



87 John St, Providence, RI 02906
info@friendsofindiapointpark.org
www.friendsofindiapointpark.org

Burying Waterfront Power Lines Will Boost Economic Development & Encourage Tourism

The high-voltage power lines on the Providence and East Providence waterfronts are a conspicuous impediment to the two cities capitalizing on their location at the head of Narragansett Bay. Other cities have shown that burying wires helps transform industrial backwaters into **vibrant waterfront public destinations**, like the Providence Riverwalks.

The case for burying the wires is stronger now than ever with key parcels adjacent to the wires primed for development in both cities. With more than **\$17 million** raised and designated for burial, the remaining funds could be raised by a statewide surcharge of approximately 10 cents/month for the average ratepayer for 20 years. That's 1% of the \$10.53 rate increase approved in 2014 – or 1/100th of that rate increase, in order to fund upgrading the waterfront for the next 100 years. If not used for burial, these funds will dissipate, without resulting in similar lasting benefits.

BOOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & RAISE PROPERTY VALUES

Proximity to high-voltage power lines can depreciate property values by up to 30%, according to multiple studies in the US and Canada, as reported in the *Journal of Real Estate Literature* and elsewhere. Burying these wires will **improve the marketability** of key waterfront parcels and **increase the tax base** by raising property values for some of the I-195 parcels in Providence and others in East Providence, benefiting both cities for the foreseeable future.



The above ground waterfront power lines (solid yellow line) will be highly visible from projected development parcels in Providence and E. Providence, reducing their property value.

Waterfront developers and businesses in **Providence** (Churchill and Banks, the RI Seafood Festival, and others) have written letters urging burial because it “will be a major asset to the Providence Waterfront and the redevelopment of the new 195 land parcels,” and “will **pay dividends in the form of travel and tourism.**”

In **East Providence**, the wires and looming towers are highly visible from the new Tockwotton Home and other developable parcels. The East Providence Waterfront Commission urges burial to create “a **more attractive waterfront for future high-quality private development**, as well as for current residents.”

ENCOURAGE TOURISM AT WATERFRONT DESTINATION

In **Providence**, the Riverwalks, greatly enhanced by the removal of overhead utility lines, have created an attractive public space for Waterfire, which brings invaluable buzz to downtown Providence, and draws more than a million visitors a year, adding more than \$113 million to the City’s economy. Burying the waterfront wires will encourage tourism at the Capital Region’s signature waterfront, which millions of people pass by on their way to and from Cape Cod & the Islands.

Chattanooga, Louisville, and San Antonio and other mid-size cities have buried shoreline wires and transformed industrial backwaters into marquee waterfront destinations that draw millions of people.

CHATTANOOGA buried high-voltage power lines in its riverfront parks, upgraded the area, and now hosts a million people a year at festivals featuring music, arts, wine, boat races, and parades.

“**Burying utility lines is critical** to the overall enjoyment of great public spaces.” – *Jim Bowen, RiverCity Company, Chattanooga*

LOUISVILLE buried high-voltage wires and created Waterfront Park, which draws 1.5 million people to over 100 events a year: boat races, concerts, and festivals of fireworks, wine tasting, hot air balloons, etc.

“Waterfront Park has transformed a blighted industrial area into a **popular gathering spot.**”
 -- *NY Times*

SAN ANTONIO buried utility lines on its Riverwalk, which draws about 5 million people a year to restaurants, boat rides and festivals, making it one of the **top tourist attractions in Texas.**