

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Partnership for Southern Equity Acquires EcoDistricts **PSE Makes Strategic Investment to Build a National Just Growth Agenda**

ATLANTA - The Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE) has acquired EcoDistricts, a highly regarded international nonprofit organization that promotes sustainable and equitable development, to expand PSE’s investment to promote “Just Growth” throughout the American South and beyond. The acquisition was completed on December 1, 2021.

Founded in 2013, EcoDistricts is a multi-disciplinary non-government organization working exclusively at the district and neighborhood level to achieve real impact in equity and sustainability. Over the last eight years, EcoDistricts has built a passionate community of urban development and sustainability professionals dedicated to tackling the growing climate crisis, severe equity divide, and rising distrust between citizens, private developers, and cities. In 2016, EcoDistricts created the EcoDistricts Protocol to shape and inspire new models of urban and community development, with over 820 EcoDistricts Accredited Professionals (AP) trained and 21 communities seeking EcoDistricts Certification, including 5 trailblazing projects having achieved full certification in Seattle, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh. In all, the organization has convened over 5,000 people and advised 106 project teams from 334 cities and 16 countries since its founding.

ECODISTRICTS HAS DRIVEN SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT-SCALE INNOVATION ACROSS...



The acquisition will help PSE expand its Just Growth programming and community engagement platform; with a focus of growing a large and diverse ecosystem of stakeholders including community members, industry practitioners and public policymakers to influence community-scale equity, resiliency, and environmental justice. Over the coming year, PSE, EcoDistricts, and a committee of national experts will work together through an inclusive design and planning process to combine programming, local power building, and fee-for-service consulting opportunities to

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support a growing number of communities that are looking to integrate equity and sustainability into neighborhood and district scale redevelopment.

“By bringing EcoDistricts into the PSE village we will strengthen the equity ecosystem in metropolitan Atlanta, the American South, and beyond. EcoDistricts’ vast wealth of knowledge, connections, and data will enhance PSE’s work in the community, bring equitable development to more cities across the region, and center racial equity in the American community development agenda,” said PSE’s Founder and Chief Equity Officer Nathaniel Smith.

PSE is a leader in promoting racial equity and “Just Growth” in urban and community development in the American South. PSE has developed a range of innovative programs to build community power to drive systematic change in urban planning, real estate development and anti-displacement public policies. Most recently PSE developed the City of East Point’s Equitable Development Plan, the first of its kind in the state of Georgia. Smith and EcoDistricts’ Founder and CEO Rob Bennett saw an opportunity to collaborate in advancing a more powerful model of equitable and sustainable development by integrating EcoDistricts into PSE.

“Nathaniel Smith has built one of the country’s most important social enterprises – dedicated to ensuring that racial equity is the driving force for community regeneration,” said Bennett. “EcoDistricts is honored to join Nathaniel in PSE’s mission to put people and the planet first in rebuilding our cities. Together we will continue to advocate and support inclusive, just, and sustainable development.”

About The Partnership for Southern Equity

The Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE) is an Atlanta-based nonprofit 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

About EcoDistricts

EcoDistricts is advancing a new model of urban development to empower just, sustainable, and resilient neighborhoods. Through an integrated suite of programs, convenings and project certification tools, we aim to mobilize, empower, and accelerate sustainable and equitable urban development leadership throughout North America and beyond. Learn more about our approach at www.ecodistricts.org.

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