

A PROVEN LEADER FOR A BETTER PROVIDENCE

“I’m running for Mayor because the city of Providence at this crucial time needs a proven leader with family values, cultural inclusivity and vision for all citizens. I’m running for mayor so that a generation from now, citizens will be glad we collectively implemented best practices with our eyes on the future” – Kobi Dennis

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP 2018: It’s as easy as A, B, C, D...

The following information has been comprised from the thoughts and ideas of the citizens of Providence in collaboration with Providence Mayoral Candidate Kobi Dennis. Several listening sessions were held at various locations throughout the city. We listened to youth leaders, cultural innovators, community activists, business leaders, financial advocates, mothers, fathers and many more concerned citizens that reside within the city limits. Together we bring to you: **COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP 2018.**

“It’s as easy as A, B, C, D...” The foundation of the **Kobi Dennis Administration’s** platform is based on one very simple philosophy: **Asset-Based Community Development, or ABCD.**

ABCD is a strategy for sustainable community-driven development. Beyond the mobilization of a community, ABCD is concerned with how to link micro-assets (our local businesses, start-ups, nonprofits, etc.) to the macro-environment (city and state systems, local and national financing/resources).

The appeal of ABCD lies in its premise that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilizing existing, but often unrecognized assets, and thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunity.

ABCD builds on the assets that are already found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to build on their assets—not concentrate on their needs.

What many Providence residents are guilty of is believing we need to look elsewhere to solve our issues here at home. ABCD's community-driven approach is active participation and empowerment (and the prevention of disempowerment); the **KDA** strategy is directed towards sustainable, economic development that is community-driven.

The **KDA** will be spending an extensive period throughout the campaign identifying the assets of individuals, associations, and institutions before they are mobilized to work together to build

on the identified assets of all involved. The identified assets from an individual are then matched with people, groups or anchor institutions that have an interest or need in that asset.

The key to **ABCD** is **COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP 2018**. We shall begin to use what is already in, and of, the community... we have plentiful resources right here!

Together, we will all participate in the governing of our city and its residents as one collective voice through participatory governance, starting with city services, housing, small business policy development and recreation. We will continue our collective efforts in the many fields of constituent concerns including: city budget, infrastructure and education during our next platform information release.

The **KDA** platform is and shall be a “working document” for the citizens of the city of Providence to improve. We will continue to listen to the people and together we will construct innovative ideas and sustainable efforts for the betterment of life as we know it.

Initiatives

Assess and Reinvest in the Community Policing Model: To cultivate stronger relationships and promote respect between city residents and law enforcement, the City of Providence should identify and implement a system of community policing that builds upon the successes and proactively addresses the concerns and challenges of previous models that have been utilized within the City of Providence.

Details - Convene a Task Force of city residents, Law Enforcement officials and advocates to identify current challenges and opportunities for community policing in the city. Identify national models that can fit Providence’s character and needs, while utilizing current resources. Connect with regional and national leaders regarding best practices for community policing.

Benefits - officers become familiar with more people. Creates positive change in how the community views both the individual officer and the department. Provides the community with a voice on how it will be policed. Provides the community with a voice in setting law enforcement priorities. Provides a stronger, safer and more friendly community in which to live. Provides a better understanding of police capabilities and limitations. Provides for a closer working relationship with other governmental agencies. Provides for a more efficient and effective use of department resources. Enables the department to be more aware of and responsive to specific needs of the community. Enables the department to increase the quality and quantity of criminal intelligence. Improves communications, both within the community and within the police department. It increases citizen support for department programs and budgets. We plan to create new and inventive policing strategies, improve some old strategies

while being guided by national law enforcement agencies and task forces such as; Center for Policing Equity (CPE) and Advancing Diversity in Law Enforcement research study group.

- We will introduce a **Neighborhood Resource Unit**: the department training for emergency/terrorist/active shooter situations.
- We will support **Evidence Based Policing**: our policies will be based on evidence, scientifically proven techniques and practices, and not based on emotions or haphazard.
- We will re-introduce the **Police Athletic League (PAL)**: in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club and recreation centers/midnight basketball, etc. These are initiatives that are implemented in hundreds of cities around the country to help decrease crime and increase positive relations.
- We will introduce **Juvenile Offender Community Services (J.O.C.S)**: by reinitiating active juvenile hearing boards and initiate teen courts. These programs will provide 1st time, nonviolent offenders a second chance as opposed to being charged and put in the criminal justice system. These will be balanced and restorative Justice models for juveniles to help build stronger more self-reliant communities.
- We will introduce **Man to Man (M2M)**: a community youth and police officer mentoring program. The officer will be paired with the juvenile as part of their conditions of the juvenile hearing board.
- We will introduce **Veterans Against Street Violence (V.A.S.T)**: we shall pair United States War Veterans and retired Law Enforcement officers with troubled/ gang affiliated young men and women. Program supports will include group and individual counseling sessions with trained professionals.
- We will introduce a semi-annual **Citizens Police Academy**: this will allow community members to take a firsthand look at the ever-changing world of law enforcement. Graduates of the citizen police academy can assist with staffing neighborhood crime watch programs, citizen details and citizen-lead community/police forums. Trained and screened community graduates shall volunteer to occupy the empty substations throughout the city.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen? –

- [Providence Journal](#)
- [CEBCP](#)
- [PsychologyBenefits](#)
- [Berkeley](#)
- [ric-zai-inc](#)
- [Obamawhitehouse](#)
- [ClevelandNPR](#)
- [Urban](#)
- [Crimesolutions.gov](#)
- [ICMA](#)
- [PoliceFoundation](#)
- [Policemag](#)

Programs, Strategies and Proven Policies...

We will introduce **Block Captains**: Block Captains will be our attempt to “shrink the city” to allow everyday citizens to become active in the decisions being made. Everyone wants to feel included in the process, so why not become a Block Captain?

Each district will have 6-10 block captains that will meet once a month to discuss neighborhood concerns derived from residents. The residents will have the ability to email, drop off or mail completed “Concern Sheets” to their appointed Block Captain. Each month Block Captains shall meet and bring all concerns to city councilors, law enforcement, and school officials. All concerns will be discussed and addressed city-wide with mayoral staff included. All concerns will be addressed before convening of the next meeting.

We will introduce **PVD Midweek Sweep**: The Midweek Sweep is an initiative with the primary focus of reunifying neighbors. Our communities are comprised of hardworking people who often have never met one another. The Midweek Sweep will get neighbors outside of their residences to clean and beautify their property and surrounding areas. A winner will be chosen monthly for the cleanest blocks in each district.

Good Neighbor Next Door Program: To encourage more city residence on the part of public sector service providers, the City of Providence should proactively promote and assist eligible home buyers to take advantage of federal support for home ownership in the city. This strategy is intended to not only encourage better community relations between public sector service providers and other Providence residents, but to also increase the city’s tax base, and address the city’s vacant/ abandoned housing challenges.

Details - Geared toward law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians and teachers. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers a substantial incentive in the form of a discount of 50% from the list price of the home. In return, you must commit to live in the property for 36 months as your sole residence. Eligible Single-Family homes located in revitalization areas are listed exclusively for sale through the Good Neighbor Next Door Sales Program. Properties are available for purchase through the program for seven days. HUD requires that you sign a second mortgage and note for the discount amount. No interest or payments are required on this "silent second" if you fulfill the three-year occupancy requirement.

Benefits - Encourage more service sector professionals to live in the City. Promote home ownership in Providence. Stronger relationships with and collaborations between Federal and local government. Greater tax base for City of Providence. Opportunity to address abandoned property issue in Providence.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen? –

- [HUD \(1\)](#)
- [HUD \(2\)](#)
- [HUD \(3\)](#)
- [Benefits.gov](#)

Combine Payments In lieu of Services (PILOTs) & Services In Lieu of Taxes (SILOTs): To address the tremendous burden placed upon tax paying residents due to the large amount of tax-exempt property located in the City of Providence, the city should adopt a policy of requiring a combination of PILOTs and SILOTs from institutions and entities (Universities, Hospitals, etc.) that possess a certain amount of tax-exempt property in the city. The combination of PILOTs and SILOTs will offset costs associated with public services provided to city residents that tax-exempt institutions and entities utilize as well. PILOTs are payments made by a property tax-exempt organization to a municipality to help cover the cost of municipal services to that tax-exempt property. Services In Lieu of Taxes are services provided to municipalities by a property tax-exempt organization to help offset the cost of municipal services to that tax-exempt property.

Details - Determine the cost of providing services to the tax-exempt property. Through negotiation, based on the cost of providing services to the tax-exempt property, require a combination of PILOTs and SILOTs from property tax exempt institutions and entities that utilize City services. Through negotiation, based on the cost of providing services to the tax-exempt property, require additional SILOTs from property tax exempt institutions and entities with which the city has already secured PILOT agreements. Nonprofits use and rely on these services and should pay these operating costs as do all other property owners.

Benefits - Offset some of the tax base lost due to nonprofit tax exemptions. Offset tax burden of Individuals and businesses located in the City. Property tax-exempt institutions and entities more cognizant of and engaged with overall viability of City.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen? –

- [Philadelphia, PA](#)
- [Syracuse, NY](#)
- [Durham, NC](#)
- [Minneapolis, MN](#)
- [Cleveland, OH](#)
- [Governing.com](#)
- [Inside Higher Ed](#)
- [Pewtrusts.org](#)

- Nyssba.org

Cultural Sector Infrastructure Investment and Development: To attract support and investment from the national/international cultural sector and economy, the City of Providence should take steps to develop the cultural sector infrastructure necessary to be competitive. To achieve this goal, the City of Providence should identify and implement strategies to develop the physical and programmatic infrastructure of the city's emerging cultural sector and economy. The goal is to increase the city's market share of the over \$178 billion-dollar industry. This would thereby solidify Providence as a national leader in both the creative and cultural sectors and economies.

Details - Support and encourage investments in the cultural economy, as a specific and unique element apart from the Arts. Support the development and designation of Cultural Heritage and Cultural Development districts to attract more innovative business and tourism.

Promote cultural amenities for attracting economic investment and skilled workers. Promote community development through artistic, cultural, or creative policies. Promote community and neighborhood revitalization through cultural and artistic measures and strategies that emphasize creativity. Create economic or job clusters based on creative businesses, including linking those businesses with non-cultural businesses. Provide training, professional development, or other activities for arts, cultural, or creative entrepreneurs. Create cultural development-specific business incubators or dedicated low-cost space and services to support artistic, cultural, or creative professionals. Develop visual elements that communicate a community's character, e.g. use logo development and graphic design for advertising, marketing, and promoting a community. Provide more economic or regulatory support for combined residential and commercial space for artists. Financial investment in the development of cultural place-making initiatives to create unique cultural tourism attractants. Provide public or private economic or regulatory support for marketplaces, bazaars, arcades, community centers, public places, parks, and educational facilities of several types. Encourage and support more celebrations and/or festivals to highlight a community's cultural amenities. Implement the reuse of existing sites or buildings for arts and culture purposes. Support more temporary and permanent public-art and culture projects.

Benefits - Economic development is enhanced by concentrating creativity through both physical density and human capital. By locating firms, artists, and cultural facilities together, a multiplier effect can result. The recognition of a community's cultural assets (and the marketing of these assets) as an essential element of economic development. Attract a strong workforce and successful firms, as well as help sustain a positive quality of life by creatively acknowledging and

marketing cultural assets. Arts and cultural activities can draw crowds from within and around the community. Increasing the number of visitors as well as enhancing resident participation helps build economic and social capital. Planners can make deliberate connections between the arts and culture sector and other sectors, such as tourism and manufacturing, to improve economic outcomes by capitalizing on local assets. New usage for abandoned buildings in the city. Development of a business sector and economy based upon cultural resources the city already possesses. Build stronger relationships with Providence based cultural sector establishments, develop a unique tourism and investment narrative for the Providence base in cultural diversity.

more cognizant of and engaged with overall viability of City.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen? –

- [Culture for Sustainable Urban Development](#)
- [Unesco.org](#)
- [Cultural Tourism](#)
- [Cultural Participation](#)
- [Americans for the Arts](#)

Live Music Presenter Tax Break: To encourage a stronger, more vibrant live entertainment sector and economy in the City of Providence by providing tax relief to establishments that host consistent live music events. The goal is to foster a greater interest in live artists performing in the city, by encouraging more venues to develop infrastructure for and to physically host more live music events, and simultaneously cultivating more opportunities for Providence and Rhode Island based live artists to perform in Providence based establishments.

Details - Cut the tax on mixed beverage sales or admissions for clubs that prove they're using the savings to present live music. Cut taxes for venues that have live stages and consistently use them to host live music events. Venues must stage live music at least four nights a week for 45 weeks per year, provided they prove that they will spend the savings putting on concerts. Owners must apply for status of "live music presenter" each year with the state comptroller's office.

Benefits - Encourage live music scene in Providence. Lessen tax burden on local music venues. Encourage more performance opportunities for artists in Providence.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen? –

- [Texas](#)
- [Texas \(2\)](#)
- [Cleveland, OH](#)
- [Seattle \(2\)](#)

- [Seattle](#)

Thriving Community Task Force: To address and subdue the negative impact of gentrification, the City of Providence should convene a diverse interdisciplinary task force. The task force will include residents, homeowners, professionals, advocates and field experts to identify and suggest innovative means of promoting more thriving and connected neighborhoods in Providence through addressing the negative impacts of gentrification in the city. The task force should assess the current landscape of gentrification in the City of Providence, recommend city policy changes in housing affordability, anti-displacement zoning, education and workforce training, transportation, health and cultural equity.

Details - Analyze data, trends, and market demands for the local and regional housing markets. Assess the legal, financial and organizational capacity of the city to support new policies and programs recommended. Identify alternative tax structures that can potentially be implemented in the city. Explore enacting a “Generational Ownership” tax break that benefits City of Providence home owners in distressed communities who have owned their homes more than 25 years. Explore enacting a “Home Improvement” tax break for City of Providence home owners that live in and make improvements to their homes.

Benefits - Proactively addressing one of the major instigators of social discord. Encourage and promote stronger neighborhood ties and neighborly relations. Become a regional leader on gentrification mitigation. Note: the only other similar task force is in Birmingham, AL.

Links- Where Else Does This Happen?

- [Birmingham](#)
- [Birmingham \(2\)](#)
- [Tax Deductions](#)

Point-based Preference System: To encourage more businesses to locate their offices in the City of Providence. To encourage hiring of city residents, the City of Providence should implement a comprehensive point-based preference system that values contracting with and hiring businesses and employees that have a business or residence located in the City of Providence.

Details - Award a point preference to any applicant for city employment opportunities who is a bona fide city resident AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION, unless he/she declines the preference points. Award a point preference to any applicant for city Requests for Proposals whose office is

located in the City AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION, unless he/she declines the preference points. The preference points will be added to any points awarded to the person/business on the 100-point scale used to rank qualified applicants for the position. For competitive promotions, except promotional examinations (e.g., police officers, firefighters), the point preference will be added to any points awarded to each qualified employee point scale used to rank the qualified employees. Preferred candidates will be selected ahead of equally qualified non-preferred candidates.

Benefits - More business contracts and employment opportunities available for city residents and business. More individuals encouraged to reside in or locate businesses in the City of Providence.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen?

- [APTA](#)
- [Massachusetts](#)
- [Washington, DC](#)
- [Government Executive](#)

Providence Peace City initiative: To continue building upon its reputation for and the abundance of peace and nonviolence resources, the City of Providence Peace City initiative (PCI) will institutionalize the concept of equitable reconciliation in the Providence community. Equitable reconciliation is the convergence of nonviolence and peace studies with cultural equity education and training that not only builds bridges of respect through cultural exchange, but also encourages and fosters the beloved community.

Details - Citywide initiative to achieve the beloved community in Providence through equitable reconciliation initiatives. Host cultural equity trainings for city public service professionals. Implement nonviolence trainer programs in public schools based in tenets of restorative justice. Raise support for nonviolence and cultural equity initiatives and institutions in the city. Collaborate with statewide peace initiatives.

Benefits - Teaching our youth how to identify and transform conflict in a healthy way in 2018. Institutionalizing equitable reconciliation in education on a comparable level to reading, writing, and arithmetic. Minimize the financial and physical cost of violence and incarceration to the city. Become a national example for city-wide institutionalization of equitable and restorative justice practices at the municipal level. Individual equitable reconciliation and nonviolence trainer of trainer and citizenship classes/programs in each of the middle and high schools. Creation of a city-wide Positive Peace Warrior network of youth organizers, trainers and mentors. Providence city residents better equipped with the skill and will necessary to achieve equity and seek reconciliation to address contemporary issues of conflict.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen?

- [Chicago, IL](#)
- [Watertown, MA](#)
- [The Peace Flag Project](#)

No More Business as Usual

U.S. small businesses employed 56.8 million people, or 48.0% of the private workforce, in 2013. (Statistics of U.S businesses / U.S Census Bureau <https://www.census.gov/econ/susb>)

We often hear that small business is the backbone of our economy and this is particularly true for urban cities as they are often the greatest source of all important jobs for residents. Cities like Providence get a lot of attention for their pursuit of new large businesses that may not always have the best interest of the city in mind. Rarely do we hear of new strategies to attract and retain small businesses that improve the economy and culture of the city in ways large businesses cannot.

“Small business support in most cities is an uncoordinated, unfocused set of programs implemented by a disparate group of private and public organizations” (Initiative for a Competitive Inner City).

This can be seen in Providence as well, with very few city resources for small business owners outside of state resources and organizations such as the Economic Development Corporation. Providence needs a laser focus that is consistent with the unique culture and diversity of our Renaissance City and its residents.

We will hire a Small Business Coordinator: for any of the following initiatives to be implemented you need someone who can focus on the varying needs of small business owners. The current administration has not had anyone in this position, yet they have a “Small Business Coordinator” position which was posted as of 10/23/17. The current unfilled position is posted with a salary of \$51,715. This can be adjusted based on the budget with the base salary it requires to be connected to an incentive agreement that allows the person to make extra commission based on performance. This will be measured by the success of the small business along with other barometers agreed on by the small business owners and our administration. The small business Coordinator will be responsible for implementing the strategies below with a focus on Minority and Women owned small business.

Weekly visits: to local businesses to actively listen to the concerns and suggestions of constituents at their place of business. There will also be structured networking events that promote partnerships between fellow small business owners as many currently do not know how they can benefit each other to pool resources and share best practices.

Enforcement of City Ordinance: The city ordinance that requires 10% of City contracts go to minority owned firms along with another 10% going to women owned firms will finally be enforced after falling short in previous administrations.

This will be done through more outreach to these communities but also specific training to ensure they are ready to meet the needs of the city. All trainings and programs will have a minimum requirement to include these firms along with training tailored specifically for them to ensure a pipeline of talent is nurtured and well versed in the expectations placed on their business.

We will create Small Business Boot Camp Programs: small business owners need access to expert guidance and education in a very structured way. The Goldman Sachs 10k small business program is a new example of a successful program that has benefited a growing number of local businesses. The limits of the program make it exclusive and out of reach for many micro businesses that currently contribute to the local economy but can do so much more with the right program in place. We will partner with local business associations that are currently working towards providing technical assistance in Providence while seeking to partner with corporate sponsors that have a vested interest in seeing small business thrive in the same way a company like Goldman Sachs. This intensive and hands on training will be the light that illuminates an otherwise unclear path of entrepreneurship for first generation small business owners who don't have the family backing or financial capacity that many successful entrepreneurs already had.

In an effort to allow residents to shape the business environment in their area a contest like Hatch Detroit will promote engagement and healthy competition among local businesses. "The Contest is an opportunity for one savvy entrepreneurs to win a \$50,000 grant to open their brick and mortar retail business in Detroit, Highland Park, or Hamtramck. We believe that independent retail helps define the character and personality of city neighborhoods and we built this contest on the idea of crowd entrepreneurship— giving community members a role in the city's redevelopment. By voting for their favorite business for their chance at 50k in grants to open a shop" (<http://hatchdetroit.com/about-the-contest/>)

We will focus on Workforce Development: to find the right employees to help a business succeed while giving opportunity to the employee is a widespread challenge. Most of the current training, recruiting and placement of potential employees is focused toward large businesses. In order for small businesses to benefit from workforce development initiatives such as “Clusters” (<http://www.skillsforri.com/about/overview/>) that focus on preparing talent for particular large industries that employ a lot of residents.

The same approach can be made for small business for common jobs. The cost and training of new employees who often do not work out is an impediment to job growth.

Matching small business with big business: every small business would like to work with the local large, midsize businesses in the City of Providence but have no way of connecting with them. Most small local businesses must rely on the hope of making a connection or cold call, which usually takes several months or years. Many of the big businesses often have vendors from out of state.

The **KDA** will strongly encourage in-person matchmaking that will foster connections from small business to the larger organization. Small business will have an opportunity to learn about available contracts while also learning what they can do to get those contracts. If the small businesses are not ready yet or if their proposal or bid gets declined, we shall utilize The Small Business Administration (SBA) in Washington’s “Matchmaking” model during Small Business Week. Fifteen-minute meetings between qualified business owners and procurement officers from large corporations, including AT&T, Honeywell and Raytheon, and several government agencies. “The face-to-face matchmaking meetings last year, (2016) approximately (150) businesses and (20) buyers matched up based on their compatibility and the buying needs of the federal agencies, corporations and small business owners” (<https://www.sba.gov/content/sba-adds-business-matchmaking-events-during-national-small-business-week-0>)

We will introduce Small Business Week Providence: The focus will be for awareness of our small business community. This thriving community will be celebrated and promoted. Panel discussions, matchmaking seminars, guest speakers and training sessions.

The National SBA and local SBA helps to promote small business week for cities and towns so the direction and promotion for this is already in place.

We will promote “New” City Department Culture: whether getting the necessary permit to build and grow a business or working with the city to correct code violations, communicating with inspectors or department staff. We will change this experience for the betterment of the citizens of the City of Providence. All business owners and aspiring business owners

should be treated with respect and dignity always, no matter the location or business capacity. We will require a customer service approach in all departments that reflects the professionalism that we all expect when doing business. This change in expectations and resident experience will be monitored with city surveys to track how people are treated. Doing business in a friendly environment promotes more business due to less resistance and misunderstandings.

We will implement a Cooperative Business Structure: In line with **Collective Leadership 2018** community members will vote on many of the internal decisions that impact them directly. Community members will have ownership over the businesses they patronize daily. This true democratic structure tackles the pervasive problem of workforce development that most Providence businesses struggle with by merging management with the workforce instead of a top-down approach that sometimes breeds conflicting goals. Converting Business that may have to consider closing due to the burdens placed on one person or family is a good opportunity to improve and maintain existing businesses that make up the culture of our city. Cooperatives have seen significant growth since 2000 as Progressive Mayors like Chokwe Antar Lumumba of Jackson, Mississippi see them as a way to protect residents against growing inequality while empowering residents to literally take ownership of their own economy.

Worker-owned cooperatives are business enterprises that are owned and governed by their employees. All worker cooperatives have two common characteristics: 1) member-owners invest in and own the business together, and share the enterprise's profits, and 2) decision-making is democratic, with each member having one vote. Currently, there are over 300 worker-owned cooperatives in the U.S. operating in a diverse range of industries. While the majority are small businesses, with fewer than 50 workers, there are also notable larger enterprises.

Worker-owned cooperatives play a critical role in building community wealth for several key reasons:

- They create quality, empowering jobs for community members.
- Since most workers are community residents, worker cooperatives are more likely than other businesses to employ sustainable business practices that do not harm the local environment, and profits are more likely to remain and circulate within the community.
- As democratically run organizations, cooperatives help member-owners develop critical leadership skills and practice direct, grassroots decision-making.
- They allow employees to accumulate wealth and build assets through having an ownership stake in the cooperative.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen?

- [Petaluma, CA](#)
- [Oakland, CA](#)
- [Providence, RI](#)
- [Cleveland, OH](#)
- [Viroqua, WI](#)
- [Providence, RI](#)
- [Morganton, NC](#)

Cooperative Home Care Associates in Bronx, NY employs over 2000 people in one of the fastest growing industries jobs while providing 600 jobs to qualifying women annually.

<http://chcany.org/>

Ace Hardware is one of the largest U.S based Cooperatives that also has stores in RI. They are an example how a Co-op can grow among huge corporate competitors by appealing to the unique needs of the city they reside in. This is consistent with our goal of working to grow small businesses that focus on and appreciate the local community.

“Ace Hardware, much bigger than many people would suspect with nearly \$15 billion in annual global sales, nearly 4,500 U.S. locations and a No. 6 ranking in the Franchise Times Top 200+ list of the largest franchisors”

www.Franchisetimes.com

We will provide Access to Capital: This maybe the most significant challenge to small business owners. There are many local options but they all have similar structures and rely on the same institutions. Peer lending is a unique yet proven approach which is consistent with our **Collective Leadership 2018** approach. We shall focus on micro loans for micro businesses which is often talked about internationally but is now happening in the U.S.

Community Health & Wealth Building

We will refocus and restructure the recreation department. The current system has not been conducive to the health or wealth of community members, young and old, for many years. The current state of recreation facilities is far from being utilized to their fullest potential. Adequate staffing, maintenance, infrastructure, programming and budgeting have long been ignored and are in dire need of restoration. Unfortunately, with 11 buildings all being ran and operated in silos with different philosophies and management styles, it has been a constant mystery for residents to learn about programs offered, employment opportunities, hours of operation, leagues, and rental protocol.

Rec Centers in Providence:

- Vincent Brown (East Side)
- Pleasant View (Mt. Pleasant)
- John H. Rollins (Lower South Providence)
- Joslin (Manton)
- Madeline Rogers (Smith Hill)
- Neutaconkanut (Silver Lake)
- Davey Lopes (Upper South Providence)
- West End Rec (West End)
- Zuccolo Rec (Federal Hill)
- Sackett Street Rec (Lower South Providence)
- Robert F. Kennedy (Elmhurst)

There are 11 Recreation Centers in the City of Providence. All but 1 of the centers are in a different neighborhood. Both John Rollins and Sackett Street are in Lower South providence. The other 9 centers are in different sections of the city. These recreation centers will function as a safe space in neighborhoods where kids and their families can go to for extended services. The centers will have comprehensive programming for children ages 5 to 17yrs. Services will also be provided for young adults and seniors. Although in various locations throughout the city the centers shall operate as one. The same programing offered city wide that will change from season to season. The city website will provide an interactive view of the wide range of activities offered free to the public (residents of Providence). If the person(s) not a resident of Providence, a fee will be charged for daily use or rental. Providence residents, community programs and groups will utilize the recreational facilities at no cost, year-round.

A Recreational “Snap Shot”

Recreation should be in direct correlation to what the communities need, not what other people believe the community wants... Recreation should reach the core values of the surrounding citizens. Every individual has different expectations of what a Recreation Department should be responsible for. Therefore, Recreation should offer a wide range of activities and adventure based learning that constantly change right along with the people we serve. Recreation is a response to aesthetic experiences, achievements and personal goals for one’s self and family. Recreation in our communities is a sense of belonging to many persons that otherwise would not participate due to lack of financial resources. Information for better Health & Wealth should always be readily accessible to the citizens of Providence. We must increase the value of our city’s Recreation Centers to increase positive relations between families within the different communities. The program and infrastructure neglect has gone on long enough. We continue to look around aimlessly at many of the ills in our communities, when the answer to many of these problems can be solved within the walls of these 11 buildings.

Healthy youth in an unhealthy home is counterproductive to say the least. We need to service the entire family unit. From ages 5yrs – 105yrs, recreation should be inclusive. Programs for adults during school hours (Senior exercise programs, lunch time work-out sessions, etc.), age appropriate programs for youth Monday – Saturday, and adult programs for college students, parents and grandparents after hours. The Recreation Centers are the nucleus to inner-city livelihood and therefore should operate as such.

Additional programs will include; team building, adventure base learning, parkour, homework help, music, arts, food and social justice, sexual education, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) based activities and more... Partnerships and collaboration is paramount. **COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP 2018** will continue as recreation centers will actively join forces with neighboring schools and the dozens of amazing city organizations that care for youth and families, such as:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. A Sweet Creation | 11. Providence Community Libraries (PCL) |
| 2. AS220 City Arts | 12. Providence Student Union (PSU) |
| 3. City Year | 13. RI Girls Empowerment Mentoring Support (GEMS) |
| 4. Community Action Partnership of Providence (CAPP) | 14. Teen Connect |
| 5. Generation Citizen | 15. The Essence T. Christal Foundation |
| 6. New Urban Arts (NUA) | 16. Unified Solutions |
| 7. Oasis International | 17. Young Voices (YV) |
| 8. Princes 2 Kings (P2K) | 18. Youth in Action (YIA) |
| 9. Prism | 19. Youth Pride |
| 10. Project 401 Dance Co. | |

These organizations and many others will be granted unlimited access to Recreation Centers. It's time for new and inventive strategies in these Recreation Centers that our families turn to for guidance, structure and the path to better Health & Wealth solutions. There is far more to recreation than simply athletics. Through partnerships with community groups and constituent listening parties, we shall re-evaluate the current mission statement and the name of this department and many others gain the maximum capacity of the Recreation Centers and other city services.

Let's get the people involved

Participatory Governance: a first step towards participatory governance is helping citizens to have access to relevant information about government policies, decisions and actions. Another important dimension of participatory governance is citizen education and deliberation on critical issues. Furthermore, the design and implementation of public policies and plans that respond effectively to citizens' priorities and needs are a key task of any government.

Therefore, we will enable citizens and community organizations to contribute actively and meaningfully to processes of public policy-making and planning.

Transparent, accountable, effective and efficient public fiscal management is key to good governance. The **KDA** will develop the tools to help citizens understand and influence decisions about the allocation of public resources, monitor public spending and hold government actors accountable for their management of public financial resources.

Links: Where Else Does This Happen?

- [Boston, MA](#)
- [New York, NY](#)
- [San Bruno, CA](#)
- [The United Nations](#)

Can't we all just get along?

The higher-education institutions, medical institutions, cultural/arts institutions and our community service organizations all play critical roles in our city and for our residents, they serve as “anchors” in our communities.

Our large non-profit institutions in the city like hospitals, colleges and universities own 44% of the taxable land in the city. Our administration plans to sit down with each institution, one by one, to come to a mutually beneficial agreement on how they can provide their social, financial and physical resources to support the communities immediately surrounding their campuses.

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP 2018 will involve a new way of thinking. New leadership is the start of innovative ideas and fresh perspectives. We shall continue to share our vision for the City of Providence over the next (8) months. Hopefully together we can make a better Providence for all our residents.

We will be putting out segments of the entire **COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP 2018** Campaign Platform to continue our dialogue with constituents city-wide.

I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to read a small portion of our vision. The KDA is dedicated to change with inclusivity and collective leadership at the forefront of our mission. The time for new leadership in the City of Providence is now and I am prepared to accept the challenge. I am not a politician trying to become a leader. I am a leader trying to become a politician and I look forward to leading the City of Providence in a new direction.

With Sincerity,

Kobi J. Dennis – Mayoral Candidate 2018

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” Barack Obama

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