



NYSERDA Commercial Tenant Program; Part 2: Can Tenant Build-Outs Be Modeled?

By Jack Jenkins

Welcome to part two of our five-part series on NYSERDA's new \$5.75 million Commercial Tenant Program.

As a reminder: the program will pay 50% of the cost of energy modeling for tenant fit-out projects in New York. Having worked on the program's pilots, we are sharing some of our insights via this series of short updates.

[If you missed part one you can find it here](#)

In this part we offer our take on whether and how energy modeling can be applied to tenant build-out projects.

PART 2: CAN ENERGY MODELING BE USED FOR TENANT BUILD-OUTS?

Tenant build-outs can be a challenging application for energy models. Modelers are often more familiar with whole buildings than with the specific challenges of part-floor build-outs. Detailed modeling can also often seem slow. Whereas fast paced build-out projects need answers quickly if they are to affect design decisions.

However, in our experience, when done right, energy modeling is a powerful tool that can help tenant projects test out how much ideas will save before committing to them. It can also help get ideas approved: providing expert technical analysis to support the business case for investment or operational change.

The key is to do energy modeling in a way that is both suited to the fast pace of tenant projects, and that is focused on the tenant: allowing their cost savings to be broken out separately from those of the building.

At RDA, we do this by following a simple three step approach to modeling of tenant space:

- 1) **Idea Generation:** agreeing a list of energy saving ideas for the project. Focusing on the tenant space: its design, its operation and the building systems supporting it.
- 2) **Interim Modeling:** providing initial results early in the design process; to assist in making key design decisions.
- 3) **Final Modeling:** revisiting the interim analysis in light of the final project details and design decisions.

We also use our own proprietary analytical tools to break out cost savings for the tenant separately from those of the building.

The result is a process that takes the best that energy modeling has to offer and applies it in a way that works for tenant projects: giving both tenants and buildings an understanding of what they individually stand to gain from the energy saving ideas that are on the table.



Jack Jenkins, CEA, LEED AP BD+C

Jack leads the Energy and Sustainability group at RDA. He is a keen advocate for a greener economy, and has spent over 10 years providing independent analysis to help organizations both become more sustainable and cut their energy costs.

:: [E-mail Jack](#)

In part three, we will look at whether there is actually much tenants can do to save energy.

We will also have another example of an energy saving idea from one of our recent tenant projects. [Click here to make sure you don't miss out.](#)

Planning a tenant project? [Get in touch:](#) we will talk you through whether energy modeling is a good fit.