June 14, 2019

TO: Local Newspapers and radio stations

FR: Claire Whalen, OSF, Chair, Oldenburg Renewable Energy Commission

RE: Oldenburg takes stock of greenhouse gas emissions as part of IU Inaugural Resilience Cohort

Oldenburg’s all volunteer study group, Renewable Energy Commission (OREC), will spend the summer collecting information about community-wide greenhouse gas emissions as one of thirteen communities selected to be a part of Indiana University’s first Resilience Cohort. See attached photo of OREC members and its wider mission.

Findings from the community-wide greenhouse gas inventory will be used to help residents and local officials understand Oldenburg’s current emissions profile and to help Town Council members to create an action plan to reduce emissions, increase energy efficiency and improve air quality.

A greenhouse gas inventory is a fundamental first step for Hoosier cities, towns and counties committed to combating the climatic changes communities in Indiana are already experiencing, such as heavier rainfalls in spring and winter, more river and flash flood events and more freeze-thaw events wreaking havoc on transportation infrastructure and potholes. The inventory process will provide 2018 and/or 2017 data on the amount of energy consumed, the diversity of energy supplied to the grid, vehicle fuel use within the town boundary, the amount of waste generated within the town boundary and more.

Dennis Moeller, Oldenburg Town Council President, commended the work of OREC.  He stated, "Not only will the results show where we stand regarding our carbon footprint, but at the same time I hope it brings to light glaring inefficiencies that can be subsequently dealt with to help our bottom line and the environment we live in. I also wish to thank the Environmental Resilience Institute for inviting our town’s participation in this state-wide project.”

The Resilience Cohort was established by the Environmental Resilience Institute, an Indiana University Prepared for Environmental Change Grand Challenge initiative. The Cohort is made up of 13 Indiana cities, towns and counties that will complete their inventories this summer. As part of the Cohort, OREC has access to technical resources, a peer network, and training through ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, a nonprofit that specializes in helping local governments with emissions inventories.

“We are delighted that these 13 Indiana communities have chosen to take a critical early step on the path to reducing carbon emissions and enhancing air quality,” said Ellen Ketterson, Director of IU’s Environmental Resilience Institute. “The findings from these greenhouse gas inventories will provide a roadmap for local officials to address emissions produced in their own backyards, improve public health, and strengthen the resilience of Hoosier communities.”

The Oldenburg Town Council anticipates that the Inventory will be done by the completion of the Resilience Cohort, September 15, 2019.

Other Resilience Cohort participants include Bloomington, Carmel, Columbus, Delaware County / Muncie, Evansville, Fort Wayne, Gary, Greencastle, Goshen, Michigan City, Richmond and West Lafayette.

About the Prepared for Environmental Change initiative:

The Indiana University Prepared for Environmental Change Grand Challenge initiative brings together a broad, bipartisan coalition of government, business, nonprofit and community leaders to help Indiana better prepare for the challenges that environmental changes bring to our economy, health and livelihood. Announced in May 2017, Prepared for Environmental Change is working to deliver tailored and actionable solutions to communities across the state of Indiana.