Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting

~ Agenda ~

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/21142408877515?p=A0hplwAiLfzfGpSFMi
Meeting ID: 211 424 088 775 15
Passcode: qU7S49Jx
Need help? | System reference
Dial in by phone
+1 332-249-0606,,704639388#

Wednesday, November 4, 2026	4:00 PM	Committee "A" (City Hall 3rd Floor)

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of October Meeting Minutes (for discussion and vote)
3. Department Updates (for discussion)
    a. Climate Justice Plan Engagement
    b. Public Street
    c. Commissioner Appointments
    d. CJRI Workshop - November 5
    e. Odor Regulations Update — Letter + Public Hearing on November 5
4. Commissioner Updates (for discussion)
    a. Greg Gerritt — DEM Conversation about Economic Development
5. Transportation Organization Updates (for discussion)
    a. RIPTA / PVD Streets
6. Public Comment (for discussion)

Meeting Packet

PER ORDER THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
Enza Heinze,

All matters appearing on the Agenda are scheduled for discussion and possible vote or other action.

The City of Providence is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate and benefit from the City's programs, activities and services. If you have a disability and require accommodations in order to fully participate in this activity, contact Leonela Felix, Esq., Assistant City Solicitor at 401-680-5333 or LFelix@ProvidenceRI.gov. Providing at least 72 hours' notice will help to ensure availability.

Sustainability Commission

Regular Meeting

~ Meeting Minutes ~

Wednesday, October 7, 2026	4:00 PM	Committee "A" (City Hall 3rd Floor)

1) Roll Call
    a) Present: Chandelle Wilson, Greg Gerritt, Justice Gaines, Gianna Sollitto, Bormey Cargoe (arrived at 4:29pm), Jesus Holguin (virtual)
    b) Absent: Dwayne Keys, Jaylyn McNeil, Dawn Sumner
    c) Staff Present: Priscilla De La Cruz, Director of Sustainability; Kevin Proft, Deputy Director of Sustainability
2) Approval of August and September Meeting Minutes (for discussion and vote)
    a) Greg Gerritt makes a motion to approve the August and September minutes. Justice Gaines seconds the motion. All in favor and the motion passes.
3) Commissioner Updates (for discussion)
    a) Gianna Sollitto
        i. Providence Preservation Society and People's Port Authority hosting a walking tour of the Upper South Providence Waterfront - 10/19 at 4-5:30pm —https://ppsri.org/events/upper-south-providence-waterfront-upper-south-providence/
        ii. The Center for Behavior and Climate has an open call for its Behavior Change for Climate Action Challenge (11/1/26 deadline).
        iii. Gianna Sollitto shared the two items without much discussion.
4) Department Updates (for discussion)
    a) Kevin Proft provided an update on the Public Street Waterfront Access Project.
        i. Permitting update: RIDEM has approved their portion of the application. CRMC will now review the application. It is unclear if it will be reviewed administratively or by the full Council because Sims Metals has objected to the project. RI Energy's also objected to the project, but after discussions with the Sustainability Department had their concerns addressed and withdrew their objection. RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission has minor lingering concerns with the project that should be able to be resolved with relative ease.
        ii. Pipe update: The City reissued an RFP to have the pipe cleaned on October 5. Bids are due October 19. The Department rejected all bids for the first RFP because they were incomplete proposals that made it hard to understand how the bidders arrived at their bid prices. Cleaning the pipe is the first step towards being able to inspect the interior of the pipe so that RIDEM can decide whether the petroleum discharging into the river is coming from the project area. If it is, they will direct RI Energy to resolve the issue, since RI Energy is the party responsible for the contaminated soil in the area.
    b) Priscilla De La Cruz provided an update on sustainable stormwater funding.
5) Review of Draft Letter regarding Public Street Traffic Pattern Proposal (for discussion and vote)
    a) The Commission discussed the letter and proposed several edits. They will send the letter to the departments and agencies discussed at the previous meeting. The draft did not cc all of them. The Commission will also add language saying the Commission supports adding traffic signals to the Allens Avenue gates of Eastern Salt and Sims so they do not need to use Public Street to enter and exit Allens Avenue safely. They will also correct the spelling of Greg Gerritt’s name.
    b) Justice Gaines makes a motion to send the letter with the proposed edits. Gianna Sollitto seconds the motion. All in favor and the letter passes with the discussed modifications.
6) New DEM Odor Reporting Regulations - Letter sign on (for discussion and vote)
    a) Kevin Proft summarizes the Sustainability Department’s comments on RIDEM’s proposed odor regulations. He adds that the Department may still make minor edits.
    b) The Commission discussed and decided to sign-on to the letter. Greg Gerritt made a motion for the Commission to sign on to the letter, with edits made by the Department. Justice Gaines seconds the motion and the motion passes unanimously.
7) Climate Justice Plan Update, Progress Tracker, Community Convening #1 Debrief (for discussion)

    a) Priscilla De La Cruz and Kevin Proft provide an update on the Climate Justice Plan Update.
8) Future Meeting Topics – November — RIPTA, transit advocate, and PPA (for discussion)
    a) The Commission discusses the November meeting topic. Department staff will reach out to transit advocates to invite them to the meeting.
9) Public Comment (for discussion)
    a) The Committee took and responded to public comments.
    b) There was a Fire Department training at Collier Point Park. There was no fire or incident at the park. The Sustainability Department will request future trainings be telegraphed to NA chairs and PPA.
    c) There is an opportunity to comment on an ordinance relating to billboards coming up. The ordinance proposes allowing electric billboards if overall billboard size and quantity is reduced. Compared to other places in the country, the proposed reduction in size and quantity is not as significant.
    d) A member of the public asked if odor fines can go back to the impacted neighborhoods instead of the general fund. The City does not have the ability to make this decision as it is a State regulation.





CLIMATE JOBS RI, EL CENTRO DE RESILIENCIA DE OLNEYVILLE Y LA SECCIÓN LOCAL 99 DEL IBEW TE INVITAN A UNIRTE A NOSOTROS PARA UN

TALLER COMUNITARIO

¡Descubre oportunidades laborales bien remuneradas con el Local 99 de la IBEW, aprende sobre el movimiento sindical y accede a recursos útiles!

EXCELENTE COMIDA Y TARJETAS DE REGALO DISPONIBLES

Fecha: 4 de Noviembre, 2026

Hora: Cena 5pm. Discución 5:30-6:30 PM

Dónde: 10 Sims Ave, Providence, RI 02909

https://forms.gle/tQsYWWU8YMpcuTPj8

Registrate aquí

**RSVP requerido para tarjetas de regalo

Preguntas? Email: ovreshub@wrwc.org



CLIMATE JOBS RI, THE OLNEYVILLE RESILIENCE HUB, AND IBEW LOCAL 99 INVITE YOU TO JOIN US FOR A

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

Discover well-paying career opportunities with IBEW Local 99, learn about the labor movement, and connect with helpful resources!

GREAT FOOD & GIFT CARDS PROVIDED

When: November 4th, 2026
Where: 10 Sims Ave, Providence, RI 02909
Time: Dinner at 5pm, Discussion 5:30-6:30 PM

Questions? Email: ovreshub@wrwc.org

https://forms.gle/tQsYWWU8YMpcuTPj8

RSVP Here

**RSVP required for gift cards

MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

October 9, 2026

Ms. Brianna Giglietti, Air Quality Specialist III, Compliance Assurance
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
235 Promenade Street
Office of Air Resources
Providence, RI 02908

RE: City of Providence Comments to Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management ("RIDEM") on Proposed Odor Regulations

To Ms. Giglietti,

The City of Providence's Department of Sustainability is responsible for implementing the Climate Justice Plan (CJP) – a community-driven plan adopted by the City of Providence in 2019. The CJP recognizes the disproportionate burden of poor air quality and negative health outcomes on Providence's frontline communities, largely low-income communities of color living in areas of the city impacted by historic disinvestments. The Community Health chapter in the CJP is heavily focused on the city's port-adjacent neighborhoods that are most impacted by pollution, poor air quality, and high asthma rates, and outlines ten strategies to create the conditions for healthier community spaces free of pollution. These strategies include:

- Work with the State of Rhode Island to communicate air quality to impacted communities: Monitor major air pollutants and ensure residents in areas of high air pollution are aware of existing air quality conditions and improvement plans and actions. Residents must also be informed of methods to reduce their exposure to pollution and have a clear process to report violations. (Climate Justice Plan, Community Health, 54)
- Work towards a zero-emissions, pollution-free port including reducing climate and other pollution from port operations and industrial processes. (Climate Justice Plan, Community Health, 56)

The Department of Sustainability, through its work with the Sustainability Commission, the Racial Environmental Justice Committee (REJC) and Breathe Providence, and through its participation in the Master Plan Advisory Committee for the ProvPort Master Plan and the Port-Community Working Group, has heard recurring complaints and recommendations from community members concerning odors issues. To begin to address these issues, the Department recommends the following revisions to the proposed odor regulations, currently under development by RIDEM.

1. **Make odor reporting easier for residents** by giving equal weight to odor reports submitted to RIDEM, to cities or towns, and to community-led initiatives. These include, but are not limited to, the City's 311 odor reporting form and the Smell my City app. Odor reporting forms should also be translated into multiple languages to improve accessibility.
2. **Give residents' odor reports more weight in the nuisance determination process.** If a high volume of odor complaints are received for the same instance and for a facility with previously confirmed odors, but an RIDEM inspector cannot confirm the odor before it dissipates, the odor complaint should be counted anyway.
3. **Specify that RIDEM may issue penalties for confirmed odors following the confirmation of three odors within 30 days, even while a facility is going through the OCP process.** Currently, it is ambiguous when RIDEM is empowered to issue a penalty. It is unclear if all the procedures within the proposed regulation need to be completed before RIDEM may issue a penalty. If this is the case, penalties could easily be delayed by 10 months or more from the time an odor is first reported (see scenario below). The threat or actual accrual of penalties during the OCP development and implementation process will encourage facilities to implement controls in a timelier manner. If RIDEM cannot issue a penalty until the full regulatory process has run its course, facilities are likely to drag out the timeline and wield the process as a shield against penalties.

Day	Event
Day 1	First odor confirmed by RIDEM against facility.
Day 31	After confirming two additional odors within 30 days, RIDEM requires facility to develop an Odor Control Plan (OCP) within 60 days.
Day 91	Facility submits OCP with administrative controls to RIDEM for review.
Day 105*	RIDEM finds OCP deficient and requires facility to revise OCP within 60 days.
Day 165	Facility submits revised OCP with administrative controls to RIDEM for review.
Day 179*	RIDEM approves OCP.
Day 209** (i.e. seven months later)	OCP's administrative controls are fully in effect, but odors persist. RIDEM requires facility to submit a subsequent plan for engineering controls.
Day 269***	Facility submits subsequent plan for engineering controls to RIDEM.
Day 283*	RIDEM approved subsequent plan for engineering controls.
~Day 313****	Facility implements engineering controls based upon the approved timeline in the subsequent plan that takes into account permitting, contracting, procurement, etc.

*assumes 2-week review period by RIDEM, but regulations do not define the length of the review period.

**assumes 30 days to implement admin controls. OCP implementation timeline is developed by the facility and approved by RIDEM per proposed regulations.

***assumes 60 days to develop plan for engineering controls, but regulations do not define this period.

****Assumes 90 days to design, procure, contract, and install engineering controls, but this will vary by facility and OCP.

4. **Shorten and better define the timeframes associated with each step of the OCP development and implementation process.** While the timeline could be somewhat shorter or stretch significantly longer than the scenario above, it is simply too long to garner buy-in from community members being affected by odors in real time. The City recommends the following alterations:

Event	Draft Regulations	Proposed
RIDEM requires facility to develop OCP	Proposed regulation unclear.	One day after third odor within 30 days is confirmed.
Facility Develops OCP	60 days	21 days
RIDEM Reviews OCP, OCP revisions, or subsequent plan for engineering controls	Unspecified	10 days
Facility Revises OCP, if applicable	60 days	14 days
Facility implements OCP controls	Per timeline agreed upon in OCP	Administrative controls: 14 days Engineering controls: per timeline agreed upon in OCP
Facility develops subsequent plan for engineering controls	Unspecified	21 days

5. **Increase transparency of violations** by adding a regulatory requirement to develop a public website identifying businesses that have been required to develop OCPs, and those that have been fined for being out of compliance with their OCPs.
6. **Ensure adequate capacity to permit timely inspection of odor reports.** While not something that can be resolved through this rule making process, a key constraint in the ability for DEM to implement the regulations is a lack of staff capacity to inspect reported odors in a timely fashion. The City strongly recommends RIDEM budget for and hire additional DEM inspectors. Inspectors shifts should be staggered to cover more hours per day. The regulations should allow for the use of DEM-trained community odor inspectors using a standardized system to be developed in the future.

The Department of Sustainability is eager to collaborate with RIDEM to ensure seamless integration of odor reports from all sources. In 2024, the Department of Sustainability worked with Breathe Providence and their Resident Task Force to integrate odor reporting into the City's existing 311 reporting tool. Together, we created an Odor Reporting Form that is accessible via 311 and is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Chinese, and Haitian Creole. The Sustainability Department periodically sends the reports to DEM for their records. The goal is for the Odor Reporting Form to send RIDEM real-time reports, but 311 does not currently have that capacity. While we work towards this goal, the City welcomes RIDEM's collaboration to improve the system for receiving and using odor complaints from the City in the near term.

In addition to these broader recommendations, the Department has included a list of more technical items relating to wording in the proposed regulations as an appendix to this letter for your consideration.

We appreciate your attention to these recommendations and look forward to more accessible reporting and timely responses.

Thank you,

Priscilla De La Cruz, Director of Sustainability

Chandelle Wilson

Chandelle Wilson, Chair of the Sustainability Commission, City of Providence

Jesus Holguin

Jesus Holguin, Interim Director of the Racial Environmental Justice Committee (REJC)

Signature: Jesus Holguin
Jesus Holguin (Oct 14, 2026 11:15:23 EDT)
Email: jesus@rejc401.com

Signature: Chandelle Wilson
Chandelle Wilson (Oct 14, 2026 13:10:06 EDT)
Email: chandelle@southsideclt.org

Appendix A:

17.7 A

Using "and" instead of "or" makes it seem like all four items - characteristics, frequency, duration, and intensity - need to achieve a certain threshold for an odor to be confirmed by an inspector. Using "or" would be more appropriate because a low-intensity odor with a lengthy duration should be confirmed as an odor.

17.8 A 3

This section has a potential typo. The line ends with "and which **may** include the following". Then 3 A & B are both **shall** provisions.

17.8 A 3 B 4

This section permits an offending facility to reject implementing engineering controls even after administrative controls have failed if, in the facility's opinion, the engineering controls are not necessary to control the odor. If the facility has attempted administrative controls, and those controls failed to control the odors from the facility, RIDEM should be able to mandate that the facility implement engineering controls without further objection by the facility.



Odor Regulation Workshop and Public Hearing

November 5, 2026

Workshop: 5:30 PM • Regulatory Hearing: 6:30 PM

780 Allens Avenue, Providence

City of Providence Dept of Inspection and Standard's Training Room

Attend a question and answer session with Rhode Island DEM staff to learn more about the state regulatory process and attend the public hearing to submit comments on proposed amendments to the odor regulation (250-RICR-120-05-17).

DEM RHODE ISLAND

DEM.RI.GOV/ODOR-REGS

Find more details about this event and read the proposed rule and supporting documenation

SUBMIT COMMENTS

DEM is accepting comments on the proposed odor regulations through November 13, 2026



Taller sobre la regulación de olores y audiencia pública

5 de noviembre de 2026

Taller: 5:30 PM • Audiencia pública: 6:30 PM

780 Allens Avenue, Providence

Sala de capacitación del Departamento de Inspección y Normas de la ciudad de Providence

Le invitamos a una sesión de preguntas y respuestas con el personal del Departamento de Gestión Ambiental de Rhode Island para obtener más información sobre el proceso de regulacion estatal. Luego, participe en la audiencia pública para presentar comentarios sobre las enmiendas propuestas a la regulación de olores (250-RICR-120-05-17).

DEM RHODE ISLAND

DEM.RI.GOV/ODOR-REGS

Para obtener más detalles sobre este evento, lea la propuesta de reglamento y la documentación de apoyo.

ENVÍE SUS COMENTARIOS

RIDEM aceptará comentarios sobre la propuesta de regulación de olores hasta el 13 de noviembre de 2026.