

Riverside Watershed Environmental Living Lab Systems (RWELLS): Water and Energy Project Development

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Climate change, carbon emissions, water, energy and jobs are global concerns, and inner city neighborhoods are severely impacted. To meet these challenges requires grassroots participation from the residents of these neighborhoods, businesses/industries, city governments, utilities, and academic institutions. While there are many excellent public and private programs to assist urban neighborhood residents, RWELLS is unique because it will involve neighbors helping neighbors in developing long-term sustainable solutions in which they have ownership. This initiative will instill hope back into families because it will create jobs through entrepreneurship. Solving problems related to climate change, carbon emissions, water and energy can create opportunities and result in new business start-ups. RWELLS will demonstrate how solving these problems can lead to new solutions, best practices, new jobs, etc. RWELLS is expected to become a national and international model of a futuristic neighborhood with a goal of zero leakage of their water and sewer lines. This will be done by establishing a strategic and tactical water asset management program. The objective of RWELLS is to demonstrate a new model where IUPUI will work closely with the neighborhood leaders, residents, and families to start up and operate businesses to meet the major global challenges mentioned previously. A major focus will be to assist women and minorities who will own and operate these businesses. RWELLS will serve as a center of excellence for neighborhood, municipal and utility leaders to join with industry and researchers, using sound science to evaluate watershed, environmental and energy related issues to develop futuristic neighborhoods and cities which are energy neutral and free of contamination and pollution benefiting all stakeholders by protecting public health, improving the environment, maximizing asset life-cycle value, sustaining economic development, and enhancing the quality of life.