

REQUEST FOR
QUALIFICATIONS

KNOZONE

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PUBLIC
EDUCATION AND AIR POLLUTION
MITIGATION INITIATIVE

CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

ISSUED: JUNE 1, 2026



POTENTIAL PARTNER,

Thank you for your interest in the Knozone request for qualifications. This is an opportunity to partner with the City to make Central Indiana a cleaner, healthier region for Hoosiers via air quality education and air pollution reduction strategies.

Our mission is to improve local air quality awareness and reduce sources of air pollution through three (3) main categories of work:

- 1. Educating on Air Quality & Electrification for Public Health**
- 2. Influencing the Market & Accelerating Behavior Change**
- 3. Managing Partnerships & Building Coalitions**

The following RFQ is intended to help the City understand the experience and capacity of organizations/teams interested in a long-term creative partnership. General areas of responsibility include:

- Project management
- Digital and print media content creation
- Media buys and contract negotiations
- Market research and analysis
- Stakeholder engagement
- Policy research and program design
- Public event management



GENERAL INFORMATION

The City of Indianapolis first implemented an ozone awareness program (dubbed Knozone) in 1996 as a means to reduce the city's instances of exceeding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ground-level ozone. In 1997, fine particulate matter (PM2.5) was also added to the education and awareness campaign.

Knozone was designed to be a public education program to inform residents in Marion and surrounding counties on measures to protect public health and individual actions to reduce ground-level ozone and PM2.5 pollution.

At the time of its inception, most local residents were not aware that Central Indiana had problems with ground-level ozone or PM2.5 and had limited knowledge about both pollutants.

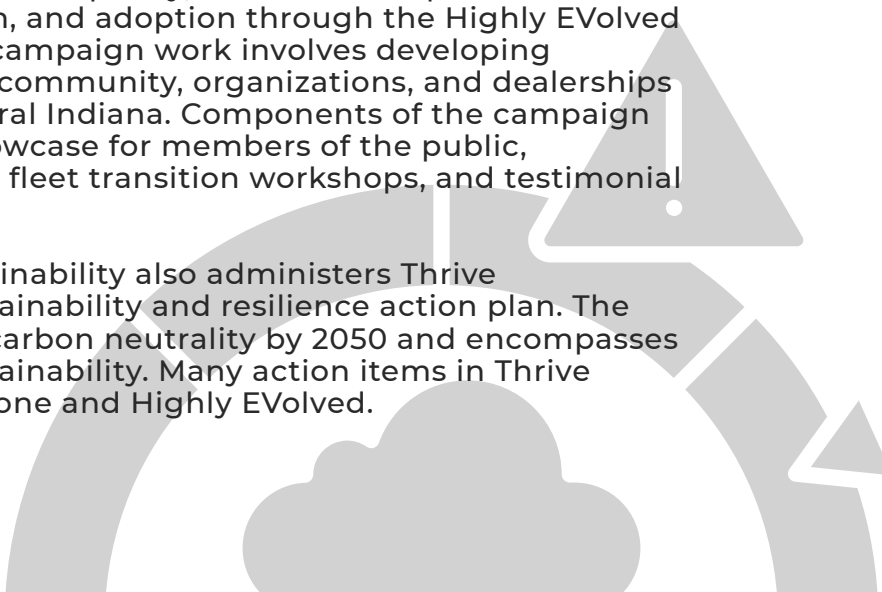
When the regional air quality is forecasted to exceed national standards, the Indianapolis Office of Sustainability issues a Knozone Action Day to help protect Central Indiana's vulnerable populations and engage residents in actions that will reduce air pollution. More than 624,000 people living in Central Indiana are considered vulnerable to unhealthy air quality, including children, the elderly, and anyone who is pregnant or diagnosed with asthma, COPD, or a lung or heart condition. With a broadcast media area of more than 1.8 million people, the pollution reduction potential is significant.

Due to the success of the initiative, the most recent research suggests that now 78% of regional Hoosiers are aware of Knozone and 65% take action to reduce their emissions on Knozone Action Days.

Other Knozone projects have included pilot studies of free bikeshare access for residents, public bike rack distribution and installation, support of air quality education and bike instruction in schools, and an educational exhibit at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis's STEM Lab.

In addition to public outreach on air quality, Knozone incorporates electric vehicle (EV) education, outreach, and adoption through the Highly EVolved campaign. The Highly EVolved campaign work involves developing partnerships with the business community, organizations, and dealerships to advance EV adoption in Central Indiana. Components of the campaign have included an annual EV showcase for members of the public, workplace charging workshops, fleet transition workshops, and testimonial videos of local employers.

The Indianapolis Office of Sustainability also administers Thrive Indianapolis, the city's first sustainability and resilience action plan. The plan guides a path to citywide carbon neutrality by 2050 and encompasses eight different elements of sustainability. Many action items in Thrive coincide with the goals of Knozone and Highly EVolved.



AIR QUALITY IN CENTRAL INDIANA

OZONE & PM2.5

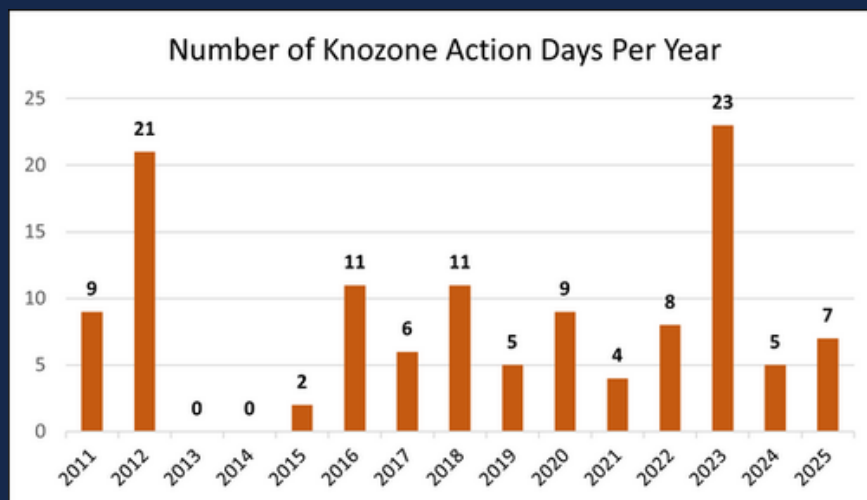
Ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (PM2.5) are the two main air pollutants in Central Indiana.

Ground-level ozone is caused by a chemical reaction in the atmosphere with pollution from power plants and vehicles that reacts with sunlight and high temperatures. More hotter days means a higher risk of ground-level ozone and the health issues that come with it.

PM2.5 is made up of microscopic particles in the air—things like smoke, dust, dirt, and soot. Sources include wildfires, diesel vehicles, and fireplaces.

The American Lung Association’s annual State of the Air report regularly ranks the Indianapolis metropolitan area among some of the worst metro areas in the country for particle pollution. Marion County received failing grades in the 2026 report for ozone, 24-hour particle pollution, and annual particle pollution.

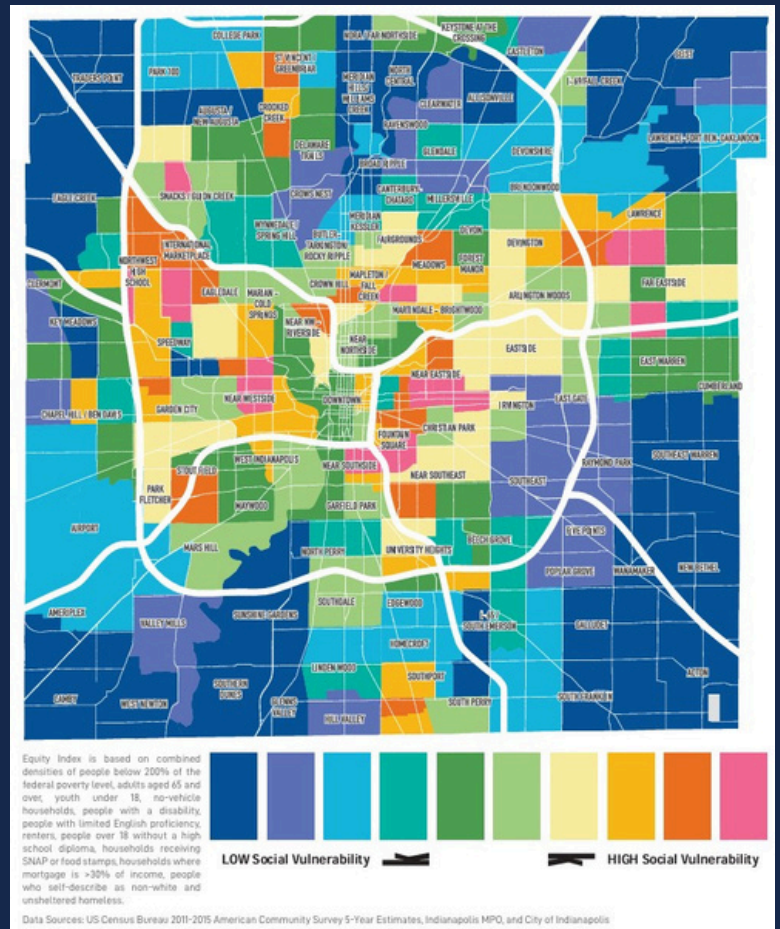
Mass public education via the Knozone initiative can help people take precautions on Knozone Action Days that prioritize their family’s health needs. Additionally, successful Knozone policies and programs can reduce the amount of air pollution being emitted and thus reduce the number of Knozone Action Days we experience.



THRIVE INDIANAPOLIS

The Indianapolis Office of Sustainability administers Thrive Indianapolis, the first sustainability and resilience action plan in Indy's history. As a division of the Department of Public Works, the Office of Sustainability promotes an environmentally sustainable city through various programs and partnerships that address the root causes of climate change.

In conjunction with the development of Thrive Indianapolis, the City completed a Social Vulnerability Index which identifies areas in greatest need of resilience investment. It demonstrates how *where* a person lives has a tremendous effect on *how* a person lives.



Across Indianapolis and the Central Indiana region, different neighborhoods experience different air quality due to a variety of factors including historic under-investment. Some neighborhoods are exposed to disproportionate levels of pollution and may be less likely to access helpful information or resources.

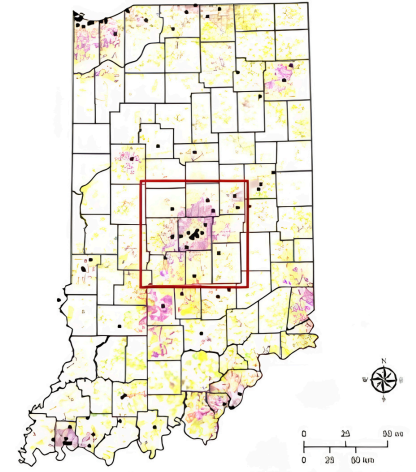
Successful Knozone education campaigns and programs will incorporate equity in their design. Projects should reach people across demographics—age, ability, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language, sexuality, and geographic location. Ideally, benefits of cleaner air should be accessible to those living in areas of greatest need.



PROJECT LOCATION

City of Indianapolis and the Central Indiana region, including Boone, Hamilton, Madison, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, Morgan, and Hendricks counties.

State Air Monitoring Network



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Managing the Knozone initiative requires a professional service consultant who can project manage the various components of the program and subcontract with experts in qualified fields for completion of all required elements.

The selected vendor will be able to provide qualifications associated with the following core responsibilities:

- Storytelling, Awareness, + Education
- Data, Research, + Performance
- Organizational + Corporate Engagement
- Designing Public Programs to Influence Behavior + Markets

A successful vendor may have an educational and professional background in urban planning or marketing and any associated licenses.

ANTICIPATED SCOPE OF WORK

The selected vendor should expect to include subcontractors to satisfy all of the required elements. The selected vendor will provide an annual plan to the City for approval and coordinate any subcontractors to provide a cohesive execution of the approved annual plan.



**AIR QUALITY &
ELECTRIFICATION EDUCATION
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**



**INFLUENCING THE MARKET &
ACCELERATING BEHAVIOR
CHANGE**



**MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS &
BUILDING COALITIONS**

The selected vendor is expected to have staffing continuity to minimize account management turnover over the term of the contract. The selected vendor is also expected to participate in monthly meetings and work with the City's program manager on strategic planning and budgeting as well as general communication.

AIR QUALITY & ELECTRIFICATION EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Create mass public awareness via:

- Digital content creation
- Print media design + production
- Radio, television, and outdoor advertising purchases and contract negotiations
- Curriculum/exhibit/lesson plan creation
- Public meetings
- Other innovative strategies to reach vulnerable populations



INFLUENCING THE MARKET & ACCELERATING BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Design programs + policies such as:

- A public Electric Vehicle Showcase
- Electric lawn equipment rebate program
- Public bike rack distribution
- Free IndyGo service on Knozone Action Days
- Other innovative strategies



MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS & BUILDING COALITIONS

Engage stakeholders including:

- Public health workers
- Youth-serving organizations
- Schools and childcare facilities
- Employers with commuting employees and landscaping operations
- Other innovative partnerships



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- **Cover Letter**
 - Organization name, contact name, address, phone number, and email address
- **General Information**
 - Company/organization history
 - Identification of key personnel
 - Any special certificates or licenses
 - A list of services and rates
- **Examples of Previous Work and Experience**
 - Provide a description of the organization's experience managing similar public health education/outreach focused projects or campaigns, earning brand recognition via various media channels, planning and hosting large public advocacy-focused events, and/or designing and implementing strategies related to public policy, asset distribution, data gathering, outcome evaluation, or something similar.
 - Document organization's capacity and intent to proceed without delay if selected for this work.
 - Provide a detailed description of the organization's ability to implement the Anticipated Scope of Work.
 - Other information relevant to convening the agency's strengths and significance to this initiative.
 - Three (3) business references; preference will be given to references where similarly requested services were performed. Do not include references currently employed by the City. References should include: Name; title; address; phone number; email address; brief description of services performed.
 - If applicable, please provide a list of lawsuits that your company has been a party to as related to the types of services provided in this RFQUAL. For each lawsuit, please provide a brief description of the facts at issue as well as the resulting outcome.

MBE/WBE/VBE/DOBE (“XBE”) PARTICIPATION FORM OR WAIVER

It is the policy of the City that Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), Veteran Business Enterprises (VBEs), and Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBEs) shall have the maximum feasible opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts. Consequently, the City, through Article IV, Section 202-401 of the revised municipal code & The Consolidated City of Indianapolis and Marion County MBE/WBE/VBE/DOBE Business Utilization Plan in Indianapolis, has established MBE participation goals of 15%, WBE participation goals of 8%, VBE participation goals of 3%, and DOBE participation goals of 1% for its dollars spent on public works, goods, and services.

In order to help accomplish this goal, the City is requesting that you include with your submittal information regarding your status as an MBE, WBE, VBE, or DOBE. Additionally, please include contact information for any MBE, WBE, VBE, or DOBE owned Vendors directly participating in your business operations. The City also requests contact information for any MBE, WBE, VBE, or DOBE sub-contractors that you might use in the course of doing business with the City. Some examples of this kind of service include, but are not limited to: office suppliers, courier services, shipping services, etc. These services can occur at the local, state, or national level. Please include an estimated percentage or dollar amount that you anticipate using.

Be advised that the information provided on MBE/WBE/VBE/DOBE participation will be included as part of the scoring criteria for this RFP. Accordingly, it is imperative that you do everything possible to obtain the information above and supply it as part of the submittal.

In order to be recognized by the City of Indianapolis/Marion County as an MBE/WBE/VBE/DOBE participant, your company must be certified with the Office of Minority & Women Business Development (OMWBD). The City will recognize only City of Indianapolis certified firms regardless of any other state or national affiliation.

If you should need assistance in obtaining information or certification for possible participation in a contract, please contact the OMWBD on the Internet at www.indy.gov/omwbd or by phone at (317) 327-5262.

Respondents can view a list of City OMWBD approved MBE/WBE/VBE/DOBE vendors by going to this web page: <https://www.indy.gov/activity/find-omwbd-contractor> and selecting the appropriate monthly “Vendor Listing” spreadsheet.

COMPENSATION/COST

Since this is a Request for Qualifications only, **any Vendor submission of compensation/costs will cause your submittal to be rejected.** After the City selects a short list of candidates, negotiations will begin with each Vendor and the City will encourage, only at that time, innovative responses regarding compensation / costs for representing the City in providing consulting services.

The Knozone agreement will last for three (3) years and be compensated between \$960,000 and \$1,200,000.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Questions may be submitted before June 15, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time by email to sustainindy@indy.gov. The City will respond no later than June 22, 2026.

Please provide an electronic submission of the responses to this Request for Qualifications. Submissions must be received before noon Eastern Time on June 26, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted or considered.

Please send your submittal via email to sustainindy@indy.gov on or before June 26, 2026 at noon Eastern Time. Subject must read Knozone - 2413FFE.

Submissions must be signed by a representative of the respondent organizations authorized to submit and establish fees on behalf of the respondent organization and bind the respondent organizations to the terms and conditions of this RFQUAL.

CONDITIONS

- The selected vendor should be in compliance with the Good Wages Initiative (GWI) certification program led by EmployIndy. GWI recognizes Marion County employers who pay full-time employees at least \$18/hour and offer access to health insurance. There is no cost to certify. Any sub-contractors engaged by the selected vendor for work on the Knozone contract should also be in compliance with GWI requirements.
- By submitting a response to this RFQ, each responder agrees that all of its related expenses are its sole responsibility, and that the City will not be responsible for any costs whatsoever incurred by any responder in connection with or resulting from this RFQ and the evaluation process, including but not limited to, costs for submission preparation, travel and per diem, attending interviews, providing presentations or demonstrations, and participating in agreement negotiation sessions.
- Pursuant to the Indiana Access to Public Records Act (APRA), I.C. 5-14-3, et. seq., and Section 141-105 of the Revised Code of Indianapolis and Marion County, all RFQ submissions and any following communications and contractual agreements shall be public records subject to disclosure upon request, and may be posted to the City's website. If a responder believes that any information in its submittal is subject to non-disclosure pursuant to I.C. § 5-14-3-4(a), the responder must: (a) request the City to treat the information as confidential; (b) assert in writing the proper statutory exemption(s) from disclosure, such as the exemption for trade secret information under I.C. § 5-14-3-4(a)(4) or confidential financial information of a person under I.C. § 5-14-3-4(a)(5), and provide a brief explanation of the basis for such assertion(s); (c) place the information for which confidential treatment is sought in a sealed envelope, labeled as "Request to Maintain as Confidential" and include in the submittal a section stating that information the responder deems confidential has been so submitted; and (d) to the extent that the information for which confidential treatment is sought is contained in a document that also contains non-confidential information, the responder shall provide a redacted version with its submittal. If the City does not agree that information requested for confidential treatment is in fact confidential under APRA, the responder will be notified and afforded reasonable time to present additional justification prior to release of the information. The City reserves the right to make the final determination in accordance with the law.
- The Consolidated City of Indianapolis and Marion County has a strict non-discrimination policy. Accordingly, any organization submitting a RFQ response shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment in the preparation of the LOI or the performance of any agreement that may arise as a result of this RFQ with respect to her or his hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, or any matter directly or indirectly related to employment, because of her or his race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or United States military service veteran status.
- The Consolidated City of Indianapolis and Marion County is exempt from federal, state and local taxes.