estimates as part of the annual Integrated Impact Evaluation Reports.

### 3.6.3 ILLINOIS STATEWIDE TECHNICAL REFERENCE MANUAL SUPPORT

The evaluation team is actively involved in the annual IL-TRM update process in several ways:

- We are regular participants in Illinois Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, including participation in weekly calls, as well as reviewing and commenting on IL-TRM update items presented to the TAC. This includes participation in TAC subgroups as needed, including the IQ TRM Working Group.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Illinois Energy Efficiency Policy Manual Version 3.0, Section 6.2.

<sup>16</sup> Reporting requirements are further defined in the Policy Manual.

<sup>17</sup> Participation in the Illinois NTG Working Group is discussed in Section 3.6.7

- We coordinate and collaborate with other Illinois evaluation teams as needed on key research related to the IL-TRM.
- We develop workpapers to update the IL-TRM based on evaluation research conducted in prior years and discuss these updates with the IL-TRM Administrator and other interested parties as needed.
- We review workpapers provided to the TAC in support of revisions to existing measures or the addition of new measures as needed.
- We reserve ad hoc budget and time to support the IL-TRM Administrator, VEIC, and other Illinois stakeholders in all of the above.

In addition, we scope and execute research activities outside of annual program evaluations and specifically designed to result in IL-TRM updates as needed. Throughout 2026–2029, we will coordinate with AIC, its implementation team, and other Illinois stakeholders to identify and pursue research to update the IL-TRM. Potential studies that we will undertake during the evaluation period include:

- Full load hour study for portable heat pumps and cold climate heat pumps: We will do a literature review of the most recent studies on in situ cold climate and portable heat pump run times and compare these to the existing values in the IL-TRM. If there are significant gaps in information, we will design a study to collect new data.
- Consumption analysis of envelope measures: We plan to coordinate with additional Illinois evaluators to conduct consumption analyses on participants in programs that include envelope measures, such as air sealing and insulation, to update savings numbers for the IL-TRM.

### 3.6.4 COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS AND SUPPORT

Sections 8-103B and 8-104 direct utilities to operate cost-effective energy efficiency programs, and to demonstrate that their energy efficiency portfolios are cost-effective using the Illinois Total Resource Cost (TRC) test. In accordance with law, relevant ICC orders, and policy developed by the Illinois SAG, we conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis of AIC’s energy efficiency portfolio on an annual basis.

Cost-effectiveness testing for the Illinois TRC, conducted as part of our annual evaluations, will align with national standard practice, as well as directives presented in the Policy Manual, and will incorporate information from AIC program tracking data, Opinion Dynamics’ annual evaluations of AIC’s portfolio, and supporting information from the IL-TRM.

To assess cost-effectiveness, the team monetizes each initiative’s net resource benefits as measured by the avoided costs, total incremental costs of measures installed, and administrative costs to calculate initiative-level benefit-cost ratios. These results are aggregated to produce program- and portfolio-level benefit-cost ratios, as well. We will work closely with AIC and its implementer to ensure we accurately capture costs and benefits associated with the portfolio.

State law requires AIC’s energy efficiency portfolio to be cost-effective at the portfolio level,<sup>18</sup> but does not prescribe cost-effectiveness requirements at the program level. Nevertheless, to the extent possible, our analysis will provide insights into the cost-effectiveness of various components of AIC’s portfolio to provide further insight for program planning. In addition to the Illinois TRC test, we will conduct the program administrator cost test (PA/UCT) to support SAG-requested reporting.

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<sup>18</sup> State law specifically exempts measures delivered to low-income customers from this requirement, which means that the cost-effectiveness requirement is for the portfolio, less all effects of low-income programs.

We will report the results of our analysis in an annual verified cost-effectiveness report, which will be delivered after the finalization of each year's program impacts. We will make every effort to provide the final verified cost-effectiveness report for each program year by July 1 of the year following implementation.

Additionally, we will provide ad hoc support to AIC and its implementation teams by screening proposed measures and implementation scenarios for cost-effectiveness.

### 3.6.5 REGULATORY TESTIMONY IN RIDER EE DOCKET

In accordance with AIC's stipulated agreement for Plan 7,<sup>19</sup> Opinion Dynamics, as AIC's independent evaluator, is required to participate in AIC's annual Rider EE update docket, including but not limited to the following activities:

- Filing of concise direct testimony that:
  - Provides a high-level summary of our annual evaluation reports,
  - Summarizes annual incremental savings achieved and explains how those calculations were performed,
  - Summarizes CPAS achieved and explains how those calculations were performed, and
  - Describes any disputes that have been documented in evaluation reports in accordance with the Policy Manual.
- Responding to any data requests we are served by parties to the proceeding.
- Filing testimony in response to any issues raised with evaluation reports and available to provide oral testimony at the evidentiary hearing while being represented by our own counsel.
- Filing any corrections or errata to our reports.
- Retain our own legal counsel to appear at the evidentiary hearing and move for admission into the record of our reports, evaluations, testimonies, affidavits, verifications, and any other exhibits we authored.

As required in the stipulation, we will make every effort to file our initial direct testimony within 14 days of AIC filing its annual petition to open the Rider EE docket.

### 3.6.6 SAG PARTICIPATION

Since 2008, SAG has provided a venue for utilities and stakeholders to work together to discuss a variety of policy and technical issues and reach consensus on ICC directives.<sup>20</sup> In support of AIC's portfolio, Opinion Dynamics is a regular attendee at SAG meetings and is frequently called upon to present and support SAG discussions on a variety of topics. This includes, but is not limited to, participation in Large Group SAG meetings, as well as participation in any SAG working groups and activities in support of AIC's portfolio, including but not limited to the SAG Market Transformation Savings Working Group, the SAG Non-Energy Impacts Working Group, and the SAG Reporting Working Group. Opinion Dynamics also presents evaluation materials as part of multiple annual SAG activities, including the annual NTG update process. SAG participation is dependent on expressed needs and can vary significantly from year to year.

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<sup>19</sup> Ameren Exhibit 1.1 – Appendix J Docket 25-0211. [https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/Ameren-Illinois-2026-2029-EE-Plan\\_revised-June-2025.pdf](https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/Ameren-Illinois-2026-2029-EE-Plan_revised-June-2025.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Illinois Energy Efficiency Stakeholder Advisory Group: Process Guidance – 2025 Update. [https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/SAG\\_Process\\_Guidance\\_2025-Update\\_FINAL\\_6-4-25.pdf](https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/SAG_Process_Guidance_2025-Update_FINAL_6-4-25.pdf)

### 3.6.7 NTG WORKING GROUP PARTICIPATION

The ICC, via numerous ICC orders in 2014, directed Illinois utilities to require their evaluators to collaborate with other Illinois evaluators and the SAG in developing consensus statewide NTG methodologies to be included as an attachment to the IL-TRM. The ICC indicated that the independent evaluators should take the lead in this effort.<sup>21</sup> This collaboration was formalized as the Illinois NTG Working Group; the Opinion Dynamics team has participated in (and frequently facilitated) this group since its inception.

## 3.7 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTROL

Since PY4, the Opinion Dynamics team has worked with Dr. Richard Ridge, who has a long history in energy efficiency evaluation, to provide outside quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) review and to serve as a resource to ensure the quality of our evaluation plans, analysis, and reporting. In recent years, Dr. Ridge has utilized his expertise to assist in writing evaluation protocols and oversee other firms in their evaluation efforts, while also continuing to perform evaluations across the country. From 2005 to 2012, Dr. Ridge served as a consultant to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) evaluation staff, working with them to understand evaluation needs, review contractor plans, and participate in many aspects of a multi-million-dollar evaluation effort. From 2008 to 2016, he provided similar support to the New York State Department of Public Service. From 2019 to 2021, he assisted the evaluation of multiple programs implemented by the California investor-owned utilities (IOUs) and third parties and advised the CPUC.

As part of the Plan 7 evaluation efforts, Dr. Ridge will continue to (1) discuss portfolio evaluation plans with the evaluation team, providing advice as needed; (2) participate in ongoing sampling and evaluation design efforts as requested, including the Illinois NTG Working Group; and (3) review draft evaluation reports to ensure quality and accuracy.

## 3.8 INTEGRATED REPORTING

The evaluation team will provide an integrated report with impact findings for all AIC portfolio efforts by April 30 following each year of program implementation. This report will include detailed EM&V tables, an overall AIC portfolio WAML, overall AIC portfolio CPAS calculations, as well as a high-impact measure summary table for the Residential Program and Business Program.

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<sup>21</sup> Illinois Statewide Technical Reference Manual V13.0 – Attachment A: Illinois Statewide Net-to-Gross Methodologies. [https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/IL-TRM\\_Effective\\_010125\\_v13.0\\_Vol\\_4\\_X-Cutting\\_Measures\\_and\\_Attach\\_09202024\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ilsag.info/wp-content/uploads/IL-TRM_Effective_010125_v13.0_Vol_4_X-Cutting_Measures_and_Attach_09202024_FINAL.pdf)

## 4. 2026 EVALUATION PLANS

In this section of the evaluation plan, we present detailed evaluation plans for research scoped as part of the 2026 evaluation of the AIC portfolio. For descriptions of each initiative or channel being evaluated, please refer to Section 3.

### 4.1 RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

#### 4.1.1 RETAIL PRODUCTS INITIATIVE

##### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Retail Products Initiative focuses on estimating gross and net electric energy, electric demand, natural gas, other fuel impacts, and number of participating customers associated with the offering. Process evaluation for this program will be limited to data and material review and interviews with program staff, which will help inform the impact analysis and help the evaluation team understand key context and considerations for current and future evaluation activities.

##### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 19 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Retail Products Initiative.

Table 19. Summary of Retail Products Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Review 2026 implementation plan, marketing and outreach materials, administrative reports, policy documentation, and tracking database to inform impact analysis and document any design and implementation changes.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Conduct interviews with AIC and implementation teams to understand recent performance, explore expectations and considerations around any recent or planned developments, and review evaluation priorities.
3	Impact Analysis	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to verify accuracy and completeness, assign IL-TRM V14.0-recommended algorithms and assumptions to estimate annual gross savings, and apply SAG-approved NTGRs to estimate annual net savings.

##### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 20 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity for the Retail Products Initiative and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 20. Summary of Retail Products Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	April and December 2026	Completed staff interviews

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
3	Impact Analysis	Q3 2026 (Interim) March 2027 (Draft Annual) April 2027 (Final Annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim impact analysis identifying differences between ex ante and verified savings</li> <li>Draft annual impact evaluation report</li> <li>Final annual impact evaluation report</li> </ul>

The total budget for the evaluation of the 2026 Retail Products Initiative is \$87,000.

## 4.1.2 MARKET RATE SINGLE FAMILY INITIATIVE

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Market Rate Single Family Initiative focuses on estimating the gross and net electric energy, electric demand, natural gas, other fuel impacts, and number of participating customers associated with the offering. Process evaluation for this program will be limited to data and material review and interviews with program staff, which will help inform the impact analysis and help the evaluation team understand key context and considerations for current and future evaluation activities.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 21 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Market Rate Single Family Initiative.

Table 21. Summary of Market Rate Single Family Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Review 2026 implementation plan, marketing and outreach materials, administrative reports, policy documentation, and tracking database to inform impact analysis and document any design and implementation changes.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Conduct interviews with AIC and implementation teams to understand recent performance, explore expectations and considerations around any recent or planned developments, and review evaluation priorities.
3	Impact Analysis	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to verify accuracy and completeness, assign IL-TRM V14.0-recommended algorithms and assumptions to estimate annual gross savings, and apply SAG-approved NTGRs to estimate annual net savings.
4	Home Efficiency Channel PA Interviews		✓		Interview PAs involved in implementing the Home Efficiency channel to solicit their feedback on program coordination processes and customer needs.

### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 22 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity for the Market Rate Single Family Initiative and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 22. Summary of Market Rate Single Family Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	April and December 2026	Completed staff interviews

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
3	Impact Analysis	Q3 2026 (Interim) March 2027 (Draft Annual) April 2027 (Final Annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim impact analysis identifying differences between ex ante and verified savings</li> <li>Draft annual impact evaluation report</li> <li>Final annual impact evaluation report</li> </ul>
4	Home Efficiency Channel PA Interviews	May 2026 (Kickoff) July 2026 (Draft Instrument) October 2026 (Draft Memo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kickoff to align on key research objectives</li> <li>Draft data collection instrument</li> <li>Draft key findings memo</li> </ul>

The total budget for the evaluation of the 2026 Market Rate Single Family Initiative is \$147,100.

### 4.1.3 INCOME QUALIFIED INITIATIVE

#### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the IQ Initiative focuses on estimating gross and net electric energy, electric demand, natural gas, other fuel impacts, and number of participating customers associated with the offering. Process evaluation for this program will be limited to data and material review and interviews with program staff, which will help inform the impact analysis and help the evaluation team understand key context and considerations for current and future evaluation activities.

#### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 23 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the IQ Initiative.

Table 23. Summary of IQ Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Review 2026 implementation plan, marketing and outreach materials, administrative reports, policy documentation, and tracking database to inform impact analysis and document any design and implementation changes.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Conduct interviews with AIC and implementation teams to understand recent performance, explore expectations and considerations around any recent or planned developments, and review evaluation priorities.
3	Impact Analysis	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to verify accuracy and completeness, assign IL-TRM V14.0-recommended algorithms and assumptions to estimate annual gross savings, and apply SAG-approved NTGRs to estimate annual net savings.
4	PA Interviews (SF, CAA, JU, MHAS, and Smart Savers Channels) <sup>a</sup>		✓		Interview PAs involved in implementing select channels to solicit their feedback on coordination with program staff, engagement with customers, and how the IQ Initiative can most effectively meet customer needs and maximize energy efficiency opportunities for each engaged customer.

<sup>a</sup> PA interviews will include separate parallel efforts focusing on distinct but overlapping PA networks supporting (1) the SF, CAA, and JU channels; (2) the MHAS channel, and (3) the Smart Savers channel.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 24 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity for the IQ Initiative and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 24. Summary of IQ Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	April and December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analysis	Q3 2026 (Interim) March 2027 (Draft Annual) April 2027 (Final Annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim impact analysis identifying differences between ex ante and verified savings</li> <li>Draft annual impact evaluation report</li> <li>Final annual impact evaluation report</li> </ul>
4	PA Interviews (SF, CAA, JU, MHAS, and Smart Savers Channels) <sup>a</sup>	May 2026 (Kickoff) July 2026 (Draft Instrument) October 2026 (Draft Memo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kickoff to align on key research objectives</li> <li>Draft data collection instrument</li> <li>Draft key findings memo</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> PA interviews will include separate parallel efforts focusing on distinct but overlapping PA networks supporting (1) the SF, CAA, and JU channels; (2) the MHAS channel, and (3) the Smart Savers channel.

The total budget for the evaluation of the 2026 IQ Initiative is \$415,400.

### 4.1.4 MULTIFAMILY OFFERINGS

#### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Multifamily Offerings focuses on estimating gross and net electric energy, electric demand, natural gas, other fuel impacts, and number of participating customers associated with the offering. In addition, we will conduct on-site verification activities to estimate ISRs, confirm key building characteristics, and solicit feedback around the measure distribution and installation process.

#### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 25 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Multifamily Offerings.

Table 25. Summary of Multifamily Offerings Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Review 2026 implementation plan, marketing and outreach materials, administrative reports, policy documentation, and tracking database to inform impact analysis and document any design and implementation changes.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Conduct interviews with AIC and implementation teams to understand recent performance, explore expectations and considerations around any recent or planned developments, and review evaluation priorities.
3	Impact Analysis	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to verify accuracy and completeness, assign IL-TRM V14.0-recommended algorithms and assumptions to estimate annual gross savings, and apply SAG-approved NTGRs to estimate annual net savings.

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
4	On-Site Verification	✓	✓		Conduct virtual site visits with participating property managers and building owners to estimate ISR associated with both in-unit and common area measures for future application, confirm key building characteristics, and solicit feedback regarding measure distribution and installation processes.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 26 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity for the Multifamily Offerings and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 26. Summary of Multifamily Offerings Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	April and December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analysis	Q3 2026 (Interim) March 2027 (Draft Annual) April 2027 (Final Annual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interim impact analysis identifying differences between ex ante and verified savings</li> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report</li> </ul>
4	On-Site Verification	July 2026 (Sampling Plan and Draft Instrument) November 2026 (Draft Memo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft sampling plan and data collection instrument</li> <li>▪ Draft key findings memo</li> </ul>

The total budget for the evaluation of the 2026 Multifamily Offerings is \$138,900.

## 4.2 BUSINESS PROGRAM

### 4.2.1 STANDARD INITIATIVE

#### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Standard Initiative focuses on estimating electric energy, peak demand, natural gas impacts, and number of participating customers from Initiative activities. Process evaluation for this initiative will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team's understanding of the status of the initiative and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation.

#### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 27 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Standard Initiative.

Table 27. Summary of Standard Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about Initiative design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to ensure that the correct deemed values and IL-TRM V14.0 specified algorithms are used in calculating savings. Estimate gross impacts through a review of the tracking database and application of the IL-TRM V14.0. Determine 2026 net impacts using SAG-approved NTGR values.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 28 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 28. Summary of Standard Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Quarterly	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analyses	August 2026 March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interim impact memo delivered in August 2026</li> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Standard Initiative is \$121,280.

## 4.2.2 CUSTOM INITIATIVE

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Custom Initiative focuses on estimating electric energy, peak demand, natural gas impacts, and number of participating customers from Initiative activities. Process evaluation for this Initiative will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team’s understanding of the status of the Initiative and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation. The evaluation team will also continue its ongoing NTG research with combined heat and power (CHP) participants.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 29 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Custom Initiative.

Table 29. Summary of Custom Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about Initiative design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.
3	Net-To-Gross Research	✓	✓		Conduct NTG research with Combined Heat and Power (CHP) participants. Explore participant satisfaction with Initiative processes.

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
4	Impact Analyses	✓			Use desk review and on-site M&V results to estimate gross impacts and measure lives for the Initiative. Determine 2026 net impacts using SAG-approved NTGR values.
5	Early Reviews	✓			At the implementation team's request, review project documentation and calculations to account for analytical errors, incorrect assumptions, etc., for in-process projects.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 30 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 30. Summary of Custom Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Quarterly	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Net-To-Gross Research	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-Depth interviews with CHP customers</li> </ul>
4	Impact Analyses	March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>
5	Early Reviews	Ongoing	Project-specific early review memos

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Custom Initiative is \$418,780.

## 4.2.3 SMALL BUSINESS INITIATIVE

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Small Business Initiative focuses on estimating electric energy, peak demand, natural gas impacts, and number of participating customers from Initiative activities. Process evaluation for this Initiative will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team's understanding of the status of the Initiative and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 31 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Small Business Initiative.

Table 31. Summary of Small Business Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about Initiative design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to ensure that correct deemed values and IL-TRM V14.0 specified algorithms are used in calculating savings. Estimate gross impacts through a review of the tracking database and application of the IL-TRM V14.0. Determine 2026 net impacts using SAG-approved NTGR values.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 32 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 32. Summary of Small Business Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Quarterly	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analyses	September 2026 March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interim impact memo delivered in September 2026</li> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Small Business Initiative is \$98,180.

## 4.2.4 MIDSTREAM INITIATIVE

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Midstream Initiative focuses on estimating electric energy, peak demand, natural gas impacts, and number of participating customers from Initiative activities. Process evaluation for this Initiative will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team's understanding of the status of the Initiative and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 33 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Midstream Initiative.

Table 33. Summary of Midstream Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about Initiative design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Review Initiative tracking data to ensure that correct deemed values and IL-TRM V14.0 specified algorithms are used in calculating savings. Estimate gross impacts through a review of the tracking database and application of the IL-TRM V14.0. Determine 2026 net impacts using SAG-approved NTGR values.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 34 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 34. Summary of Midstream Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Quarterly	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analyses	August 2026 March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interim impact memo delivered in August 2026</li> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Midstream Initiative is \$107,480.

## 4.2.5 RETRO-COMMISSIONING INITIATIVE

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Retro-Commissioning Initiative focuses on estimating electric energy, peak demand, natural gas impacts, and number of participating customers from Initiative activities. Process evaluation for this Initiative will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team's understanding of the status of the Initiative and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 35 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Retro-Commissioning Initiative.

Table 35. Summary of Retro-Commissioning Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about Initiative design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Review project documentation and calculations to identify analytical errors, incorrect assumptions, etc. Collect on-site data to inform measure verification and verified gross impacts. Determine 2026 net impacts using SAG-approved NTGR values.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 36 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 36. Summary of Retro-Commissioning Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analyses	March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Retro-Commissioning Initiative is \$63,980.

## 4.2.6 VIRTUAL COMMISSIONING AND VIRTUAL SEM CHANNELS

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the VCx and Virtual SEM channels focuses on estimating electric energy and peak demand impacts, and number of participating customers from channel activities. Process evaluation for these channels will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team's understanding of the status of the channels and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 37 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Virtual Commissioning and Virtual SEM channels.

Table 37. Summary of Virtual Commissioning and Virtual SEM Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about Initiative design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Calculate verified gross and net electric savings using the IL-TRM approved approach for VCx and a custom approach for Virtual SEM. Determine the savings resulting from participation in other AIC initiatives and make adjustments accordingly. Apply the SAG-approved NTGR values to estimate net impacts.

## EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 38 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 38. Summary of Virtual Commissioning and Virtual SEM Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews
3	Impact Analyses	March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Virtual Commissioning and Virtual SEM channels is \$99,000.

## 4.2.7 BUSINESS INFORMATIONAL

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the Business Informational channel focuses on estimating electric energy and peak demand impacts and number of participating customers from channel activities. Process evaluation for the channel will be limited to interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team’s understanding of the status of the channel and inform the team of any key developments or changes to design or implementation.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 39 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Business Informational channel.

Table 39. Summary of Business Informational Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Material and Database Review	✓	✓		Gather information about channel design, implementation, and performance in 2026.
2	Staff Interviews		✓		Explore changes made since 2025 and gather information about 2026 design and implementation.
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Panel regression analysis of daily electricity consumption for treatment and control group customers to estimate channel net electric energy savings. Panel regression analysis of hourly consumption during coincident summer peak hours for treatment and control group customers to estimate pilot net electric demand savings.

### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 40 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 40. Summary of Business Informational Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Material and Database Review	Ongoing	Data requests delivered to AIC
2	Staff Interviews	July 2026 December 2026	Completed staff interviews

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
3	Impact Analyses	March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for evaluating the 2026 Business Informational channel is \$110,700.

## 4.2.8 BUSINESS PROGRAM PROCESS EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In addition to the activities described above, we have provided initial scope concepts for two activities that focus on building upon the process evaluation work completed in 2025 related to AIC’s pipeline channels. These channels are designed to provide Business customers with the information and data they need to scope, plan, and fund energy efficiency projects. Among these channels are AIC’s Strategic Energy Management channel, Process Energy Advisor Assessments, Staffing Grants, Metering & Monitoring, and others.

The research completed in 2025 focused on exploring the performance of the pipeline channels in generating energy-saving conversion projects. The evaluation team also completed secondary research to explore the pipeline offerings of other utilities and industry best practices related to engaging with and recruiting participation from large business customers. We also interviewed AIC’s Energy Advisors and explored their role in customer engagement, encouraging participation in the pipeline channels, and guiding customers from initial participation in a pipeline channel to completing projects through energy-saving channels. The scope concepts below build upon that work by conducting primary research with peer utility staff to gather additional insights and developing PTLMs or customer journey maps to assist with program design and implementation. However, we recognize that AIC is still in the process of reviewing and reacting to the pipeline process evaluation, and so the activities described below should be viewed as preliminary concepts that may be subject to significant revision depending on AIC’s response to the pipeline process evaluation findings.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 41 summarizes these additional 2026 Business Program process evaluation activities.

Table 41. Summary of Business Program Process Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Peer Utility Research		✓		Primary research with program staff at peer utilities to discuss the pipeline channels they currently offer, and have offered historically, as well as the performance of those channels.
2	PTLM / Customer Journey Maps		✓		Develop PTLMs or customer journey maps for each of AIC’s pipeline channels.

### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 42 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 42. Summary of Business Program Process Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Peer Utility Research	September 2026	Memo summarizing research findings
2	PTLM / Customer Journey Maps		PowerPoint deck with collection of PTLMs or customer journey maps.

The total budget reserved for these activities is \$110,000.

## 4.3 VOLTAGE OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the VO Program focuses on estimating energy and peak demand saving impacts and number of impacted customers associated with VO implementation. Process evaluation for this program will be limited to annual interviews with program staff, which will aid the evaluation team’s understanding of the status of the program at the start of the evaluation year and inform the team of key developments in the VO program.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 43 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the Voltage Optimization Program.

Table 43. Summary of Voltage Optimization Program Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Program Staff Interviews	✓	✓		Explore program status, progress implementing VO technology, and potential ramifications for the 2026 evaluation.
2	Data Request and Materials Review	✓			Request data needed for impact calculations, review, and assess data for quality and completeness.
3	Impact Analyses	✓			Deliver interim impact results with full-year forecast in May 2026. Calculate 2026 full-year gross impacts using an algorithmic approach in March 2027.

### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 44 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 44. Summary of Voltage Optimization Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Program Staff Interviews	May 2026	Completed staff interviews
2	Data Request and Materials Review	April 2026 January 2027	Data requests delivered to AIC
3	Impact Analysis	May 2026 March 2027 April 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Interim impact memo delivered in May 2026 containing initial estimates and forecast of 2026 program savings</li> <li>▪ Draft annual impact evaluation report delivered in March 2027</li> <li>▪ Final annual impact evaluation report delivered in April 2027</li> </ul>

The total budget for the evaluation of the 2026 Voltage Optimization Program is \$82,000.

## 4.4 MARKET TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES

### 4.4.1 LLLC INITIATIVE

#### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the LLLC MT Initiative continues the long-term evaluation started in 2024, and also augments primary data collection with the addition of sales and stocking data from distributors. The evaluation team will initiate the 2026 evaluation with a PTLM and MPI Review, and then continue formative evaluation, MPI assessment, and net savings estimates as in previous years.

#### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 45 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the LLLC MT Initiative.

Table 45. Summary of LLLC MT Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	PTLM and MPI Review		✓		Thorough review of PTLM and MPIs for internal consistency and evaluability.
2	Participant Surveys and Interviews		✓		Collect the third wave of participant survey data and the second wave of interview data to gather feedback on training and evidence of participant learning.
3	Market Actor Surveys	✓			Collect a third wave of market actor survey data to assess market progress and gauge market share for LLLCs.
4	Program Materials Review		✓		Provide feedback on market engagement materials, document completed outputs, and gather evidence of potential program influence on Initiative target markets.
5	Distributor Sales Data	✓			Estimate market share for LLLCs.
6	Savings Estimation	✓			Estimate net program savings, triangulating across market actor survey and distributor sales data as needed.

#### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 46 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 46. Summary of LLLC MT Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	PTLM and MPI Review	PTLM and MPI Review	Recommended revisions to the PTLM and MPI table
2	Participant Surveys and Interviews	Participant Surveys and Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Findings Summary</li> <li>▪ Annual report section</li> </ul>
3	Market Actor Surveys	Market Actor Surveys	Annual report section
4	Program Materials Review	Program Materials Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recommended revisions</li> <li>▪ Annual report section</li> </ul>
5	Savings Estimation	Savings Estimation	Annual report section

The total budget for the evaluation of the 2026 LLLC MT Initiative is \$169,400.

## 4.4.2 HPW INITIATIVE

### EVALUATION APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The 2026 evaluation of the HPW Initiative focuses on essential preliminary work to initiate a successful multi-year MT evaluation. This assumes the SAG will approve the HPW Business Plan in 2026 and that AIC will then begin ramping up to market interventions, which are likely to launch in 2027. The evaluation team will adjust this scope's presumed timing based on the actual SAG approval date and AIC's implementation timeline.

### EVALUATION TASKS

Table 47 summarizes the 2026 evaluation activities planned for the HPW MT Initiative.

Table 47. Summary of HPW MT Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	PTLM and MPI Review		✓		Thorough review of PTLM and MPIs for internal consistency and evaluability.
2	Market Actor Surveys	✓			Survey market actors as needed to set MPI starting values for measuring impact in later years.
3	Program Materials Review		✓		Provide feedback on initial market engagement materials.

### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 48 summarizes the timing of each 2026 evaluation activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 48. Summary of HPW MT Initiative Evaluation Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	PTLM and MPI Review	TBD Pending SAG Approval	Recommended revisions to the PTLM and MPI table
2	Market Actor Surveys	TBD Pending SAG Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Survey instruments</li> <li>▪ Annual report section</li> </ul>
3	Program Materials Review	TBD Pending SAG Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recommended revisions</li> <li>▪ Annual report section</li> </ul>

We have reserved \$120,000 for the evaluation of the 2026 HPW MT Initiative, subject to change depending on the timing and details of SAG approval for the HPW Business Plan.

## 4.4.3 EFFICIENT ROOFTOP UNITS AND ENERGY STAR RETAIL PRODUCTS PORTFOLIO

During this cycle, AIC plans to develop and launch two additional MT Initiatives: Efficient Rooftop Units and ENERGY STAR Retail Products Portfolio (ESRPP). We anticipate limited evaluation activities for these initiatives in 2026, such as providing input on data collection and sources for setting Natural Market Baselines and MPIs. We have budgeted \$40,000 each for preliminary evaluation support.

## 4.5 CROSS-CUTTING RESEARCH

During 2026, the evaluation team will conduct two cross-cutting research studies, as well as complete a periodic update of the macroeconomic and employment impact model.

### 4.5.1 RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT RESEARCH

#### RESEARCH APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In 2025, Opinion Dynamics began fielding two studies about engagement and marketing with IQ and MR customers; these studies will conclude in early- to mid-2026. Given the importance of successful engagement with residential customers, AIC anticipates additional research needs related to IQ and MR residential customer engagement during 2026. The research team will refine the scope of this study based on findings from the preceding research and consultation with AIC. Based on discussions with AIC to date, we anticipate conducting qualitative research to gain insight into customer awareness of the breadth of program offerings, to understand the needs and motivations of customers, and to examine the extent to which AIC marketing addresses those needs and motivations. Among IQ customers, AIC is particularly interested in learning from residents of manufactured homes and potentially those who use propane for heating.

#### RESEARCH TASKS

Table 49 summarizes the planned 2026 residential customer engagement research.

Table 49. Summary of Residential Customer Engagement Research for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Literature Review			✓	Find and synthesize recent publications about MR and IQ customer needs and motivations, including those residing in MHs and with propane or delivered fuels for heating.
2	Community Interviews			✓	Identify and interview up to six representatives from community-based organizations, tenant organizations, and/or homeowner's associations to learn their approaches to marketing, outreach, and education.
3	Customer Interviews			✓	Interview up to 24 total IQ and MR customers.

#### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 50 summarizes the timing of each 2026 research activity and associated key deliverables.

Table 50. Summary of Residential Customer Engagement Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Literature Review	April 2026	Report section
2	Community Interviews	May/June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft interview guide</li> <li>▪ Completed interviews</li> </ul>
3	Customer Interviews	July/August 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data request</li> <li>▪ Draft interview guide</li> <li>▪ Completed interviews</li> </ul>

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
4	Reporting	September/October 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation in September</li> <li>▪ Draft report in September</li> <li>▪ Final report in October</li> </ul>

The total budget for the Residential Customer Engagement Study is \$100,000.

## 4.5.2 LARGE BUSINESS CUSTOMER RESEARCH

### RESEARCH APPROACH AND KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study will explore the needs, barriers, and sentiment of a group of AIC’s large business customers regarding energy efficiency.<sup>22</sup> Specifically, the evaluation team will target a group of customers in AIC’s largest rate classes (e.g., DS-4, DS-3B, DS-3A, GDS-4, and GDS-3) who are not large enough to opt out of Illinois energy efficiency programs. We will investigate their barriers to investment in energy efficiency, awareness and sentiment toward AIC’s business offerings, barriers to their engagement in the business channels, drivers of energy consumption, and energy-related needs and desired support. For customers engaged with AIC energy advisors, the study will also examine their satisfaction with energy advisor engagement. As the needs of large business customers are likely unique, the study will include exploratory interviews with customers from each of the target rate classes to delve into the range of business types, needs, and barriers they experience. Working from the interview data, the research team will hone survey items to examine the same topics with larger samples of customers. The study will employ a mixed-methods analysis of interview and survey data.

### RESEARCH TASKS

Table 51 summarizes the 2026 research planned for Large Business Customer Research.

Table 51. Summary of Large Business Customer Research for 2026

#	Activity	Impact	Process	Market	Details
1	Exploratory Interviews			✓	Prepare to develop survey items for multiple customer rate classes through exploratory interviews touching on firmographics, energy-related needs, and barriers to channel participation and investment.
2	Customer Interviews			✓	Building from interviews by creating and fielding a survey exploring business types, needs, barriers, awareness, sentiment about AIC’s offerings, and experience with energy advisors.

### EVALUATION TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 52 summarizes the timing of each 2026 research activity and associated key deliverables.

Table 52. Summary of Large Business Customer Research for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Exploratory Interviews	June/July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data request</li> <li>▪ Draft interview guide</li> <li>▪ Completed interviews</li> </ul>
2	Customer Survey	August 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data request</li> </ul>

<sup>22</sup> The evaluation team completed a similar study focused on small businesses in 2023.

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft survey instrument</li> </ul>
3	Reporting	October/November 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentation in October</li> <li>▪ Draft report in November</li> <li>▪ Final report in November</li> </ul>

The total budget for the Large Business Customer Research is \$110,000.

### 4.5.3 MACROECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT IMPACT MODEL UPDATES

As detailed in Section 3.6.2, Illinois statute requires Illinois program administrators to report estimates of job and macroeconomic impacts from their energy efficiency portfolios annually at the conclusion of each year’s annual impact reporting cycle (April 30 following the year of program implementation). Opinion Dynamics currently completes this analysis annually and includes the results in the annual Integrated Impact Evaluation Report. As agreed upon with SAG, we currently use a static input-output model that is updated once per plan cycle to reflect changes in the underlying economy. Our current model was last updated in Plan 5, and therefore in 2026, we will purchase and analyze economic data that will be used to update the multipliers for our evaluation approach.

We have reserved \$25,000 of evaluation budget to support this update as part of the 2026 evaluation, the majority of which will be spent on direct costs associated with the purchase of underlying data.

### 4.5.4 IL-TRM RESEARCH STUDIES

#### KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The IL-TRM research studies planned for 2026 are designed to support the inclusion of new efficiency measures and the refinement of energy and demand savings calculations for existing measures. There will be particular focus on activities in alignment with CRGA requirements.

#### RESEARCH TOPICS

Table 53 summarizes the IL-TRM Research Studies planned for 2026.

Table 53. Summary of IL-TRM Research Activities for 2026

#	Study	Details
1	Peak Savings Calculation Review	We will review and refine the peak savings calculations for high-impact measures in the IL-TRM using third-party load shapes to verify and, if needed, modify the existing coincidence factors.
2	Streamlined calculations for complex measures	The burden of capturing participant information acts as a deterrent to program participation by trade allies. We will review collected program data from previous years to provide default values for measure parameters, where possible, reducing the burden on trade allies while maintaining the accuracy of claimed energy and demand savings.

#### RESEARCH TIMELINE AND BUDGET

Table 54 summarizes the timing of 2026 TRM study activity and key deliverables associated with each activity.

Table 54. Summary of TRM Research Activities for 2026

#	Activity	Timing	Summary of Deliverables
1	Peak Savings Review Framework	Q1 2026	Memo containing the approach to peak savings review and calculation revisions.
2	Peak Savings Calculation Review	April–August 2026	Updated calculation methods and coincidence factors for high-impact TRM measures.
3	Meet with AIC staff and program implementer to identify measures with high trade ally burden	April 2026	List of measures/parameters to review for potential streamlining of measure calculations
4	Develop proposed parameters for streamlined calculations	June 2026	Proposed default parameters for the IL TAC

We have reserved \$155,000 of evaluation budget to support our ongoing TAC engagement as well as for the above activities.

## 4.6 2026 EVALUATION BUDGET SUMMARY

Table 55 outlines the estimated budget to execute the 2026 evaluation plans presented in Section 4, as well as budget allocations for other overarching portfolio activities as described in Section 3.6.<sup>23</sup>

Table 55. 2026 AIC Evaluation Budget

Evaluation Activity		Budget
<b>Program-Specific Activities</b>		
Residential Program	Retail Products	\$87,000
	Market Rate Single Family	\$147,100
	Income Qualified	\$415,400
	Multifamily Offerings	\$138,900
Business Program	Standard	\$121,280
	Custom	\$418,780
	Small Business	\$98,180
	Midstream	\$107,480
	Retro-Commissioning	\$63,980
	Virtual Commissioning & Virtual SEM	\$99,000
	Informational	\$110,700
	Other Business Program Process Evaluation Activities	\$110,000
Market Transformation Initiatives	LLLC MTI Evaluation	\$169,400
	HPW MTI Evaluation	\$120,000
	ESRPP MTI Support	\$40,000
	Efficient Rooftop Units MTI Support	\$40,000
Voltage Optimization Program		\$82,000
<b>Total Program-Specific Activities</b>		<b>\$2,369,200</b>
<b>Portfolio-Level Cross-Cutting Activities</b>		
Compliance and Stakeholder Engagement Activities		\$370,000
Cross-Cutting Evaluation Research		\$235,000
Quality Assurance and Control		\$20,000
Portfolio Evaluation Reporting		\$50,000
Other Non-Program Activities (Project Management, Evaluation Planning, Program Design Support, etc.)		\$440,000
<b>Total Portfolio-Level Cross-Cutting Activities</b>		<b>\$1,215,000</b>
Contingency		\$164,050
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$3,648,250</b>

<sup>23</sup> Please note that the evaluation of the VO Program is separately funded and budget allocated to this evaluation is not fungible.  
Opinion Dynamics



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