



Voices for climate justice.

Goals of EmpowerED

Shift power, build trust, and foster community leadership around climate justice

Residents play an active role in decisions that impact their well being

Demystify climate science and connect it to everyday life

Climate action is accessible and culturally relevant

Curriculum module that can be used as a train-the-trainer model in NRZs and beyond



Who is EmpowerED?

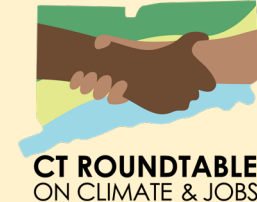
20+ Bridgeport public housing residents

PT Barnum, Trumbull Gardens, Greene Homes

**Majority are women, parents, caregivers, and
lifelong residents**

In partnership with

- **CRCJ**
- **PT Partners (resident-led housing justice organization)**
- **City of Bridgeport's Sustainability Office**



What is EmpowerED?

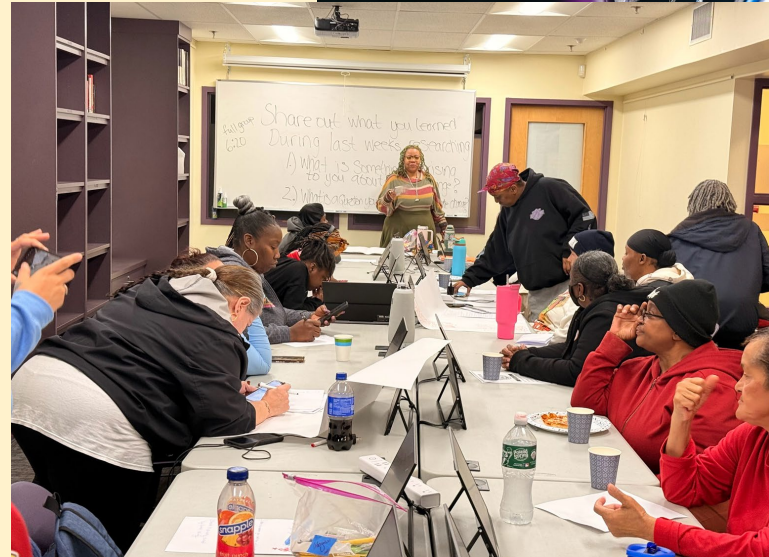
Monthly 2-hour community conversations

Weekend retreats

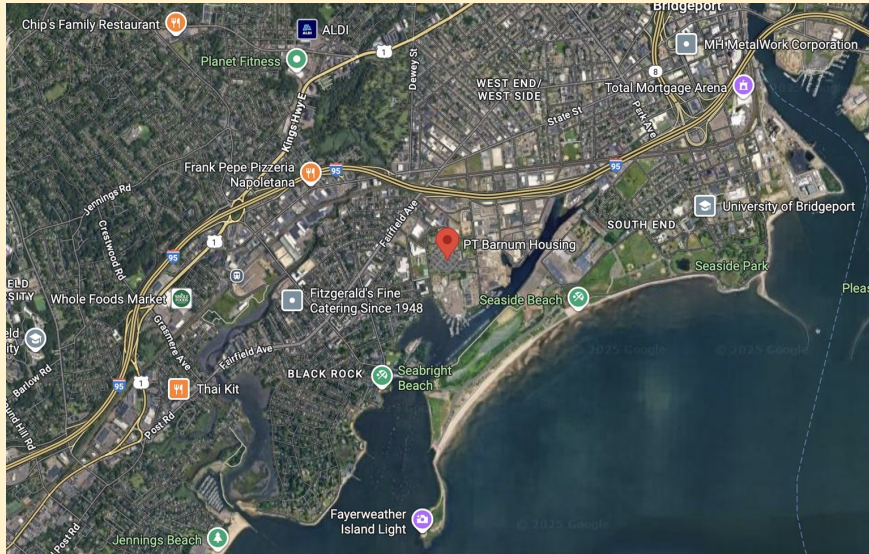
Team meetings

Curriculum co-creation

Relationship and trust building



Why EmpowerED?



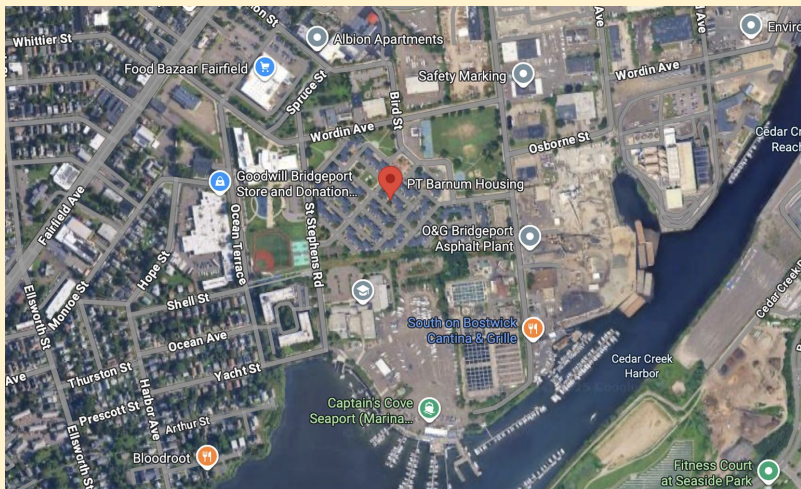
Highest rate of asthma emergency room visits in CT

Located next to:

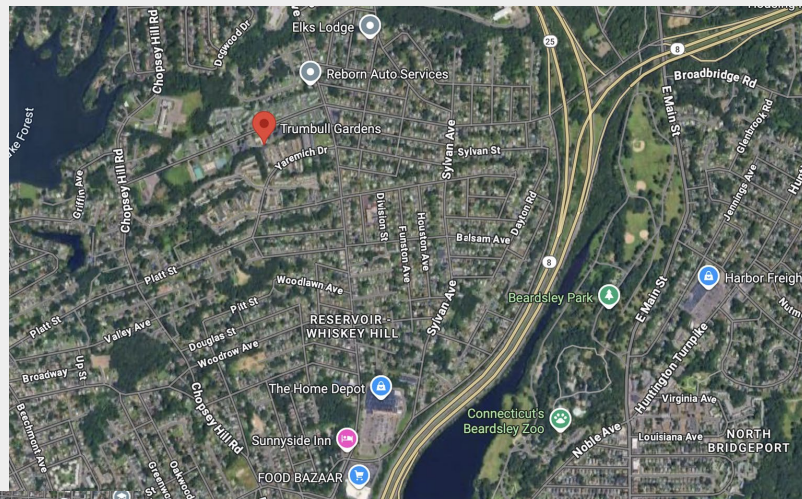
- **State's largest trash incinerator**
- **Wastewater treatment facility**
- **Asphalt plant**
- **I-95**
- **Decommissioned coal plant**

Lowest percentage of publicly accessible green space

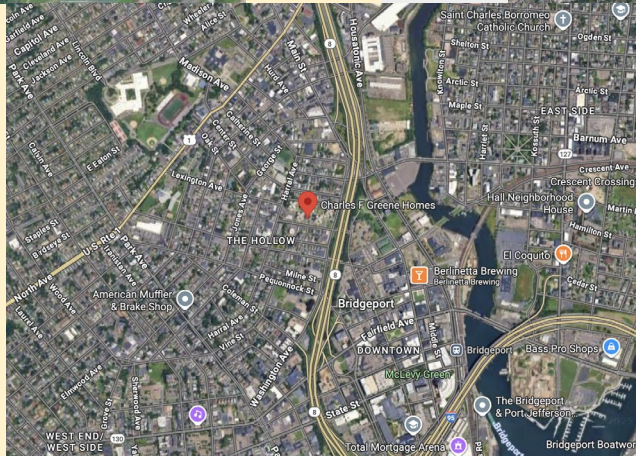
Low-income, predominantly Black, Brown, and immigrant neighborhoods



PT Barnum



Trumbull Gardens



Greene Homes

Why EmpowerED?



NEED TO CHANGE

City's history of corruption, environmental racism, and disinvestment in BIPOC neighborhoods has led to culture of distrust

Power imbalances, lack of authentic community engagement

Bridgeport residents experience the effects of climate change first — and benefit last.

EmpowerED: The Work

Community conversations - 16 and counting

Hands-on projects and activities

Research projects

Community asset mapping

Problem solving charrettes

Climate and environmental justice concepts that connect to their own neighborhoods and daily lives

Building leadership, collaboration, knowledge, and skills that are shaping and leading local climate and environmental justice efforts.



EmpowerED: The Work



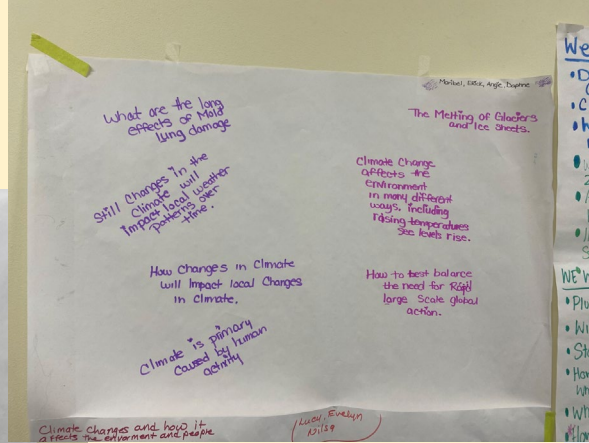
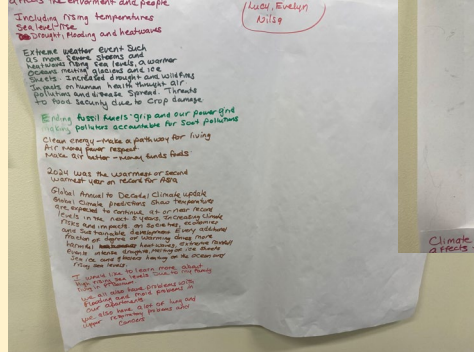
Evaluating EmpowerED

Exit tickets

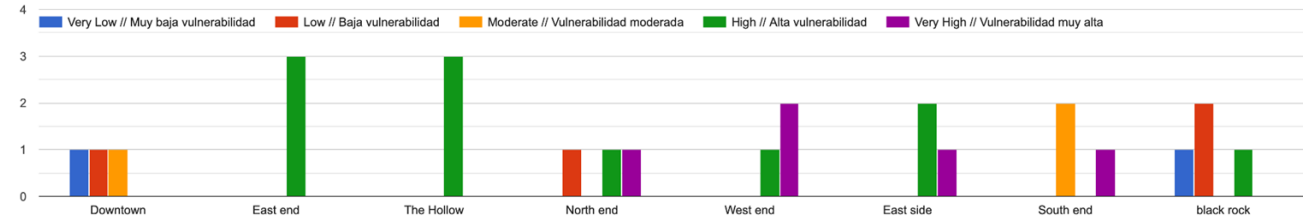
Interviews and focus groups

Community asset maps

Research presentations



On a scale of 1 - 5, 5 being the worse, rate the bridgeport neighborhoods vulnerability to the climate crisis. // En una escala del 1 al 5, siendo 5 el peor, califique la vulnerabilidad de los vecindarios de Bridgeport a la crisis climática.



Evaluating EmpowerED



Trust and relationships are strengthening in EmpowerED community

Residents' climate vocabulary is increasing in sophistication

Residents articulate why climate action is important to them personally

Residents regularly make connections between their lived experiences and climate science

What Participants Are Learning



We connect climate justice to daily lived experience:

- Heat islands → high summer electric bills & impact on public spaces
Poor air quality → asthma triggers
- Waste and recycling → pollution & connection to nature
- Transportation emissions → major traffic corridors next to homes
- Renewable energy → energy costs and transmission

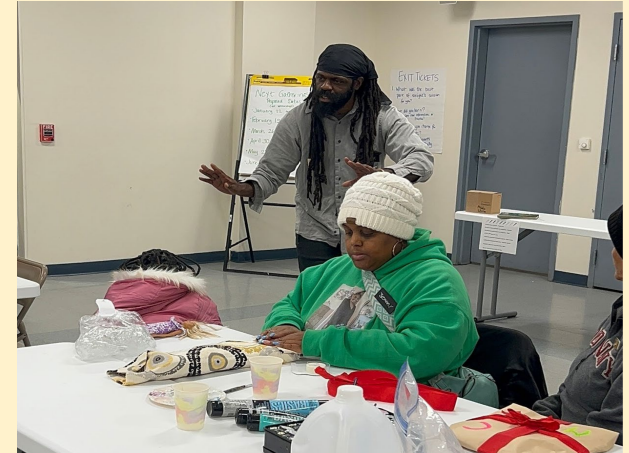
Skill areas:

- Technology & digital literacy
- Research & data collection
- Critical thinking & advocacy

Residents learn not just *what's happening*, but why and what they can do.

What's Next

- Curriculum is being co-designed with residents
- Monthly sessions serve as pilots to test training content
- The curriculum will reflect participants' insights, needs, and leadership
- Goal: create a model that can be replicated in other frontline communities across CT



Questions?

