



**AIA**  
Minnesota



**AIA**  
St. Paul

January 14, 2020

Honorable Members of the Saint Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West, 310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

**RE: THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE 19-81 TO BENCHMARK COMMERCIAL AND  
MULTIFAMILY BUILDING ENERGY AND WATER USAGE**

Dear Council Members,

On behalf of AIA Minnesota and AIA St. Paul, we are writing in full support of the proposed ordinance 19-81 to benchmark commercial and multifamily building energy and water usage in St. Paul. AIA Minnesota is the professional organization of over 2,400 Minnesota architects, with AIA St. Paul representing more than 400 architects in the area. Addressing the impacts of the built environment on climate change is a top policy priority for our organizations.

We strongly support the proposed ordinance to require buildings in Saint Paul to measure their energy and water performance. Emissions from building energy usage account for over 60% of Saint Paul's greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to our climate crisis, and benchmarking is a first step towards addressing these emissions. Benchmarking building energy and water usage is also a best practice; US EPA found that buildings that benchmarked over a 3-year time span reduced energy consumption by an average of 2.4% annually. Recognizing this, over 30 cities nationwide, including Minneapolis, Saint Louis Park, and Edina, have passed benchmarking ordinances. In fact, over 200 buildings in Saint Paul have benchmarked since 2018 through the city's voluntary program, the Race to Reduce.

Benchmarking is an effective, low-cost way to encourage energy and water efficiency in Saint Paul's buildings. By passing this ordinance, the City Council will be taking an important step towards making our city more resilient. We strongly support the proposed ordinance.

Sincerely,

Karen Lu, AIA  
AIA Minnesota President  
Snow Kreilich Architects

Mary-Margaret Zindren, CAE  
Executive Vice President  
AIA Minnesota and AIA St. Paul