

# BUILDING ENERGY REPORTING: HARNESSING MARKET FORCES TO SAVE ENERGY AND DRIVE INVESTMENT IN PROVIDENCE BUILDINGS

The City of Providence has set a goal to become a carbon neutral city by 2050, pledging to adhere to the Paris Agreement and tackle the climate crisis. Buildings account for 70% of Providence's greenhouse gas emissions so improving the energy efficiency of our buildings is critical to achieving the City's climate goals. Providence's Sustainable Providence Plan and the Climate Justice Plan both point to reporting and disclosing energy use in buildings as an essential strategy for reducing climate pollution. Over 28 cities and two states have passed benchmarking policies that require buildings to measure and report their energy use. The City then discloses that data publicly, bringing transparency to the marketplace and unlocking the economic, health, and environmental benefits of energy efficiency.

## GOALS

1. **SAVE MONEY** - Lower energy costs for Providence building owners and tenants.
2. **CREATE LOCAL JOBS** - Support growth of the energy efficiency industry in Providence.
3. **PROTECT OUR HEALTH** - Reduce harmful pollution by using less energy and improving indoor air quality.
4. **LEAD THE NATION** - Promote Providence's position as a leading sustainable city to attract talent and new businesses.

## THE OPPORTUNITY

There is a need to dramatically improve the efficiency of buildings in Providence. They consume large amounts of electricity and gas, driving up energy costs and contributing significantly to the climate crisis. There is an enormous potential for saving money, creating jobs, and reducing pollution through cost-effective energy efficiency improvements. Unleashing this potential could be worth millions of dollars for Providence, but we need consistent and accurate building energy data in order to take action. Furthermore, having information on buildings' energy use would benefit building owners and managers and tenants who can use the data to make informed decisions on how to improve energy use in their buildings. Prospective building tenants can make better leasing decisions based on a full understanding of their potential energy costs and environmental impact. High-quality and consistent data on building performance also allows energy efficiency programs to target rebates and incentives to buildings where there is the most potential for savings.



## THE SOLUTION

### PROVIDE THE MARKETPLACE WITH ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT BUILDING ENERGY PERFORMANCE SIMPLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

The marketplace needs current and accurate information about how buildings are performing, derived from tools applied consistently across all major buildings.

#### WHAT:

##### **BUILDING ENERGY REPORTING ORDINANCE**

- This ordinance requires large commercial, institutional, and multifamily building owners to use ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager to assess their buildings' energy performance and report energy use information to the City, which then verifies and discloses that data to the public. Twenty-eight other cities across the U.S. such as Boston, Saint Louis, Kansas City, and Orlando have successfully adopted similar policies that help conserve energy.

#### HOW:

##### **COMPLIANCE IS EASY AND BENEFICIAL**

- The ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager tool is simple to use and is free of charge. It provides standardized and easily understood data by which building performance can be compared. Providence professionals are knowledgeable in Portfolio Manager and are ready to take action. The City has been using this tool to benchmark its buildings since 2010. It is also used by building owners in the RePowerPVD Energy Challenge Program, as well as by the state and other utility energy programs.

#### WHY:

**KNOWLEDGE IS POWER** - There is strong evidence that ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager helps drive energy efficiency improvements. For the 35,000 buildings that used the tool to benchmark energy performance from 2008 to 2011, average energy use declined by 7 percent.

##### **SAVE MONEY WHILE GROWING THE ECONOMY AND PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY**

- Through the use of ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, building owners often discover that they can cut energy use by 20 to 30 percent with very short payback periods. This level of energy savings means big money and a big impact to our economy, environment, and public health.

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MAYOR JORGE O. ELORZA  
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

## THE FOLLOWING GROUPS HAVE JOINED IN SUPPORT OF THE PROVIDENCE BUILDING ENERGY REPORTING



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