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Winter Lights Market and Tree Lighting to illuminate downtown Providence

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Providence, RI Mayor Jorge Elorza, the Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, the Department of Parks, the Downtown Providence Parks Conservancy, Eat Drink RI, the Partnership for Providence Parks, Rhode Island Pride, and BankNewport will celebrate the 2019 Winter Lights Market and Tree Lighting Ceremonies. Providence's free annual holiday tradition takes place over two days and features a wealth of activities for people of all ages, including tree lighting ceremonies on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Spectators are invited to gather on the City Hall steps on Friday, December 6 at 5:30 PM for the tree lighting ceremony. The festive event will feature performances by Lillian Feinstein Elementary School at Sackett Street, Trinity Rep singers, as well as a special appearance from Ebenezer Scrooge of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. At approximately 6:00PM, mayor Elorza and The Rhode Show's Brendan Kirby will illuminate the tree. After the City Hall lighting, attendees are invited to sing carols before walking across the street for family-friendly performances, skating, and programming in Burnside Park, courtesy of the Downtown Providence Parks Conservancy.

Adding to Friday's festivities will be the kickoff of the third annual Winter Lights Market. The artisan and culinary marketplace, curated by Eat Drink RI, will once again transform the areas in and around Kennedy Plaza into a winter wonderland. Expect savory dishes from food trucks, local brews, hot drinks and sweet treats crafted by some of the Ocean State's most beloved epicureans. The Winter Lights Market will be open for shoppers from 5:00PM-9:00PM on Friday and 12:00PM-9:00PM on Saturday.

At 9:00PM, public skating will conclude in anticipation for Rhode Island Pride's annual toy drive and Pride on Ice, featuring a performance by figure skating drag queen MILK, best known from the 2014 season of RuPaul's Drag Race. Bring a toy anytime on Friday and Saturday and you will receive free admission to the skating rink!

On Saturday, December 7, the Winter Lights Market tent will be open with a full menu of family activities beginning at 12:00PM. The tent will feature vendors selling one-of-a-kind gifts. Boscov's, one of this year's generous sponsors, will be on hand with coupons for fudge. Once the sun sets, Burnside Park will be illuminated with public art installations by Masary Studios (Boston, MA) and local design collective Pneuhhaus (East Providence, RI).

At 5:30PM, the Brown University Ice Skating Band will play at the BankNewport City Center prior to

the evening's tree lighting ceremony. WJAR's Patrice Wood, mayor Elorza, and members of Providence City Council will invite spectators to join them in lighting the BankNewport City Center tree. A spectacular evening show by champion figure skaters will follow the lighting. The lineup, produced by Sarah DiNardo and Brad Vigorito, will feature an unprecedented cast of Olympic figure skating medalists, including guest host and emcee, the two-time Olympic medalist and winter sports icon, Nancy Kerrigan. Please note: Public skating will be closed from 4:00PM – 7:00PM.

The 60-minute skating show will also feature 2014 Olympic Bronze Medalist Ashley Wagner, 2018 National Silver Medalist Ross Miner, and Rhode Island's very own 2014 Olympic Bronze Medalist, Marissa Castelli. They will be joined by World Theatre on Ice Medalists, Ocean State Ice Theatre, National Synchronized Competitors, the Ocean Blades, and regional, sectional, national, and international medalists.

As part of the start of the holiday season and the Winter Lights Market, the Providence Tourism Council is also excited to partner with the City of Providence, local businesses, and organizations to launch the Illuminate PVD Campaign. This campaign works to activate and illuminate some of our city's public spaces and buildings, adding a little extra holiday spirit to the downtown area and to highlight the special character and beautiful architecture of our city.

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