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Partnership for Southern Equity announces Just Communities

ATLANTA - On the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE) and EcoDistricts, PSE is proud to announce a new name and ambitious agenda to reimagine EcoDistricts as a liberatory model of community development.

Just Communities is a bold reimagination of how communities grow – focusing on places where the inseparable forces of racial and environmental injustice persist- largely places that Black and brown and historically disinvested communities have occupied but have not flourished, and places around the world stunted by a dearth of economic mobility and extraction.

“The future of our communities depends upon our ability to provide equitable growth for all,” said Nathaniel Smith, founder and Chief Equity Officer of the Partnership for Southern Equity. “Just Communities provides a unique opportunity for PSE to address the opportunities and challenges of building bridges between the racial equity and sustainability fields, and to shape the next generation of urban and community development through the lens of a Black-led and racial equity-focused organization.”

The result of PSE’s acquisition of EcoDistricts in 2022, Just Communities is a comprehensive and practical program to unlock the power of resident leaders, community-based organizations, developers, and municipalities in advancing racially equitable and environmentally regenerative development of our built environment.

Just Communities comprises the following primary components:

1. A Framework for Equity & Regeneration

Just Communities is an implementation tool to guide the planning and implementation of neighborhood development projects.

2. A Rigorous Certification Standard

The Just Communities certification program provides verification services to communities looking to successfully apply the framework in their neighborhood. Certification is a mark of leadership and a global peer-to-peer learning network.

3. A Learning & Leadership Platform

The Just Communities Accredited Practitioner (AP) program is a continuing education and learning platform to support community leaders, city officials, and planning, design, and development professionals committed to applying the Just Communities Framework in their work.

Just Communities is PSE's contribution to helping spark a more equitable ecosystem and regenerative future, where all our communities – regardless of race, class, and ethnicity – provide the essential needs of every person to lead a healthy and secure life – from food, quality education, vibrant gathering places, and housing choice to meaningful work and political voice. Just Communities is a call to action to learn, unlearn, and commit to a new model of community development.

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About The Partnership for Southern Equity: Based in Atlanta, PSE is a nonprofit organization that advances policies and institutional actions that promote racial equity and shared prosperity for all in the growth of metropolitan Atlanta and the American South. Through forums, research, and organizing efforts, PSE brings together the regional community to lift up and encourage just, sustainable, and civic practices for balanced growth and opportunity. www.psequity.org