

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

*No. 469*

Approved October 9, 2018

WHEREAS, If approved, State Ballot Question #3 in the November 2018 General Election would authorize a Green Economy and Clean Water bond investing in water quality, land cleanup, farmland, recreational facilities, open spaces, and much more to ensure Rhode Island remains a wonderful place to live, visit, and raise a family; and

WHEREAS, Investments in clean drinking water, recreation, bikeways, open space, farm land, and coastal resiliency are fundamental to preserving and improving quality of life in Providence and throughout Rhode Island; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide \$7.9 million to ensure our state's drinking and recreational waters are clean and safe; and

WHEREAS, By utilizing matching funds, the initial \$7.9 million investment will unlock close to \$40 million in federal funds and an additional \$150-\$200 million in private capital for water treatment upgrades, stormwater quality improvements, combined sewer overflow abatement projects, water distribution system upgrades, and repairs to aging sewers; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide an additional \$5 million for wastewater treatment facility resilience, helping to ensure our water quality and protecting facilities from flooding, higher tides, and major storm events; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide \$12 million of investment in bikeways, local recreation, and open space; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island's bikeways, waterways, and open spaces are vital to the state's economy and ability to attract visitors, new residents, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, Protected open spaces and parks are the cornerstone of our tourism and outdoor recreation industry, attracting visitors and supporting businesses and employment in Providence; and

WHEREAS, Access to quality green space improves health outcomes, promotes stronger social ties, and enhances residents' sense of satisfaction and pride in their communities; and

WHEREAS, According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation in Rhode Island supports 37,000 jobs, \$1.2 billion in wages, and nearly \$300 million in state and local tax revenue annually; and

WHEREAS, Expanding the state's network of bike paths will enhance connections between communities, workplaces and parks, promote health and fitness, and increase Rhode Island's appeal as a tourist and outdoor recreation destination, further boosting our economy; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide \$2 million of investment to preserve working farms and Rhode Island's growing network of local farmers; and

WHEREAS, Protecting and preserving agricultural land in Rhode Island is critical to providing healthy locally grown food for our residents, supporting our farmers markets, providing community gardens accessible to every resident, and building a stronger and more equitable local food system; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island leads the nation in food-system planning and innovation - spurred on by growing consumer demand for fresh, locally grown food; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide \$4 million to clean up former industrial sites, known as "brownfields," removing environmental hazards and returning them to productive use; and

WHEREAS, Funding for remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites in Providence will create jobs, protect and enhance public health, and help to revitalize our neighborhoods by transforming underused or abandoned properties into productive places generating increased local tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, Since 1995, hundreds of brownfield sites have been cleaned in Rhode Island, leading to over \$630 million of private investment and creating thousands of jobs; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide \$5 million to restore and improve the climate resilience of vulnerable coastal areas, as well as river and stream floodplains; and

WHEREAS, With our nearly 400 miles of coastline, many marine-based businesses, and strong local maritime history, it is of the utmost importance that Rhode Island ensure that our coastal areas are preserved and able to withstand sea-level rise as well greater storm frequency and intensity; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will invest \$7 million for dredging sections of the major rivers in downtown Providence, supporting economic development, enhancing tourism opportunities, and improving water depths for boating, recreation, and climate resilience; and

WHEREAS, Significant sections of the rivers from Waterplace Park to Point Street Bridge are now impassable for boat traffic 50% of the time, and mud and debris are exposed at low tide; and

WHEREAS, The longer dredging is delayed, more and more sediment will build in the rivers, disrupting WaterFire and other major downtown events, and making future dredging even more expensive; and

WHEREAS, The Green Economy and Clean Water bond will provide \$4.4 million to repair dams throughout the Rhode Island, protecting people, property, and communities; and

WHEREAS, The Comprehensive Community Plan for the City of Providence documents the City's objectives for open space protection, urban agriculture, parks, greenways, and outdoor recreation facilities as well as transportation infrastructure, storm-water management and flood prevention with goals and objectives specifically cited throughout the most recent plan; and

WHEREAS, Municipal projects financed in part with past Open Space and Recreation Bond funds have enabled the City of Providence to implement our adopted Comprehensive Community Plan, preserve our unique character and enhance our quality of life by protecting our special places while improving parks and outdoor recreation facilities in our community; and

WHEREAS, The people of Rhode Island have consistently and overwhelmingly expressed their support for similar bond questions in the past, including the 2012 Farmland, Open Space Conservation, Parks and Bay Restoration Bond, the 2014 Clean Water, Open Space, and Healthy Communities Bond, and the 2016 Environmental and Recreational Improvement Bonds; and

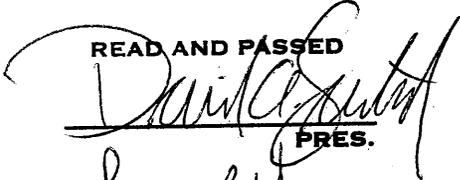
WHEREAS, Moreover, each of the aforementioned initiatives was supported by more than 80% of Providence residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Providence does hereby express its strong support for the Green Economy and Clean Water bond proposed by State Ballot Question #3 in the November 2018 General Election.

IN CITY COUNCIL

OCT 04 2018

READ AND PASSED

  
PRES.

  
CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

  
Mayor

Date: 10/9/18