



MAYOR JORGE O. ELORZA  
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

# ENERGY & CLIMATE JUSTICE IN PROVIDENCE

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City of Providence

December 19, 2022



# Equity in Sustainability Initiative

- Partnered with the Racial and Environmental Justice Committee (REJC) to apply the *Just Providence Framework* – a set of principles developed by frontline community members of Providence



## Excerpts from The Just Providence Framework

### A Racially Equitable & Just Providence:

The full version is available at [www.providenceRI.gov/sustainability/equity](http://www.providenceRI.gov/sustainability/equity).

#### 1 Moves us toward el Buen Vivir.

- Ensuring that **frontline communities** enjoy their fundamental right to **quality of life** and liberty and to live free from discrimination and oppression;
- Prioritizing the well-being of our children, youth and elders;
- Centers conversations about the future of Providence on the communities most affected by inequities.

#### 2 Supports Safe Spaces for Frontline Communities of Color

including politically and financially supporting physical and psychological safe spaces built by and for **frontline communities** where we can heal and lead. Acknowledging **gentrification** and committing to stopping the **displacement** of indigenous and people of color, especially by developers and universities; An end to surveillance, police brutality in **frontline communities** that creates a culture of fear and repression.

#### 3 Knows people are sacred and respects their cultures.

#### 4 Upholds Self Determination.

**Frontline communities** are autonomous and have the right to craft decisions that impact their lives and their communities. **Frontline communities** have the resilience and expertise to be our own leaders. It is only in the dignity of our **self determination** that we can thrive as a community.

#### 5 Co-creates and co-leads governance

with **frontline communities** of color and the City of Providence to protect the space for communities' **self-determination**, and ensure equitable access to resources, information, and power.

#### 6 Values education for our children and youth.

#### 7 Practices Local, Regional, National and International Solidarity.

#### 8 Supports meaningful work.

#### 9 Requires building a sustainable local economy

in which we produce and consume to live well without living better at the expense of others.

This includes:

- Zero Waste
- Clean and Efficient Public Transportation
- Clean Community Energy
- Regional Food & Water Systems
- Efficient, Affordable, Durable Housing
- Ecosystem Restoration & Stewardship

#### 10 Respects Community rights to Land, Water, and Food Sovereignty by:

- Supporting land ownership by people of color.
- Supporting education for people of color about their rights to land, water and food.

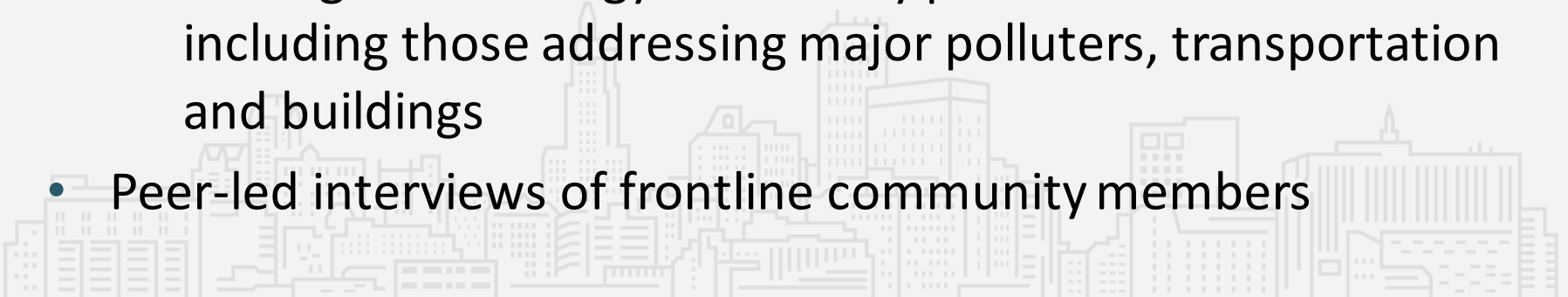
#### 11 Works to end the extractive economy.

- Eliminate fossil fuel dependence and wasteful use of scarce metals and minerals;
- Eliminate production of plastics, toxic chemicals, synthetic substances and our dependency on them;
- Reduce waste and eliminate wasteful practices that hurt our environment and ecosystems;
- Eliminate destruction of nature and invasion of natural spaces (e.g., land, water, wildlife, forests, soil, ecosystems).

# Energy Democracy Community Leaders Program

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- Series of compensated workshops for a cohort of frontline community members (summer of 2018)
- Ensure community had the resources and information needed to make decisions about energy in Providence:
  - How energy is produced, distributed and consumed
  - The impact of fossil fuels on communities of color
  - Strategies for energy democracy possible for Providence including those addressing major polluters, transportation and buildings
- Peer-led interviews of frontline community members





# Climate Justice Plan

## From the frontline of Providence's climate crisis

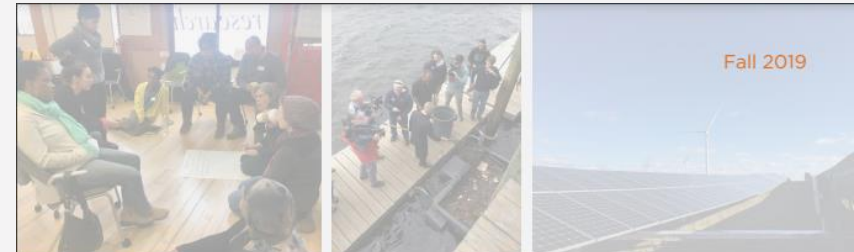
"Not every room in my house has heat! Radiators are missing or broken. Windows are a mess and the outside air come right through the walls. Gotta use space heaters, but can't really afford it. ... [Summer is] so hot I have to go outside. Can't even open windows in my apartment. More access to AC would make a big difference for my family."

"There are not enough places for kids to play and be near nature. Even Roger Williams Park is surrounded by highways!"

"Every time our community gets cleaned up, white folks want it and start moving us out. ... **We need to make sure we won't get kicked out before we push to make good things happen.**"

"Those huge tanks at the **Port** are just scary. They look like they could blow up anytime. Wait, I think something did a few months ago! And then nasty stuff spilled on Allens. **What are they bringing in and out of there anyway? Definitely not benefiting me, just adds to traffic pollution and make me wish I could move.**"

"Why are buses in RI so hard to use? Not enough routes and stops. Not on time. You just need a car around here, and if you can't afford one it is really difficult to get around."



Fall 2019

## The City of Providence's **CLIMATE JUSTICE PLAN**

Creating an equitable, low-carbon, and climate resilient future.



# Community Choice Aggregation



We can use our  
community's combined  
buying power to bring  
local, renewable energy  
to everyone affordably

# American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for electrification



**SUSTAINABILITY: \$7,700,000**

Provide a better quality of life for all residents while ensuring adequate community infrastructure to respond to and prepare for the impacts of climate change in the City's frontline communities and to support the growth of green economic sectors within the City.

**Resiliency Infrastructure in Frontline Communities \$1,700,000**

<b>Stormwater and Sewer Repair</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>
<b>Street Sweeping and Sewer Repair</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>

**TOTAL SUSTAINABILITY INVESTMENT: \$7,700,000**

**APPLY TODAY!**

**#PVDRESCUEPLAN**

Funds are now available through the  
***Electrification of  
Institutionally-Owned Affordable  
Housing Program.***

Applications Open: **December 1, 2022**

Applications Close: **January 9, 2023**

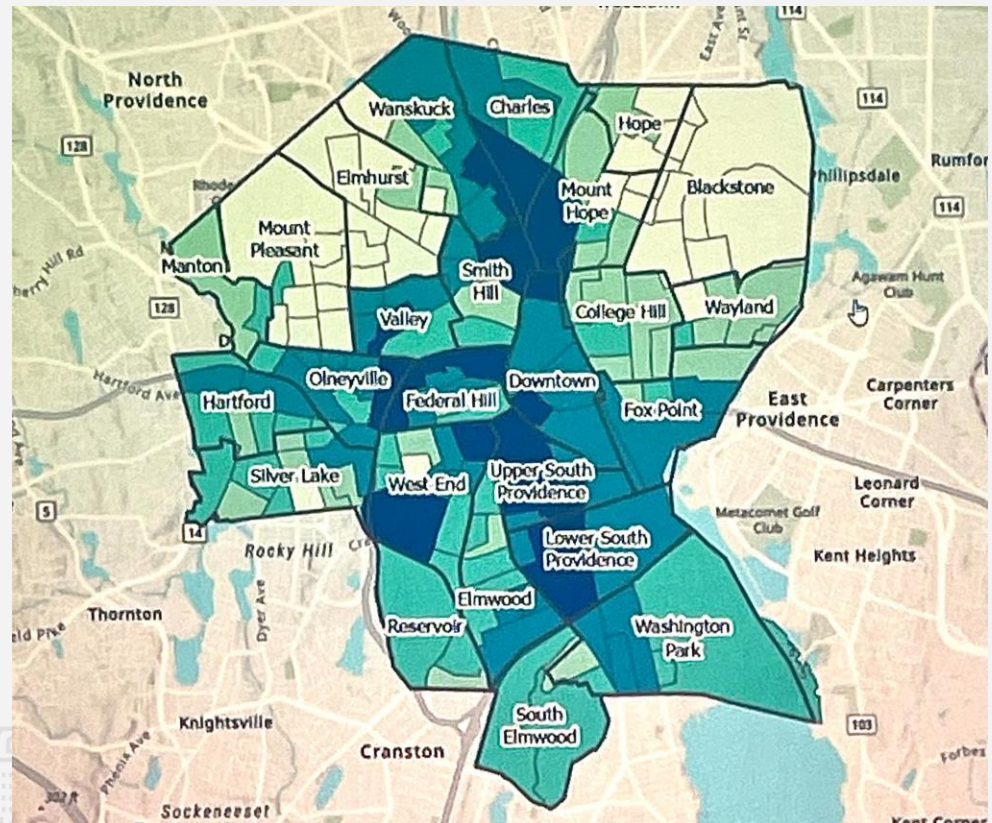
Learn more and apply here: [PVDRescuePlan.com/Apply](https://PVDRescuePlan.com/Apply)





# Municipal building/capital investments

- Municipal building and capital investments should include community collaboration and prioritize buildings most used by frontline communities and/or located in *Green Justice Zones*
  - Environmental justice populations
  - Human-caused pollution and natural hazards
- Trusted city-owned or non city-owned sites (recreation centers, schools, community libraries) as potential *resilience hubs*





# THANK YOU

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City of Providence

