



2025 RI Climate Action Strategy

Draft Engagement Plan

December 2024

Developed by Lighthouse Consulting Group with Energy and Environmental Economics (E3)

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Introduction

This Draft Engagement Plan aims to provide stakeholders input on the Engagement Plan itself, including feedback on how they want the process to work and the focus areas most important to them. The "final" RI Climate Action Strategy (RICAS) Engagement Plan will be available in January 2025 but will serve as a living document guiding the Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy engagement process throughout 2025.

Throughout this Plan, we refer to the "Project Team." This refers to the Lead Contractor, Energy and Environmental Economics (E3); the Engagement Plan Contractor, Lighthouse Consulting Group; and the State of Rhode Island's Climate Action Strategy project leads.

The work undertaken in 2025 pursuant to this engagement plan will inform the development of both the 2025 Climate Action Strategy and RIDEM's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). The CCAP is due to be completed and delivered to EPA by December 1, 2025.

Engagement Plan Summary

Draft Engagement Plan – Quick Look



We divided this engagement plan into four phases: Kickoff/Pre-Strategy Development, Action Strategy Development, Strategy Refinement, and Final Rollout. This division provides a framework for ensuring engagement throughout the Strategy's development.

Kickoff/Pre-Strategy Development – Community engagement during this stage will introduce the project to stakeholders, provide background, and begin the discussion on policy pathways. This stage is crucial as it sets expectations and fosters a strong working

relationship between stakeholders and the project time, making the former an integral part of the process. **This meeting will take place on January 9, 2025.**

Action Strategy Development – Community engagement during this phase is a key opportunity for the various broad stakeholder groups to provide input. This input will inform the Strategy's development. A bulk of the engagement, totaling ten opportunities to provide input, will occur during this period. Three engagement meetings will occur in person [within RI DEM Environmental Justice Communities](#). There will be seven virtual meetings, one of which will be a general stakeholder meeting, and six will be sector or topic-specific. **These meetings will take place February 27 – April 30.**

Strategy Refinement – Stakeholders will be able to engage with draft findings and specific elements of the Climate Action Strategy during this phase. This includes refining identified pathways and gathering feedback on analyses completed by the consultant team. **These meetings will take place in October 2025.**

Final Rollout – This is the final stage and will include presenting the new Strategy to stakeholders and officials of Rhode Island.

Other opportunities to connect with the Strategy's development

This Engagement Plan primarily focuses on facilitated meetings with the objective of allowing stakeholders to provide input to Rhode Island's Climate Action Strategy and CCAP. We do not specifically highlight other areas where stakeholders will receive updates about the Strategy's development. In particular, the Project Team will use the Spring and Summer EC4 meetings to provide updates on the Strategy's progress.

Incorporating Environmental Justice

Incorporating Environmental Justice (EJ) into the engagement strategy is essential to ensuring an equitable and inclusive approach to decision-making. EJ groups represent communities disproportionately affected by environmental issues, often including low-income populations and communities of color who bear the brunt of pollution, climate change, and limited access to resources. Their lived experiences and insights provide valuable context for identifying and addressing systemic inequities that might be overlooked.

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management has identified [Environmental Justice Communities throughout Rhode Island](#), localized around Woonsocket, the Cranston/Providence area, and Newport. In addition, the USEPA has developed tools for states to use to identify EJ communities (EJ Screen and the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)). The project team will host public workshops in these communities as part of this process. We will continuously solicit feedback on how to most proactively and comprehensively engage in these communities with the understanding that different approaches may be desired across communities.

Finally, wrap-around services, including childcare, translation, and transcription, will be available to ensure accessibility and support for all participants. If you have any questions, please get in

touch with the Project Team by emailing Danielle Jameson at danielle.jameson@energy.ri.gov or Elizabeth Stone at elizabeth.stone@dem.ri.gov.

Kickoff/Pre-Strategy Development

This meeting aims to set expectations, provide background, identify policy pathways, and further refine the engagement plan with stakeholder input.

Kickoff Meeting

Date and Time: January 9, 2025, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Objectives:

- Provide policy background motivating the Climate Action Strategy, including information on the Act on Climate, RI's climate goals, and the current status of GHG emissions and climate planning in RI.
- Explain the role of this project in achieving those 2025 goals.
- Introduce the project, including the project team, tasks to be completed, and project timeline.
- Present and review the proposed Engagement Plan.
- Receive feedback on the Engagement Plan and proposed focus topic areas. These topic areas will become the focus of virtual workshops during the Action Strategy development phase.

Action Strategy Development

General Stakeholder Meetings

The Consultant team will host four general stakeholder meetings, three in-person and one virtual. In-person stakeholder meetings will occur in or near [EJ census tract areas of Rhode Island](#) (Newport, Providence/Cranston area, and Woonsocket).

The purpose of these meetings is to provide opportunities for stakeholders to engage on broader, general topics related to the Action Strategy development. Meetings may include breakouts allowing stakeholders to learn about, examine, and comment on specific topics.

Meeting	Dates/Target Dates	Location
Meeting # 1	February 24 – March 7, 2025	Woonsocket
Meeting # 2	February 24 – March 7, 2025	Providence/Cranston Area
Meeting # 3	February 24 – March 7, 2025	Newport
Meeting # 4	February 24 – March 7, 2025	Virtual

Specific locations, dates, and times are still to be determined and will be announced approximately one month before the events take place.

Topic Focus Area Meetings

The Project Team will host six virtual workshops to engage stakeholders on specific focus area topics related to the Climate Action Strategy development. Topics must include environmental justice and workforce development as mandated by the Act on Climate but may also include transportation, energy, municipalities, and other topics.

Stakeholders will provide input on these focus area topics during the Kickoff meeting.

Topic Focus Area	Dates/Target Dates	Location
Workforce Development	Mar 10 – Apr 25, 2025	Virtual
Environmental Justice	Mar 10 – Apr 25, 2025	Virtual
Topic Focus Area # 3	Mar 10 – Apr 25, 2025	Virtual
Topic Focus Area # 4	Mar 10 – Apr 25, 2025	Virtual
Topic Focus Area # 5	Mar 10 – Apr 25, 2025	Virtual
Topic Focus Area # 6	Mar 10 – Apr 25, 2025	Virtual

Specific dates and times are still to be determined and will be announced approximately one month before the events take place.

Strategy Refinement

The purpose of meetings during the strategy refinement phase will be to present findings and allow an opportunity for feedback on specific elements of the draft strategy, including draft analyses and policy pathway decisions.

During this phase, the Project Team will host three meetings, two of which will be general stakeholder meetings with breakout sessions for topic-specific discussions. The third meeting could either be a Topic Focus Area meeting or an additional General Stakeholder meeting. The Topic Focus Area meeting will allow stakeholders to engage on specific focus areas within the Action Strategy draft, while a General Stakeholder Meeting would follow the same format as the first two General Stakeholder meetings.

Meeting	Dates/Target Dates	Location
General Stakeholder	October 2025	Virtual
General Stakeholder	October 2025	Virtual
Topic Focus Area or General Stakeholder	October 2025	Virtual

Specific dates and times are still to be determined and will be announced approximately one month before the events take place.

Rollout

The Project Team will work with the EC4 and its advisory bodies to communicate the results and final Climate Action Strategy, including analytical findings and recommendations, to members of the public, including presentations to members of the General Assembly, other key decision makers, and possibly media members.