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PROVIDENCE TOMORROW

our city ☐ our neighborhoods ☐ our future
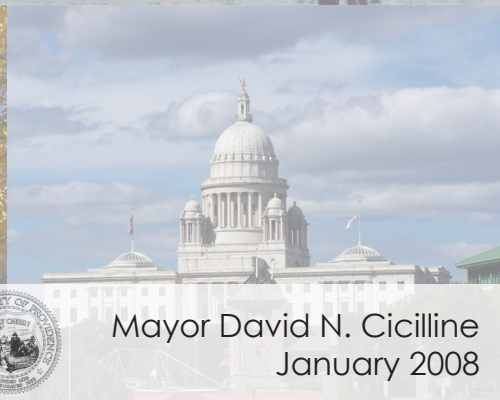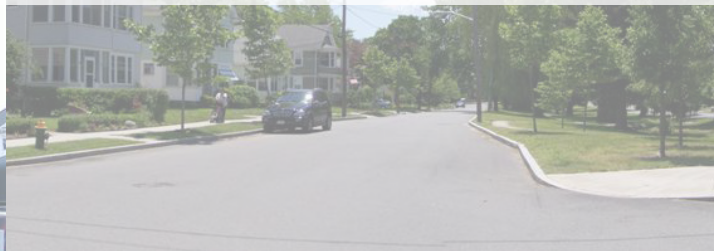
Mayor David N. Cicilline
January 2008

Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Comprehensive Plan

Foreword - Mayor David N. Cicilline

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It is with great pleasure that I present *Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Comprehensive Plan* for your consideration. The vision and strategies outlined in this plan are the result of a collaborative effort between city government and you, our residents and business owners, to develop a framework for guiding the future growth and development of Providence. From the day the City Council and I announced this process in May 2006, hundreds of residents have generously donated their time and creativity at multiple meetings.

At our kick-off event in July, over 200 people came from all over the city to the Roger Williams Casino to meet their neighbors, enjoy ice cream sundaes on a hot summer evening, and share ideas about what makes Providence a special place to live and work, as well as areas for improvement. For three hours, people of all ages and backgrounds shared their thoughts and found common ground.

The ideas you provided in July formed the foundation for our next public outreach event, the citywide charrette. Held in October 2006, the citywide charrette consisted of 9 public workshops held over five days, giving you the chance to tell us what your ideal Providence would be like in terms of the natural environment, public spaces, arts and culture, housing, businesses and jobs, transportation, and architectural character. You created wish lists and identified needs, goals and concepts. You even spent two evenings building your own city of the future with building blocks to show us where new growth should be directed.

When we embarked on this process last year, we envisioned a fairly simple update to the city's current comprehensive plan as an interim measure until neighborhood plans could be completed. After listening to the innovative and bold ideas presented at the citywide charrette, it became apparent that a simple update would not adequately capture and reflect your vision for Providence. The energy and commitment exhibited by the 300 plus participants at the citywide charrette inspired us to craft a plan that focuses on a series of core values that will ensure the future health and vitality of our city: sustainability, equity, creativity, collaboration and engagement.

Foreword - Mayor David N. Cicilline

The vision of a sustainable Providence outlined in this plan is ambitious and cannot be achieved by Providence alone. The future sustainability of both Providence and Rhode Island hinges on the ability of state and local governments to recognize our symbiotic relationship and work together to achieve our common goals. For that reason, Providence Tomorrow identifies specific strategies that need to be undertaken at the state and regional levels for implementation to proceed.

The adoption of Providence Tomorrow as the city's interim comprehensive plan is just the first step in the process. In the coming months, we will be hosting the first of several neighborhood charrettes to develop plans for every neighborhood in the city. I fully expect that these plans as well as more detailed studies on issues such as climate change and economic development will result in changes to Providence Tomorrow in the coming years.

Most of all I want to thank the residents of Providence who have already participated in this unprecedented process and encourage as many residents as possible to get involved in the neighborhood charrettes. As is already evident in this draft, the comprehensive plan will reflect your love of our great city and your ambition to become even greater. When complete, it will serve as our guiding document as we approach a future of great opportunity together.

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A Vision For Providence

As a key part of Providence Tomorrow, residents from every neighborhood told us what they like best about our city and what things they would like to change. Themes started to emerge from all of the comments that we received, and these themes have started to form a vision for our city's future. A vision is a broad statement of what we are aspiring to and what we are all collectively working toward.

We envision a Providence that is

o Green - with a healthy natural environment and sustainable design

o Rich in character – honoring our historic character, producing excellence in design and showcasing our spectacular waterfront location

o Dynamic – thriving with abundant business and employment opportunities

o Livable –with healthy, vibrant, walkable neighborhoods connected to an active downtown, with many transit options

o Diverse –culturally rich, home to many diverse communities

o Active –with many places for people to recreate and gather

o Equitable - with an array of housing and job choices

A Vision For Providence

o Efficient – a fiscally sound city, providing high-quality, cost-effective services

o Engaging – with strong schools, libraries and civic groups

o Creative – where the arts play a key role in city life

A city where all can enjoy a great quality of life!

A Vision For Providence

Introduction

Providence Tomorrow is an interim Comprehensive Plan that has evolved from the previous plan, *Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan* and the extensive public input received during the fall of 2006 when the City hosted a week-long charrette and three follow up meetings to discuss all of the topics addressed in the plan.

Providence Tomorrow is a work in progress. It will serve as the City's guiding document while the next step, the neighborhood charrette process is underway. Over the next two years this plan will be fine-tuned through the neighborhood charrettes that will involve residents and stakeholders in extensive discussions about the vision for their communities. Amendments will be made, as needed, through the neighborhood planning process. At the end of the two years, this Comprehensive Plan will be reworked again to update its objectives and strategies to reflect the new ideas from the nieghborhood charrettes. In addition, revisions to the Zoning Ordinance will be proposed based on the results of neighborhood and specific plans and the resulting amendments to this Plan, as a means of implementing the objectives of the Plan.

The State of Rhode Island requires all municipalities to develop a comprehensive plan to guide development decisions and to establish the basis for zoning ordinances and other land use regulation tools. The plan must address community concerns such as housing, parks, transportation, community services and many others. In Providence Tomorrow you will find all of the required elements and a few others such as sustainability, the city's built environment, and the arts. You will also find discussions about growth and change and where and how the city plans for future development.

The discussions from the citywide charrette were fruitful and productive and inspired us to build Providence Tomorrow into something much more than a document to fullfill a requirement of the State. We have crafted a plan to make possible the hopes for our city's future, to address some of the concerns and to set the path so that Providence is moving in the direction that we all hope for: a livable, sustainable, vibrant city that is a great place to live.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles provide the foundation for the goals and objectives in Providence Tomorrow, and future initiatives undertaken by the City to implement the Plan.

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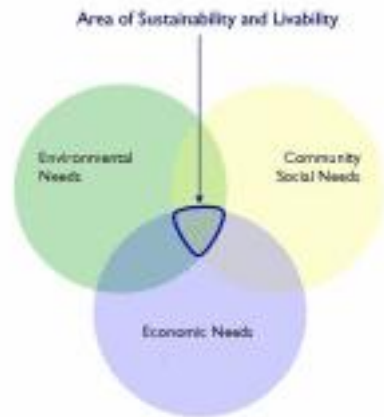
Sustainability

Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. [1]

The concept of sustainability is not new; however, global changes such as climate change, rising sea level, and uncertainties in the oil market are placing new emphasis on the importance of moving toward a sustainable community. While Providence cannot change worldwide trends, it can become a leader in promoting environmentally sound practices and encouraging sustainable development patterns that promote walking, biking and transit as alternatives to driving and support efforts to expand agricultural opportunities in the City.

Sustainability is about more than just the environment. A sustainable community must meet all of its needs: environmental, economic, and social. The purpose of this Plan is to establish a framework for how to meet all of these needs and achieve long-term sustainability.

Equity

The City of Providence serves as a donor community to the state and the region, providing services without benefit of corresponding property tax revenue. This places even greater strain on the City's ability to provide services to residents, even though the demand is greater here than in other communities. The City also takes on the burden of undesirable land uses such as asphalt processing facilities, salt piles, utilities and contaminated industrial sites that serve the state and region. Furthermore, despite goals to concentrate growth in the urbanized areas of the state, cities remain disadvantaged by higher development costs such as land cost, environmental remediation, and structured parking. Hidden subsidies for greenfield development such as highway interchange improvements in rural and suburban communities further increase the competitive disadvantage.

Similar issues of inequity arise at the local level within the city's neighborhoods: poverty, unemployment and affordable housing are concentrated in a few areas rather than dispersed throughout the city, brownfields and environmentally contaminated properties are predominantly located in the poorer neighborhoods of the city, and public access to one of the city's most valuable assets, Narragansett Bay, is limited to one neighborhood on the east side. For Providence to truly be a livable, sustainable city, these inequities must be addressed at all levels.

Creativity

For many years Providence has benefited from substantial federal funding to support city projects, including the river relocation project, the moving of Interstate 195, transportation funds that are dispersed through the State, and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Over the past several years, there has been a significant decline in the amount of federal dollars available for local communities. This trend is mirrored at the state level with continuing budget deficits. The City must continue to pursue its goals even if federal and state governments are unable or unwilling to pay their share. Creativity and innovation will be the hallmarks of this Plan, as the City continues to challenge both itself and others to find new, more efficient ways of providing necessary services and

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1   Definition from World Commission on Environment and Development. Illustration drawn from the text of a speech given by Governor John Kitzhaber
     of Oregon, May 2000.

effecting the changes envisioned by this Plan. Creativity also means being innovative when it comes to addressing the challenges that the city faces. This plan is a significant step in that direction.

Collaboration

The success of Providence Tomorrow hinges on our ability to build strong partnerships; the City alone cannot implement all of the goals and objectives of this Plan. Collaboration with the State of Rhode Island, neighboring communities, non-profit organizations, private developers, residents and business owners is essential to achieving the vision. For that reason, this Plan gives equal emphasis to matters directly under City control and those controlled by other agencies. It is intended that, through Providence Tomorrow, various agencies and levels of government will work together to achieve the objectives city residents and businesses feel are important.

Engagement

Providence has a rich tradition of citizen engagement, starting with those in Roger Williams' original settlement who established a new form of self-government that separated church and state. That tradition continues today with increasing interest from residents in how our city continues to grow and develop. Our challenge in the coming years is to find ways to broaden the community engagement process to include all voices. Providence is a racially and culturally diverse city; for Providence Tomorrow to be truly representative of the people of Providence, we must work to ensure that participation in crafting and updating plans is as diverse as the community itself.

Plan Organization

The format and organization of Providence Tomorrow has changed significantly from its predecessor, Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan. The goals and policies of the previous plan were organized by geography: citywide, neighborhood, downtown, waterfront. This organization was difficult to use and often resulted in omissions of policies that should have applied to broader areas.

The framework of Providence Tomorrow is value based; it is designed to clearly identify goals that are essential to ensuring the city's future in a manner that is easy for everyone to understand. Another key change deals with the relationship of the land use plan to the rest of the plan. Traditionally, land use has been considered the heart and soul of a comprehensive plan, the driving force from which all other goals and policies are crafted. Providence Tomorrow is based on a new paradigm in which the land use plan becomes a tool to implement the goals and objectives of the Plan in its entirety.

Section 1: Building on the Past

This section provides a brief overview of Providence's history and how changing conditions continue to influence the future sustainability of the city. Chapters within this section are: *A Rich History* and *Moving Forward.*

Section 2: Shaping the Future

This section establishes the roadmap for achieving the vision of Providence Tomorrow by identifying goals, objectives and strategies to address a diverse array of issues that will ultimately determine the City's future. Chapters within this section are: *Sustainability and the Environment, The Built Environment, Business and Jobs, Housing, Mobility, Arts and Cultural Resources, People and Public Spaces, Community Services and Facilities, Land Use* and *The Waterfront.*

Each chapter in this section is organized in the following manner:

Introduction

Goal

This statement identifies the central purpose of the chapter as well as the overall desired outcome.

Overview

A brief introduction on the chapter topic.

Changes, Challenges and Opportunities[2]

The factors that affect the ability of the City to achieve the described goal, objectives and strategies.

Objectives

The major policies and actions that should be undertaken by the City to realize the vision of Providence Tomorrow.

Strategies

General efforts and approaches to be taken by the City to support the objectives, without providing specific directives or a list of tasks. The strategies constitute the implementation plan for each individual element.

While each chapter addresses a different required element of the Plan, they are all interrelated. As such, duplication exists throughout the Plan to ensure that key initiatives are addressed from a variety of perspectives.

Section 3: A Work in Progress

This section provides a series of principles and strategies to guide implementation of Providence Tomorrow in a chapter titled *Implementing the Plan*.

Section 4: Appendices

This section contains details on existing conditions in the city and the planning process used to develop Providence Tomorrow. Chapters within this section are: *Existing Conditions*, *Compliance with City and State Regulations*, *Capital Improvement Program Overview*, and *Parties Responsible for Implementation*.

Section 5: Supplemental Plans[3]

Supplemental Plans address particular issues in more detail than can be addressed in the Plan itself. The need for these plans are identified in the related objectives and strategies. The following plans have been included as supplements to Providence Tomorrow:

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2   *This section does not appear in the Land Use Element since all of the issues are addressed in the previous chapters.*

3   **Providence 2000 directed the preparation and adoption of a series of supplemental plans (the Comprehensive Plan Series and Area Plan Series) to address specific issues in more detail. Many of the adopted supplemental plans were implemented or have become outdated since their adoption. Furthermore, the adoption of plans separate from the main Plan is not user-friendly in that it often leads to inconsistencies and requires users to review multiple documents. As such, Providence Tomorrow has been designed to minimize the use of supplemental plans by incorporating the key points of the original supplements to Providence 2000. Supplemental plans will only be adopted as determined necessary by the City Plan Commission and the City Council to address issues in more depth.**

Introduction

- Strategy for Reducing Risks from Natural Hazards in Providence, Rhode Island (2004)
- Adult Entertainment Plan (1997)

Introduction

A Rich History   1

1   A Rich History

1 A Rich History

1.1 Providence - Yesterday

The Providence area was first settled in 1636 by Roger Williams, and was one of the original Thirteen Colonies. Having been expelled from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for his religious views, Williams sought to resettle elsewhere and secured a title to the land from the local Narragansett natives around this time. Here he gave the city its present name, in honor of "God's merciful Providence" which he believed had aided him in finding the location. Williams cultivated Providence as a refuge for persecuted religious dissenters, as he himself had been exiled from Massachusetts.

Shortly after being settled, much of Providence was burned in King Philip's War, which lasted from 1675 to 1676. Providence's growth was slow during the next quarter-century. The first census of the colony, taken in 1708, recorded 1,446 residents. However, in the second census, taken in 1730, the colony's population had almost tripled to 3,916 people. The Providence territory would become smaller as more and more of the land would become part of different towns, including Scituate and Johnston. The city's slow growth was also due to the rocky, hilly, and heavily wooded land which made farming difficult, as well as the tradition of dissent and independent-mindedness (Rhode Island was the first of the thirteen colonies to declare independence from Great Britain). Residents often fought over land titles, politics, and religion.

Providence is ideally located along the eastern seaboard of the United States. The city developed near a natural harbor, establishing a populated area along one of the earliest key trade routes. Today this network includes the major northeastern cities: Boston, Providence, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. This Northeast corridor runs 600 miles long and 30 miles wide, and Providence is well situated within it. The City's location facilitated its development as a transportation center, offering access to both water and overland routes.

Providence developed in a unique way compared to most older cities. Its settlers seemed to have no need for a common square or meetinghouse, and the town grew in a linear fashion, along the east side of the Providence River. The downtown area, typically the core of early development in a community, did not develop for a century after Providence's colonization. Known then as Weybosset Neck, the downtown area to the west of the river, was dominated by steep hills, marshy lowlands, and muddy creeks. Not until 1771 was any kind of permanent link created between the east side and downtown.

Demand for a specialized commercial district in Providence increased around the turn of the nineteenth century, as "downtown" started to develop west of the Providence River. Shipping and manufacturing became the key industries around the downtown area, as residential development continued along its fringes. By the end of the 1820's, what we know today as downtown was a thriving area. During this time the jewelry industry grew most significantly of the manufacturing trades, later establishing Providence as the jewelry capital of the region.

Providence's growth and transformation from a small shipping town to the major economic center of the most highly industrialized state in the nation was rapid and dramatic. Providence grew in population from 15,000 people to more than 175,000 at the turn of the twentieth century. Forty years later the City enjoyed its highest population ever (253,504), as industries and businesses continued to migrate to Providence's active harbor and commercial areas. The next forty years, however, from 1940 to 1980, saw a significant decrease in population, as the "suburbanization" phenomenon negatively impacted most of the older cities throughout New England. Urban renewal schemes and the construction of routes 6/10 and Interstates 95 and 195 in the 1950's and 1960's destroyed a significant part of the city's urban fabric and isolated neighborhoods from each other and from downtown.

A Rich History 1

Providence reached its lowest population count of the century in 1980, with 156,804 people. In the early 1980's, however, this trend began to reverse and the city has since enjoyed a much touted and celebrated renaissance. According to the 2000 census the city had 173,618 residents, second only to Boston of New England cities.

1.2 Providence - Today

The City of Providence is characterized by a number of outstanding features; its topography and open spaces; its waterways and shoreline; its unique scale in terms of buildings and population; the many respected private and public learning and health institutions; its history and historically significant architecture; and its proximity to a variety of economic, recreational and cultural areas, including the cities of Boston and New York, the ocean and the mountains in northern New England, all adding to the significance of Providence as the capital city of the state of Rhode Island. Providence's population is ethnically and culturally diverse and varied, which creates a unique cultural and educational environment. The city is also home to numerous top hospitals, colleges and universities, a key part of its economy. The city is alive with new development designed to compliment existing scale, and along with the ongoing preservation and renovation activities, is helping to continue the tradition that is Providence.

1.3 Planning In Providence

A notable administrative innovation in Providence was the organization of the City Plan Commission in 1913. The group proposed several bold plans for Providence, including the relocation of the railroad station and the removal of the elevated tracks, or "Chinese Wall," that separated Downtown from the State House. Most of its early recommendations such as the 1926 Whitten Thorofare Plan, a proposal to relieve traffic congestion throughout the metropolitan area, and others extending to education, public health, and industrial development, went unheeded. The city's first comprehensive zoning ordinance was written and enacted, on the commission's recommendation, in 1923.

In 1944, there was a significant reorganization of the City Plan Commission. In 1945, the new Commission issued the first of many publications over the next two decades, the "Future Population of Providence." The plan foresaw the challenges that Providence would face in the coming years. The Commission wrote that "urban areas are changing in character from one thickly populated central city, to a group of satellite cities around a central city." The physical saturation of older cities with the slow decline of age, coupled with the proliferation of the automobile, made the exodus to suburbia a national phenomenon.

Between 1946 and 1953, the City Plan Commission produced a master plan which was published as a series of separate reports. Through the 1950's the Commission worked on a number of other reports, culminating in the "College Hill Demonstration Study of Historic Area Renewal." This report was the basis for historic preservation and local historic districts in Providence. In the early 1960's the Commission published "Downtown Providence 1970"; out of this plan grew the Capital Center project.

Through the 1960's and into the 1970's, the Commission continued to publish master plan reports dealing with specific issues. Of these, "Interface: Providence" was the most notable. It emerged from a RISD architecture studio class that envisioned bold, extensive changes to the entire downtown area by daylighting the river system. Combined with the "Capital Center Project Development Plan," the document set the stage for the railroad relocation and waterplace park project that defined the city's transformation in the early 1990's. And in the mid-1970's, neighborhood planning began in the city with the refinement of neighborhood boundaries, the preparation of a Citywide neighborhood analysis and the completion of a series of individual neighborhood plans. In the 1980's, the Commission prepared an update of the 1964 Master Plan and a series of neighborhood plans. In addition to the neighborhood

1 A Rich History

plans, several plans dealing with preservation on a neighborhood level were prepared, as well as a revitalization plan for downtown and the port area.

In 1992, the Old Harbor Plan proposed shifting Interstate 195 away from downtown to the south, opening up developable land between the jewelry district and downtown. The plan envisioned reconnecting downtown streets to the waterfront and created a design vision for new development. By the time this plan was issued, much of the river relocation was complete.

In 1988, the State passed the innovative Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act, which requires each municipality to develop a comprehensive plan and requires zoning regulations to conform to the plan. In 1989, the City began to develop its comprehensive plan, *Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan*, which was adopted in 1993 and would serve as the city's guiding document for the next 15 years.

Moving Forward 2

2 Moving Forward

Providence is a vastly different city than it was during the writing of Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan. In 1990, Providence was just starting to recover from decades of population decline. While small increases in population had been recorded, best expectations were for the city to remain stable. While the comprehensive plan included bold strokes to change the physical environment, such as moving rivers and highways, it did not anticipate continued growth in population and increasing investment and development pressures. Providence Tomorrow builds on the concepts and ideals contained in the original comprehensive plan and expands them to address the environment in which we now live.

To understand the goals and objectives established in this Plan, it is necessary to understand the events and forces that continue to influence the city. This chapter presents an overview of the wide variety of changes that have occurred in the city since 1990, the challenges that we must overcome to make the vision for Providence Tomorrow a reality, and opportunities on which to capitalize. Many of these issues are not unique to Providence: the continued decrease in federal funding, the impact of homeland security, and the multitude of concerns that result from global warming, such as sea level rise and a changing climate. However, it is how we choose to respond to these obstacles that will determine our ultimate success.

2.1 Changes

People

Providence is now a growing city. Between 1990 and 2000, the city's population increased by approximately eight percent, reversing a trend of population decline that had lasted several decades. Much of this increase can be attributed to the growing Latin American populations. For the first time in its history, the non Hispanic white population makes up less than 50 percent of the city's population. This new trend continues to strengthen the city's rich history of cultural diversity.

While population is increasing, demographics are also changing. Since 1990, the median income for Providence families has declined 16 percent, contributing greatly to the fact that 29 percent of the city's population lives below poverty level, and 40 percent of children live below poverty level. The impact of poverty on Providence families is particularly strong in the housing market. Housing prices have increased dramatically over the last several years, forcing over 50 percent of people in the city to pay more than 30 percent of their income in rent.

Changes in the poverty rate can also be partially attributed to dramatic shifts in the types of jobs available to residents. While Providence was historically a manufacturing city, manufacturing jobs, which in many cases paid better than service sector employment, have decreased 44 percent since 1990. On the contrary, retail jobs have increased 64% in that same time frame. Another significant change is the 83 percent increase in construction jobs, reflecting the explosive growth in development over the last few years.

Overall, as of the last census 110,615 people were employed in the city, most of whom live elsewhere. Of the 67,169 Providence residents who are employed, only 51 percent work in the city.

Investment

Providence has seen tremendous development in recent years, with increases in both residential and commercial construction. While many developers continue to be from Rhode Island, an increasing number have come to

Providence from other states, drawn by our prominent waterfront location, historic building stock, state historic tax credits, and by all that Providence has to offer: livable neighborhoods, location in the heart of the Eastern Seaboard, and a vibrant arts, education, and cultural scene.

In addition to private sector growth, many of the colleges, universities and hospitals in Providence are seeking additional space to accommodate students and patients. Changes to state and federal regulations and new technologies impact the amount of space hospitals need per patient.   Universities are seeking to add new facilities and student amenities. Johnson and Wales University has expanded its Harborside Campus significantly. The Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has expanded into downtown and Brown University is planning to expand its facilities in the Jewelry District. All told, there has been over 3.4 billion dollars of public and private investment in Providence since 2003.

Policy Shifts

Several shifts in policy have had a significant impact on historic structures in Providence. Beginning in 2000, the passage of a series of State laws and City ordinances provided for property tax incentives to rehabilitate historic buildings Downtown and in the industrial areas. The creation of the state historic tax credit in 2002, in addition to existing federal tax credits provided even more incentive to developers to rehabilitate historic buildings. Also in 2002, the City adopted the Industrial and Commercial Buildings District, a new historic zoning district which protects significant buildings against demolition. The combination of these policies has resulted in substantial rehabilitation and decreased demolition of historic resources.

2.2 Challenges

Financial Constraints

Providence, like all communities in Rhode Island and across the nation, is affected by the decreases in federal and state funding. Smaller funding allocations make it more difficult for the City to provide adequate services to its residents and businesses, placing even more burdens on the already stretched property tax system.

This decrease in funding is further compounded by Providence's role as a donor community to the rest of the state and region. Providence is the largest community in Rhode Island, home to a multitude of state agencies, colleges and universities, hospitals and service agencies. However, these facilities do not serve Providence exclusively, they serve the entire state. Nevertheless Providence alone bears the financial burden of these facilities that don't pay property taxes, leading to higher property tax rates for city residents and businesses.   Additionally, Providence is also home to many locally undesirable land uses (lulus) such as oil and gas tanks, salt piles, scrap metal, and asphalt batch plants that provide essential services to the state and region, but are harsh on the environment and generate little in property tax revenue.

All of these financial challenges pose significant obstacles to providing services to Providence residents, a demand that is greater than other areas of the state due to higher poverty levels.

Limited area for Growth

Providence is a compact city with limited land area available for new development. Unlike many U.S. cities that are able to annex land to increase their area, Providence has a fixed land area of 18 square miles. Approximately a third of the land area is stable residential neighborhoods where significant change and growth is unlikely and unwanted. In addition, a large percentage of the city's land area (over 46%) is taken up with land uses that do not generate

| 2 | **Moving Forward** |

property taxes such as schools, churches, hospitals, state offices and public rights of way. What remains is a small area of available land for new growth and development to generate new revenue for the city. It is imperative that this resource be utilized efficiently and effectively. Growth is essential for the city's economic health and sustainability, as the City is dependent on property taxes for income. Land use policy and tax policy are intricately linked, and must both be considered in this plan.

Some of the best opportunities for growth occur through reuse of former industrial properties. Like many northeastern cities, Providence was an industrial giant during the 19th century. Remnants of this history remain in the form of historic mill buildings ripe for reuse, and in a much more problematic form of pollutants and contaminants underground. Many of the vacant and underutilized parcels in the city must be remediated to make the land safe for redevelopment. This poses a financial challenge for many property owners, limiting the type of development that can recoup the cleanup costs for these properties. Incentives such as density and height bonuses may be needed to offset the increased development costs for these properties.

Evolving State Priorities and Regulatory Changes

Like all communities in the state, Providence is subject to state regulations. However, many of these regulations were drafted based on a suburban and rural model, which often places Providence at a disadvantage. For example, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Open Space grants have a minimum threshold 5 acres for a property to be considered. Furthermore, changes to laws such as the state historic tax credit, will affect Providence disproportionately as the majority of development occurring from the credit is in Providence. Successful implementation of this plan will require collaboration with state agencies to ensure a more urban view.

Affordability

The skyrocketing housing market over the last several years has outpaced the growth in income and employment, creating challenges for many Providence residents. While a significant percentage of Providence's housing stock meets the federal and state affordability criteria, more must be done in the areas of housing, business retention and expansion, and workforce development to start reversing the trend of increasing poverty.

The development of condominiums and lofts and movement of middle income buyers into traditionally lower-income neighborhoods has led to concerns about displacement and clashing values. This type of redevelopment can have both positive and negative impacts. The influx of new residents into an area can bring new amenities, stores and, in some cases, increased political capital to neighborhoods and help to create vital mixed-income communities. However, new higher-income residents can also mean rising property values, higher property taxes (which translates to higher rents), and changing neighborhood character. Existing residents in changing neighborhoods may not benefit equally, or share in the change and increased prosperity. There are models of revitalization and reinvestment in city neighborhoods that succeed while minimizing displacement, by nurturing the local economy and preserving adequate housing for existing residents. At the city and neighborhood levels there must be a balance of jobs and housing at all income levels to help stabilize mixed-income communities.

Schools

Providence Public Schools face many challenges in offering a high quality education to Providence children including funding, outdated facilities and the associated issues that come with providing education in a city where 40% of children live below the poverty level and 48% do not speak English as a first language. The ability of the City to overcome this challenge will directly impact whether Providence continues to attract and retain families.

Code Enforcement (Zoning, Building, Housing)

The architectural and urban character of Providence neighborhoods is one of the city's most prized assets. Enforcement of building and zoning codes continue to be significant challenges facing the city. The ability to provide adequate enforcement is critical to maintaining what makes the City special.

2.3 Opportunities

Location

Providence is strategically located at the head of Narragansett Bay in the heart of the Eastern Seaboard. The city's size provides clear alternatives to those looking for an active urban lifestyle without the big city problems that come with living and working in Boston or New York. Furthermore, Providence is just beginning to capitalize on its waterfront location. The moving of the rivers downtown and the subsequent creation of *Waterfire* draws thousands of tourists to the city each summer. Restoring public access to Narragansett Bay by transforming underused industrial areas into mixed-use districts with jobs and housing opportunities will reinforce the city's prominent waterfront location. The creation of view corridors, greenways and other public open spaces will further complement all of the efforts that have been made to improve the water quality of the Bay and restore one of Providence's greatest assets to all residents.

Land Use 2025 and Smart Growth

Providence has the opportunity to benefit from the goals and policies in the Rhode Island state land use plan, Land Use 2025. The plan calls for the concentration of growth in existing urban centers, maximizing state investment in areas with existing infrastructure and promoting efficient development through infill, redevelopment, and higher densities. If state actions and investments are aligned with these goals, Providence, as the state's urban center, will benefit. Considering the regional context of which Providence is a part, Quonset Point in North Kingstown is an asset and opportunity for Providence. Quonset Point is uniquely situated to accommodate water dependent uses, and utility companies requiring large amounts of land. The state and region should consider the best locations for these uses and begin to distribute them equitably beyond the borders of Providence.

New Development

When complete, the relocation of Interstate 195 will make Providence safer and easier to travel. It will also allow for the reconnection of the historic street grid in downtown, as well as opening up new areas of the city for redevelopment. This area, along with the underused waterfront land along Allens Avenue, is an opportunity for growth and development in a planned way that creates views and public access to the water, public walkways, connected greenways, and linkages to other green spaces and adjacent neighborhoods.

Institutions

The seven universities and seven hospitals in the city are economic generators as employment centers. Hospitals and colleges also have unique characteristics that add value above and beyond creating jobs. These institutions are constantly conducting research and imparting technical expertise to their employees and students. In an era increasingly dependent on knowledge-based industries, these institutions contribute to a more experienced and educated workforce, a resource desirable in all cities. Furthermore, their economic activities foster an entrepreneurial spirit and attract additional economic growth. Providence benefits equally from the institutions' contributions to

the cultural and creative economy, widely recognized as a principal source of both jobs and visitor expenditures, critical to the city's health and quality of life.

Sustainability

Providence has the opportunity to be a pioneer as a green, sustainable city. Green principles that can be applied to the betterment of the City include energy efficiency; development and use of alternative energy sources; reduction, reuse and recycling of materials; expansion of the tree canopy; and protection and improvement of water quality in rivers, streams, ponds and the bay. Specific measures include "green" development that employs features such as green roofs and rain gardens; implementation of the Department of Public Works' new urban composting program; improved recycling efforts; increased tree planting citywide; encouraging the development of businesses that produce products that will further the goal of environmental sustainability; and expansion and increased use of mass transit to reduce air pollution in the city. Implementation of these principles and measures will significantly improve our environment and quality of life.

Citizen Involvement

Providence has an active and engaged citizenry who are very progressive in their ideas and attitudes. By continuing to engage residents in dialogue on the current state and future of the city, Providence can become an even better place to live and work.

Livability

Providence is a place people want to live and work, drawn by our diverse housing stock, variety of jobs, and thriving arts and cultural scene.

Sustainability and the Environment 3

3   Sustainability and the Environment

3 Sustainability and the Environment

> ### Goal 1
>
> **Protect and preserve the natural environment and strive to make Providence a "green," sustainable city.**

The City of Providence is highly developed, with well established infrastructure and only a small amount of vacant developable land. Most current development activity is infill, restoration, reuse, and redevelopment. In this context, and within the broader context of climate change, sea level rise and diminishing natural resources, the goal of making Providence a "green" city is both a necessity and a tremendous challenge. Measures such as energy efficiency, water conservation, emissions reduction, ecological restoration and protection to benefit stormwater management, habitat protection, water quality, recycling, composting, community gardens, green space distributed throughout the city, and environmentally sustainable design must all receive new emphasis.

An emerging focus on environmental sustainability and design innovation to promote "green" development, green roofs, alternative transit, and transit-oriented development is reflected in this plan. The plan's overriding themes of Sustainability, Equity, Creativity, Collaboration, and Community Involvement are particularly relevant to this element and borne out by the objectives and strategies herein. For example, the introduction of a policy specifically addressing environmental justice is indicative of the need for greater equity in the distribution of environmental burdens and benefits citywide.

The plan also includes strategies for increasing the tree canopy coverage throughout Providence to benefit the city through cleaner air, lower summer temperatures and stormwater retention. Through participation in the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection program (CCP) the City has shown its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Lastly, but certainly no less important, are strategies for protecting surface waters in the harbor and rivers through local and regionally cooperative action.

3.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Changes

Development

With population growth and increasing regional and national attention on Providence, the City has experienced a significant increase in residential and commercial development. Unfortunately, this often has resulted in the loss of open space and tree canopy. Recent residential and commercial development within established neighborhoods has too often been designed, constructed and sited to minimal standards. In addition, paving, vehicle traffic and roadway congestion have widespread ramifications including the effects of runoff pollution on water quality and the impacts of emissions on air quality.

Sustainability and the Environment 3

Environmental Sustainability as a Priority

The City of Providence has embraced the commitment to become a "green" city, pledging to incorporate standards for energy efficiency, reduce emissions, and support community gardens and small-scale agriculture. This local initiative is supported by emerging national and international awareness of environmental, health and energy issues and the need for efforts to address them.

Land Use 2025

The new State Land Use Plan sets goals and strategies for the State's "sustainable prosperity." The emphasis on growth centers, whereby population and development are concentrated in urbanized nodes, represents a defined and comprehensive approach to planning for an environmentally and economically sustainable Rhode Island.

Metro Bay Special Area Management Plan (SAMP)

The Metro Bay SAMP represents a new, regional approach to harbor planning. The new plan establishes a cooperative framework for the cities of Providence, Pawtucket, East Providence, and Cranston to address future development and use of Metro Bay waters and coastline. The SAMP process also provides the opportunity for the City to evaluate water type classifications that define uses along the waterfront.

Challenges

Limits to Growth

Providence is a small, densely developed city with limited space in which to grow. This limitation presents challenges to environmental and economic sustainability and quality of life. As the city develops, the need for the benefits of open, green space and clean air and water becomes more pronounced. We must find ways to mitigate the negative affects of impervious surfaces, the loss of trees and green space, and polluted air and water through innovative, environmentally sound means. We face the challenge of more effectively using the space we have and incorporating green design features into development.

State Laws and Policies

Many State laws, policies and funding mechanisms do not reflect the burdens, needs, land costs, and growth patterns of an urban environment. This poses challenges to the City of Providence for open space funding and site remediation.

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

Environmental considerations relative to future development must respond to and anticipate the effects of global warming and sea level rise.

Quality of Development

As land and resources become increasingly scarce, it is important that the quality of development improves with respect to site planning, runoff, erosion control and stream stabilization, use of environmentally safe materials, energy efficiency, water conservation, use of green roofs, and other measures.

3 Sustainability and the Environment

Water Supply

Less than 30 percent of the water produced by the Providence Water Supply Board (PWSB) is used by the City of Providence. As the city grows and to guard against drought emergencies, the City faces the challenge of establishing a mechanism for reserving necessary capacity. In the wake of increasing suburban development, protection of the watershed in the areas surrounding the Scituate Reservoir is a primary concern; addressing this will require cooperation among the City of Providence, other municipalities, and the State. Water conservation by households and businesses presents an additional challenge.

Waterbodies and Waterways

Improving the cleanliness and ecological functions of rivers, ponds and streams and their surrounding landscapes is an important challenge. Furthermore, in planning for development on the waterfront, the City must determine the appropriate mix of uses and accommodate a connected system of access to the water's edge.

Solid Waste

The City must address solid waste reduction and handling, as the Central Landfill is projected to reach its capacity over the next 10 to 15 years.

Alternative Transportation

Providence and its residents face the emerging challenge of moving a growing and diversifying population via an aging system of roads and infrastructure. More people and more trips results in a decreasing level of service, more emissions and increased runoff pollution. Providence needs to continue to improve alternative transportation systems such as walking and biking through sidewalk improvements and implementation/expansion of the bicycle network. The challenge is finding sufficient funding to make much needed improvements. Furthermore, expansion of the transit system and development of transit alternatives represents a major challenge.

Downtown Parking

Downtown parking should be accommodated in parking structures and transit use should be promoted to minimize the effects of vehicle pollution and paved surfaces.

Neighborhood Parking

Excessive paving of yards in residential areas must be addressed through neighborhood-by-neighborhood analysis of the feasibility of permitted, overnight, on-street parking or other measures to reduce the need for surface parking.

Funding for Open Space

Locating funding for open space acquisition is challenging given current federal and state budget demands. Additionally, state program guidelines need to be adjusted to recognize the unique challenges faced in urban environments. For example, while the State may grant waivers to the minimum size requirements for open space grants, no waiver should be needed for urban areas; thresholds should be adjusted to recognize different constraints.

Brownfields

While brownfields represent some of the best opportunities for development, they also require cleanup. Assessment and remediation are costly and present challenges to regulators, developers and the City. With the State Land Use Plan's new emphasis on developing in areas with infrastructure and concentrations of existing population comes an emphasis on development near the coast and in contaminated areas. This presents challenges to both clean sites and protect coastal waters and features from future degradation.

Streams and Floodplains

Streams and floodplains must be stabilized, cleaned up and maintained for protection from erosion and flooding.

Opportunities

Brownfields

Brownfields represent opportunities for environmentally sound land use and reintroduction of green fields on former industrial land.

I-195 Relocation

The relocation of I-195 provides the opportunity for needed open space, increased waterfront access and awareness, and the introduction of land that can be developed to high standards of environmental sustainability.

Smart Growth/Land Use 2025

The State Land Use Plan, *Land Use 2025* advocates "smart growth" development patterns statewide, whereby populations are centered in growth centers to the benefit of the state's natural resources and environmental and economic sustainability. The City must take the opportunity to work in cooperation with the state and other municipalities to meet statewide goals.

Transit

Many of the recommendations of the Mayor's Transit 2020 Working Group are expected to guide the forthcoming Metropolitan Area Transit Study, funded in part by RIPTA and the City of Providence. The challenge put forth by the Working Group is to enhance and expand the existing transit system and investigate new transit options. The prospect of expanded and diversified transit presents opportunities to reduce car travel, ease congestion and concentrate development around transit stops.

Waterfront

Waterfront development potential and the need for access to the water present opportunities to clean up the waterfront, introduce a mix of uses that capitalize on waterfront locations without negatively affecting water quality, and increase water-related recreational use.

Citizen Involvement

Increasingly active citizen involvement in the planning process and development citywide offer opportunities for more sensitive land use.

3 | Sustainability and the Environment

Green Design

The City strives to be a leader in green design and development and there is increasing recognition of the need for environmentally sustainable development and practices. The introduction of LEED-based or similar standards, use of alternative materials and energy sources, energy conservation, green roofs, and increased recycling and composting, offer promising opportunities for a more sustainable city.

Urban Agriculture on Under-utilized Land

Small-scale urban agriculture already serves a vital role in parts of Providence, using yards, vacant lots and other formerly under-used land for food production and open space. Support of expanded community gardens and urban agriculture builds community, fosters cultural identity and connections, engages residents in the stewardship of land, provides affordable produce, and offers high quality produce to residents and local restaurants.

Development Review

Establishment of an improved process of local development review would provide the means to strengthen environmental standards for development proposals.

3.2 Objectives and Strategies

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Land Use 2025, Element 121 of the State Land Use Plan.*

Objective SE 1

Climate Protection and Air Quality

Implement measures to mitigate the effects of global warming and sea level rise and improve air quality.

Strategies:

A. Conduct a baseline study of greenhouse gas emissions and identify strategies to reduce emissions in accordance with City support of ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives).
B. Establish a reduction target for global warming pollutants in accordance with ICLEI.
C. Develop a local Climate Action Plan in accordance with ICLEI.
D. Implement the Climate Action Plan.
E. Measure, verify and report performance to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the City's efforts.
F. Reduce vehicle-generated pollution by expanding the use of transit and other alternatives, such as biking and walking, supporting telecommuting and home-based employment, expanding the use of alternative fuels, and identifying ways to improve traffic circulation. [1]
G. Review and amend City policies and regulations to promote and increase green space, landscaping, trees, and natural vegetative areas, and reduce paved areas to mitigate the heat island effect. [2]

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1 See Strategies M-1(A), M-1(B) and M-2(A).
2 See Strategy W-2(B).

Sustainability and the Environment 3

H. Lead by example by adopting measures for climate protection in the following areas: forestry, land use management, trip reduction and transit development, traffic signal synchronization, development and use of "green" energy, energy efficiency, green building, waste reduction and recycling, and education.

I. Study using dedicated revenue generation mechanisms such as excise taxes to support local shares of transit and other transportation-related improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

J. Ensure that industrial, biomedical and other scientific research facilities conform to federal and state environmental, health and safety regulations.

Objective SE 2

Nature and the City

Promote environmental sustainability and the stewardship of natural resources.

Strategies:

A. Restore and protect environmentally significant and sensitive areas, including wetlands and conservation areas by: [3]
  1. Promoting the restoration of all rivers as fishable and swimmable. [4]
  2. Evaluating, promoting and supporting all appropriate CSO projects of the Narragansett Bay Commission.
  3. Developing incentives for buffer restoration on existing properties.

B. Maintain and expand the urban forest and achieve 25% tree canopy citywide by 2020 by:
  1. Preparing and adopting a tree management plan that addresses tree planting, tree health and maintenance.
  2. Maintaining and improving the health of the existing street tree inventory by developing systematic strategies for removing dead trees and stumps; tree pruning; watering, mulching and pruning of young trees; and expanding the "Tree Rescue" program for trees threatened by undersized tree pits, grates and bricks.
  3. Promoting (in consultation with the City Forester), a significant increase in the overall canopy coverage provided by trees citywide, including the retention, maintenance and planting of trees on both private and public property.
  4. Producing and publishing design standards for tree planting and tree protection for use in both public and private street tree planting efforts.
  5. Implementing community outreach programs to increase the stewardship and public appreciation of the benefits of street trees.
  6. Increasing and supplementing the city funding of planting programs through partnerships with businesses and institutions.
  7. Developing and continuously updating a computerized inventory of street trees.
  8. Developing stronger enforcement strategies for protecting street trees from private development, sidewalk and road construction, and public utilities.

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3   See Strategies LU-7(D), LU-8(F) and W-2(I).
4   See Strategy W-2(D).

3 # Sustainability and the Environment

9. Protecting and maintaining heritage trees and other large trees in the city that are historically or culturally significant and/or valued for the canopy coverage they provide.
10. Diversifying tree species in the urban forest to provide resilience against potential pests and diseases.
11. Promoting tree planting citywide in an equitable manner.

C. Improve the water quality and natural functions of the harbor, rivers, ponds, streams, and other waterbodies, and protect the natural integrity of adjacent land areas by:

1. Protecting shore areas, waterways and waterbodies from the harmful effects of development through effective stormwater management measures and implementation of an urban greenways policy. [5]
2. Encouraging the establishment of connected greenways along the edge of all waterbodies. (See Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'). [6]
3. Improving storm water management and increasing the amount of permeable surface citywide by reviewing, creating, amending and enforcing city policies and regulations, and encouraging the use of green areas and permeable paving materials when practicable.
4. Decreasing the existence and creation of unnecessary point- and non-point pollution sources, through RIPDES and other measures.
5. Developing a harbor management plan to address use of the water sheet, including no-wake zones and limits on commercial traffic on the Providence River north of the Hurricane Barrier, and on the Seekonk River.
6. Addressing dredging needs and the impacts of development in neighboring municipalities on riparian flow and water quality.
7. Promoting habitat restoration and sustainable, water-retaining, non-invasive planting in coastal buffer areas, in accordance with CRMC guidelines. [7]
8. Protecting and maintaining floodplains and undertaking stream stabilization efforts.
9. Updating floodplain management activities to exceed minimum thresholds established by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and applying for certification under the Community Rating System (CRS) to reduce flood insurance premiums.
10. Encouraging industrial and commercial water conservation and improved stormwater management.

D. Synchronize, maintain and improve the enforcement of city and state environmental laws and regulations.
E. Establish guidelines to promote appropriately-scaled, hand-tended agriculture, providing neighborhood access to healthy, affordable foodstuffs and promoting stewardship and remediation of land. [8]
F. Expand community gardening opportunities on under-utilized land, including community gardens as a use on surplus City property through interagency and intergovernmental cooperation. [9]
G. Protect public health and urban agriculture/community gardening through greater attention to open dumpsters.

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5   See Strategies W-2(A)(1) through W-2(A)(3) and Strategy W-10(A).
6   See Strategies PS-3(B), LU-7(B) and LU-7(I).
7   See Strategy W-11(I).
8   See Strategies BJ-4(B)(4), LU-7(G) and LU-8(H).
9   See Strategies LU-7(G) and LU-8(H).

Sustainability and the Environment 3

Objective SE 3

Resource Conservation

Conserve resources, including water, energy and materials, and plan for the long-term needs of the City and region.

Strategies:

A. Lead by example by:
    1. Purchasing 20 percent of City government energy from clean, renewable sources by 2010.
    2. Continuing to procure fuel efficient vehicles.
    3. Making City buildings more energy-efficient.
    4. Adopting policies that reduce the City's use of materials, increase the percentage of materials recycled, promote the purchase of recycled materials, and encourage source reduction in packaging.
B. Increase public awareness through innovative programs oriented to both residents and businesses that focus on reducing the amount of waste generated, increasing the amount of waste that is recycled, conserving energy, using renewable energy sources and using "green" materials. Such programs could include:
    1. A "green" rating system for local businesses.
    2. Neighborhood-based education campaigns.
    3. Educational tools for people of all ages, including children.
C. Protect the city's water supply by:
    1. Conserving water through technological innovation and efficiency of use. [10]
    2. Updating landscape regulations to reduce water use.
    3. Achieving steady per capita water-use reduction over the next 20 years.
    4. Supporting the Providence Water Supply Board in its efforts to protect the watershed lands of the Scituate Reservoir, and developing a water protection policy plan. [11]
D. Conserve energy, reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and promote new energy sources by:
    1. Promoting energy-efficient technologies and the use of renewable energy sources (including solar, hydro, wind, and others) in the home and workplace.
    2. Identifying and maintaining locations and resources for the potential development of wind, solar, hydro, and tidal energy production. [12]
    3. Developing public awareness and incentive programs for energy-efficient construction and rehabilitation.
E. Reduce the amount of waste produced and delivered to the landfill by:
    1. Reducing per capita residential solid waste delivered to the landfill by raising public awareness of the benefits of recycling and purchasing recycled materials.
    2. Maintaining and support urban recycling and composting programs.

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10   See Strategies CS-3(B)(3) and CS-3(C)(3).
11   See Strategies CS-3(A)(1) through CS-3(A)(5).
12   See Strategy CS-7(E).

3 Sustainability and the Environment

3. Increasing recycling compliance through outreach and improved collection management, particularly for commercial establishments and apartment buildings.
4. Encouraging the reuse and recycling of demolition and construction debris.

Objective SE 4

Sustainability and the Built Environment

Promote and implement environmentally sustainable design and development.

Strategies:

A. Lead by example in adopting policies that further the use of renewable energy resources and develop "green" City buildings. [13]
B. Encourage the use of LEED-based or similar standards for building construction.
C. Promote the use of "green" technology and practices in industry, business and construction.
D. Develop design criteria that maximize energy conservation.
E. Encourage the use of recycled materials in the construction of buildings.
F. Encourage the reuse of existing buildings.
G. Promote the long-term benefits of energy-efficient rehabilitation and new construction and consider the use of appropriate incentives.

Objective SE 5

Public Awareness

Promote environmental sustainability by educating and encouraging residents and business owners and managers to adopt environmentally sound practices.

Strategies:

A. Lead by example by adopting environmentally conscious practices for City government.
B. Encourage and, when practicable, provide incentives to recycle, conserve water and energy, use renewable resources and alternative sources of energy, and use public transit and alternative modes of transportation.

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13   See Strategy H-5(A).

Sustainability and the Environment 3

Objective SE 6

Brownfields

Promote neighborhood sustainability by mitigating the impacts of environmentally compromised lands such as brownfields.

Strategies:

A. Work with state, private and non-profit entities to facilitate the assessment, remediation and environmentally sustainable development of brownfield sites, including coastal sites.
B. Identify environmentally compromised land and establish strategies to mitigate impacts.
C. Identify additional funding sources to encourage redevelopment of vacant, underused, and environmentally compromised lands such as brownfields.
D. Develop policies and regulations that provide environmental review of development projects and discourage the over-concentration of uses that could produce negative environmental impacts in specific neighborhoods.

Objective SE 7

The Environment and the Region

Coordinate planning efforts with neighboring communities, the state and the federal government to address regional sustainability issues, including transit, air and water quality, brownfields remediation, protection of floodways and wildlife habitat, and provision of recreation areas and bike paths.

Strategies:

A. Support the State of Rhode Island in implementation of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a compact entered into by nine northeastern states to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide.
B. Participate in the development and periodic revision of the Metro Bay Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) to establish a regional policy and plan for the approximately 24 miles of shoreline bordering the cities of Providence, East Providence, Cranston and Pawtucket in the context of ongoing economic development and urban growth.
C. Work with the State of Rhode Island and its agencies to compensate for and reduce the disproportionate share of environmental burdens and constraints that negatively affect the City's long-term environmental and economic sustainability in the regional context.
D. Coordinate the review of state and federal government plans and projects with adjoining communities to ensure that the proposals will not adversely affect air and water quality and environmentally sensitive areas.
E. Work with the State and neighboring municipalities to address the issue of water-borne debris.

3 Sustainability and the Environment

F. Encourage the State to exempt EPA-certified SmartWay Elite vehicles from the vehicle excise tax and reduce rates for SmartWay vehicles. [14]

G. Encourage the State to tie vehicle excise tax revenues to transit and other transportation-related improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to consider substantially increasing the gasoline tax to benefit reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

H. Work with state agencies to recognize the unique problems brownfields pose in urban areas and streamline brownfields assessment and remediation processes by:

　1. Coordinating reviews between state and municipal agencies.

　2. Implementing time frames for review.

　3. Exploring different funding techniques for brownfields in urban areas.

I. Encourage the State to lead by example in using alternative fuel vehicles for fleet and transit vehicles.

J. Work with the State and other municipalities to address regional sustainability through coordinated approaches to transit, air and water quality, brownfields remediation, flood zone protection, and provision of bike paths and recreational areas.

K. Ensure that state projects meet or exceed local landscaping requirements.

L. Encourage the state to consider ease of maintenance in its designs and identify long-term maintenance plans for all of its projects.

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14 SmartWay Elite is the rating given to those vehicles that score 9 or better on both the Greenhouse Gas and Air Pollution Scores. The highest Air Pollution Scores are given to vehicles that greatly reduce the emissions that cause smog and other health problems. The highest Greenhouse Gas Scores are given to vehicles that significantly reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and that have outstanding fuel economy relative to other vehicles; SmartWay Elite Vehicles are considered superior environmental performers.

The Built Environment 4

4 The Built Environment

4 The Built Environment

> ### Goal 2
>
> ### Protect, preserve and promote a high quality built environment.

An essential element of Providence's quality of life is its urban design — how the city looks, feels and functions. "Urban design" refers to the basic structural forms on which the city is built — natural features such as waterways, landforms and topography; the street grid, alleys, and open space system; the architecture of its buildings, infrastructure and public spaces; and the relationships among all of these elements. Rarely have American cities achieved high-quality urban design consistently over time and in the cities where it has occurred, people cherish the result.

History of Design Excellence

Fortunately for Providence, at several critical points in its history leaders recognized the value of the city's special features and character and worked to preserve and restore the elements that make Providence unique. These include the traditionally designed public buildings and open spaces that use Providence's natural assets to the best advantage and create a unique civic identity. Opportunities to improve our built environment include taking advantage of waterfront areas, setting aside more land for parks and continuing to maintain historic development patterns in the city's neighborhoods.

One of the oldest cities in the northeast, Providence has retained an unusual urban coherence, which combines exemplary 18th and 19th century residential neighborhoods with a large number of high quality industrial buildings and a central business district downtown. Sustaining excellence in urban design into the future demands that Providence use its best legacies to guide development. While new development need not conform to or attempt to replicate the precise historical or architectural particulars of historic buildings, it should reflect the fine qualities of design and use of materials inherent to Providence's built environment. This applies to Downtown, commercial corridors, residential neighborhoods, and former manufacturing areas, and both new construction and rehabilitation. It also applies to infrastructure such as streets and bridges, as well as to both public and private buildings. The City must work harder to set the standard with its own projects and will accept nothing less from those who build in the city.

Providence's identity is shaped largely by the diversity and evolution of its architectural styles, dating from the 1600s to the present. Fortunately, some of the architectural heritage of every era remains as part of the built environment of the city. Historic buildings provide not only a sense of place but a sense of continuity with the past. We can learn from them about the people who came before us, how they lived and worked and shaped the city we know today.

Cities like Providence recognize that historic buildings are culturally, aesthetically and financially valuable to the community as a whole and are worthy of preservation. In 1960, the city created the Providence Historic District Commission (PHDC) to protect the unique physical character and visual identity of the city by regulating development in designated Local Historic Districts. In Providence, historic districts are established as zoning overlay districts after extensive neighborhood consultation and education, a public hearing and adoption by the City Council. Providence has eight Local Historic Districts, containing a total of approximately 2,500 properties. Local Historic

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Districts contain residential, commercial, religious, educational, industrial, governmental, transportation, and civic buildings, in addition to other structures and open spaces, and represent a range of architectural styles. Providence also contains many National Register Districts. Properties in these districts are not regulated by the city, but are eligible to receive state and federal historic tax credits.

In 1994, the City created the Downcity District, an overlay zoning district designed to direct downtown development, protect historic and architectural character, encourage round-the-clock pedestrian activity, promote the arts and entertainment, and support residential uses. The Downcity Design Review Committee (DRC) was created to administer the Downcity regulations.

4.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Changes

Policies and laws to encourage design excellence and preservation

Over the past fifteen years, both the City and the State have adopted several legislative and policy changes to encourage preservation of historic buildings, including the creation of new tax incentives, historic districts and design regulations.

State Tax Credit - Tax incentives for preservation have made a dramatic impact in Providence in the past several years. In 2002, the State of Rhode Island created economic incentives to stimulate the redevelopment and reuse of its estimated 900 historic commercial properties, structures primarily found in city, town and village centers throughout the state. Owners of these properties can earn State tax credits equal to 30 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures, which is the most generous state historic tax credit program in the country. In addition to the state credit, there is a federal tax credit of 20 percent that has been available since the mid 1970's.

According to a 2006 study commissioned by Grow Smart Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Investment Tax Credit Program is returning historic properties to municipal tax rolls, generating employment and housing where they are most needed, and leveraging substantial private investment that otherwise would not occur. This state program has had a profound impact on revitalization efforts in the city.

Overlay Districts - In the late 1990s, the Main Street, West Side and Commercial Corridor overlay districts were established to regulate building and site design on four primary commercial corridors. The overlay districts have not been as successful as intended since the districts do not apply citywide, and many projects have received variances from the design regulations.

Industrial and Commercial Buildings District (ICBD) -In 2000, Providence developed the Industrial and Commercial Buildings District, the state's first non-contiguous, thematic local historic district. This district is composed of mid 19th to 20th century industrial and commercial buildings throughout the city. The buildings in this district are reviewed by the Historic District Commission for demolition and major alterations only. The landmark status makes these buildings eligible for state, federal and local tax incentives for their rehabilitation and renovation.

Local Historic District Expansion - In 2004, the Armory Local Historic District was expanded from 120 to 520 properties. A total of approximately 2,500 properties are now in included in all local historic districts.

Tax Stabilization - Beginning in 2000, the passage of a series of State laws and City ordinances provided for property tax incentives to rehabilitate historic buildings Downtown and in the industrial areas. The creation of the state

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historic tax credit in 2002, in addition to existing federal tax credits provided even more incentive to developers to rehabilitate historic buildings.

Development of vacant lots

In the late 1980s and early 1990s many of Providence's neighborhoods were littered with vacant lots. In the past few years, with an increase in market pressure, many of those lots have been developed. While this has been a welcome change, the quality of construction on many of these infill lots has been poor. Residential and, to a lesser extent, commercial infill projects have been constructed with poor quality materials, and do not fit in with the character of the existing homes and businesses.

Public awareness

Since the late 1980s there has been an increase in public awareness fn the impacts urban design and historic preservation have on quality of life in the city.

Challenges

Regulatory

Urban design and historic preservation regulations are only successful to the extent that they are enforced. Enforcement of zoning regulations continues to be a challenge with the limited resources of the city.

Financial Burden

Local historic districts protect some of Providence's most important legacies, but can also put a financial burden on homeowners who must adhere to strict standards for renovation and preservation. In some instances, regulations to sustain the historic features of buildings are beyond the economic means of homeowners. Balance is needed to maintain the diversity and stability of many of Providence's historic neighborhoods.

Pubic awareness

Educating the public about the value of historic buildings and the value of design excellence is an ongoing challenge. While progress has been made, we must continue to educate residents, homeowners, business owners and developers of the importance of preserving Providence's character.

Character

<u>Design review</u>- Public demand for design review is sometimes an attempt to resolve land use conflicts. Design review must be carefully administered as a means of influencing the form of new development and must complement the use and density parameters established in zoning.

<u>Neighborhood character</u>- The increasing need for a broad array of housing options requires a more diverse mix of residential types that are both affordable and complementary to neighborhood character. New construction must be sensitive to the character and qualities of Providence's neighborhoods. It is also important to retain the traditional character of neighborhood commercial districts.

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Street design- The city's streets have been carrying more and more traffic. Typically, streets in existing neighborhoods cannot be widened, as buildings are built to the street edge in many areas. Balancing the needs for traffic capacity and urban design features remains a challenge.

Commercial and industrial areas- Economically obsolete commercial and industrial areas must be redeveloped to be profitable with uses that are acceptable transitions to adjacent residential uses.

Unprotected properties

Undesignated structures-- Many buildings in Providence that may qualify for landmark designation have not been designated due to owner indifference toward the program and competing development interests.

Modern architecture-- The City has not adequately addressed preservation standards for significant examples of architecture from the second half of the 20th century. Without foresight, more architecturally significant structures of this underappreciated era may be lost. Neighborhoods and architectural styles developed after World War II are maturing but are not addressed by current preservation policies.

Opportunities

Excitement

There is a buzz in Providence. Out of state developers want to come to the city to build new buildings and renovate existing buildings. The buzz has generated development pressure in many areas of the city, but it also generates opportunities to contribute to the urban fabric of the city. Many vacant parcels in Providence's downtown are now being developed.

Development

Waterfront-- There are opportunities to redevelop much of the waterfront for a mix of uses that will contribute to the city's urban character. Providence 2020 identifies this area as full of potential for parks, greenways and new mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented development with housing, retail, services, employment and transportation linked to Providence's adjacent neighborhoods.

Interstate 195 Relocation-- Relocating interstate 195 opens up approximately 40 acres for redevelopment. This is an unusual opportunity for an older, built-out city to significantly add to its downtown. The new development in this area should showcase design excellence.

Surface Parking Lots-- Surface parking lots downtown and along commercial corridors are an excellent opportunity for redevelopment. Filling in missing teeth in the urban fabric with high quality infill projects will add to the city's character.

Quality Development -- Many of the best infill projects have been developed by Providence's sophisticated Community Development Corporations. The high quality work and capacity of the CDCs is an asset to the city. High quality mill rehabilitations and construction projects downtown have also contributed to the city's character. These projects have the capacity to revitalize surrounding areas and encourage additional high quality development.

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Economic Value

The economic value of historic preservation in Providence is well established and can stimulate interest and support among property owners for reasonable controls. Policies that link the value of historic preservation with economic development will help to create jobs, stimulate related retail and services, generate tax revenue, and develop Providence as a business location and tourist destination.

4.2 Objectives and Strategies

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Land Use 2025, Element 121 of the State Land Use Plan.*

Objective BE 1

Design Excellence

Promote a culture of design excellence in Providence.

Strategies:

A. Provide a model of excellence in urban design by incorporating design standards and review for City projects and for projects receiving City funding.
B. Develop and promote design standards for: [1]
   1. All new construction projects, both commercial and residential.
   2. Design that enhances the quality and character of the city, including the preservation of significant historic structures and features.
   3. Waterfront areas that incorporate provisions for view corridors and setbacks. [2]
C. Create a city-sponsored awards program that recognizes projects that exemplify design excellence.
D. Preserve Providence's architectural legacies while allowing new ones to evolve. Design of buildings and public spaces must complement world class design of the past with 21st Century design excellence.
E. Promote the use of sustainable designs and materials and "green" buildings. [3]
F. Strategically invest in public infrastructure and amenities to promote Providence's civic identity and attract high-quality development.
G. Evaluate new projects and designs in light of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles and strategies.

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1   See Strategies BJ-4(A)(4) and LU-1(A)(3).
2   See Strategy W-3(A).
3   See Strategies SE-4(A) through SE-4(E).

The Built Environment 4

Objective BE 2

New Development to Complement Traditional Character

Adapt Providence's traditional urban design character to new needs, expectations and technologies.

Strategies:

A.   Promote design innovation and architectural diversity while preserving Providence's traditional character.
B.   Periodically review the effectiveness of design standards and review procedures, recognizing that the locations and focus areas for review will likely change over time.
C.   Identify community design standards and development issues through the neighborhood planning process and target specific concerns with appropriate controls and incentives.
D.   Ensure that regulations reinforce high quality urban design and, in residential neighborhoods, ensure that zoning regulations reinforce traditional neighborhood design.
E.   Promote public art in the built environment.   [4]

Objective BE 3

Compact Urban Development

Incorporate the best urban design principles into new development patterns to achieve a higher concentration and greater mix of housing, employment and transit options in identified areas of the city.

Strategies:

A.   Identify and evaluate those areas of the city where increased building height and density can be accommodated, allowing for compatible transition to surrounding areas.   [5]
B.   Develop regulations and incentives that encourage high-quality, mixed-use development at heights and densities that support the city's diverse housing needs and transit alternatives.   [6]
C.   Target regulations and incentives to direct investment along commercial corridors and create mixed-use centers to promote public transit. Identify nodes of higher density along these corridors.   [7]
D.   Evaluate and identify areas where increased height limits may be appropriate.
E.   Encourage the redevelopment of and reduction of surface parking lots.   [8]
F.   Encourage life and vitality on city streets, particularly along main streets, on corners and in traditional squares.

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4   See Strategies AC-7(D) and AC-7(E).
5   See Strategies H-5(D), LU-1(B)(2) and LU-2(A)(1).
6   See Strategies BJ-4(A)(5), M-7(B) and LU-4(B)(1).
7   See Strategy LU-2(A)(2).
8   See Strategy M-6(F).

4 The Built Environment

Objective BE 4

Design of the Public Realm

Reinforce the design quality, function and character of connections among public places and centers of activity, as they are part of the public realm and serve as important places in their own right.

Strategies:

A. Preserve, enhance and, where possible, extend and connect the pattern and character of the primary street and sidewalk system. [9]
B. Establish design and maintenance standards for major corridors that incorporate preservation, high-quality design and neighborhood character.
C. Encourage design that connects neighborhoods while recognizing individual neighborhoods' unique character.
D. Develop streetscape standards that enhance the pedestrian experience and incorporate high-quality design elements that are affordable and easy to maintain. [10]
E. Buildings that are adjacent to or across the street from parks and open spaces shall be oriented in a way to respect the public realm. Utility, service areas and surface parking areas shall not abut or face the park or open space.
F. Identify key neighborhood connections through the neighborhood planning process and prioritize those streets for street trees and other streetscape improvements.

Objective BE 5

Preservation Planning

Preserve the historic buildings, districts and areas that contribute positively to Providence's urban fabric.

Strategies:

A. Balance the preservation of buildings with ways to prevent displacement of neighborhood residents.
B. Develop additional incentives and tools for the rehabilitation of structures of architectural or historic merit.
C. Require institutions to identify historic buildings and plan for their future use.
D. Protect and preserve historic resources citywide through the use of design standards, zoning controls, easements, and other tools.
E. Identify areas of conflict between historic regulations and environmentally sensitive design and work to mitigate the conflicts.
F. Amend land use regulations, as needed, to support the reuse of properties listed in the Industrial and Commercial Buildings District.

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9   See Strategy M-3(B).
10   See Strategy M-3(H).

G. Identify stronger enforcement options to discourage the alteration and demolition of historic resources without approval.
H. Consider adopting varying degrees of regulation for historic properties.
I. Update *A Plan for Preservation* (1994) to identify more detailed strategies for preserving historic resources.

Objective BE 6

Design Leadership

Ensure that the City of Providence takes the lead in design excellence and historic preservation.

Strategies:

A. Support and encourage historic preservation of City-owned properties within all agencies and departments for the enjoyment of future generations.
B. Consider the adaptive reuse of historic buildings when procuring office space for City agencies. [11]
C. Work with the State to evaluate and address the impact of building codes, development review and other permitting processes on historic preservation.
D. Coordinate with the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission to create a consolidated approach to preservation in the city.
E. Encourage and inspire inviting, creative and environmentally innovative civic and government structures and places.
F. Design and construct city buildings as models of design excellence, and design schools that meet the Northeast Collaborative for High Performance Schools Protocol. (CHPS).

Objective BE 7

Neighborhood Character and Design

Protect the existing character of the city's neighborhoods by supporting design excellence and historic preservation.

Strategies:

A. Uncover distinct cultural values in the neighborhoods and take steps to honor their significance.
B. Encourage developments to be compatible with surrounding uses in scale, density and character, while not stifling innovative design and architecture. [12]
C. Allow for mixed-use, pedestrian oriented developments along commercial corridors at a greater height and density than in the residential areas. [13]

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11   See Strategy LU-1(B)(3).
12   See Strategy LU-1(B)(1).
13   See Strategies M-3(A) and M-3(E).

4 The Built Environment

D. Ensure that new developments improve pedestrian movement, provide pedestrian amenities and preserve view corridors.
E. Update regulations to:

1. Create design and development standards to ensure the compatibility of new, infill and rehabilitated uses, particularly in residential areas of neighborhoods.
2. Put significant emphasis on the form as well as the use of buildings.

E. Identify areas for future historic and cultural resource surveys in the neighborhood planning process.
F. Require commercial and mixed-use buildings to be built to the street edge and at a human scale. Large-scale projects must incorporate human-scale elements on the lower floors. [14]
G. Evaluate local historic districts for possible expansion, consider the designation of additional districts and consider different levels of historic district controls for individual districts.
H. Encourage the preservation of Providence's historic neighborhoods and enhance their livability for families of varied income levels.
I. Amend regulations to reduce the number of required parking spaces and, in neighborhood commercial areas, prohibit parking between the street and buildings. [15]
J. Encourage the remediation of existing conditions that are detrimental to neighborhood character.

Objective BE 8

Public Awareness

Promote public awareness of urban design and historic preservation principles through education and collaboration with partners and schools.

Strategies:

A. Encourage partnerships with design and preservation organizations to organize public information campaigns.
B. Support efforts to educate Providence residents on the importance of high quality urban design and historic preservation. Raise public awareness of the historic significance of structures and areas in Providence.
C. Support student education and involvement in design issues and historic preservation at all grade levels.

Objective BE 9

Built Environment and the Region

Work with the State of Rhode Island and adjacent communities to support design excellence and historic preservation in the region.

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14   See Strategy W-3(E).
15   See Strategy M-6(G).

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Strategies:

A. Lobby the state to preserve the historic tax credit.
B. Work with adjacent communities to ensure high-quality design on the city's borders.
C. Encourage the development of urban design standards for RIDOT and other state agencies for projects in Providence and other urban areas in Rhode Island.
D. Work to revise state regulations to allow form-based codes, such as the SmartCode, in Providence.

4 The Built Environment

Business and Jobs 5

5	Business and Jobs

5 Business and Jobs

> **Goal 3**
>
> **Grow the Providence economy.**

The city's economic base is its lifeblood: it provides the framework upon which the city prospers and develops. Economic growth is critical to the health of Providence, both to provide jobs for its residents and to generate taxes to pay for City services. This section emphasizes the importance of developing a business environment that promotes the retention and expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses and the development of a skilled workforce.

The Providence economy is diverse in its breadth, with a wide variety of businesses and institutions, and in its scale, ranging from neighborhood stores to corporate headquarters. Each of these activities contributes to the economic well-being of the City and to the vitality of the regional economy by providing jobs and needed services.

Economic activity will expand by promoting Providence as a favorable place in which to work, live and conduct business; by adopting economic development programs and fiscal policies to attract and retain businesses; and by setting aside land area for business growth and expansion.

5.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Changes

New Development

Providence is in the midst of a major building boom that has already produced thousands of new housing units and tens of thousands of new square feet of commercial space throughout the city. The combined public and private investment in new and proposed development amounts to well over 3 billion dollars, 1.5 billion of which has occurred in neighborhoods outside Downtown. It has resulted in the conversion of industrial areas to housing and commercial uses and the transformation of Downtown into a new residential neighborhood. The Providence Place Mall reestablished Providence as a retail destination, a distinction it had not enjoyed for decades. Since the construction of the mall, Capital Center has seen the construction of three new hotels, two high-end residential towers, and a new corporate headquarters building.

Much of the new development was enabled through a package of property tax relief, historic tax credits and strategic public infrastructure improvements. Growth was also stimulated by the State designation in the mid-1990s of several enterprise zones in the city. These sound public investments and policies have improved the environment for business growth.

Economic Shifts

Over the past fifteen years, two significant economic trends have had impacts on the overall economic viability of the city: the continued decline in manufacturing and the growth of health care and educational institutions. The retail, tourism and hospitality trades are doing well, as are the arts and institutional sectors. The city has lost significant jobs in the manufacturing trades including wholesale and warehousing, and in the finance, insurance and transportation sectors. Due in part to the changing economic climate, several industrial buildings have been converted to residential use. Should this trend continue unabated, the already limited area available for business and job growth would be further constrained. Institutional expansion does present the potential for economic growth through the provision of jobs and the creation of related enterprises. However, the continued expansion of institutions increases the amount of tax-exempt land in the city, shifting that burden to other businesses and residents. While some of the higher educational institutions did agree to a payment in lieu of taxes in 2003, such an agreement has yet to be reached with the health care institutions.

Policy Changes

In 2005, the city began to implement the "First Source" ordinance, which had lain dormant for two decades. First Source requires businesses that receive aid in cash or in-kind above normal services (such as tax stabilization agreements and projects funded in whole or part with City funds) to enter into an agreement with the City in which employers agree to recruit and hire suitable employees from a First Source list of Providence residents seeking employment. The list is maintained by the Department of Planning and Development, and covers only non-supervisory positions. The ordinance enables employers to hire from other sources if there is agreement that a suitable employee is not found. The Department of Planning and Development is also obligated to establish training and referral programs for persons on the First Source list.

Challenges

Limited Growth Potential

Providence faces many challenges to economic development. The City is mostly built out, and has limited areas for growth, especially areas with large parcels favored by many industries. As former manufacturing areas are converted to residential use, less land is available for industrial jobs. In addition, much of the vacant land and buildings in the city have environmental contamination and aging infrastructure. Another issue that may limit growth in the future is water availability: projections show demand exceeding supply for the City and State in the coming years.

Transportation and Circulation

Providence has its share of transportation problems, most notably highway congestion, narrow streets, longtime neglect of local roadways, and limited supplies of free or low-cost parking. Indeed, many office buildings in Providence have no parking. These issues may put the city at a disadvantage when compared to the suburbs.

Cost and Risk of Doing Business

Providence has a high cost of doing business. One of the challenges is the state and local regulatory environment, where time and complexity of permitting are of concern. Property taxes, rents, construction costs, and the cost of parking Downtown are also concerns, especially when nearby cities and towns offer lower costs and free parking. Further, in some areas of the city, commercial buildings do not always support the changing demands for workforce and retail space.

5 | Business and Jobs

Workforce

With changes in the economy come challenges in matching jobs to the workforce. Many workers lack the skills that available jobs demand, while for many recent college graduates, there is a lack of jobs and salaries commensurate with their skills. Between 1995 and 2000 Rhode Island ranked sixth highest among the thirty-three states with negative migration rates of single, college-educated adults. [1]

Opportunities

Smart Growth

The State of Rhode Island recently adopted the Land Use 2025 plan. This is a "smart growth" document that calls for more intensive development in the urbanized areas of the state. Providence's development patterns are a prime example of smart growth, and have the capacity for additional development. As State policies shift, consistent with Land Use 2025, to promote development in the urban areas, Providence will benefit.

Redevelopment

Providence has many opportunities for new development. Dozens of acres of land will soon be available for business development Downtown with the relocation of Interstate 195. Further to the south, along the Providence River, is an area that could be transformed into a mixed use district, with ample space for business. Also, the city has had successes with remediating brownfield sites, and there are many more opportunities for environmental cleanup and redevelopment. Downtown, the numerous surface parking lots present opportunities for new buildings. In the neighborhoods, there are many opportunities for redeveloping the commercial corridors for a mix of commercial uses and housing.

Transportation

While Providence has its share of parking and traffic congestion problems, it also has amenities that are rare outside of the city. Providence's compact form often makes driving unnecessary. Walking and biking are viable options for commuting and getting around town. Providence has more RIPTA bus service than any other city or town in the state, and is a hub for bus service to all major regional cities. Providence station is also seeing increased train service, with recently added MBTA commuter rail runs to and from Boston and AMTRAK high speed service to the north and south. State transportation plans call for future expansion of commuter rail to the south, most notably to T.F. Green Airport. An added amenity for business is excellent freight rail access to many of Providence's industrial areas.

Assets

Providence has assets that give it advantages for economic development. Its success as a thriving service and tourism center has seen a huge payoff in its desirability as a place to visit and live. The many health care and higher educational institutions are major economic generators, and together make up one of the city's most critical competitive advantages. There are significant opportunities for synergy in the medical and life science fields, and for the increased commercialization of institutional research and development activities into high-skill, high-wage jobs. Providence's multicultural and talented residents provide an excellent employment pool. The large number of artists and artisans are important to the city's economy, contributing to both the tourism and retail trades and providing numerous jobs in the design fields. The neighborhood commercial areas provide convenient services to residents and reflect

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1   Destination Rhode Island, a report of the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, April, 2007.

the wide ethnic diversity of the city. Perhaps Providence's most significant asset is its physical character. People and businesses continue to be drawn by its urban flavor, historic architecture and walkable scale.

Enterprise Zones

The City's two enterprise zones have had a substantial impact on economic development in Providence, and have helped to revitalize distressed neighborhoods. In 2005, 76 companies employing 2,210 people participated in the program." Of the 786 new Providence Enterprise Zone hires in 2005, 149 actually lived in Enterprise Zones either in the City or in other Rhode Island communities.

5.2 Objectives and Strategies

Objective BJ 1

Business Retention and Expansion

Expand economic opportunity and the City's economic base by focusing efforts on retaining existing businesses and attracting new businesses.

Strategies:

A. Establish a clear, comprehensive approach and strategy for economic development.
B. Identify and quantify the existing job base.
C. In conjunction with the State, identify target industries for job growth and support the development of spaces for job growth.
D. Work to retain and expand businesses that have a positive economic impact on city residents, including industries that are historically important to the city.
E. Work, through legislative efforts and the State Enterprise Zone Council process, to expand State-designated enterprise zones to all eligible areas of Providence.
F. Support business retention and expansion by designating specific areas as "Jobs Districts." (See Map 11.2 'Future Land Use') [2]
G. Strengthen Providence as a destination for business, leisure and convention visitors. [3]
H. Capitalize on the collaboration between health care and higher educational institutions by encouraging tax-paying business development in the medical and life sciences fields.
I. Use public/private partnerships to facilitate development and redevelopment projects that advance the City's goals and objectives.
J. Ensure that economic development is environmentally sustainable.
K. Encourage development of businesses that produce products that will further the goal of environmental sustainability.
L. Work to attract, retain and expand businesses that pay good wages[4] and provide benefits.

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2   See Strategy LU-5(B).
3   See Strategy AC-3(B).
4   The Mayor and City Council should establish a baseline using, for example, the Poverty Institute's Rhode Island Standard of Need as a guide for what constitutes a good wage.

5 | Business and Jobs

M. Encourage city government to purchase supplies, foodstuffs, and services from small Providence businesses whenever possible.
N. Recognize that improving the quality City's natural environment is critical to attracting businesses.
O. Identify incentives for businesses to locate downtown to restore downtown Providence as the business center of the state.
P. Support, develop and retain locally-owned businesses.
Q. Identify and attract businesses that will provide jobs for the underemployed. [5]

Objective BJ 2

Workforce Development and Support

Ensure a skilled workforce that matches the employment opportunities by focusing on workforce needs for advancement, education and training, affordable housing and transportation options.

Strategies:

A. Collaborate with other agencies to identify and fund job training programs.
B. Continue to implement the First Source ordinance and encourage use of the First Source program by businesses that are not subject to the ordinance.
C. Collaborate with the business community and higher educational institutions to provide education and training opportunities that will prepare Providence public school students for employment, especially in the growth industries that will shape Providence's future, including healthcare, life sciences, and creative economies.
D. Create an Employer Homeownership Challenge program to secure housing for employees of Providence businesses.
E. Support the development of more effective transit and parking opportunities. [6]
F. Encourage employers to develop job training programs.
G. Support and develop outreach campaigns that provide information on GED, and vocational and job opportunities.

Objective BJ 3

Knowledge-based Economy

Promote the growth of Providence's knowledge-based economy and leverage that growth to attract, develop and retain commercial businesses that generate taxes, and skilled jobs.

Strategies:

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5   See Strategy W-4(E).
6   See Strategy M-2(A).

A.   Foster collaboration between universities, colleges, hospitals, businesses, the City and the State.
B.   Increase the commercialization of the institutional research and development activities into for-profit commercial ventures, and help the existing knowledge-based businesses to grow.
C.   Increase the commercial tax base in Providence.
D.   Work with the State to share revenue generated from sales and corporate taxes of knowledge-based businesses with the City.
E.   Work to retain more knowledge workers in the city.
F.   Work to improve Providence's competitiveness for growing and nurturing knowledge-based industries into the 21st century.

Objective BJ 4

Business Environment

Create a business-friendly environment to stimulate the growth of business and the creation of good jobs that improves the quality of life for residents.

Strategies:

A.   Develop a state-of-the-art, streamlined, one-stop, integrated predictable system for building, fire and development permits that allow permits to be issued in a timely manner.
B.   Promote Providence's quality of life as an economic asset. [7]
C.   Promote Providence's reputation as a business location with a highly educated workforce.
D.   Develop predictable, transparent processes that support business development, consistent with the goals of Providence Tomorrow.
E.   Promote infrastructure and service improvements that support business and job growth.
F.   Support and encourage partnerships with Business Improvement Districts to enhance the attractiveness of these districts for employers, workforce and visitors.
G.   Evaluate all existing and proposed city ordinances for their impact on the city's economic development competitive advantage.

Objective BJ 5

Neighborhood Economic Development

Support the creation and growth of locally-owned businesses that enhance the vitality and quality of life in the city's neighborhoods.

Strategies:

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7   See Strategy AC-4(A).

5   Business and Jobs

A. Support small businesses in neighborhoods by using the following key strategies:
1. Incorporate neighborhood-based business development into the neighborhood planning process.
2. Support the development of neighborhood business centers that serve adjacent residential areas through programs like *Neighborhood Markets*.
3. Using a variety of public and private funding sources, strengthen financial and technical assistance programs that support small business and neighborhood revitalization, such as *Neighborhood Markets* and the Providence Economic Development Partnership's (PEDP) technical assistance, revolving loan fund, micro-loan, storefront improvement grant, and arts and culture revolving loan fund programs.
4. Establish design and maintenance standards for neighborhood commercial areas that incorporate preservation, high-quality design and neighborhood character to ensure the compatibility of new construction and renovations. [8]
5. Encourage high-quality mixed-use development at appropriate densities to support housing needs, transit and neighborhood businesses. [9]
6. Support targeted efforts to encourage business development in the city's immigrant communities.
B. Support the development of sustainable economies in all neighborhoods. To accomplish this:
1. Identify areas through the neighborhood planning process that need assistance to strengthen local businesses.
2. Assess, evaluate and coordinate available funding sources to assist in the stabilization and revitalization of Providence neighborhoods.
3. Use incentives to stimulate business development and job creation, particularly for those businesses that provide locally needed products and services.
4. Identify and preserve areas suitable for urban agriculture. [10]
5. Use resources available through federal, state and regional agencies to revitalize neighborhoods with high percentages of low-income residents.
C. Support farmers markets to supply locally-grown food to residents of the city.
D. Support the creation of a citywide marketplace for locally-produced food and crafts.

Objective BJ 6

Economic Development and the Region

Work with the State of Rhode Island to strengthen Providence's role as the economic center of the state.

Strategies:

A. Collaborate with the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) to direct businesses to locate in Providence in accordance with Land Use 2025.
B. Evaluate State and local tax policies to identify opportunities to encourage business growth in Providence and to reduce disparities between Providence and other localities that make the city uncompetitive.
C. Promote the adoption by State agencies of processes that support business and job growth.

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8   See Strategy BE-1(C).
9   See Strategy BE-3(B).
10   See Strategy SE-2(E).

D.   Discourage the relocation of State offices from Providence to suburban communities.

E.   Encourage the adoption of State policies that promote the equitable distribution of locally undesirable land uses throughout the State, not just in Providence and compensate Providence for accommodating such uses.

F.   Encourage the revision of brownfields and redevelopment legislation to make urban development economically competitive with greenfield development.

G.   Support local agriculture through farm-to-school and farm-to-government programs that link local farmers to schools and encourage government purchasing of local produce.

H.   Work with the State to identify and implement strategies that assist immigrants in transferring their knowledge and skills into the Rhode Island job market.

5 Business and Jobs

Housing 6

6	**Housing**

6 Housing

Goal 4

Create, revitalize and preserve housing.

The City is deeply committed to making housing more accessible and affordable. Everyone deserves the opportunity to live in decent housing.

The condition of Providence's housing stock tends to reflect the condition of the city as a whole. When the city's fortunes were in decline, the condition of Providence's housing stock and property values spiraled down as well. Vacant lots and abandoned buildings were scattered throughout many of Providence's neighborhoods.

For the past several years, however, Providence has been in a period of growth and revitalization. The city has transformed itself and is now one of the most desirable places to live in the Northeast. Nowhere is this more evident than in the strength of the city's housing market. Housing prices have skyrocketed, existing homes are being renovated, and new infill homes are rapidly being constructed on vacant lots and former side yards.

Due in part to the changing housing market, the number of housing units in the city has increased dramatically. There is unprecedented development throughout the city. Developers are converting industrial and commercial buildings to residential uses as well as building new large scale condominium developments. Providence has a strong network of non-profit Community Development Corporations (CDC's) that develop affordable housing for city residents. While the CDC's are developing affordable housing, the vast majority of the new units being developed in Providence are out of the reach of low to moderate income families.

The City has a responsibility to ensure that its policies encourage a wide range of housing, do not impede housing production, encourage maintenance and preservation of the existing housing stock, and provide financial assistance to enable all residents of Providence to live in safe, habitable housing, and address concerns about resident displacement due to redevelopment.

6.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Changes

Housing Development

There has been significant growth in the construction of single and multi-family residences, through both infill development on vacant lots and rehabilitation of existing structures. Redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial structures has also occurred in several city neighborhoods, including downtown. Downtown Providence is now a residential neighborhood as well as a commercial destination.

A number of the colleges and universities in Providence have built new dormitories and/or converted existing buildings to dormitory use. An increasing number of students who would formerly have commuted to school are now residing on campus as a result of these expansions. Additionally, the increase in dormitory space appears to

have lessened some of the pressure on the surrounding neighborhoods by decreasing the number of students looking for off-campus housing.

Cost of Housing

The cost of housing in Providence has seen double digit percentage increases for several years. Limited land for development has resulted in high land costs, contributing to the ever-increasing cost of housing. In comparison, wages have risen at an average of five percent per year. This puts home ownership out of the reach of many families in Providence. Rental costs have increased dramatically as well, more than 41 percent of renters in Providence spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC) was created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 as an alternative method of funding housing for low and moderate income households and has been in operation since 1987. Rhode Island receives the small state maximum of two million dollars a year This amount is slated to increase over the coming years.   These tax credits are used to leverage private capital into new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing. In Providence LIHTC have been used to create rental housing in several neighborhoods.

Challenges

Housing for All

For Providence to retain and attract businesses and workers, the City must offer an ample supply and wide variety of housing types for people across the income spectrum. The City must also work to link the types of housing available to the types of jobs available and work to develop housing in areas near transit to create more affordable living for those working in Providence. An adequate supply of workforce housing is crucial to attracting quality jobs to Providence. It is also crucial to retaining existing residents.   In addition to ensuring that there is affordable housing for those who need it, the city must have housing available for young professionals including those with moderate and higher incomes. Without housing for all, the city will continue to lose these young professionals to other urban areas.

Rising sale prices and rental rates have made affordable housing difficult to find, especially for larger families. Cuts in funding sources also make it more difficult for CDC's to develop new affordable and supportive housing. The competitive nature of the housing market has also impacted the availability of affordable housing, as many rental property owners have chosen to rent to students rather than families. Affordable housing also needs to be distributed equitably throughout the city in order to avoid concentrations of affordable units and services.   Developing mixed-income neighborhoods is critical to the future economic sustainability of the city as a whole.

The high property tax burden for homeowners in the city can make it difficult for property owners to retain their homes. It also prevents some residents from purchasing homes, as the tax burden can make the homes unaffordable. Also, many long time property owners find themselves struggling to keep their homes because of increased tax bills from property value increases.

6 | Housing

Housing Stock

Almost 90 percent of Providence's housing is over 25 years old. These structures run the gamut from single family homes to larger apartment buildings. Ongoing investment in these buildings is required to avoid decline and decay. Due to the age of the housing stock, lead paint hazards are a significant issue and pose health and safety issues for many families.

Limited Resources

Over the past ten years federal and state resources for developing affordable housing have been shrinking. Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs face annual cuts by the federal government, resulting in a smaller pool of money for the city. The City must use its funds efficiently and new funding sources, such as the housing bond issue recently passed by the state, must be created. In addition to the reduction in federal and state funding provided to the City, the cost of developing housing has increased.

The state legislature continues to propose changes to reduce or eliminate the historic tax credit, as well as several others, including the artist residence tax credit.   These tax credits have facilitated a tremendous amount of residential construction in Providence and their reduction or elimination would likely have a significant impact on residential development in the city.

Evolving Housing Market

Residents are sometimes resistant to new development that is perceived as changing a neighborhood's character, such as converting a mill to housing. Higher density housing and rental housing often face resistance from current neighborhood residents. Additionally, developing housing in areas where there was formerly limited housing can create conflicts between the new residents and existing businesses in the area.

Between 2000 and 2005 the real estate market in Providence saw explosive growth. While housing development is still ongoing in Providence, it slowed in 2006 and 2007. This slowdown has occurred throughout the city, leading to greater vacancy rates in the housing market. In some neighborhoods of the City, rental costs are starting to decline as a result of the changing market.

Homelessness

The fastest rising segment of the homeless population is families with children. The shortage of affordable units places people at risk of homelessness. Providence is also the home of several homeless services agencies, including Crossroads RI, the largest homeless services provider in the state.

Opportunities

Commitment

Create, Preserve, and Revitalize: A Housing Agenda for Providence details the vision and priorities of the City in addressing pressing housing needs in Providence. The City has incorporated many of the objectives and strategies of the housing agenda into this comprehensive plan.

Several state agencies and quasi-public agencies such as the Housing Resources Commission (HRC) and Rhode Island Housing support a range of services for low and moderate income renters and owners, new home buyers, and special needs housing. A $50 million dollar bond issue for the creation of affordable housing throughout the state

passed in the Fall 2006 elections. This bond issue will be administered by the HRC and Rhode Island Housing over the next five years. Providence will receive funds from this bond issue to help create more affordable and workforce housing. Providence uses funds from sources such a RI Housing and HUD to leverage the city's dollars. Historically, the City has been able to leverage its housing dollars on an order of five to six times the initial amount received by the city.

The City is also committed to providing affordable housing through the Providence Housing Trust. Created in 2005, the Housing Trust consolidated several city housing funds into one main fund. This fund provides resources to create, rehabilitate and preserve affordable housing throughout Providence. Funds from the Housing Trust may be used for acquisition and development of affordable units. The fund also provides flexibility to ensure that projects move forward.

Livability

People want to live in Providence even if they don't work here. New residential development in areas such as downtown builds upon our historic housing stock, making Providence a desirable place to live.

6.2 Objectives and Strategies

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Land Use 2025, Element 121 of the State Land Use Plan* and *the Rhode Island Five Year Strategic Housing Plan: 2006-2010, Element 423 of the State Guide Plan.*

Objective H 1

Improve Existing Housing

Revitalize, modernize and preserve Providence's housing stock.

Strategies:

A. Encourage the retention and revitalization of the existing housing stock and discourage the demolition of housing units.
B. Strictly enforce codes and encourage housing rehabilitation by providing funds for repairs to existing structures.
C. Continue efforts and coordination to address lead based paint hazards throughout the city.
D. Use techniques such as land banking and acquisition to revitalize residential structures and blighted areas.
E. Increase environmental enforcement of vacant and blighted lots.
F. Enhance and expand potential for housing improvement funds available to owner occupants.

Objective H 2

Create New Housing

Support the creation of new ownership and rental housing citywide.

6 Housing

Strategies:

A. Provide for diversity in the type, density and location of housing within the city to provide an adequate supply of safe, sanitary housing at price levels appropriate to the financial capabilities of city residents.
B. Promote a diverse housing market to meet increasingly specialized housing requirements including elderly, handicapped and student population.
C. Encourage and develop home ownership and rental opportunities for all income groups.
D. Encourage the development of housing in rehabilitated older commercial buildings and in new structures. [1]
E. Encourage the development of housing opportunities for artists and craftsmen in old commercial and industrial buildings that enable artists to live and work in the unit.
F. Encourage the development of housing on existing and potential transit corridors.

Objective H 3

Housing for All

Create new and preserve existing affordable, workforce, and moderate income rental and home ownership opportunities throughout the city.

Strategies:

A. Encourage the development of housing for residents at all points of the income spectrum, low, moderate and high.
B. Encourage and support equal access to housing throughout the city for all people regardless of race, color, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, or physical or mental handicap.
C. Work with Rhode Island Housing to preserve affordable housing throughout the city.
D. Create programs that encourage developers to build housing that is affordable to all.
E. Develop a process to streamline the permitting process for developers of affordable and workforce housing.
F. Support for-profit and non-profit organizations and encourage their collaboration for the active development of affordable housing.
G. Develop programs and regulations to increase the development of affordable housing throughout the city, particularly in neighborhoods identified as underserved.
H. Consider creating requirements and/or incentives for the development of affordable housing in conjunction with the development of market rate units.
I. Require colleges and universities to develop plans for student housing.
J. Work with residents and neighborhood organizations to address concerns about resident displacement.

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1   See Strategy LU-3(B).

Objective H 4

Special Needs Housing

Promote the maintenance and development of supportive housing, both owner occupied and rental, to ensure that all residents with special needs have access to safe and affordable housing.

Strategies:

A. Encourage programs that will increase the supply of accessible housing in the City.
B. Establish programs that will allow elderly homeowners who wish to age in place to retain their homes or remain in their neighborhoods.
C. Promote programs such as reverse mortgages that assist the elderly in maintaining their homes to ensure that the elderly have safe and adequate housing.
D. Work with the owners of subsidized elderly housing complexes to maintain the buildings as affordable housing for the City's elderly residents.
E. Encourage and support the rehabilitation of housing units to make them handicapped accessible.
F. Provide incentives to developers to encourage the construction of handicapped accessible housing units.
G. Encourage and support the creation of permanent supportive housing for persons with special needs.
H. Encourage the development of programs that will assist the homeless in acquiring permanent residences.
I. Support the continued operation of emergency shelters.
J. Support agencies that provide housing and supportive services to homeless persons and families.

Objective H 5

Housing Design

Promote high quality residential design throughout the City.

Strategies:

A. Encourage innovative residential design and construction through the use of LEED, Energy Star and other green building standards[2]
B. Create design standards for quality residential construction.
C. Create regulations for quality residential site design.
D. Develop a pattern book of residential designs based on Providence's vernacular architecture.
E. Determine appropriate residential densities to accommodate growth in areas of change without negatively impacting surrounding neighborhood character. [3]

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2   See Strategy SE-4(B).
3   See Strategies BE-3(A) and LU-3(A)(2).

6 Housing

Objective H 6

Housing and the Region

Work with the state and other local governments to address housing needs in Providence and throughout the state.

Strategies:

A.   Encourage the state to develop special needs and affordable housing in other communities.
B.   Encourage the state to continue to create new funding sources for housing development with a dedicated percentage of the funds set aside for Providence.
C.   Discourage the state from making changes to the Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.

Mobility 7

7 | Mobility

7 Mobility

Goal 5

Anticipate and meet the transportation and mobility needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Mobility, the ability to move from place to place safely and conveniently, is a key measure of Providence's quality of life. Most Providence residents are accustomed to the convenience of getting places by car. Voluntarily or involuntarily, many others experience the difficulty of navigating the city without a car.

A balance must be achieved between the supply of transportation facilities and the demand for their use. It has been demonstrated in city after city that government cannot afford to build enough roadways to meet the demand for auto travel. The cost is too great - in dollars, environmental degradation (decreasing air quality, fossil fuel consumption), and in visual blight. Instead, local governments must focus on alternative solutions such as more efficient use of the roadway system, expanded transit opportunities, and more options for biking and walking. In addition, demand for transportation should be offset by greater use of telecommuting, home offices, mixed-use development, and the opportunity to live and work in close proximity.

Providence cannot expand its existing road infrastructure without destroying the neighborhood fabric the residents of the city value most. The city developed before automobiles were the dominant means of transportation and our roads are narrower than roads seen in cities which developed after the advent of the automobile. To that end, Providence must take steps to address expanding transportation needs with well integrated, multiple modes of transportation that provide convenient access for citizens, minimize impact on the environment, sustain quality of life throughout the city, and support economic activity. The City's transportation policies must ensure the adequacy of the existing roadway system while developing and promoting practical alternatives that complement automobile travel. To be accepted by the public, transportation alternatives must be convenient, safe, affordable, and comfortable.

Transportation infrastructure is expensive and has major impacts on how residents live. It both influences and is influenced by development. The City must consider the transportation systems diverse range of users, including residents of all ages and abilities, business commuters, visitors and tourists, shopping and recreational travelers, and freight carriers.

Residents want and need a variety of options depending on where they are going on any given day or time of day. The City also recognizes that walking is a part of almost every trip, and supporting the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment is essential. Providence's social, economic, and environmental sustainability requires that the overriding preference for automobile travel be reduced through incentives for transit use, a more robust transit system and disincentives for automobile usage.

Mobility 7

7.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Changes

Roadways

Access to the city has been improved through the completion of the Capital Center Interchange. The relocation of I-195 is well underway and is scheduled to open in 2010. The removal of the current highway superstructure is scheduled for completion in 2012 and will allow for reconnection of portions of the traditional street grid downtown. Other main roads in the City have also been upgraded through the pavement management program.

Transit

The reconstruction of Kennedy Plaza as an intermodal transportation center has been completed since the writing of Providence 2000. RIPTA has implemented programs with Providence employers, such as the hospitals and universities, to encourage bus ridership through reduced price bus passes to reduce congestion. Due to recent increases in fuel prices, RIPTA has also seen a steady increase in ridership. Trolley service also serves several neighborhoods in the city.

MBTA has increased the number of trains running between Providence and Boston to 12 a day, increasing the opportunities for Providence residents to work in Boston and vice versa, however these trains do not always run at times convenient for commuters. Amtrak has also added high speed train service (the Acela) between Providence and points north and south of the City.

Additionally, the Transit 2020 Working Group was convened to study the state of transit in Providence and Rhode Island and released their report on expanding transit and the need to change the public's transportation habits in early 2007. The working group's key findings included the need for a robust intermodal transit system and the need for dedicated funding for the construction, maintenance and operating of said transit system.

Transportation Funding

Federal funding for transportation has changed significantly in the past 15 years, first with the passage of the intermodal surface transportation efficiency act of 1991 (ISTEA) and its subsequent reauthorization's through the Transportation Equity Act of 1998 (TEA-21) and Safe Accountable Flexible and Efficient Transportation Act-A Legacy For Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005. As a result of these laws state transportation agencies are required to systematically plan transportation investments. SAFETEA-LU in particular emphasizes maintaining and improving existing infrastructure over constructing new roads and highways.

These laws also created the Transportation Enhancement Program which provides funding for pedestrian, bike, and streetscape improvements in communities. In Rhode Island, these funds are administered by RIDOT through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which establishes the list of projects and their priority for completion through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Providence has received funding for several enhancement and infrastructure improvement projects through the TIP.

7 Mobility

Challenges

Roadway Congestion

The highways and local roads of Providence have become increasingly crowded over time. Vehicle miles traveled have increased and the number of persons per car has decreased. Congestion is time-consuming, inefficient and frustrating to drivers. New development presents concerns about the impacts of increased traffic throughout the city.

Aging Infrastructure

As they age, the city's roads, sidewalks and bridges require regular maintenance, such as resurfacing, to keep them functioning safely and efficiently. Infrastructure such as roads and sidewalks is expensive to maintain, and the City has limited funding for these projects. The City cannot expand its existing infrastructure, it must find ways to use existing infrastructure more efficiently.

Bicyclists, Pedestrians and Transit Riders

Most roads in Providence were built before the car became the preferred form of transportation. Today, however, these roads are dominated by cars and trucks, leaving little space for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The City must work to accommodate the increased demand of Providence residents to walk, bike and take transit. The increased desire of Providence residents to take transit coincides with a time of decreased funding for transit services. RIPTA is constantly threatened by budget cuts and other potential funding problems. Residents of and commuters to Providence will only slowly change their longstanding preference for driving and only if there are adequate alternative modes of transportation that are safe, comfortable, convenient, and affordable.

Parking

Parking spaces are at a premium in the city. Parking downtown is difficult to find and/or expensive. Parking in neighborhoods often occurs on small side streets where it can impede traffic flow and decrease visibility. In smaller commercial areas parking turnover can be slow and/or parking is not readily available for quick shopping trips. The increase in development throughout the city has increased the pressure on existing parking and has compounded the need for more parking. The city must decrease demand for parking by increasing transit and other alternative transportation opportunities. On-street overnight parking has long been a contentious issue in the city. Many residents are supportive of the concept and just as many are strongly opposed.

New Development

Since the middle of the 20th century, the automobile has dictated the way communities have developed. This is true even in a compact, built out city such as Providence. Today, the challenge is accommodating new development within our existing transportation system. New developments in the city must accommodate multiple types of access such as by pedestrian, bus and bicycle. New developments in the city have a significant impact on traffic, particularly when several developments occur in the same corridor or neighborhood.

Funding

Improvement of transportation infrastructure is extremely expensive. Improvements to our roadway system will require the city to evaluate traditional and nontraditional funding. Federal, state, and local dollars no longer meet the transportation needs of Providence. The majority of existing federal funding goes towards maintenance of

existing highway infrastructure. There is little federal and no state money available for increasing transit in Providence and the rest of Rhode Island.

Opportunities

Interstate 195 Relocation

The completion of the relocation of I-195 will provide safer and more efficient travel through parts of the City. It will also allow the reconnection of the historic street grid when the highway superstructure is removed contributing to improved multi-modal connectivity throughout the city.

Expansion of Transit

The MBTA is in the process of expanding commuter rail service south of Providence. The first intermodal station to be constructed will be adjacent to T.F. Green Airport with additional stops to be added in East Greenwich, Wickford and Kingston. This expansion in service will allow more people who work in Providence to commute without their car, decreasing congestion. Transforming Providence Station into an intermodal transit hub will also reduce congestion in the city. The expanded service south of the city must be developed in conjunction with the existing MBTA and Amtrak trains which stop in Providence. A decrease in the number of trains stopping in Providence would be a detriment to the city.

Currently RIPTA cannot cross state lines. Transforming RIPTA into a regional transit provider would benefit not only Providence, but all of southern New England.

Transit 2020 and the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Initiative

Transit 2020 is a working group established to study the effectiveness of public transit in the city and to explore ways to expand and strengthen transit service as well as to explore additional transit modes. The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Initiative (MTPI) is a study planned to analyze potential new routes and the benefits of serving these new routes through a variety of transit modes, including: Rapid Bus, Bus Rapid Transit, Street Cars, and Light Rail. The MTPI will also study various options for funding capital improvements and expansion of the transit system. The Transit 2020 Advocacy Group will continue through 2007 and beyond to advise and advocate on behalf of reaching the transit goals spelled out in the report.

New Development

In new developments that include transit stops, transit oriented development can support other goals of Providence Tomorrow, such as neighborhood revitalization, local business development, affordable housing, and access to public amenities.

Public & Private Partnerships

In this time of decreased federal and state funding for transit and infrastructure improvements, the time has come for joint public and private funding of improved transportation facilities.

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7.2 Objectives & Strategies

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Transportation 2025, Element 611 of the State Guide Plan.*

Objective M 1

Diverse Transportation Options

Provide residents, businesses, employees and visitors with a variety of transportation options that are safe and convenient.

Strategies:

A.   Advocate for transportation options, such as transit, bicycling and walking, that increase mobility and connectivity throughout the city. [1]

B.   Promote public transit as a safe, attractive and convenient choice for those who might otherwise drive to employment, education, cultural, and other destinations.

C.   Identify areas throughout the City where transportation policies should reflect pedestrian priorities. These include schools, child care centers, civic institutions, business centers, shopping districts, and parks.

D.   Provide for the special transportation needs of people without cars, families with small children relying on transit, school-age children, people with physical disabilities, low-income persons, and the elderly.

E.   Address the transportation needs of visitors, tourists and people attending special events and major attractions.

F.   Recognize that, due to the limitations of roadway width, existing streets must operate more efficiently to carry a greater volume of vehicles.

Objective M 2

Transit

Encourage investment in existing modes of transit as well as new transit options, including the RIPTA system, commuter rail and other new modes to increase mobility for Providence residents, and improve air quality.

Strategies:

A.   Encourage mass transit use to reduce air pollution and congestion caused by automobiles and to alleviate the need for additional parking in the City. [2]

B.   Work with RIPTA to identify areas in the city other than Kennedy Plaza (such as the Providence Train Station, Olneyville Square, and under the new I-95 & I-195 interchange) which could serve as additional intermodal transit hubs. [3]

1   See Strategy SE-1(F).
2   See Strategies SE-1(F) and BJ-2(E).
3   See Strategy LU-1(2)(A)(1).

C. Require employers which receive city or state funds to promote transit as an alternative to driving through partnerships with RIPTA, through programs such as transit incentives.

D. Work with RIPTA to increase transit ridership and promote alternative transportation modes available to residents.

E. Encourage RIPTA to provide secured bicycle parking at transit (bus and trolley) stops and park and rides.

F. Encourage RIPTA to expand bicycle rack capacity on their buses.

G. Encourage the development of a new intermodal center which allows the integration of bus, train, bicycle, and pedestrian movement.

H. Work wtih RIPTA to improve access to transit in the neighborhoods.

I. Encourage the expansion of commuter rail to points south of the city while maintaining and/or adding to the existing level of service at Providence Station.

J. Explore other methods of public transportation such as light rail, street cars and commuter rail.

K. Investigate the feasibility of utilizing existing infrastructure (such as the rails along Allens Avenue) for street cars or light rail. [4]

L. Explore ferry, water taxi, and other waterborne transit options. [5]

M. Support the creation of dedicated revenue sources for transit.

N. Explore innovative funding options for transit.

O. Require major land development projects to have a "trip reduction plan" to reduce car trips.

Objective M 3

Walking

Promote walking for commuting, recreation and other trips by creating safe and attractive pedestrian environments throughout the city.

Strategies:

A. Give greater priority to traffic calming and pedestrian features throughout the city. [6]

B. Establish traffic calming standards for the city.

C. Encourage pedestrian travel in the downtown area by providing safe walkways, corridors and intersections. [7]

D. Ensure pedestrian safety on neighborhood streets through signs and traffic management.

E. Evaluate existing pedestrian accessibility in the neighborhoods and develop a pedestrian access improvement program to address any shortcomings.

F. Encourage the development of walkways and corridors to improve pedestrian access to the waterfront. [8]

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4   See Strategy W-5(C)(3).
5   See Strategies W-5(C)(2) and W-5(C)(4).
6   See Strategy BE-7(A).
7   See Strategy BE-4(A).
8   See Strategies BE-7(C), PS-3(D) and W-5(A)(1) through W-5(A)(3).

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G. Ensure that sidewalks are continuous along all major Providence streets and that they provide pedestrians and transit riders with direct access to commercial areas, education facilities, recreational facilities, and transit stops.

H. Identify gaps in the City's sidewalks and develop a plan for filling these gaps in order to increase connections for pedestrians.

I. Create design standards for pedestrian facilities throughout the city that address items such as materials, street furniture, maintenance, and traffic calming.[9]

J. Increase enforcement of pedestrian, bicycle and car traffic violations.

K. Promote pedestrian and driver education programs that emphasize pedestrian safety.

L. Explore shortening crossing distances and/or lengthening crossing times to improve pedestrian safety.

M. Improve traffic signal timing, and where appropriate, institute a pedestrian phase.

Objective M 4

Biking

Provide safe and convenient facilities to encourage bicycling for commuting, recreation and other trips.

Strategies:

A. Encourage bicycle travel throughout the city by completing the signing and striping of the Providence Bicycle Network. (See Bicycle Network Map at the end of this section.)

B. Promote Providence as the hub of the statewide bicycle network.

C. Create design standards for bicycle parking.

D. Evaluate ways to improve bicycle connections between neighborhoods.

E. Promote bicycle rider and driver education programs, emphasizing bicycle safety and sharing the road.

F. Explore the potential for incorporating bicycle lanes as part of pavement resurfacing projects in the city.

G. Encourage employers to provide facilities such as bicycle lockers and showers for bike commuters. [10]

H. Pursue supplemental funding sources for bicycle network development.

I. Update the Development Review Regulations to require developments to provide bicycle facilities.

J. Explore incentives for employers and property owners who provide bicycle facilities, beyond that which is required by law. [11]

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9   See Strategies BE-4(D)and PS-3(A).
10   See Strategy W-5(B)(1).
11   See Strategy W-5(B)(2).

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Objective M 5

Roadways

Manage the effectiveness of Providence's roadway network, including its street grid, by investing in operational and reconstruction improvements.

Strategies:

A. Explore funding options for conducting a citywide traffic study that includes all modes of transportation.
B. Create standards for reviewing Physical Alteration Permit and street abandonment applications to maximize the efficiency of the street grid.
C. Improve and maintain the City's road system with proper lane designations, adequate signs and traffic signal improvements, as well as bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements.
D. Review and monitor traffic and development data to assess the adequacy of the existing system and make recommendations for improvement.
E. Continue to upgrade traffic signals to Light Emitting Diode (LED) signals.
F. Create and maintain a standard sign and wayfinding system for the city.
G. Continue to implement the pavement management plan.
H. Develop and implement a plan for the maintenance and improvement of sidewalks throughout the city.
I. Amend regulations to establish concrete as the standard for sidewalks throughout the city.
J. Direct commercial and institutional traffic and parking to major arterials.
K. Develop an integrated traffic system for the smooth flow of transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, cars, and other alternate modes of transportation throughout downtown upon completion of the I-195 relocation.
L. Evaluate existing traffic patterns in the neighborhoods and make recommendations for alterations and improvements where necessary.
M. Discourage the use of neighborhood streets for intracity travel and commercial and institutional traffic.

Objective M 6

Parking

Develop a comprehensive citywide approach to parking that addresses parking needs both downtown and in the neighborhoods as adequate parking is crucial to the future economic development of the city.

Strategies:

A. Identify ways to maximize the efficiency of existing parking to increase access to jobs, downtown and commercial areas of the city.
B. Explore opportunities for shared parking to decrease the amount of parking needed.
C. Implement the recommendations of the City of Providence Parking Management and Organizational Review Report including reconstituting the Providence Off-Street Public Parking Corporation.

D. Create standards for balancing the parking needs of new development against the needs of the city and its neighborhoods.

E. Consider the strategic placement of parking garages in commercial corridors to limit the amount of parking needed in neighborhoods.

F. Where feasible, require Major Land Development Projects to link to transit to limit the amount of parking required.

G. Encourage the elimination of surface parking lots and discourage the creation of new surface parking lots as they are a detriment to the city's economic future and its built environment. [12]

H. Reduce the amount of surface parking in the city to increase green space and developable land through regulations such as: [13]

   1. Maximum parking requirements.

   2. Tying parking requirements to proximity to transit facilities.

   3. Allowing on-street parking to be counted by businesses in their parking calculations.

I. Reduce paving of residential properties by expanding the on-street overnight parking program.

J. Explore on-street parking in identified areas of the City.

Objective M 7

Accommodating Development

Plan, design, and invest in transportation infrastructure and systems that support the principal uses within the area, and provide strong interconnections to downtown, the neighborhoods and other destinations.

Strategies:

A. Strengthen multi-modal connections and transportation improvements within and between existing and potential transit hubs.

B. Promote Transit Oriented Development (TOD) as an urban design framework. Development at transit nodes should provide for both higher transit ridership and viability and walkability in the area. [14]

C. Require all Land Development Projects to conduct traffic impact analyses that examine the cumulative impact of all project phases in concert with other developments proposed in the vicinity.

D. Require traffic impact analyses to examine all modes of transportation (car, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit).

E. Require developers to create connections within projects to alternative modes of transportation.

F. Amend development review regulations to provide for RIPTA review of Major Land Development Projects.

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12   See Strategies BE-3(E) and LU-4(C)(4).
13   See Strategy BE-7(I).
14   See Strategies BE-3(B) and LU-4(B)(I).

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Objective M 8

Transportation and the Region

Work with federal and state government agencies to improve Providence's transportation and transit infrastructure.

Strategies:

A. Work with RIDOT and RIPTA to continue transportation initiatives that enable low income workers and job seekers to access job opportunities and achieve economic independence.
B. Work with RIPTA to increase ridership by distinguishing current and potential high use routes by making those routes and the vehicles serving them more appealing and easier to access.
C. Encourage the state to provide adequate funding for RIPTA to become an excellent statewide transit system with Providence as its center.
D. Encourage RIPTA, MBTA and Connecticut Commuter Rail (including Shoreline East, New Haven Line, and Metro North) to implement a unified fare system.
E. Encourage the state to provide more funding for bike transportation.
F. Encourage RIDOT to equitably maintain roads classified as primary and collector under the functional classification system in highly urbanized areas such as Providence, as it does in suburban and rural communities.
G. Work with RIPTA and state and federal governments to transform RIPTA into a regional transit authority with service to border communities in Connecticut and Massachusetts.
H. Encourage RIDOT to create design standards for urban infrastructure projects such as bridges and highways.
I. Advocate for the TIP process to put a higher priority on transit infrastructure projects.
J. Work with the surrounding communities to implement the recommendations of Transit 2020.
K. Continue to work with the other communities in the state and the utility companies in creating a single standard for repairs to pavement and sidewalks due to utility work.
L. Work with the state to establish clear responsibilities for public transit agencies.

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8   Arts and Cultural Resources

8 Arts and Cultural Resources

> ### Goal 6
>
> **Sustain and strengthen an active, vibrant and sustainable arts and cultural community that contributes to the economy, education, employment and quality of life throughout the city.**

As Providence moves into the 21st century, our city is charged with harnessing the economic and social energy our arts community contributes to civic life. Historically the city's economy has relied upon artisans, designers and the creative industries to set it apart from others in the northeast. This fact was recognized in the 19th century and led to the establishment of Rhode Island School of Design, one of the nation's top art and design schools. Today the city's arts economy contains some of the highest quality organizations in the region and individual artists that are recognized in the international market. Providence arts organizations and artists lead the way in implementing high quality experiences for youth engagement, job training, arts education, neighborhood development and social change. Our rich mosaic of culturally based organizations reflects the city's diverse population and offers opportunities for cultural understanding.

The city's arts organizations and artists have been leaders in changing the face of Providence. Today the city boasts an arts economy that is the envy of the region, with more arts organizations and artists per capita than any other New England city. Our challenge in the coming years is to support this important economy and encourage continued risk-taking. Providence has reinvented itself and the arts will continue to play a major role in that process.

8.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Changes

Focus on Arts and Culture

Over the past ten years the explosion of Providence's arts and culture scene has played a key role in the revitalization of our city. In 2003, Mayor Cicilline replaced the Office of Cultural Affairs, a public programming division of the Parks Department, with the new cabinet-level Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism. This new department has continued to expand arts programming in the city, and emphasized the roles that the arts play in both education and the economy by advocating for the arts both in city government and across the city as a whole. In a recent comparative study conducted by Americans for the Arts, Providence was cited as generating $111.81 million in local economic activity – well above the nationwide median of $48.4 million.[1] This study supports the fact that the non-profit arts community is an industry in the City of Providence, supporting 2,759 jobs.

A Diverse and Growing Arts Community

The Providence arts and cultural community is incredibly diverse, represented by over 400 organizations ranging from large institutions that present the highest quality work to community-based organizations steeped in the various

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1   *Arts and Economic Prosperity III*, Copyright 2007, Americans for the Arts. Page 3.

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cultures of our residents. The broad array of colleges and universities also provide a rich mix of cultural and athletic activities. These organizations not only improve our quality of life and make the city a desirable place to work and visit, but also make great contributions to our economy and enrich our childrens' educational experience. The city is also home to thousands of individual artists and musicians that contribute to our civic life.

The city has created an atmosphere which encourages the growth and expansion of existing arts organizations and programs. Trinity Repertory Company, Festival Ballet and the RI Philharmonic are all on upward trajectories, as recognized by national publications and foundations. The Providence Performing Arts Center has been restored to its original beauty and is programmed with nationally touring shows and serves as a cultural center for the city. The Veterans Memorial Auditorium Arts & Cultural Center has reinvented itself and is contributing to the revitalization of a long ignored corner of downtown. Waterfire has captivated millions and reawakened the city's spirit. The $30 million RISD Museum expansion project will enhance the school's impressive collection, which ranks third in New England and 20th in the nation in size. AS220 led the revitalization of Empire Street and is now poised to do the same on Washington Street. Providence Black Repertory Company is a symbol of our city's ability to embrace transculturalism. Community MusicWorks, New Urban Arts and the Carriage House give young people opportunities for inspiration and hope. The Steel Yard and Monahasset Mill have transformed a neighborhood. Our culturally based organizations such as the Latin American Film Festival, ECAS Theatre and RI Black Storytellers have grown strong. Additionally, many new arts and cultural organizations, events and festivals have been created – such as Sound Session, the Providence-based Rhode Island International Film Festival and the award-winning *Celebrate Providence* Neighborhood Performing Arts Initiative.

Our individual artists have also thrived. From musicians to painters, jewelry designers and photographers, this economy of individual working artists has founded record labels, started artist collaboratives, and built community in areas that were long ignored. Our individual artists have made contributions to our creative economy and continue to develop innovative ways to approach and support the industrial economy of our city.

Providence Tourism

Through the collaborative efforts of the City, the Providence Tourism Council and the myriad of arts and cultural organizations in the city, Providence is now a regional tourism destination. There have been significant public and private investments in the arts economy including the moving of the rivers and resulting creation of Waterplace Park and Waterfire, and the renovation of the Providence Performing Arts Center. A large contributor to Providence's appeal is its growth in the convention and hospitality industries. Construction of new hotels and the completion of the Rhode Island Convention Center have attracted thousands of people to Providence. Other attractions include our strong architectural legacy and the variety and quality of restaurants located throughout the city, boosting Providence's reputation as a culinary destination.

New Markets: Film and Television

The passage of one of the most competitive film tax credit laws in the country by the Rhode Island Legislature has been a boon to filmmaking in the state and city. Since its adoption, Providence has played host to the filming of two television series, *Brotherhood* and *Waterfront*, as well as several films including Walt Disney Pictures' live-action *Underdog* and numerous independent features.

8 Arts and Cultural Resources

Challenges

Funding for the Arts

Corporate, foundation and government funding for the arts on the local and national level has been erratic over the past ten years. Currently there is no robust, dedicated funding source for the arts in Providence. These factors have created an unpredictable funding atmosphere that makes it difficult to forecast the future of the city's arts organizations. While the community clearly understands the value of the arts to quality of life and the economy of the region, the sustainability of the arts and cultural economy remains in question.

Arts and Education

Arts education in Providence Public Schools has slowly deteriorated over the last ten years due to limited financial resources and an increasing national focus on test scores for primary skill sets such as reading, writing and math. The State of Rhode Island has recently instituted a new requirement that all high school graduates demonstrate proficiency in the arts. Dramatic improvements in arts education at all levels are needed for the City to comply with this mandate.

Economic Forces and Artist Live/Work Space

The recent economic boom that has spurred revitalization efforts citywide has taken a toll on the creative industries. These industries, which include individual artists, small industrial businesses, and the city's music industry, have traditionally relied on cheap space that has been traditionally found in underused mill buildings. Ironically, the very ordinance that was intended to help artists by allowing them to live and work in industrial areas served as a catalyst for the conversion of many mills to residential uses, resulting in displacement of artists and other small businesses. This surge in reinvestment has led to ever-increasing property values, further limiting the ability of artists to secure affordable space. While the City has supported several efforts in this area, including the development of the Dreyfuss Hotel, Monahasset Mill and Firehouse 13, more needs to be done.

Opportunities

Funding for the Arts

In 1980, the City Council adopted the *Art in City Life* ordinance, which required one percent of total project costs for the reconstruction or remodeling of any building, decorative or commemorative structure, park, street, sidewalk, parking facility or utility paid for in whole or in part by the City to be expended on works of art. This ordinance has never been enforced. With projects such as Transit 2020 and the overhaul of Providence Public Schools on the horizon, implementation of this ordinance could result in a significant new funding source for the arts.

Tourism

The City of Providence, Providence/Warwick Convention & Visitor's Bureau and the Providence Tourism Council have aligned resources and now have the ability to work collaboratively on behalf of the city's tourism economy. This alignment has led to an increased emphasis on cultural tourism that will continue to be developed in collaboration with the city's cultural providers, hotels and restaurants. Future efforts include a branding campaign, increased visibility for the visitor's center, aligned event calendars, improved signage and new tourism products.

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As the city works to expand and improve its tourism industry, it looks to do so while aligning itself with some of the basic principles behind geotourism. **Geotourism** is defined as "tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents."[2]

Arts Education

While there are many challenges associated with arts education in the public schools there are also opportunities. Collaborative efforts between Hope High School and RISD have demonstrated amazing results. The state mandate to comply with arts proficiency standards offers opportunities to rebuild the arts curriculum within the schools but also reach outside their walls to the rich arts community in the city. After-school arts learning providers have led the way in quality arts experiences for our city's youth and are anxious to make a larger contribution. Providence After School Alliance's efforts in this area will continue to be strengthened.

Collaboration

Artists and arts organizations struggle to stay in business. This has led to a silo effect during the past decade. With changing leadership and strengthened organizations there are new opportunities for collaboration. Collaborative marketing efforts, audience development initiatives and program initiatives will lead to a stronger arts economy.

Public Art

With the city's rapid growth come opportunities to develop an innovative public art program. All across the country cities are exploring ways to make their public art programs more engaging and meaningful. An effort should be made to re-examine the Art in City Life ordinance, with an eye to exploring options for innovative and multi-tiered models of creation.

The Providence Waterfront

As Waterfire has already demonstrated, the presence of a scenic and navigable waterfront can be a great asset to the city's arts and culture scene. Whether as a centerpiece for an art installation, as the backdrop for a film, television show or live performance or as the set course for a guided boat tour, the Providence Riverwalk provides countless opportunities for public art and a unique setting for a vibrant cultural life.

8.2 Objectives and Strategies

Objective AC 1

Cultivating the Arts

Strengthen and promote a vibrant artistic community.

Strategies:

A.   Identify and create new dedicated funding sources not limited to the general fund, such as:

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2   *National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations. www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable.*

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      1.   Revisiting and enforcing the *Art in City Life* (one percent for arts) ordinance.

      2.   Establishing a non-governmental controlled funding mechanism for the arts.

B.   Develop a cultural plan that:

      1.   Builds on the 2003 report prepared by the Mayor's Cultural Task Force.

      2.   Includes an assessment and inventory of existing arts and cultural facilities.

      3.   Identifies current and long-term needs.

C.   Provide opportunities for people in every neighborhood to participate in the arts by:

      1.   Coordinating cultural resources at the neighborhood level.

      2.   Promoting the programs and activities sponsored by neighborhood groups and community centers, while supporting neighborhood cultural activities that include but are not limited to festivals, fairs and concerts.

      3.   Encouraging the development of additional programs targeted toward inner city youths.

      4.   Supporting the use of public facilities such as parks, recreation centers and waterfront venues by neighborhood artists and arts and cultural groups that need space for exhibitions, performances and classes.

D.   Continue to communicate with the arts and cultural community.

Objective AC 2

Arts Venues

Encourage the development and maintenance of facilities to support diverse cultural and artistic activities.

Strategies:

A.   Support further development of small and mid-sized venues for galleries, music, performance, and visual arts exhibitions, both in downtown and nearby areas and, where appropriate, in neighborhood commercial corridors.

B.   Review city zoning, building and fire code regulations to remove unnecessary barriers to arts-related enterprise.

C.   Encourage the music scene in the City to regain strength and thrive. Work to restore the loss of small music venues downtown.

Objective AC 3

Economic Development and the Arts

Continue to integrate the arts and entertainment into the City's economic development activities.

Strategies:

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A. Include arts and cultural organizations, institutions and businesses in business recruitment and retention efforts.[3]

B. Continue to highlight the richness and diversity of Providence's arts and cultural activities, institutions and attractions in economic development and marketing plans that promote Providence as a center for tourism, conventions and business. Build identifiable marketing initiatives that support increased participation in arts activities in the City. [4]

C. Continue to develop strategic alliances to promote the economic benefits of a strong arts and cultural community with agencies such as the following: [5]
   1. Providence Tourism Council
   2. Providence/Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau
   3. Providence Economic Development Partnership (PEDP)
   4. Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA)
   5. Rhode Island Film and Television Office

D. Conduct an assessment of entertainment venues to determine economic and social impacts and identify strategies to promote a healthy arts and entertainment district downtown.

E. Increase the availability of affordable and accessible artist live/work spaces throughout the neighborhoods by:

   1. Identifying levels of affordability and exploring innovative solutions to keeping space cheap.
   2. Recognizing artist work-only studios as jobs to ensure that they can be located in areas designated as "Jobs Districts" on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'.
   3. Reviewing zoning, building and fire codes to identify changes that would reduce the cost of developing artist live/work spaces without jeopardizing life/safety needs.
   4. Exploring opportunities to partner with arts organizations and private entrepreneurs to develop permanently affordable artist work spaces.

F. Continue to support and strengthen festival development in the City in order to increase tourism and quality of life.

G. Explore options to strengthen arts districts legislation.

H. Expand, promote and support internationally prominent arts activities that broaden the city's positive reputation and provide tourism income to the city.

Objective AC 4

Regional Center for Culture and the Arts

Continue to build and promote Providence as the state and regional center for culture and the arts and a national and international venue for arts events.

Strategies:

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3   See Strategy BJ-3(B).
4   See Strategy BJ-1(G.)
5   See Strategy BJ-1(G).

8 Arts and Cultural Resources

A. Sustain and strengthen the cultural facilities and organizations downtown and in the neighborhoods.

B. Support the enhancement of Roger Williams Park and Zoo as a city and regional cultural resource.

C. Explore the feasibility of new signature cultural attractions along the waterfront such as museums, aquariums and professional sports venues. [6]

D. Support the development of a well-designed, large outdoor signature events space. [7]

E. Design programs that support and encourage individual artists to live and work in Providence.

F. Establish Providence as a geotourism destination, shaped by the following principles:[8]

   1. Encourage tourism that maintains Providence's natural and cultural heritage, as a means of encouraging market differentiation and pride in our unique culture.

   2. Promote selectivity and diversity within the tourism industry, so as to encourage a full range of food and lodging facilities appealing to the entire demographic spectrum of the market and to create a sustainable tourism market.

   3. Encourage local small businesses and civic groups to build partnerships to promote and provide a distinctive, honest visitor experience and market their locales effectively. Help businesses develop approaches to tourism that build on the area's natural, historical and cultural resources, including food and drink, artisanry, performance arts, etc.

   4. Encourage micro- to medium-size enterprises and tourism business strategies that emphasize economic and social benefits to involved communities, especially poverty alleviation, with clear communication of the destination stewardship policies required to maintain those benefits.

   5. Encourage businesses and festivals to recycle and use effective waste management procedures. Advertise these measures in a way that attracts the large, environmentally sympathetic tourist market.

   6. Enforce requirements for businesses and festivals to minimize water pollution, solid waste, energy consumption, water usage, landscaping chemicals, and overly bright nighttime lighting.

Objective AC 5

Education and the Arts

Expand appreciation and support of the arts by supporting arts and cultural education and career opportunities.

Strategies:

A. Strengthen the capacity of the School Department to ensure that arts and culture are part of the K-12 core curriculum, including instruction, appreciation and participation.

B. Continue to develop partnerships with arts organizations and higher educational institutions to increase exposure of students to arts and cultural activities.

C. Continue to work with organizations such as Providence/Cranston Workforce Development on programs that target career development and training in arts and culture disciplines among youth and adults.

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6   See Strategies LU-13(D), W-6(A) and W-7(I).
7   See StrategiesLU-13(B) and W-7(I).
8   *National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations. www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable.*

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D. Explore options to integrate arts and cultural facilities into new and renovated school buildings in order to make high-quality arts learning experiences accessible to all of the City's youth.
E. Develop a strategy to make the above referenced facilities available to the community for public use and stewardship.

Objective AC 6

Arts as a Civic Value

Value the arts within the civic realm.

Strategies:

A. Support programs that offer residents the ability to use the arts as a form of civic dialogue and engagement.
B. Continue the programming of arts and cultural activities in the neighborhoods to reinforce the contributions of the arts to the livability of Providence. [9]
C. Set high standards for design excellence in the construction and renovation of all City buildings.
D. Enliven the civic realm with art installations.
E. Showcase and incorporate the work of local artists into the fabric of city activities, including the built environment, the natural environment and special events.

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9   See Strategy PS-1(E).

8 Arts and Cultural Resources

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Goal 7

Create a sustainable, high-quality parks and recreation system that reflects the unique identity of Providence.

Open space, parks and recreation facilities are essential to the vitality and quality of life of a city. They provide residents with opportunities for exercise, entertainment and peaceful contemplation. Unlike private yards in suburban communities, these public places offer social opportunities and can be the setting for community building. Our public spaces are the places that are collectively owned by all residents of Providence; as such, everyone has an interest in the care and treatment of the public realm.

Providence's recreational areas are not just for residents. Facilities such as Waterplace Park and the riverwalks are critical to the city's tourism industry, providing settings for events and destinations for visitors. Open spaces also serve important environmental roles, providing wildlife habitat, stormwater control, improved air quality, and atmospheric carbon storage.

Providence has a diversified public park and recreation system. As the city's population increases and changes, so will the demand on the city's facilities. This section sets forth objectives and strategies to meet the changing needs for open space, parks and recreational facilities within the city.

9.1 Changes, Challenges and Opportunities

Changes

New Facilities

Providence has recently seen substantial new development of parks and recreation facilities, the most prominent of which are Waterplace Park and the riverwalks downtown. Neighborhood parks under development include Riverside Park and the proposed park at the Lincoln Lace and Braid site, both on remediated brownfields. There are new types of facilities as well: two dog parks, a community garden, and several water parks opened recently; the Botanical Center is now open at Roger Williams Park; and there are proposals to develop a boat ramp on the Seekonk River and a ski slope at Neutaconkanut Hill.

Demographics

There have been major demographic shifts in Providence's population in the past decade. Most significantly, the city's people are younger and more ethnically diverse than in past decades. These changes have resulted in different demands being placed on the parks and recreation system. Some facilities are underutilized, while others are oversubscribed.

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Challenges

Available Land

Being mostly built out, Providence has limited areas for new open space and recreational facilities. Much of the land that is available has environmental contamination, and remediation of these sites, especially for recreational purposes, is difficult and expensive.

Limited Resources

Due to budget cuts and shifting priorities at the federal and state levels, money for acquisition and site remediation is in short supply. Maintenance of existing parks remains a challenge, with limited resources available; the Parks and Recreation departments have to maintain an aging and expanding inventory of facilities with less money and fewer employees.

Meeting Demand

The changes in demographics in the city have placed new demands on park and recreation facilities. Officials must constantly evaluate programs to ensure that they are in accord with the demand.

Mistreatment of Facilities

Providence Parks, the Department of Public Works, and the Recreation Department struggle to maintain public facilities that are subject to abuse and vandalism. Litter, graffiti and the destruction of recreation equipment are all too common. Unfortunately, the actions of an inconsiderate few can spoil the enjoyment of these facilities for all.

Opportunities

Waterfront Parks

The water flowing through Providence is one of the City's greatest assets. Beginning with the River Relocation Project and the creation of the riverwalks downtown, and including the Fred Lippitt Woonasquatucket River Greenway, Providence has embraced opportunities to develop access to the waterfront for recreation. The relocation of Interstate 195 presents an important new opportunity for waterfront parks. A concept plan has been developed for two signature waterfront parks on eight acres of land liberated by the highway's relocation. These parks will be connected by a new pedestrian bridge built atop the piers that now carry I-195 across the Providence River. There are also opportunities to create green space and continual access along the entire waterfront.

Joint Use of Facilities

With budget shortfalls and limited availability of land, Providence Parks and the Recreation Department have recognized the importance of joint use of facilities, such as using schools for recreation programs and neighborhood parks for Department of Arts and Culture programming.

Other Open Space and Recreation Opportunities

Open space does not have to be publicly held. There are opportunities to create publicly-accessible parks through private land development. This might include playing fields and greens owned by private institutions, pocket parks created adjacent to office buildings, and paths to the waterfront through private developments. Also, the ability of

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the City to maintain public parks can be expanded upon by the community. The city has seen significant growth in the number of organizations that provide human capital to improve the parks and grant-writing ability to secure additional funding. Further, in addition to parks and recreational facilities, people find opportunities for recreation and public gatherings in other public and civic spaces. These include squares, sidewalks, and even streets.

9.2 Objectives and Strategies

Objective PS 1

Recreational Opportunities

Provide and enhance recreational, cultural, arts, and performing arts programming throughout the city.

Strategies:

A.   Provide a diversity of programming at park facilities throughout the city.
B.   Diversify and expand programmed athletic opportunities in parks.
C.   Expand parks programming opportunities for youth.
D.   Develop new space(s) in the city for large-scale festivals. [1]
E.   Support and encourage public art in park spaces. [2]
F.   Expand use of school facilities for recreation programs through interdepartmental collaboration.
G.   Collaborate with organizations such as the Providence After School Alliance (PASA) to enhance access to recreational and educational opportunities.
H.   Adapt programming in recreational facilities to changing demographics of the city.
I.   Support federal and state recreation plans that help to implement Providence Tomorrow.

Objective PS 2

Sustain Our Park and Recreation Assets

Provide the necessary resources to build and maintain a park and recreation system that offers a diversity of recreational opportunities for all residents.

Strategies:

A.   Supplement City funding with additional funds from user fees, concession and lease agreements, and grants.
B.   Supplement City maintenance resources with maintenance sharing agreements.
C.   Collaborate with institutions, businesses and organizations to sponsor and fund programs.
D.   Ensure balance between services, fees and programming.
E.   Establish reasonable and feasible maintenance standards.
F.   Increase park maintenance staffing during peak seasonal periods.

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1   See Strategy LU-13(B).
2   See Strategy AC-6(B).

G.   Incorporate low maintenance designs into park renovation projects.

H.   Investigate and implement innovative park maintenance plans with public and private partners.

Objective PS 3

Link Public Spaces

Connect neighborhoods and open spaces through a network of bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets and trails.

Strategies:

A.   Identify key connections through the neighborhood planning process to prioritize streetscape and pedestrian improvements. [3]

B.   Develop a connected system of greenways for continual access along the entire waterfront and through adjacent neighborhoods. [4]

C.   Strategically acquire parcels to link open spaces.

D.   Explore opportunities involving public and private land to provide continuous public access to the waterfront along rivers and ponds without public land acquisition. [5]

E.   Collaborate with community organizations to identify and implement improvements to the city's bicycle and pedestrian networks. [6]

Objective PS 4

Increase Access to Park and Recreation Facilities

Provide for a regular program of park and recreation improvements that reflect resident interests in recreation and physical fitness.

Strategies:

A.   Prioritize development of new parks and improvements to existing parks based on neighborhood need. [7]

B.   Provide public recreation facilities on school sites.

C.   Expand and diversify park use opportunities.

D.   Increase access for physically challenged residents.

E.   Establish consistent park signs.

F.   Make provisions for dog parks.

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3   See Strategy M-3(A).

4   See Strategies SE-2(C)(2) and W-7(A).

5   See Strategy M-3(E).

6   See Strategy M-4(D).

7   See Strategy LU-14(D).

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Objective PS 5

Stewardship of Resources

Protect natural and cultural resources by incorporating them into the fabric of an overall system of public open space.

Strategies:

A. Promote public access to the waterfront and water-based recreational activities. [8]
B. Explore opportunities to create new open spaces along waterways (rivers, ponds, streams) where none currently exist. [9]
C. Encourage the conservation, restoration and preservation of environmentally sensitive areas through means such as evaluating expansion of conservation areas.
D. Encourage pedestrian access to and passive use of designated conservation areas.
E. Identify and protect key vistas and view corridors.
F. Ensure the stewardship of historic park facilities and landscapes.
G. Promote the restoration of historic public sculptures through public/private partnerships.

Objective PS 6

Community Involvement

Ensure the success of public spaces by involving the community in planning and maintenance efforts.

Strategies:

A. Encourage community ownership of neighborhood parks and other civic and public spaces through "friends of. . . ," "park watch dog" and similar programs.
B. Develop an ongoing process for updating neighborhood and citywide resident interests and needs for park and recreation facilities and public programming.
C. Provide opportunities for community input in park and recreation facility renovation efforts.
D. Increase public knowledge about existing park and recreation spaces as well as athletic, arts and performing arts programming activities.
E. Promote a civic culture of properly caring for public spaces.

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8   See Strategies LU-14(A) and W-1C(6).
9   See Strategies LU-13(D), W-1(C)(6) and W-7(D).

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10 Community Services and Facilities

10 Community Services and Facilities

> **Goal 8**
>
> **Sustain a high quality of life by providing efficient, cost-effective city services.**

Changes in land use, demographic distribution of the population, and the evolving economic situation in the city all have an impact on the demand, location and level of service for community services and facilities that are needed to adequately serve city residents. Community services and facilities must be designed to meet the public's needs. City and public services directly impact the ability of a community's citizens to live in a safe and adequate environment.

Anticipating and preparing for the needs and safety of the citizens of Providence is essential to ensuring a high quality of life within our community. Community facilities are important to the City because they often provide the services which most citizens come into contact with. They are also often important to the neighborhood in which they are located and are typically viewed as anchors or stabilizing influences, such as police and fire stations, libraries, schools, and community centers.

The topics discussed in this chapter are separated by whether they are a service provided by the city, or a public service provided by other organizations to residents of Providence. For example, energy, and community service providers and the Providence Public Library are classified as public services as they are not directly provided by the City.

10.1 Objectives and Strategies - City Services

Schools

The Providence Public School Department (PPSD) has experienced many changes since 1994, reflecting the changes that have taken place citywide. As the racial and ethnic diversity of the city's population has increased, similar changes have occurred in the public school system, but at a more dramatic level. The number of white non-Hispanics in the school population has declined since 1994, and the overall diversity of the school system has increased. The PPSD has embarked on an Effective Schools Initiative and restructuring program to better reflect and serve its diverse and shifting population. The demographics of income distribution and cultural backgrounds indicate that some neighborhoods and areas of the city have greater needs than others. Over 50 languages are currently spoken by Providence students. Additionally, the number of students below the poverty level has increased dramatically; the city ranks third in the nation in childhood poverty. At present, the school system has a significant dropout rate and needs to improve standardized test scores. In response to the challenges created by the high level of childhood poverty, drop out rate and number of students for whom English is a second language the Providence After School Alliance (PASA) was formed to provide school students with quality activities during the after school hours. Due to the challenges facing the PPSD, charter schools and private schools are playing an increasingly important role today in the education of the city's children. Furthermore, parents often consider leaving the city to seek educational choices in other communities.

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The PPSD school facilities require millions of dollars in repairs and upgrades due to years of deferred maintenance. To address this the PPSD has recently comissioned a plan for the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the most needy schools in the district.

Objective CS 1

Schools

Ensure that all Providence children have the tools and opportunity to succeed in school and their future workplace.

Strategies:

A.　Improve academic achievement for all children and increase the graduation rate by:
1.　Implementing measures to evaluate annual progress in improvement of academic achievement and graduation rates.
2.　Regularly evaluating curriculum, instruction and programming to ensure that they meet student needs.
3.　Developing partnerships with local colleges and universities to upgrade educational materials on a regular basis.
4.　Collaborating with local colleges and universities on education curriculum and continuing education opportunities to ensure teachers are highly qualified.
5.　Working with local businesses, institutions and non-profit agencies to develop school-to-career programs and cooperative work experiences that provide practical application of academic knowledge and prepare students to join the workforce.
6.　Exploring partnerships with the Providence Public Library and local colleges and universities to increase access to resources and programming.
7.　Collaborating with community organizations to expand year-round out of school educational, recreational and cultural activities for children of all ages.

B.　Develop physical and social environments that are conducive to learning by:

1.　Improving school facilities to meet current and future research-based educational specifications.
2.　Ensuring that new and rehabilitated schools are models of environmental sustainability and design excellence.
3.　Improving pedestrian and bicycle access to schools from the surrounding neighborhoods.
4.　Opening grounds and facilities for community use, such as recreation and joint landscaping projects, to create additional urban green space in neighborhoods.
5.　Exploring opportunities for the creation of joint-use facilities such as athletic, recreational, and libraries, with community organizations.
6.　Implementing a maintenance program for buildings and grounds.
7.　Ensuring that schools are free from physical violence and psychological abuse such as bullying.

C.　Strengthen parent and community involvement in education and schools by:
1.　Strengthening the role of schools as neighborhood centers.

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2. Supporting and promoting the efforts of programs such as Volunteers in Providence Schools that encourage residents and businesses to volunteer time and expertise.
3. Collaborating with community organizations to expand adult education opportunities for parents and guardians, including classes such as English as a Second Language (ESL).
4. Implementing a comprehensive community-based outreach effort to improve communication between the school department, parents and students.
5. Recognizing that providing a quality education to the city's children is the collective responsibility of all city residents.

D. Support efforts to create a predictable and fair school funding formula statewide that recognizes the particular challenges and needs of urban school systems.

E. Increase public confidence in Providence schools.

A new public safety complex has been built, enabling the Police and Fire Departments to better serve city residents. Additionally, police substations have been placed in neighborhoods throughout the city as part of the Police Departments Community Policing Initiative. Also, the City crime rate has decreased and the community policing program continues to improve the relationship of the police department with neighborhood residents.

Objective CS 2

Police, Fire and Public Safety

Ensure the safety and welfare of residents by providing fire and police protection and adequate resources and knowledge to perform these vital services.

Strategies:

A. Support innovation in methods and technology to advance the work of the police and fire departments.
B. Coordinate the operations of the police and fire departments, and support inter-operational systems.
C. Maintain and support programs to address substance abuse.
D. Coordinate disaster operations and Homeland Security functions with the Providence Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).
E. Promote ongoing training and certification of police and fire personnel.
F. Conduct a comprehensive safety analysis to determine and assess the current and future safety needs of city residents and implement a plan to address these needs.
G. Conduct a study to determine the location and extent of hazardous materials within the city and implement a strategy to reduce or eliminate these hazardous materials. Ensure that emergency readiness exists to react to any hazardous material emergency including acquisition of appropriate equipment and the establishment of evacuation plans.
H. Promote fire prevention and safe buildings.
I. Maintain and improve public education efforts such as Risk Watch and the smoke detector program.
J. Coordinate fire and police operations with code enforcement.
K. Promote accessible routes for fire and emergency response; this also entails effective and legible street and directional signs.

Community Services and Facilities 10

L. Improve traffic safety citywide, emphasizing pedestrian and bicycle as well as automobile safety.
M. Reevaluate the Fire Department's Standard Operating Procedures in response to changing needs.
N. Educate the public on the proper use of the 911 system to reduce abuse of the system.
O. Improve the Fire Department's records protection system.
P. Continue to support and emphasize the importance of community policing.
Q. Improve coordination with code enforcement and develop public information efforts relating to code enforcement.
R. Improve enforcement of traffic regulations citywide.
S. Use the strategies of the Responsible Hospitality Partnership as a guide to ensure that Providence is a destination for active nightlife that contributes to and does not detract from quality of life in the city.

Objective CS 3

Emergency Management

Minimize damage to property, life and resources from natural or man-made emergencies.

Strategies:

A. Gain participation in FEMA's Community Rating System and acheive a rating of 8 or higher.
B. Incorporate hazard mitigation into the review of development proposals, particularly those along the waterfront and in other flood-prone areas.
C. Continually work to improve effective emergency response plans in cooperation with the State and adjacent municipalities.
D. Continually work to improve special emergency response plans for city facilities.
E. Maintain and update the Hazardous Materials Response Plans and conduct associate training.
F. Improve the city's communications systems and utility telemetry system.

Water

In order to more accurately track water usage throughout their system, the Providence Water Supply Board (PWSB) has installed automated water meters throughout the majority of their service area. Through this and other conservation efforts, increased sewer rates and the decline in large scale industrial uses, water consumption in Providence has dropped 8.8 percent in 20 years. While conservation has decreased some demand, it is important to note that the PWSB serves more than 60 percent of the state and has no rights to reserve water for the city's future needs. As development continues to occur in the city, availability of water may become an issue. Also, the PWSB is required to replace all lead services in the City over the next several years.

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Water Supply Policies of Rhode Island, Element 721 of the State Guide Plan.*

10 Community Services and Facilities

Objective CS 4

Water

Provide a safe and adequate water supply that is able to serve residential, commercial and industrial users.

Strategies:

A. Protect the city's water supply by:
    1. Implementing a watershed protection plan for the entire Scituate Reservoir system watershed area.
    2. Continuing use of the watershed protection surcharge for watershed land acquistion.
    3. Protecting and preserving the watershed land of the Scituate Reservoir by mandating additional regulations to restrict pedestrian and vehicular access to the reservoir.
    4. Continuing to support all watershed protection efforts, including use of the power of eminent domain to acquire property rights.
    5. Working to create emergency connections with other water providers throughout the state and region based on the recommendations of the supplemental water supply study.
    6. Working to amend the enabling legislation for the PWSB to allow the City to reserve enough water for its future needs.
    7. Working with the State to plan for statewide water supply challenges and needs.
B. Maintain the city's water supply by:
    1. Discouraging industrial use of potable water when other water sources can be made available or technology can minimize the need.
    2. Encouraging users to create grey water systems to lessen demand on the potable water supply.
    3. Meeting and exceeding all applicable water quality regulations.
    4. Continuing to upgrade and maintain infrastructure throughout the system. [1]
C. Upgrade the water supply system by:
    1. Addressing storage and distribution problems in order to cope with predicted long term growth in the service region and population served.
    2. Conducting studies of water system demand, safe yield, and facilities needs to ensure that future needs for water are met.
    3. Improving the water distribution system with the installation of state of the art equipment and infrastructure. [2]
    4. Completing installation of automated water meters throughout the system.
    5. Exploring new areas for potential to serve as reservoirs for additional water supply.

The Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC) is currently constructing Phase I of the Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement Project (CSO). When completed this will significantly reduce the number of storm events which bypass the Field's Point Wastewater treatment center and outfall directly into Narragansett Bay. Providence receives no revenue from the Narragansett Bay Commission to help maintain and upgrade City-owned sewer lines. With limited funding streams, maintaining the City-owned system becomes more difficult.

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1   See Strategy SE-3(A).
2   See Strategy SE-3(A).

Community Services and Facilities 10

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Water Supply Policies of Rhode Island, Element 721 of the State Guide Plan* and *Rivers Policy and Classification Plan, Element 162 of the State Guide Plan.*

Objective CS 5

Wastewater

Provide, in conjunction with the Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC), an efficient and sanitary wastewater treatment system that adequately services the entire City.

Strategies:

A.   The City shall ensure efficient operation of city wastewater facilities by:
   1.   Initiating funding to maintain and improve City owned wastewater lines and stormwater treatment systems.
   2.   Pursuing legislation for revenue sharing with NBC to ensure maintenance of City-owned wastewater lines.
   3.   Ensuring that all new development and redevelopment projects include separate wastewater and storm water lines.
   4.   Considering incorporation of Best Management Practice's (BMP's) for storm water to limit storm water flow into the city's rivers and combined sewers, reducing outfall, flow, and capacity issues.
   5.   Consider innovative ways to manage storm water runoff such as grass swales and rain gardens while at the same time increasing the green space of the City.
   6.   Amending regulations to allow the operation of grey water systems to reduce the amount of wastewater entering the treatment system.
B.   Encourage the Narragansett Bay Commission to ensure the efficient and effective operation of NBC wastewater facilities by:
   1.   Improving water quality in Narragansett Bay by reducing the nitrogen level in treatment plant effluent to 5mgL or less.
   2.   Continuing the Combined Sewer Monitoring and Metering Program which provides capacity and maintenance analysis.
   3.   Making sewer system improvements which include: Video inspections of all sewer lines, development of an asset management program linked to GIS, and upgrading infrastructure as needed.
   4.   Ensuring ability to maintain and upgrade infrastructure through review and enforcement of all overland maintenance easements.

To decrease the amount of loose trash in the city and to reduce the number of rodents, the Department of Public Works has provided animal-proof trash cans to all households. The new trash receptacles also allow for automated trash pickup. The DPW has also increased enforcement of recycling regulations in order to decrease the amount of solid waste being delivered to the landfill by the City.

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in the *RI Solid Waste Management Plan, Element 171 of the State Guide Plan.*

10 Community Services and Facilities

Objective CS 6

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Reduce the amount of waste disposed of in landfills by prioritizing participation in recycling and composting programs, and promoting solid waste and litter reduction.

Strategies:

A. Increase citywide recycling rates to meet and exceed the 35% required by the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC).
B. Encourage and support recycling and composting programs to reduce the amount of disposable solid waste, and consider implementing incentives to do so.
C. Promote the beneficial reuse of materials.
D. Encourage and support the work of groups such as Groundwork Providence to help reduce litter and dumping in the city's neighborhoods and promote the proper disposal of solid waste.
E. Educate consumers regarding the impact of purchases on waste generation and reduction, and materials recovery, through the purchase of recycled content products, and the purchase of products with reduced toxicity and packaging.
F. Encourage industrial processes that generate reduced amounts of waste.
G. Encourage local businesses and industries to recycle and to use recycled and recyclable products.
H. Promote litter prevention efforts at the local and state levels, stressing the protection of waterfront areas and waterbodies, and establishing a culture of stewardship of public spaces.
I. Continue to modernize the City's solid waste management system.
J. Develop and implement recycling programs for all uses in the city to increase overall recycling rates.
K. Work with RIRRC and RIDEM to have multi-family housing (4 or more units) solid waste reclassified as municipal waste rather than commercial to facilitate recycling at these properties.
L. Investigate the feasibility of a municipal Pay as You Throw program for Providence.
M. Establish a new transfer station within the city limits.
N. Establish a city composting program through which the City composts collected yard debris and sells it back to residents for use.
O. Work with RIRRC to expand the list of acceptable recyclables (i.e. glass, plastic types 3 through 7, bottle caps).
P. Work with RIRRC and RIDEM to create and distribute a new recycling education program.

Objective CS 7

General Government - Facilities

Maintain and, as necessary, construct government buildings and offices to ensure that the administration of the City operates effectively and efficiently.

Strategies:

Community Services and Facilities 10

A. Provide adequate space and facilities for the efficient functioning of City departments and agencies, matching program needs with space requirements for all City departments and agencies.
B. Investigate the possibility of developing a government center or structure housing several departments.
C. Improve the maintenance program for all City-owned property and buildings to reduce the need for future major capital expenditures.
D. Study the feasibility of fees and assessments for the provision and improvement of City services, including water, sewer, waste collection, public safety, parks, and education.

10.2 Objectives and Strategies - Public Services

Providence Gas Company and Narragansett Electric, through a series of mergers have become National Grid, which provides both electricity and natural gas to Providence residents.

Objective CS 8

Energy

Provide for the energy needs of City residents and the State by supporting the expansion of these utilities in a way that lessens the impact on the environment.

Strategies:

A. Work with local generators and distributors by providing them with city plans for growth and change as they plan for the future utility needs of city and state residents and continue to advocate that Providence is not an appropriate location for an LNG import facility due to population density, proximity to the Port of Providence, and proximity to Rhode Island Hospital (Rhode Island's only Level 1 Trauma Center). [3]
B. Prohibit development of private generators using coal or oil.
C. Encourage utility companies to use best and most advanced technology to minimize environmental impacts on air quality.
D. Encourage co-generation of electricity.
E. Promote alternative energy sources such as tidal, wind, and solar. [4]
F. Promote conservation of existing energy resources through education programs.
G. Create standards for the siting and design of physical plants, service vaults, transformers, and electric and gas meters within the city limits.
H. Work with the city's institutions on incorporating energy sustainability into their master plans.
I. Add alternative fuel vehicles to the city fleet.

Community services are provided by a number of agencies, including a particularly strong contingent of organizations supporting the development of Providence's youth. These agencies provide services to a diverse population with different service requirements. Decreased state and federal funding for community support services limits the

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3   See Strategy W-4(D).
4   See Strategy SE-3(F).

10 Community Services and Facilities

amount of help service providers can give to those in need. Also, the majority of the state's special needs population requiring services is concentrated in urban areas such as Providence.

Objective CS 9

Community Service Providers

Encourage community centers and service providers to streamline and strengthen the services they provide to Providence residents.

Strategies:

A. Encourage alternative sustainable funding sources for existing community centers and human service providers.
B. Encourage community centers and service providers to eliminate duplication of services.
C. Support public and private agencies in addressing the changing needs of the city's population.
D. Encourage the expansion of services provided by community centers to meet the changing demographics and needs in their neighborhoods.

The Providence Public Library faces fiscal challenges and has had to close facilities that are no longer safe for the public and staff to occupy.

Objective CS 10

Library Services

Encourage the Providence Public Library to provide residents of the city with a full range of library services.

Strategies:

The Providence Public Library will:

A. Acquire, organize and maintain comprehensive collections that reflect diversity and a wide spectrum of views.
B. Provide specialized reference services focusing on Business, Art and Music, and Rhode Island Information.
C. Refine and expand library services statewide through the development and implementation of cooperative services and individual programs, with and for community and professional groups and individual experts.
D. Improve the effectiveness of library services for children by developing and implementing programs, in cooperation with other organizations, that serve the child in the context of her/his family and the larger community.
E. Improve the effectiveness of the Library's services to adolescents.
F. Provide sufficient hours at all library locations to insure that the needs of the community are met. Maintain a high standard of customer service in library staff to ensure that the needs of users are met.

Community Services and Facilities 10

G. Bridge the gap between those with ready access to information and those without by providing access to technology through the provision of up-to-date computer equipment, programs and access to the Internet.

H. Continue training and educational programs to inform and aid individuals accessing and using the library's electronic and physical information resources.

I. Provide remote access to resources utilizing electronic databases.

J. Provide access to library resources to individuals with disabilities including the provision of assistive technology for the vision and hearing-impaired.

10 Community Services and Facilities

Land Use 11

11 Land Use

11 Land Use

Goal 9

Manage change and growth to sustain Providence's high quality of life and preserve its unique attributes.

"Where should Providence grow? How should Providence grow?"

These questions are at the heart of the Land Use plan for the city. We know that growth and change is going to happen, so the question is where should it happen, and how?

This section addresses both of these questions, based on input from Providence's citywide charrette, held in the fall of 2006. During that week, residents created their own vision of where expected growth should occur by placing building blocks representing specific types and amounts of development on a citywide map. While each group had a unique perspective, two key themes emerged; protect residential neighborhoods and direct expected development, residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional, to the downtown, major commercial corridors, and industrial areas.

This section has two important maps. The first is the "Areas of Stability and Change" map, which reflects the themes that we developed at the charrette. This map is a snapshot of where we anticipate growth is likely to happen in the future, and where growth is most appropriate. It also shows the areas of the city where we do not anticipate significant growth and change in the coming years. A quick glance at the map shows that most of the city's residential neighborhoods are considered 'areas of stability.' The areas of change identified on this map also indicate areas for further study through the neighborhood plans. This section identifies objectives and strategies that focus on the preservation of the existing character and protecting what is most special about our neighborhoods. The blue and red areas on the map are those areas where we anticipate the most change. This plan aims to direct growth in a controlled way that complements the assets of our city and builds on them. It sets the parameters for growth that will help to expand the City's tax base, while preserving and enhancing the livability of our city. *Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan* was written after decades of stagnation and did not anticipate the rate of growth and change that the city now faces. As a result, the plan did not adequately address where and how to direct and control growth. We can see the impact of that lack of planning as inappropriate developments often happen haphazardly through zoning variances for use, height, density and character.

The second map in this section is the "Future Land Use" map. This map is the official Land Use Map of the city and provides the basis for the Zoning Ordinance. The map reflects the existing land use patterns in the city, with a few amendments. Most notably, this map includes areas that are designated as "Jobs Districts," which are discussed in this section, and "Greenways."

Both of these maps are not fixed in time; it is expected that they will be refined and fine-tuned during the neighborhood planning process and periodically in the future.

Land Use 11

This section is organized in three parts.

- Where do we grow? - Identifies areas of stability and areas of change in the city on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change', and lists the goals and objectives for both areas.
- Automatic Text
- Achieving the vision - Links the Land Use section to the other sections of the plan by identifying goals and strategies that are specific to land use for each of the other topics. For example, for sustainability and the environment, the built environment and housing, specific objectives are identified that relate to land use.
- The objectives and strategies in this chapter correspond with strategies outlined in *Land Use 2025, Element 121 of the State Land Use Plan.*

11.1 Where Do We Grow?

Goal 10

Ensure the continued strength and stability of Providence's neighborhoods by directing growth to appropriate areas.

Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change' is the graphic representation of the themes expressed during the charrette. The map identifies four distinct areas, which are described in detail below: Areas of Stability, Growth Districts, Growth Corridors, and Transitional Areas. This map is illustrative only, describing a general policy approach that will be refined through neighborhood and specific plans, and amendments to Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' and the Zoning Map.

11 Land Use

Map 11.1 Areas of Stability and Change

Providence Tomorrow
Areas of Stability and Change

Legend
(See plan for description of districts)

- Growth Districts
- Growth Corridors
- Transitional Areas
- Areas of Stability

0   2,000   4,000   6,000   8,000 Feet

City of Providence
Department of Planning & Development
December 13, 2007

Areas of Stability

Areas of Stability include the vast majority of the city, primarily the residential neighborhoods and their associated commercial areas, where limited change is expected over the coming years. There are 25 ethnically and culturally diverse neighborhoods that are known for their quality of life, including their rich architecture. Each neighborhood has its own identity and character. The goal for these areas is to identify and maintain the existing character of an area while accommodating some new development and redevelopment. Of the city's 25 neighborhoods, all but Downtown are designated as areas of stability in whole or in part.

Objective LU 1

Protect and enhance stable neighborhoods

Reinforce the stability, character and diversity of the City's neighborhoods by respecting valued development patterns and attributes.

Strategies:

A.   Use the neighborhood planning process to identify the following in Areas of Stability designated on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change'.
1.   Development patterns and attributes that contribute to the character of Providence's stable neighborhoods.
2.   Significant buildings and view corridors to be protected.
3.   Environmentally important features to be preserved or enhanced such as views, river and harbor-front areas and potential pedestrian access points. [1]
4.   Needed services and facilities such as schools, parks, recreation, public safety and shopping areas.
5.   Potential redevelopment opportunities such as vacant or blighted properties.
B.   Update regulations to:
1.   Ensure that new development maintains existing density levels. [2]
2.   Ensure that new development complements existing neighborhood character in scale, massing and design. [3]
3.   Encourage the preservation of the existing building stock. [4]
4.   Mitigate impacts of non–residential uses on neighboring residential uses.
5.   Limit the locations of inappropriate uses such as adult entertainment.

Areas of Change

This section is intended to direct growth to areas where most people agree that development or redevelopment would be beneficial and is most likely to occur in the coming years. Carefully directing and planning for growth will benefit the city as a whole. Future residents and workers will have access to efficient forms of transportation that

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1   See Strategy BE-1(C).
2   See Strategy BE-7(B).
3   See Strategy BE-3(A).
4   See Strategy BE6B.

include walking, biking, buses, and, in the future, other forms of public transit. New developments in these areas can improve the economic base, provide jobs, and enhance the visual quality of buildings, streets and neighborhoods.

There are three distinct areas designated on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change':

- *Growth Districts* - These areas are centered around the downtown core, and along the waterfront and in manufacturing areas in the city. They have many different characteristics, but common traits include: close proximity to a commercial arterial street, locations in older industrial areas or large vacant areas. Opportunities for pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development and transit hubs can be found in most of these areas. Successfully developing these areas should not come at the expense of displacing existing residents. Instead, these areas are intended to become diverse mixed-use areas, with the addition of new residents to the areas, rather than displacement.

- *Growth Corridors* - These areas are located along key commercial and transit corridors in the city. These corridors present an excellent opportunity for pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development at higher densities than the surrounding neighborhoods to support an improved transit system. Development on these corridors would likely have nodes of higher intensity and activity at key intersections. The areas considered growth corridors will also address the transition from the commercial uses to the adjacent residential uses.

- *Transitional Areas* - These areas are located on the fringes of growth districts and abut residential neighborhoods. These areas are intended to provide a transition in height, density and scale between the larger scale development anticipated in the growth districts and the lower scale and density of surrounding neighborhoods.

The primary role of land use regulation in these areas is to encourage the redevelopment of these areas with economically rewarding development that enhances the city's character and livability. Although regulations cannot increase the market demand for an area or a specific type of building or industry, they can impose conditions that make redevelopment infeasible without subsidy. Therefore, the strategy for encouraging development is to allow sufficient development intensity and appropriate mixes of uses so that planned land uses will be economically feasible. Design standards will ensure that the quality of design is an asset to the surrounding neighborhood and contributes to the city's character. New development must take into consideration natural and man-made environmental constraints and focus on preserving those aspects of our environment that we hold dear, including views, vistas and corridors and Providence's historic character.

Objective LU 2

Direct Growth

Encourage growth in areas best suited to provide access to jobs, housing and transit.

Strategies:

A. Use the neighborhood planning process to:
    1. Develop a unified design vision for Growth Districts, Growth Corridors and Transitional Areas identified on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change' that identifies the preferred pattern and

character of development including mass, scale, building height, design, use, and density, and considers topography, streets, sidewalks and open spaces. [5]

2. Identify nodes of increased density to support transit options. [6]
3. Identify significant buildings and view corridors to be protected.
4. Identify environmentally important features to be preserved or enhanced such as views, river and harborfront areas and potential pedestrian access points.
5. Confirm and/or refine proposed locations and boundaries for Jobs Districts, land use designations, proposed greenways and proposed open space/public space.

B. Update regulations to:
1. Maintain and enhance waterfront views to and from the city.
2. Reflect design vision adopted as part of neighborhood plans.
3. Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures where economically feasible.
4. Create incentives for development.

11.2 How Do We Grow?

> **Goal 11**
>
> **Promote a balance of uses to support sustainable patterns of development providing healthy, walkable neighborhoods, thriving business districts, and a high quality of life.**

In contrast to the previous section, which addressed *where* future growth should be directed, this section focuses on more specific details as to *how* the city should be developed. Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' depicts specific land use designations for each area of the city and is the Official Land Use Map. The purpose of the land use plan is to establish the future amount and distribution of land uses and allocate scarce resources among competing activities.

The historic mixed-use character of the city poses a challenge with conventional land use designations and regulations. It is the mixed-use aspect of the city's character that is one of its most prized assets. Providence is a living testament to the fact that, with good design, diverse uses can coexist to create special places that are universally valued. The city's mixed-use pattern encourages walking, a goal that this Plan also promotes. Though many land use areas contain multiple uses, the descriptions of each designation depicted on the map refer to the dominant use.

The objectives and strategies for the city's waterfront areas are identified in Chapter 12.

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5   See Strategy BE-3(A).
6   See Strategy BE-3(B).

11 | Land Use

Map 11.2 Future Land Use
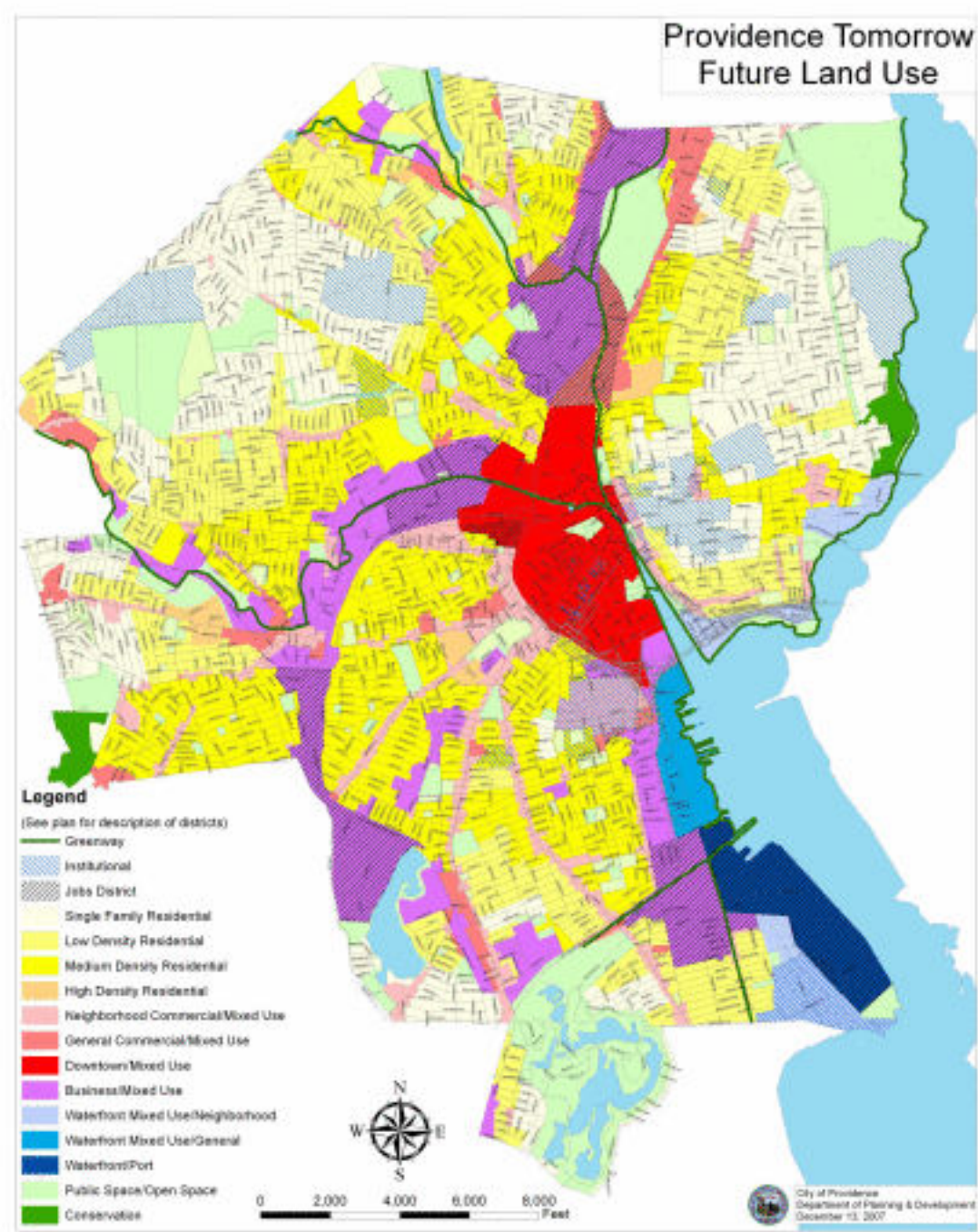
The following table contains descriptions of each land use designation as well as a photograph of a typical area (Table 11.1 'Land Use Designations').

Table 11.1 Land Use Designations

Use Designation	Description	Photo
Single Family Residential	These areas are characterized by one-family dwellings in detached structures on separate lots. Lot sizes vary by neighborhood, with most ranging from 3,200 to 6,000 square feet.	
Low Density Residential	These areas are characterized by one-family and two-family dwellings in detached structures on separate lots. Buildings typically range in height from one to three stories. Lot sizes vary by neighborhood, with most ranging from 3,200 to 5,000 square feet. In some areas, small-scale commercial uses, such as neighborhood corner stores, may be appropriate.	
Medium Density Residential	These areas are characterized by one to three-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings on separate lots. Buildings typically range in height from one to three stories. Lot sizes vary by neighborhood, with most ranging from 3,200 to 5,000 square feet. In some areas, small-scale commercial uses, such as neighborhood corner stores, may be appropriate.	
High Density Residential	These areas are characterized by multi-family dwellings, with some one, two and three-family dwellings interspersed. Multi-family buildings typically range from three to six stories in height. In some areas, small-scale commercial uses, such as neighborhood corner stores, may be appropriate.	

11 Land Use

Use Designation	Description	Photo
Neighborhood Commercial/ Mixed Use	These areas are characterized by traditional, pedestrian-oriented uses that serve local neighborhood needs for convenience retail, services, professional offices, and housing. Buildings are set close to the street, with entrances and facades oriented toward the street. Residential uses are encouraged.	
General Commercial/ Mixed Use	These areas are characterized by commercial uses such as large shopping complexes and plazas that serve citywide needs for retail, services and office establishments. Residential uses are encouraged in these areas. These areas may be located along commercial corridors that can accommodate large commercial uses or clustered uses at a higher density to support transit.	
Downtown/ Mixed Use	This area is intended to revitalize and restore the historic core business area and to accommodate appropriate expansion of the downtown area. It is characterized by a variety of business, financial, institutional, public, quasi-public, cultural, residential, appropriate light manufacturing, and other related uses. To preserve and foster the economic vitality of downtown, a mix of compatible uses is encouraged to promote commercial and other business activity at street level and residential, office, and commercial uses on the upper floors. In order to promote economic development while maintaining compatibility between uses, sub-districts may be established to address building height, entertainment and light industrial uses.	

Land Use 11

Use Designation	Description	Photo
Business/Mixed Use	These areas are intended to foster the expansion of business, industrial, commercial, office and medium-to-high density residential uses into former manufacturing areas and historic mill buildings. A variety of business, financial, institutional, public, quasi-public, cultural, light industrial, manufacturing and other related uses are encouraged to provide a mix of activities into these areas. While residential uses are permitted, these areas are intended primarily for a mix of business uses.	
Waterfront Mixed Use/Neighborhood	These areas are intended for a mixture of residential and neighborhood-serving commercial, recreational and open space/public space uses.	
Waterfront Mixed Use/General	These areas are intended for a balanced mix of industrial, commercial and residential uses to serve as a transition between heavier port uses and downtown.	
Jobs District	These areas are intended for industrial, manufacturing, commercial and office uses to support job growth and expansion. No residential uses are permitted.	

11 Land Use

Use Designation	Description	Photo
Waterfront/ Port	These areas are intended for waterfront port and maritime uses to promote the Port of Providence and related maritime industrial and commercial uses within the waterfront area. The purpose of this designation is to protect the waterfront as a resource for water dependent industrial uses, and to facilitate the renewed use of a vital waterfront for economic growth and expansion.	
Public/Open Space	These areas are intended to ensure that open space and areas for public buildings and facilities are preserved in the city. These areas are characterized by parks, baseball fields, soccer fields, and supporting uses, as well as areas for passive recreation. Other typical uses include government-owned park and recreation areas and public buildings such as fire stations and schools. These areas are publicly owned.	
Conservation	These areas are intended to ensure woodlands, rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, and other sensitive natural areas are preserved in their natural scenic and ecological condition. These areas may be publicly or privately owned.	

Land Use 11

Use Designation	Description	Photo
Greenway	These areas are intended to provide active and passive recreation and open space along the waterfront, and to provide continuous connections between open spaces. They may vary in width depending on the potential for adjacent public/open space or other amenities. They may be publicly or privately owned.	
Institutional	These areas are institutional campuses, designed to permit institutional growth and development while controlling and limiting negative impacts on neighborhoods	

11.2.1 Residential Areas

The majority of land in the city is developed as residential neighborhoods. These areas contribute significantly to the livability of the city; their special character is what attracts many people to Providence. Residents have voiced strong support for protecting residential neighborhoods from intrusions that negatively impact quality of life, such as the expansion of commercial and institutional uses. Since 2000, there has been an increase in residential infill projects in virtually every neighborhood in the city. While some projects fit seamlessly into the surrounding neighborhood, many of the new homes do not respect the character of the surrounding area. While the City supports the expansion of housing opportunities, it is essential that new construction respects the valued attributes and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

While residential dwellings are the predominant use in these areas, one of the things that makes Providence special is the variety of neighborhood stores and service establishments that are scattered throughout residential areas, within walking distance of residents. These types of uses are appropriate in certain locations, with limits on size and design to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential properties. In many neighborhoods there are also historic buildings, such as former mills and schools, that are part of the urban fabric but are no longer suitable for their original uses. To promote the preservation of these buildings, land use regulations must be flexible in terms of their use and density.

The City recognizes the importance of providing a variety of residential types and densities to ensure balanced housing choices for City residents. At the same time, the City aims to ensure that the residential integrity of the neighborhoods are preserved and protected from the encroachment of commercial, industrial and other uses.

11 | Land Use

Objective LU 3

Maintain and enhance residential areas

Promote the development of a wide range of residential land uses to ensure a diversity of housing choices (type and density) for City residents, while limiting the amount and type of other land uses within residential areas designated on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'.

Strategies:

A. Encourage development that is consistent with residential character by updating regulations to:
    1. Allow for residential development at the same density levels as currently exist.
    2. Allow for a range of housing types to accommodate increased population that is consistent with the character of the neighborhood in scale, density and overall design. [7]
    3. Allow for limited non-residential uses such as neighborhood corner stores, offices and home-based businesses while maintaining the residential character of the area.
B. Encourage adaptive reuse of historic non-residential buildings in residential areas by allowing for increased residential density or limited non-residential uses to make reuse economically feasible. [8]
C. Encourage neighborhood revitalization by targeting vacant lots for housing, green space, playgrounds, or community gardens, based on the needs and density of the neighborhood.

11.2.2 Mixed Use Areas

While most areas in the city have more than one single use, the truly mixed use areas are the city's downtown, commercial corridors, former manufacturing areas and the waterfront. Urban life and vitality are the heart of these areas, with residential, retail, office, industrial, civic, institutional, and entertainment uses jumbled together. Mixed-use takes many forms, such as small commercial blocks, commercial areas along main corridors, shopping areas and plazas, office buildings with retail uses on the ground floor, stores with apartments on upper floors, or former mill buildings with a mix of industrial, office and residential uses.

Mixing uses creates desirable places to live by improving the balance of jobs to housing and creating healthy neighborhoods where residents can walk to shops and services. It is in these mixed-use areas that nodes of concentrated development could be established to link future development to transit hubs. In these nodes, greater residential density and buildings heights could be accommodated to create a more efficient pattern of development and protect the character of the residential neighborhoods.

Building form is important in mixed-use areas. The urban fabric of our city, with buildings set to the street edge, pedestrian amenities and human-scaled building massing and design, must be preserved and must guide the character of future developments. When many uses co-exist, it is the built environment of those areas that establish the character. Establishing a cohesive form allows for uses to change over time without significantly changing the character of the area.

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7   See Strategy H-5(D).
8   See Strategy H-2(D).

Land Use 11

While a variety of uses is encouraged in these areas, it is important that no one use dominates. For example, in some of the city's former manufacturing areas, residential uses are permitted; however it is not intended that those areas should become primarily residential.   A healthy mix of uses is important to the future vitality of downtown, the commercial areas, the former manufacturing areas, and the waterfront.

Objective LU 4

Promote vibrant mixed-use areas.

Promote the development of mixed-use areas with different levels of intensity and use to improve the jobs/housing balance and encourage alternative modes of transportation.

Strategies:

A. Promote the development of a mixture of residential and neighborhood-serving commercial uses in areas designated as Neighborhood Commercial/Mixed Use on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' as a transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods by:
   1. Encouraging the development of retail, office and service uses that are compatible with surrounding areas.
   2. Encouraging and, in areas where appropriate, requiring buildings to be a minimum of two stories to support potential residential development on upper floors.
   3. Updating regulations to include design criteria focused on pedestrian orientation and maintaining neighborhood character.
B. Promote the development of a mixture of commercial uses that serve citywide needs and higher density residential uses in areas designated as General Commercial/Mixed Use on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' along major arterials and select areas to create nodes of activity by:
   1. Identifying areas that should be developed with a concentration of commercial and higher density uses to support transit. [9]
   2. Identifying areas where residential uses are not appropriate.
   3. Updating regulations to include design criteria focused on maintaining and improving neighborhood character, pedestrian orientation and accessibility to transit.
C. Encourage continued investment in the area designated as Downtown/Mixed Use on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' with a high concentration of business, commercial, institutional, cultural and residential uses by:
   1. Identifying changes to regulations and other strategies to minimize the conflict between residential, business and entertainment uses, such as developing a measurement process for nightlife's impact and creating a strategy for its use by the Board of Licenses in managing the renewal of licenses and projecting the effect of a new license issue.
   2. Refining the unified design vision for the area through the neighborhood planning process, using previous plans such as the Downcity Plan, the Jewelry District Plan and Providence 2020 as a starting point.

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9   See Strategies BE-3(B) and M-7(B).

11 Land Use

3. Refining existing regulations to better implement the goals of protecting the historic character and environmental assets of the area while promoting new investment.
4. Identifying strategies to increase parking downtown without negatively impacting the character of the built environment. [10]

D. Encourage the development of former manufacturing areas designated as Business/Mixed Use on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' with a balanced mixture of commercial, light industrial, office and residential uses by:

1. Promoting these areas for business retention and expansion for a variety of businesses.
2. Encouraging the adaptive reuse of former manufacturing buildings with a mixture of uses that contributes to the character of the area if economically feasible.
3. Updating regulations to limit residential uses to upper floors and ensure that residential uses do not impede business development efforts.

11.2.3 Business Areas

It is vital for Providence to provide opportunities for industries and industrial expansion which will employ residents of Providence, while ensuring minimal impact on adjacent residential areas. These areas are designated as Jobs Districts on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'. Manufacturing land uses consists of land that is occupied by industries such as jewelry and assembly companies. Manufacturing uses are located throughout the City, with a number of industrial parks such as Huntington Industrial Park, Silver Spring Industrial Park, West River Industrial Park, and the industrial area of Washington Park. There has been a significant reduction in the amount of land occupied by industries in the last few decades. As manufacturing companies of all kinds generally employ large numbers of people and contribute to a diverse economic base, efforts will be made through this plan to encourage manufacturing firms to grow and expand in these areas. Businesses need areas where they can predictably grow and expand in the future without the concern of conflicts that often arise between manufacturing / industrial uses and residential uses. Therefore, no residential uses of any kind are permitted in the Jobs District or the Port of Providence.

Objective LU 5

Protect Areas for Jobs.

Promote business retention and expansion in areas best suited for industrial and commercial development.

Strategies:

A. Encourage the growth of industrial activities by preserving industrial land primarily for manufacturing purposes in areas designated as Jobs Districts on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'.
B. Promote the preservation of industrial parks to encourage the expansion and, if possible, the return of manufacturing companies to the city to expand the economic base.
C. Prohibit all residential uses in the Jobs District, including artist live-work space.

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10   See Strategy M-6(F).

11.2.4 Natural and Civic Areas

Natural and civic spaces are an extension of the community. When these spaces work well, they serve as a stage for the public lives of city residents. If they function in their true civic role, they can be the settings where celebrations are held, where exchanges both social and economic take place, where friends run into each other, and where cultures mix. When cities and neighborhoods have thriving open and civic spaces, residents have a strong sense of community; conversely, when such spaces are lacking, people may feel less connected to each other.

Natural and open spaces contribute to community health – socially, economically, culturally and environmentally. They enhance the civic realm – not only visually, but also in providing a sense of character and a forum for public activities. All of these assets, as well as the opportunities these places offer residents to relax and enjoy themselves, and to exercise and recreate add up to greater city livability.

Natural, open and civic spaces also have the environmental benefits of offering some relief to urban living. Parks and other "green" public spaces, such as waterfronts and wildlife areas, increase people's appreciation for and stewardship over the natural environment, and provide habitat for animals. What is more, the trees and other greenery characteristic of these places filter out pollutants and freshen the air.

Often, public places offer free, open forums for people to encounter art, to enjoy performances, and to participate in other cultural activities. From concerts at the Temple to Music in Roger Williams Park to outdoor art displays downtown, open spaces foster and enhance a city's cultural life. WaterFire, the award winning fire and music installation, has had an impressive cultural and economic impact, attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors downtown on summer and fall evenings. These events bring a great variety of people together and set the stage for positive social interaction.

Open space and public buildings land uses consist of areas committed to planned open space such as parks, playgrounds and cemeteries; and public buildings such as City Hall, public schools, and police and fire stations. Open space areas have been designated to allow for the active and recreational needs of city residents. As the population of the city continues to change, the recreational needs of city residents are also changing. Through the open space objectives and strategies presented in this plan the city will meet these changing needs and efforts will be made to ensure that these needs are addressed on an ongoing basis.

Objective LU 6

Maintain and enhance open spaces and civic areas.

Preserve and protect Providence's open and public spaces to enhance the overall quality of life for city residents.

Strategies:

A.   Provide opportunities for recreation and visual relief by preserving Providence's parks, playgrounds, golf courses, cemeteries and undeveloped city owned open space.

B.   Preserve open space along the city's waterbodies by creating open space corridors along rivers and ponds. [11]

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11   See Strategy SE-2(C)(2).

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C. Promote a diversity of recreational activities through the use of active open space in the City's parks, playgrounds and other recreational areas.
D. Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive and significant areas. [12]
E. Provide and encourage the provision of a variety of active and passive recreation facilities geographically distributed to serve the present and future needs of City residents.
F. Expand, if possible, the amount of public open space in Providence.
G. Identify city and or state-owned open spaces best suited for urban agriculture. [13]
H. Develop a plan for the reuse of public buildings that are no longer being used for public purposes.
I. Develop a system of greenways, as identified on Map 11.2. [14]

11.2.5 Institutional Areas

The city's seven universities and seven hospitals are important centers of employment, education and culture for Providence and the region. The health care facilities provide vital services to residents. Both hospitals and colleges also have unique characteristics that add value above and beyond creating jobs. These institutions conduct research and impart technical expertise to their students and workers. In the increasingly knowledge-based economy, these institutions contribute to a more experienced and educated workforce, a highly desirable resource in all cities. Furthermore, their economic activities foster an entrepreneurial spirit and attract additional economic growth through small spin-off businesses and supporting uses. Institutions contribute to the city in other ways as well, such as through education partnerships, mentoring teachers and students and "adopting" schools, and through payments in lieu of taxes, which helps to offset the loss of taxes due to the institutions' tax-exempt status.

Balanced with all of the benefits that institutions bring to our city are the impacts of institutions: traffic, noise, pollution, housing shortages, congestion, and a loss of tax revenue. As many of the hospitals and colleges are located in residential areas, these impacts are not insignificant. Institutional buildings are often of a height, scale and massing that do not blend well with the character of residential neighborhoods. The city recognizes the importance of mitigating conflicts with residential areas, identifying the best locations for institutional growth and expansion in the future, and encouraging growth in those areas.

Providence is a compact city with limited land area available for new development. Unlike many U.S. cities that are able to annex land to increase their area, Providence has a fixed land area of 18 square miles. Approximately a third of the land area is stable residential neighborhoods where significant change and growth is unlikely and unwanted. In addition, a large percentage of the city's land area (over 46%) is taken up with land uses that do not generate property taxes, such as schools, churches, hospitals, state offices and public rights of way. What remains is a small area of available land for new growth and development, generating new revenue for the city. It is imperative that this resource be utilized efficiently and effectively. Growth is essential to the city's economic health and sustainability, as the city is dependent on property taxes for income. Land use policy and tax policy are intricately linked, and must both be considered in this plan.

The objectives and strategies in this section aim to strike a balance between institutional growth, taxpayer affordability and neighborhood preservation.

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12   See Strategy SE-2(A).
13   See Strategies SE-2(E) and SE-2(F).
14   See Strategy SE-2(C)(2).

Land Use 11

Objective LU 7

Allow for institutional growth while preserving neighborhoods

Permit institutional growth and expansion in Institutional areas designated on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' while limiting their encroachment and negative impacts on the neighborhoods in which they are located.

Strategies:

A. Ensure that institutional development is consistent with neighborhood character by updating institutional regulations to:
1. Address setbacks and buffering from adjacent residential uses
2. Encourage the development of parking garages to minimize surface parking lots, where appropriate, or off-site parking facilities.
3. Address the design of buildings, through height, scale and massing regulations.
4. Require institutions to use their land more efficiently and expand on their existing campus footprint, while ensuring compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.
B. Encourage institutions, where possible, to collaborate by co-locating uses and services to maximize the use of available land within their current land holdings.
C. Identify and evaluate the best areas in the city for institutional expansion in commercial areas, mixed use areas and downtown, with consideration for the impact of institutional uses on the city's tax base.
D. Consider the individual settings of institutions in crafting regulations. Use the neighborhood planning process to identify unique neighborhood conditions and potential regulations to address them.
E. Collaborate with institutions to address city needs such as development of housing, jobs, the redevelopment of underused land, and development of venture capital relationships with the business community.
F. Continue to require health care and educational institutions to prepare long-range master plans that will allow the city to evaluate and mitigate impacts of proposed expansions on City neighborhoods. Such Master Plans shall:
1. Address short (1-2 years), mid (5 years) and long-range (10 years) growth and expansion plans, including current property holdings.
2. Be updated a minimum of every five years in accordance with the schedule adopted by the City Plan Commission.
3. Identify the process through which the institution coordinated with the surrounding neighborhoods prior to and during plan preparation to understand and respond to community concerns.
4. Identify specific measure to mitigate impacts of expansion on surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Identify specific measures to encourage and offer incentives for students and employees to use public transportation.

11.3 Achieving the Vision

This section links the other chapters of Providence Tomorrow to Land Use by addressing how each element of the plan (Housing, Sustainability and the Environment, for example) impacts land use. In each section, specific land use strategies are identified to implement the goals of the other chapters of this plan.

11 Land Use

Objective LU 8

Sustainability and the Environment

Promote sustainability and environmental quality through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

A. Amend land use controls to:
   1. Protect solar access.
   2. Allow for greenways citywide.
   3. Promote home-based businesses and telecommuting.
B. Identify land areas that are best suited to wind power generation.
C. Evaluate existing setback requirements from waterbodies to ensure water quality protection.
D. Identify construction techniques to minimize flood damage to buildings in the flood zone.
E. Identify appropriate land areas for transfer stations. Identify other amendments that need to be made to facilitate trash to energy conversion.
F. Identify environmentally sensitive land areas, and amend regulations as necessary to ensure their protection. [15]

G. Develop incentives for the development of solar and wind energy, and green buildings and other developments with low environmental impacts.
H. Support urban agriculture by: [16]
   1. Identifying the best land areas for urban agriculture. Land best suited for development should not be considered for agriculture.
   2. Amending regulations as necessary to facilitate urban agriculture.
   3. Amend regulations as necessary to promote a system of farmers' markets throughout the city.

Objective LU 9

Built Environment

Promote design excellence and historic preservation through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

A. Identify possible "character" districts that could be used in the future as categories for land use regulations that are based more on building form than on use.
B. Identify the best locations for nodes of concentrated development and increased density. Link nodes to existing and future transit stops.

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15   See Strategy SE-2(A).
16   See Strategies SE-2(E) and SE-2(F).

C. Identify areas that could support taller buildings and amend land use regulations to allow for greater height in those areas.
D. Amend regulations as needed to establish incentives for greater height and density in exchange for affordable units, public space investment, support for neighborhood amenities, sustainable design, etc.
E. Amend regulations to permit small-scale businesses in residential neighborhoods, with the appropriate controls to mitigate the impact of these establishments.

Objective LU 10

Business and Jobs

Promote job growth and retention through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

A. Regulate land use downtown to ensure its future as Rhode Island's preeminent center for business, tourism and entertainment.
B. Ensure that land available after the I-195 relocation will support a significant number of jobs and generate taxes.
C. Revise regulations to reinforce existing jobs districts and establish new districts that allow for business growth and the development of the city's tax base without conflicts with residential uses. Key jobs districts are designated on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' and include:
   - Promenade
   - Industrial Parks: Huntington, West River, Silver Spring, Washington Park
   - Port of Providence
D. Identify land areas for the continued growth of existing industries and businesses and evaluate the land use needs for future business uses.
E. Amend regulations as necessary to encourage mixed-use buildings in neighborhood commercial areas.
F. Reduce regulatory barriers for home occupations and telecommuting.
G. Identify the best locations for small professional offices uses in residential areas.
H. Ensure residential uses do not discourage business growth and expansion in the business/mixed-use areas designated on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'.
I. Consider incentives to promote small business incubator space in industrial and commercial buildings.

Objective LU 11

Housing

Promote varying levels of housing density through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

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A. Amend regulations for the areas identified as Areas of Stability on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change' to permit existing levels of density.
B. Amend regulation for the areas identified as Areas of Change on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change' to establish nodes of concentrations of density.

Objective LU 12

Mobility

Promote the efficient use of land to promote transit, walking and biking through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

A. Identify the best land use areas for:
   1. Nodes of development to support existing and future public transit. [17]
   2. Commercial corridors best suited for transit.
   3. Possible bike connections and corridors along greenways.
   4. Ferry ports and cruise ships.
   5. Marinas and moorings, through a Harbor Management Plan and, if necessary, amend land use regulations to support these uses.
B. Amend land use regulations to:
   1. Allow for greater density and higher concentrations of development in those areas identified as nodes.
   2. Permit on-street parking.

Objective LU 13

Arts and Culture

Promote the development of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

A. Reduce regulatory barriers for artist work space.
B. Identify appropriate land areas for large outdoor venues for events and festivals. [18]
C. Evaluate entertainment citywide to identify the best locations for different sized venues for entertainment, and mitigate the impacts of these uses in residential areas.
D. Update the Adult Entertainment Plan.
E. Promote and enforce the policies of the Responsible Hospitality Partnership Initiative.

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17   See Strategy M-2(B).
18   See Strategies AC-4(D) and PS-1(D).

Land Use 11

Objective LU 14

People and Public Spaces

Promote the preservation and development of parks and open spaces through appropriate land use controls.

Strategies:

A. Promote open spaces and public access along the waterfront. [19]
B. Develop incentives for the provision of publicly accessible open spaces as a part of private developments, which shall be maintained by the private developer and be developed in accordance with established standards.
C. Develop ways to activate park spaces in conjunction with neighboring uses.
D. Identify possible locations for additional parks and open spaces in neighborhoods that are currently underserved by parks and open spaces. [20]
E. Promote the development of greenways as identified on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'.

Objective LU 15

Land Use and the Region

Work with the State of Rhode Island and neighboring communities to promote the smart, efficient and equitable use of land.

Strategies:

A. Work with surrounding communities to ensure compatibility of land uses on the city's edges.
B. Coordinate federal and state plans with Providence Tomorrow to ensure a regional planning framework.
C. Work with the State of Rhode Island to amend legislation to permit form-based regulations instead of regulations based primarily on use.
D. Work with the State and surrounding communities to promote an equitable distribution of undesirable land uses.
E. Work with the State and surrounding communities to effectively implement Land Use 2025, the state land use plan.
F. Encourage the state to retain state offices in Providence and develop a plan for their use, maintenance and expansion and to densify on their existing campus.
G. Consider the implementation of a regional planning commission to address issues such as waterfront development and other issues of regional importance.
H. Work with the state to develop new tools to assist the city in addressing the disproportionate impacts that the city bears as a result of the locations of the institutions.
I. Encourage the state to fully fund the PILOT program to offset the impacts of institutions.

19   See Strategy PS-5(A).
20   See Strategy PS-4(A).

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The Waterfront 12

12 The Waterfront

12 The Waterfront

> **Goal 12**
>
> Strengthen Providence's waterfront as the city's primary economic, cultural and natural resource.

Providence's connection to the water is one of its most defining features. The Narragansett Bayfront and the riverfronts are central to the city's economic, social and environmental well-being.

Waterfront locations determined economic evolution and prosperity. Trade in the city's port and power generated by its rivers and dammed ponds secured Providence a central role in the Industrial Revolution. Today the Narragansett Bayfront and the lands adjacent to rivers and ponds throughout the city offer residents and visitors relief from its dense urban setting - both physically and visually. Walkways and parks provide spaces for recreation, contemplation and gathering. Water views from many different locations throughout the city help define its character. The bay, rivers and ponds are also the city's primary environmental assets. Planning for the future of these areas is essential to the city's long-term sustainability and well-being.

This section identifies the objectives and strategies related to all of the city's waterfront areas and is organized in three sections:

Narragansett Bayfront – This section includes specific strategies for the waterfront along Narragansett Bay that relate to the other chapters of Providence Tomorrow such as mobility, housing, the built environment and sustainability.

Rivers – This section covers the Providence River (north of the relocated I-195), the Seekonk River (north of I-195), the Woonasquatucket River, the Moshassuck River, and the West River.

Ponds - This section covers Mashapaug, Canada, Geneva and Whipple's ponds, as well as the ponds in Roger Williams Park.

12.1 Narragansett Bay

Providence is spectacularly sited at the head of Narragansett Bay. As the capital city of the Ocean State, the Bay plays a central role in the city's civic and economic well-being. Many of the city's neighborhoods are located, in part, along the waterfront of the Bay. Residents and visitors are drawn to the water's edge for recreation and contemplation. The waterfront is also an important economic engine, home to the Port of Providence and water-dependent utility and energy-related uses that serve the state and the region, as well as maritime-related uses such as boat repair facilities and tug boats.

Public access, both physical and visual, to the waterfront must be the centerpiece of future redevelopment efforts along the Narragansett Bayfront. While each area of the waterfront is distinct, a continuous greenway dotted with civic places such as parks, piers and platforms will be the common thread along the waterfront, and is the long term vision of this Plan.

The Waterfront 12

This chapter guides the variety of uses, functions and activities that are unique to our waterfront, such as water-dependent businesses, waterfront recreation activities, and the public enjoyment of the waterfront's natural areas, open spaces and views of the water. The objectives and strategies for the waterfront are based on the following principles:

- Our waterfront is a finite resource.

- People are instinctively drawn to the water.

- Our waterfront is an invaluable economic and public asset.

- Our city's location on the waterfront is unique.

- Our waterfront is a cultural touchstone and an important natural resource.

12.1.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Districts

The Narragansett Bayfront has three distinct areas: the area south of the hurricane barrier along the relocated I-195 in Fox Point, the Port of Providence, and the waterfront area that connects the two, along Allens Avenue.

Fox Point

The most prominent feature of the Fox Point waterfront area is India Point Park. This 18 acre park provides residents with open spaces, playing fields, and playgrounds at the water's edge, and walking paths along its magnificent 3,600 feet of shoreline. The park hosts waterfront festivals and is home to the Community Boating Center. Gano Street Park is another large public open space in this area that is predominated by playing fields and a dog park. The city is constructing a new public boat ramp in this area which will further enhance access to the Bay.

The construction of I-195 fifty years ago isolated much of the neighborhood from the waterfront. The highway relocation offers an opportunity to reconnect neighborhood streets to the waters edge along the Providence River and at the northernmost edge of the Bay. In addition, there are several privately owned parcels that could be redeveloped to activate the waterfront with residences and neighborhood-serving commercial, open space and/or and recreational uses, while providing a continuous publicly-accessible greenway along the waterfront. It is envisioned that a continuous greenway would connect India Point Park to downtown through the river-walks along the Providence River and Waterplace Park. Given these opportunities for redevelopment, a more detailed study of this area is needed, which may result in changes to the Zoning Ordinance.

Allens Avenue Corridor

The area north of the Thurbers Avenue and south of the relocated I-195 along Allens Avenue is an industrial waterfront in transition. Several water-dependent utility and energy-related businesses that are essential to the regional economy are located here, as well as important marine repair services. The land area reserved for industrial uses, however, is currently more extensive than the demand for heavy industrial, water-dependent uses and activities. There is an increasing demand for commercial and tourist-related development such as hotels, restaurants and retail uses in this area. On lands no longer needed exclusively for maritime purposes, new maritime mixed-use

12 The Waterfront

developments could provide improved and expanded commercial and recreational maritime facilities, open spaces, residences and public access combined with revenue-generating, water-oriented activities and attractions to increase the public's enjoyment of the waterfront. Inland areas, on the other side of Allens Avenue, could provide opportunities for residential and commercial uses, such as offices, neighborhood-oriented retail and service businesses, and community and cultural facilities.

The primary objective in this area is to carefully balance future development with the need for water-dependent and maritime related uses and to mitigate potential conflicts among the various uses. It will be critically important in this area to ensure that water dependent and industrial businesses are able to expand and flourish, while additional uses are introduced. Particular strategies are needed to ensure that any potential residents understand that the common by-products of industrial uses such as noise, odor and vibration, shall not be deemed a nuisance in this area.

Port and Fields Point

The industrial area south of Thurbers Avenue, including the Port of Providence, is the ideal location for water-dependent heavy industry. Sited on a newly dredged deep water channel with direct on-dock rail access and convenient highway access, the Port offloads over 2,000 ships annually, handling over 1 million tons of cargo such as cement, chemicals, machinery, petroleum and scrap metal. The most efficient use of the available land in this area would be water-dependent industrial uses that can best take advantage of its strategic location, and contribute to the economy of the city and region through the provision of jobs, energy and supplies. Water-dependent uses that are scattered throughout the Narragansett Bayfront could be consolidated in this location. Currently, some uses in this area require much land and provide a small number of jobs, for example, one business employs 38 people, while consuming 75 acres of waterfront real estate.

The City-owned parcel at Field's Point, adjacent to the Johnson and Wales Harborside Campus, offers an opportunity to create a new waterfront park and gathering space for large festivals. In the future, it will be critical to link this park back to downtown through public transit and other means. Also, a small marina could be developed to create access from the water.

12.1.2 Objectives and Strategies

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Land Use 2025, Element 121 of the State Land Use Plan; Economic Development Policies and Plan, Element 211 of the State Guide Plan* and *Rhode Island Waterborne Passenger Transportation Plan, Element 651 of the State Guide Plan.*

Objective W 1

Planning for Narragansett Bay

Protect the long-term viability and sustainability of Narragansett Bay as an economic, cultural and natural resource through the development of appropriate plans and regulations.

Strategies:

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A. Develop a unified waterfront plan for Narragansett Bay, based on the analysis and refinement of the principles proposed in the Providence 2020 study, that includes: [1]

   1. Review of past planning studies for the City of Providence, such as the Old Harbor Plan and the Industrial Waterfront Plan, and of other port areas for best practices.
   2. Assessment of the role the waterfront areas play in the overall economic development of the city, including:
      - Economic viability of port use and development
      - Means of maximizing the use of land, including an assessment of both existing and potential land uses, including industrial, commercial, cultural, hotel and residential.
   3. Land Use percentage targets to ensure a balanced mix of uses while prioritizing maritime activities that are vital to the continued growth of the city's economy.
   4. Types and locations of encouraged water-dependent/water-enhanced uses.
   5. Types and locations of uses that should be prohibited.
   6. Appropriate locations for non water-dependent uses.
   7. Areas best suited for wind/hydro power generation.
   8. Design objectives for mass, scale, building height, density, setbacks, public access to and along the waterfront (both physical and visual), open spaces, streetscape, preservation of significant historic and cultural resources, and specific strategies to minimize damage from flood hazards and events.
   9. Nodes of intensity to support mass transit access.
   10. Buffer strategies for industrial properties to ensure compatibility with less intense uses.
   11. Short, medium and long-term strategies to minimize impacts of new uses on existing uses.

B. Develop a harbor management plan to address use of the water sheet, including marina and mooring field locations, no-wake zones and limits on commercial traffic on the Providence River north of the Hurricane Barrier, and on the Seekonk River.

C. Update regulations to recognize the unique significance of waterfront property by:

   1. Establishing criteria and standards for waterfront developments and development plan review.
   2. Establishing criteria to balance water-dependent and non water-dependent uses along the waterfront, and mitigate the potential conflicts among various uses.
   3. Including strategies to protect, restore and enhance the water quality of the Bay, such as urban-scaled Low Impact Development (LID) standards.
   4. Minimizing impacts of flood hazards and rising sea level by measures such as minimum freeboard elevations.
   5. Implementing the land use and design objectives of the unified waterfront plan for the Bay.
   6. Increasing opportunities for physical and visual public access to the waterfront, both physical and visual, and where possible, create linkages to public parks and recreation facilities. [2]

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1 See Objective IMP-4.
2 See Strategies PS-5(A) and PS-5(B).

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Objective W 2

Sustainability and the Environment

Maintain and improve the ecological health and functions of Narragansett Bay.

Strategies

A.   Reduce surface runoff pollution of water by: [3]
  1.   Promoting reduction/minimal use of impervious surfaces.
  2.   Promoting increased use of vegetation and best management practices.
  3.   Facilitating and enforcing on-site stormwater management.
B.   Promote clean and sustainable practices by industrial uses. [4]
C.   Promote tree planting and reduction of paved areas at waterfront industrial sites to mitigate the heat island effect.
D.   Promote and coordinate remediation of contaminated waterfront sites.
E.   Establish fishable and swimmable waters as a future goal. [5]
F.   Promote the mitigation and prevention of bank erosion.
G.   Remove marine debris, including waterborne debris and derelict docks, boats and other large stationary debris to improve navigation and water quality.
H.   Assess infrastructure needs, including pump-out facilities, to accommodate larger and greater number of boats.
I.   Evaluate and raise awareness of the potential impacts of sea level rise and investigate possible methods of lessening or mitigating those impacts.
J.   Protect environmentally sensitive waterfront areas through the development of appropriate waterfront controls. [6]

Objective W 3

Built Environment

Develop the full potential of the Narragansett Bay waterfront in a way that showcases design excellence, enhancing the Bay's unique aesthetic qualities and maritime character, and creating visual and physical access to the water.

Strategies:

A.   Prioritize public access to the water, both physical and visual, through regulations and incentives. [7]

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3   See Strategy SE-2(C)(1).
4   See Strategy SE-1(G).
5   See Strategy SE-2(A)(1).
6   See Strategy SE-2(A).
7   See Strategy BE-1(C)(3).

B.   Create and preserve public view corridors and physical access to the Bay, water-dependent maritime activities, and open space or other public attractions as part of new waterfront development.
C.   Prioritize the development of a continuous greenway along the waterfront through regulations and incentives.
D.   Recognize the physical constraints of parcels in creating development regulations.
E.   Ensure that buildings address the waterfront and open spaces along the waterfront through design and active ground floor uses. [8]
F.   Ensure that buildings are designed to respond to unique waterfront conditions, such as floodplain elevations and the velocity zones of 16 to 20 ft. in this area.
G.   Encourage retention of architecturally or historically significant buildings along the waterfront.

Objective W 4

Business and Jobs

Promote the Narragansett Bay waterfront as an economic engine for the city.

Strategies:

A.   Encourage intensive use of the area designated as Waterfront/Port on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' for water-dependent industrial businesses to take strategic advantage of the 40 feet deep-water channel.
B.   Promote more extensive use of the existing free trade zone in the Port of Providence.
C.   Support development of a mixture of water-dependent, water-related and water-enhanced uses in the areas designated Waterfront Mixed Use/General on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use'.
D.   Support development of businesses related to water-based tourism such as cruise ship terminals, marinas, hotels and restaurants.
E.   Support uses that provide jobs at a variety of skill levels. [9]

Objective W 5

Housing

Ensure an active, vibrant waterfront by encouraging mixed-use developments with residential components in appropriate locations on the Narragansett Bay waterfront.

Strategies:

A.   Promote mixed-use developments as a transition between residential and non-residential areas along the Narragansett Bay waterfront.

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8   See Strategy BE-7(F).
9   See Strategy BJ-1(Q).

The Waterfront

B. Ensure that greenways and other open spaces located along the waterfront adjacent to residential uses are publicly accessible and do not appear to be for the private use of residents.

C. Ensure that residential development does not impede development and expansion of maritime uses through the development of strategies such as location, buffering and deed restrictions that acknowledge the rights of commercial and industrial maritime businesses to continue to develop and expand. Residents in this area shall understand that noise, odors, vibrations, etc. generated by businesses shall not be deemed a nuisance.

D. Continue to oppose the development of a liquefied natural gas marine terminal in Providence as a significant hazard to existing residential neighborhoods in close proximity to the waterfront. [10]

Objective W 6

Mobility

Provide multiple land and water based transportation options for accessing and enjoying the Providence waterfront.

Strategies:

A. Improve pedestrian access to the waterfront by: [11]
    1. Developing a continuous greenway along the waterfront for use of pedestrians and bicyclists consistent with the access needs of water-dependent uses.
    2. Developing walkways and corridors perpendicular to the waterfront at regular intervals to connect into the greenway along the shoreline.
    3. Connecting each neighborhood to the waterfront with a network of pedestrian friendly streets.
B. Improve bicycle access to the waterfront by: [12]
    1. Ensuring that adequate bicycle facilities such as racks and lockers are provided at public waterfront spaces.
    2. Requiring bicycle facilities to be provided as part of all development along the waterfront, including waterborne transit facilities. [13]
    3. Incorporating dual use bicycle and pedestrian paths into the continuous greenway along the shoreline.
    4. Encouraging the development of bicycle rental facilities at waterfront parks and waterborne transit facilities.
C. Improve transit access to the waterfront by:
    1. Encouraging RIPTA to provide transit links to public waterfront spaces and waterborne transit facilities.
    2. Encouraging the development of waterborne transportation such as water taxis. [14]

10 See Strategy CS-7(A).
11 See Strategy M-3(F).
12 See Strategy M-4(G).
13 See Strategy M-4(J).
14 See Strategy M-2(L).

3. Exploring additional transit opportunities along the waterfront, such as street cars or light rail. [15]
4. Advocating for expanded ferry service to other destinations throughout the state and region. [16]
D. Facilitate the movement of goods into and out of the port through improved rail service and other means while mitigating impacts of truck traffic on pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
E. Consider existing and future public transit, including waterborne transit and inland parking when determining the amount of parking required for uses along the waterfront.

Objective W 7

Arts and Culture along Narragansett Bay

Promote the Narragansett Bay waterfront as a tourist destination and cultural venue.

Strategies:

A. Advocate the development of new signature cultural attractions along the waterfront.
B. Support public programming and art installations on the waterfront.
C. Increase the active use of the waterfront for sightseeing and other tourist activities.
D. Attract tourists from other areas of the state and users of Narragansett Bay to downtown Providence events and destinations.

Objective W 8

People and Public Spaces

Strengthen and expand public open spaces and recreational facilities along the Narragansett Bay waterfront by creating distinctive spaces that add to the city's identity, link districts and promote use of the water.

Strategies:

A. Provide a continuous system of parks, urban plazas, water-related public recreation, shoreline pedestrian promenades, pedestrian walkways, greenways and green streets along the entire Narragansett Bay waterfront while avoiding conflict with water-dependent industrial or commercial uses. [17]
B. Create small parks or public landings at the terminus of streets that meet the waterfront, particularly streets that pass under the highway from neighborhoods along Allens Avenue.
C. Provide overlooks and public viewing areas with convenient pedestrian access wherever possible; every attempt should be made to provide such viewing facilities in areas of maritime activities without interfering with the operation of those activities.

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15   See Strategy M-2(K).
16   See Strategy M-2(L).
17   See Strategy PS-3(B).

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D. Increase the amount of waterfront land dedicated to open space and recreation, with priority given to those areas where waterfront open space does not currently exist. [18]

E. Identify appropriate locations for marinas and mooring fields to expand waterside access to the Bay.

F. Develop recreation facilities that are attractive to residents and visitors of all ages and income groups.

G. Provide amenities, where desirable and feasible, that enhance public enjoyment of open spaces and public access areas such as public restrooms, drinking fountains, information kiosks, and dining opportunities.

H. Require waterfront developments to provide public open space to expand waterfront access to people residing and working in the waterfront area and adjoining neighborhoods.

I. Develop a waterfront park and festival grounds at Field's Point. [19]

Objective W 9

Land Use

Encourage redevelopment of the Narragansett Bay Waterfront with a balanced mix of water and non-water dependent uses that builds on the value of deep water access and provides additional opportunities for economic development and public access to the water.

Strategies:

A. Examine strategies for the continued revitalization of the area designated as Waterfront Mixed Use/Neighborhood on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' with a mixture of residential and neighborhood-serving commercial and open space/recreational uses in a way that connects adjacent neighborhoods to the waterfront by:

1. Providing continuous public access along the shoreline south of the Hurricane Barrier to India Point Park, with connections to the riverwalk system on the northern side of the Hurricane Barrier.

2. Encouraging development of active uses such as shops and restaurants on private properties abutting parks and public open space to enhance the visitor experience.

B. Examine strategies for the redevelopment of the area designated as Waterfront Mixed Use/General on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' with a balanced mix of industrial, commercial and residential uses to serve as a transition between heavier industrial port uses to the south and Downtown Providence to the north by:

1. Supporting the development of commercially-oriented water dependent uses such as cruise ship/ferry passenger terminals that require deep water access and related support facilities.

2. Establishing nodes of higher intensity along the Allens Avenue corridor to support enhanced mass transit accessibility for residents, businesses and visitors.

3. Protecting the ability of water-dependent industrial businesses along the corridor to grow by establishing regulations to ensure that residents understand that such businesses are encouraged in this area and that any noise, odors, vibrations, etc. generated by the businesses shall not be deemed a nuisance to any resident.

C. Examine strategies for the renewal and strengthening of the Port as a regional economic engine in the area designated as Waterfront/Port on Map 11.2 'Future Land Use' by:

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18   See Strategy PS-5(B).
19   See Strategies AC-4(C) and AC-4(D).

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1. Limiting the area to water-dependent or other related uses.
2. Working with the Port of Providence to maximize the use of available land for water-dependent and related uses.
3. Maintaining adequate transportation access for the efficient movement of goods between the Port and the local and regional transportation system.

Objective W 10

Waterfront and the Region

Coordinate waterfront planning efforts with neighboring communities, the state and the region.

Strategies:

A. Participate in the development and periodic revision of the Metro Bay Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) to establish a regional policy and plan for the approximately 24 miles of shoreline bordering the cities of Providence, East Providence, Cranston and Pawtucket in the context on ongoing economic development and urban growth.
B. Coordinate with neighboring communities during development of the Harbor Management Plan to address and mitigate potential conflicts over uses of the water sheet.
C. Work with neighboring communities to address the regional impacts of development on the Bay.
D. Work with the State to find ways to share tax revenue from the energy and utility uses that provide vital services to the region, but do not generate significant revenues for the City. Analyze the best locations for these uses in the state.
E. Work with the state to fully utilize Quonset Point as a multimodal port.
F. Work with the state to establish criteria and conditions for the disposition of properties currently held for the I-95 relocation project.

12.2 Rivers

In addition to the waterfront at the head of Narragansett Bay, Providence has several significant rivers and countless streams that feed them. The Seekonk River forms the eastern boundary of the city. The Moshassuck River flows south through the North Burial Ground and downtown before meeting the Woonasquatucket. The West River feeds into the Moshassuck from the northwest corner of the city. The Woonasquatucket River flows from the Providence/Johnston line through Manton, Hartford, Silver Lake, Olneyville, and Valley, before meeting the Moshassuck downtown. The Providence River is formed by the confluence of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck rivers downtown and flows south to Narragansett Bay.

In 1998, the Woonasquatucket was designated an American Heritage River. This significant designation recognizes the historic importance of the river to its adjacent communities while also recognizing the continued value of the river today. The Woonasquatucket flows through six communities en route to Providence and becomes tidal in the lower reaches of the river, below Rising Sun Dam, near Donigian Park in Olneyville.

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The Moshassuck River is urbanized throughout its course in Providence. This channelization has limited the river's value as a natural resource for the city. However, in recognition of the Moshassuck's historic role as part of the Blackstone Canal, it is included in the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor. The West River which flows into the Moshassuck is also highly urbanized along parts of its course. The West River flows on the surface more than the Moshassuck providing opportunities to restore its value as a recreational resource as well as wildlife habitat.

The rivers of Providence have always played a major role in the development of the city. The city's many mills used the rivers, particularly the Woonasquatucket, to power the machines of the industrial revolution. The rivers were neglected as industry declined and mills closed. Today, the proximity of the river to these same mills is helping fuel the redevelopment of many mill buildings.

12.2.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

Historically, the rivers in Providence have not been maintained with regular dredging and bank maintenance. Siltation in the rivers is caused by stormwater runoff from increasing development throughout the watershed, which increases the peak flow of the rivers in a rain event, causing flooding to occur much faster and at a greater intensity than it did historically.

Because the watersheds of the rivers in Providence flow through several other communities, the management of stormwater in these communities contributes to flooding and siltation in Providence. This is a concern to several areas along the Woonasquatucket, particularly Waterplace Park. Without dredging, Waterplace Park is in danger of silting over, which would significantly impact recreation (i.e. kayaking, canoeing) and cultural events (i.e. Watefire, concerts in the park).

Also, while public access to the rivers has been improved downtown, outside of downtown, the Woonasquatucket, Moshassuck and West rivers have limited public access points due to channelization and historic development patterns along the rivers. To improve public access, during the 1990's the downtown sections of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck rivers were daylighted, relocated and restored as assets to the city. As part of this river relocation and restoration project, over 1.5 miles of riverwalk were constructed along the Woonasquatucket, Moshassuck and Providence rivers.

The development of mills along both the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck resulted in contaminated land adjacent to the rivers and, in some cases, contamination of the rivers' sediments. This contamination can restrict activities that take place along the rivers. Many of the historic mills along the Woonasquatucket have been or are in the midst of being redeveloped. The historic built environment along the rivers limits access in many places, with buildings right up to the edge of the riverbank. This creates a challenge in reconnecting the neighborhoods to the rivers, as there are limited public access points, several of which are on private property.

There have been several initiatives to improve the water quality of the rivers and the riparian environment. Due to the channelization of the rivers, improvement can be difficult as in many cases the riparian buffer no longer exists. CRMC, RIDEM, the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council (WRWC), private developers, and the City are working together to improve the buffer conditions along the rivers. In addition, the City is working with the same agencies and private developers to improve public access to the rivers through the creation of new public access sites.

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12.2.2 Objectives and Strategies

The objectives and strategies below correspond with strategies outlined in *Rivers Policy and Classification Plan, Element 162 of the State Guide Plan.*

Objective W 11

Rivers

Improve the water quality and riparian buffers along the city's rivers while improving access to the riverfront for all city residents.

Strategies:

A. Work with upstream communities to improve the control and treatment of stormwater runoff to minimize downstream flooding. [20]
B. Improve water quality so that all Providence rivers are swimmable and fishable.
C. Create new neighborhood public access points for the rivers.
D. Dredge the Woonasquatucket River to preserve Waterplace Park.
E. Ensure that new development along riverfronts provides public access to the rivers.
F. Investigate the feasibility of daylighting buried rivers and streams, including the Moshassuck River.
G. Encourage LID techniques for riverfront development and redevelopment projects.
H. Promote bank maintenance to limit erosion.
I. Work with CRMC on implementing the Urban Coastal Greenway (UCG) initiative on subject rivers. [21]
J. Implement a river maintenance program with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

12.3 Ponds

While not as prominent as Narragansett Bay or the rivers, several significant ponds are located throughout the city. Canada Pond is located in the northwest corner of the city and, along with Geneva Pond and Whipple Pond, forms the headwaters of the West River.   Mashapaug Pond is located in in the southwest corner of the city and is connected hydrologically to the several ponds in Roger Williams Park.

All of the ponds in Providence are man-made. The ponds in Roger Williams Park were part of the original H.W. Cleveland landscape design. Mashapaug Pond formerly provided ice for the city, while Canada, Geneva and Whipple's ponds were formed by dams to provide power for adjacent mill buildings. Today, the ponds in Providence serve as wildlife habitat and as locations for passive and active recreation for the city's residents.

12.3.1 Changes, Challenges & Opportunities

The ponds of Providence are concentrated in the North End, the Reservoir neighborhood and Roger Williams Park.   These ponds provide recreation opportunities, including fishing and boating, for many of Providence's residents.

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20   See Strategy SE-2(C)(1).
21   See Strategy SE-2(C)(7).

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Due to surrounding development, however, the water quality in many of the ponds is impaired, reducing both their value as habitat for wildlife and their desirability as recreation areas.

12.3.2 Objectives and Strategies

Objective W 12

Ponds

Improve the water quality of ponds throughout the city to improve their value as recreation areas and wildlife habitat.

Strategies:

A. Implement the City stormwater runoff ordinance to reduce untreated runoff in the city's ponds.
B. Investigate ways to improve the overall health of the ponds in Roger Williams Park.
C. Promote the city's ponds as active and passive recreation assets for city residents.

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> ### Goal 13
>
> **Ensure effective implementation of Providence Tomorrow as the guiding document for the City.**

Providence Tomorrow is a living document. It establishes a long–term vision of sustainability for the city, and a framework for achieving that vision. However, we cannot predict the future. The city is constantly influenced by factors beyond our control, be it homeland security, global warming or worldwide economic shifts. Changes closer to home, such as the increase in residents living below the poverty level and renewed interest in development, have had significant impacts on the physical and social fabric of the city since Providence 2000 was adopted. For our vision of a sustainable Providence to be realized, Providence Tomorrow must be able to adapt and respond to those changes.

Providence Tomorrow is intended to be an interim plan, to be revised as neighborhood and specific plans are completed citywide and as circumstances change. At that time, it is anticipated that there will be significant updates to this Plan to reflect the information and ideas generated during the neighborhood planning process. That being said, the use of the word "interim" does not imply that the goals, objectives and strategies identified in this Plan are invalid or reduced in relevance.

13.1 Guiding Principles

The vision outlined in Providence Tomorrow is the result of collaboration between residents, business owners and city government. It is as much about building good relationships as it is about performing tasks, completing projects or showing results, for the City alone cannot hope to achieve the objectives outlined in this Plan. In many ways, the responsibility to achieve this Plan rests with the people of Providence, for it is their plan. The people of Providence must know this Plan and work with the City to ensure that the provisions of this Plan are enforced, for it is only through continued collaboration that effective implementation of this Plan will occur.

The implementation plan contained in this chapter is based on six guiding principles that should characterize all implementation efforts:

- *Leadership* – The City must lead by example to successfully implement the goals and objectives established in Providence Tomorrow. We must live by a credo of "do as we do," not just "do as we say."
- *Comprehensive Approach* – Effective implementation of this plan requires a multi–disciplinary approach. This plan is designed to build more connections within and beyond City government. By working across disciplines, City departments can help to ensure that actions to implement Providence Tomorrow consider partnership opportunities and long–term impacts.
- *Partnership* – Providence Tomorrow encourages partnerships to innovatively and creatively address issues and solve problems. It recognizes that many of the problems facing the city are complex and must be addressed through the cooperative efforts of more than one department or governmental entity. In this Plan, "partnership" applies to arrangements involving the City of Providence, its departments, state agencies, surrounding

communities, other public and/or private partners with whom it shares common objectives or interests, and neighborhoods and businesses within the city.

- *Leveraging of Resources* – Every goal in Providence Tomorrow requires an investment of resources from the public, private, and non–profit sectors. In its approach to civic investment, the City should be creative and entrepreneurial in leveraging its resources by building partnerships with neighborhood organizations, businesses, non–profit institutions, other metropolitan jurisdictions, regional and state sources, and federal agencies.
- *Communication* – The City values two–way communication with all of its constituents and will strive to broaden channels of communication among individuals, city departments, private sector interests and others with regard to the implementation of Providence Tomorrow. This may include the use of electronic communication accessible to all citizens.
- *Fairness and Equality* – Every resident and business owner deserves the benefits of the actions taken to fulfill the vision of Providence Tomorrow. Fairness and equal treatment are standards that apply to every aspect of its implementation and are essential for it to succeed.

13.2 Objectives and Strategies

Objective IMP 1

Tracking Progress

Annually track and report progress in achieving the goals and objectives of Providence Tomorrow.

Strategies:

A. Explore different techniques to assess the effectiveness of implementation efforts.
B. Require city departments and agencies to report their accomplishments related to the implementation of Providence Tomorrow.
C. Compile and develop an annual report assessing the City's progress in implementing Providence Tomorrow.

Objective IMP 2

Plan Updates

Regularly update Providence Tomorrow.

Strategies:

A. Establish a regular schedule for accepting proposed Plan amendments to improve community engagement in the update process.
B. Use the best available tools to disseminate and solicit community feedback on proposed Plan amendments.
C. Amend Providence Tomorrow to incorporate changes recommended in adopted neighborhood and specific plans.

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D. Amend Providence Tomorrow to reflect significant changes in conditions and policy direction based on the findings of the Annual Report.

E. Ensure that Providence Tomorrow reflects all changes immediately after adoption by distributing it primarily as an electronic document.

Objective IMP 3

Plan Enforcement

Ensure the effectiveness of Providence Tomorrow through enforcement.

Strategies:

A. Ensure that all land use decisions are in conformance with Providence Tomorrow. [1]

B. Ensure that the following actions are in conformance with Providence Tomorrow: [2]
   1. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance
   2. Funding of Capital Improvements
   3. Approval of development proposals, whether public or private

C. Maintain existing uses, density and character in Areas of Change designated on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change' until the relevant neighborhood or specific plans and corresponding amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance have been adopted.

D. Evaluate the following during the review of land development projects, subdivisions, street abandonments, easements, institutional master plans, certificates of appropriateness, certificates of design approval, zoning variances, special use permits, licenses and amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.
   1. Consistency with the principles and design vision of adopted specific plans in Areas of Change as designated on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change'.
   2. Compatibility with surrounding areas in terms of mass, scale, design, use and density in Areas of Stability as designated on Map 11.1 'Areas of Stability and Change'.
   3. Consistency with the Zoning Ordinance.
   4. Creation of jobs and affordable housing.
   5. Visual and functional impacts on neighboring uses.
   6. Impact on the provision of human services.
   7. Impact on pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular movement.
   8. Effect on view corridors.
   9. Impact on existing parks and greenways.
   10. Displacement of jobs and affordable housing units.

E. Educate city departments and staff as needed on the goals and objectives of Providence Tomorrow.

F. Evaluate existing enforcement mechanisms and develop new tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

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1   *R.I.G.L. 45-22.2-13(C)*
2   *Providence Home Rule Charter, Section 1014*

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Objective IMP 4

Community Engagement

Engage residents, organizations and businesses in collaborative efforts to share information, solve problems and plan for the future of their city and neighborhood. [3]

Strategies:

A. Recognize the creation and implementation of neighborhood and specific plans as critical tools for refining and turning the vision for Providence Tomorrow into reality.
B. Define the role that adopted plans play in the City's decision-making and resource allocation processes.
C. Develop plans for all areas of the city, that address neighborhood character, needs, values, visions and goals.
D. For each planning process, develop and implement a comprehensive outreach and communications plan to encourage participation in the process by residents and business owners.
E. Continue neighborhood communication and engagement after neighborhood plans have been adopted to ensure the successful implementation of plans.
F. Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan that outlines the roles and responsibilities of city departments, neighborhood organizations, residents, community institutions and businesses potentially affected by proposed actions. The plan should:
    - Require timely communications among City agencies and between the City and other parties;
    - Provide guidelines for discussions and interactions among interested parties;
    - Require communications processes to be inclusive;
    - Identify City resources (services, programs and funding) for the project; and
    - Evaluate the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of the process.

13.3 The Annual Report: Tracking, Recognizing and Reporting Implementation Progress

The City Plan Commission will annually prepare and release a report to the Mayor and City Council that documents the progress of the City in achieving the goals and objectives established in Providence Tomorrow. The Annual Report will be based on the information contained in departmental annual reports and will be released during the second quarter (October-December) of each fiscal year. The Annual Report should also include a summary of amendments to the Plan that have been adopted by the City Plan Commission and City Council.

13.4 Regulatory Framework: Updating the Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary implementation tools for any Comprehensive Plan. The regulations contained within the Ordinance reflect the goals and objectives of the Plan, and are the principal regulatory means of achieving the land use pattern, densities, urban character and other features envisioned in this Plan. As identified in Table 13.1 'Five-Year Action Plan: 2007-2012', there will be amendments to the Zoning Ordinance following the

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3   See Strategy W-1(A).

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adoption of this plan, to ensure consistency. Additionally, amendments may be made to the Zoning Ordinance based on the recommendations of neighborhood and specific plans, the annual report on implementation of Providence Tomorrow, or at the recommendation of the Mayor, City Plan Commission or City Council. A more thorough update of the Zoning Ordinance is scheduled to be prepared following the completion of neighborhood plans and the subsequent update to this plan.

The completion and adoption of a new Zoning Ordinance over the next few years does not mean that our work is done. This plan, and all regulations that grow from it, like zoning, are living documents. We need to continually monitor the zoning regulations for their effectiveness in achieving the vision of the Plan; those that are not having the desired impact must be changed.

Furthermore, the successful implementation of Providence Tomorrow relies as much on enforcement as it does on actual regulation. The day-to-day enforcement of the City's regulations is a monumental task, but is critical to ensuring that the vision is fulfilled. City enforcement staff will be included in the process of crafting the new regulations to ensure their awareness of the importance of the new zoning and its connection to the comprehensive plan.

13.5 Updating and Amending the Plan

This Plan establishes a vision for the future of Providence by identifying a series of citywide values and goals, thereby providing the foundation for more detailed neighborhood and specific plans, which will guide future growth and development at the neighborhood level. The Plan will be updated as neighborhood plans are completed throughout the city. Futhermore, it is expected that, following the completion of the neighborhood plans, there will be significant changes to this Plan to reflect the new information and ideas generated through that process.

Providence Tomorrow must also have the flexibility to respond to unknown and unanticipated influences to remain an accepted vision for the city. Amendments to the Plan should be based on generally recognized shifts in circumstances for which the Plan no longer provides appropriate direction or vision, or where an unanticipated need surfaces. Due to the complexity of some issues, plan amendments may be in the form of supplements, such as the existing Hazard Mitigation Plan. Wherever possible, the adoption of supplemental plans should be avoided to minimize the number of documents that would have to be reviewed to ensure conformance of proposals with the Plan. In reviewing amendments to the Plan, the City Council and City Plan Commission should consider whether there have been significant changes or events that warrant adjustments in public policy, and as well as how the proposed amendments support the vision established in the Plan.

Once adopted, amendments will be incorporated into Providence Tomorrow.

13.6 Availability of the Plan

The Department of Planning and Development is responsible for preparing the Plan and incorporating future amendments to the Plan. To ensure that the Plan is readily available to the public, it exists primarily in an electronic format. This format will allow for the timely update and republication of the Plan after amendments are adopted by the City Council. Additionally, the electronic format is a key element of public involvement, as residents can review proposed changes and provide comments over the internet that can be viewed by any interested party. There will be links to the up–to–date Plan and annual reports from the Providence Tomorrow website (www.providencetomorrow.org).

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Providence Tomorrow will also be available for purchase in hard copy and CD–ROM at the Providence Department of Planning and Development.

A hard copy of the Plan will also be available through the Providence Public Library.

13.7 Five-Year Action Plan

The following table focuses on measures to implement the Plan over the next five years. The completion dates identified in the below table are projected based on current conditions.

Table 13.1 Five-Year Action Plan: 2007-2012

Implementation Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Recurrence
1. Implementation			
a. Create an interdepartmental implementation team.	Mayor	6-2008	As Needed
b. Prepare an Annual Report documenting progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the Plan.	Planning and Development/ City Plan Commission	12-2008	Annually
c. Develop a phased implementation strategy for tracking and reporting progress.	Implementation Team	6-2009	As Needed
2. Plan Updates/Neighborhood Plans			
a. Secure funding for the neighborhood planning process.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	As Needed
b. Develop guidelines for adoption and amendment of neighborhood and specific plans.	Planning and Development/ City Plan Commission/ City Council	12/2007	No
c. Create and adopt neighborhood and specific plans.	Planning and Development/ City Plan Commission	6-2009	As Needed
d. Prepare and adopt amendments to update Providence Tomorrow based on neighborhood and specific plans.	Planning & Development/ City Plan Commission	9-2009	As Needed

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Implementation Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Recurrence
e. Prepare and adopt amendments to Providence Tomorrow based on the findings of the Annual Report.	Planning & Development/ City Plan Commission/ City Council	3-2009	Annually
f. Prepare and adopt Five-Year Plan Update in accordance with RIGL.	Planning and Development/ City Plan Commission/ City Council	12-2012	No
3. Regulatory Framework			
a. Prepare and adopt Zoning Ordinance amendments to ensure conformance with this Plan, such as those described below, prior to completion of neighborhood and specific plans. Additional zoning amendments will be phased in as such plans are adopted and the Comprehensive Plan is updated. The amendment package will be developed through collaboration with the Mayor and City Council: ▪ Promote environmental sustainability by strengthening landscaping regulations. ▪ Ensure a high-quality built environment by changing the minimum threshold for land development projects and establishing basic design standards. ▪ Continue economic development efforts through the creation of a Jobs-Only District. ▪ Protect stable neighborhoods by clarifying the lot merger provision and updating Institutional Master Plan requirements. ▪ Ensure the effectiveness of the Zoning Map by adopting a GIS-based map as the official zoning map, including zoning changes to be consistent with Map 11.2 of this Plan. ▪ Ensure the effectiveness of the Zoning Ordinance by correcting	City Plan Commission/ City Council	1-2008 through 6-2009	No

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Implementation Actions	Responsibility	Completion Date	Recurrence
typos, cross-references, footnote numbering and references, land use code numbering/references, etc.			
b. Amend development review regulations to conform to Providence Tomorrow.	City Plan Commission/ Downcity Design Review Committee/ Historic District Commission/ Providence Redevelopment Agency	2-2008	As Needed
c. Prepare and adopt a new Zoning Ordinance subsequent to neighborhood and specific plans and subsequent updates to Providence Tomorrow.	Planning and Development/ City Plan Commission	1-2010	No
d. Prepare and adopt amendments to the Zoning Ordinance based on findings contained in the Annual Report.	Planning and Development/ City Plan Commission/ City Council	3-2010	Annually
4. Distributing the Plan and Annual Report			
a. Plan - Revise Plan document as supplements or amendments are adopted.	Planning and Development	Ongoing	As Needed
b. Plan - update the website and print CD-ROM copies; print and copy paper versions; distribute copies to libraries	Planning and Development	12-2007	As Needed
c. Annual Report - update the website; print and copy paper versions, distribute copies to libraries	Planning and Development	12-2008	Annually

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Existing Conditions A

A Existing Conditions

Appendix A Existing Conditions

This Appendix sets forth existing conditions in the city. The information in this section provides the basis for analysis and policy formulation in Providence Tomorrow.

A.1 The People

Overview

According to the US Census, the population of Providence grew by eight percent between 1990 and 2000, from 160,728 to 173,618. During this same time period, the state population increased by only half that rate (See Table A.1 'Population Change, 1990-2000'). This marked the second straight decade of population growth following four decades of decline from the peak population of 253,504 in 1940. The city's growth rate during the 1990s was more than three times the growth rate of the 1980s.

The neighborhoods of Valley and Hartford grew the most between 1990 and 2000, increasing their populations by 28 percent and 26.9 percent, respectively. Four neighborhoods lost population during that same time period, the largest occurring in Hope, which lost 13 percent of its residents- more than double the loss of the next closest neighborhoods (6 percent each in Washington Park and Fox Point).

Table A.1 Population Change, 1990-2000

1990-2000	City	Change Since 1990	State	Change Since 1990
Population	173,618	8%	1,048,319	4%
Households	62,389	6%	408,424	8%
Families	35,859	1%	265,398	2%
Public School Enrollment	26,859	31%	157,347	17%
Source: US Census, Providence School Department				

Households and Families

Overall, the number of households in Providence increased 6.5 percent, from 58,530 in 1990 to 62,327 in 2000. While the share of family and non-family households has remained relatively stable, at roughly 60 percent and 40 percent, respectively, the overall *number* of family households grew by 2.3 percent, while the number of non-family households grew by 12.9 percent (See Figure A.1 'Household Type'). The average household size in 2000 was 2.6 persons for Providence, compared with 2.5 persons for Rhode Island.

Figure A.1 Household Type

Other Nonfamily Household, 10%

Married Couple with Child, 17%

Married Couple without Child, 16%

Householder Living Alone, 31%

Single Parent with Child, 17%

Other Family Household, 9%
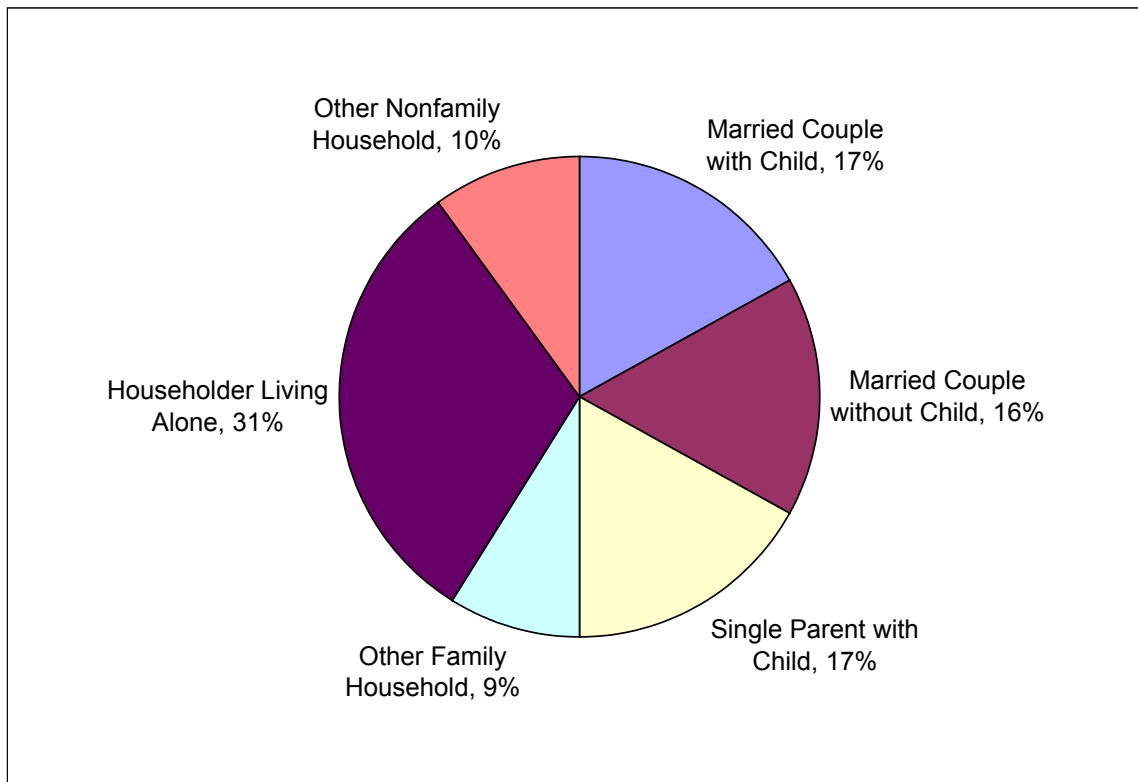
Source: US Census

There were 35,859 *family* households living in Providence in 2000. Of these, 42.3 percent were family households without their own children under eighteen years old. This figure is down seven percent since 1990. The remaining family households were evenly split (28 percent each) between married and single parent households with children under eighteen. These two groups also each equally comprise approximately a fifth (16.6 percent) of all households, including non-families. While the share of family households classified as married with children remained relatively the same between 1990 and 2000 (29.1 and 28.6 percent respectively), the share of single-parent family households increased by 7 percent during the same ten year period (See Map A.1 'Percentage of Households with Children Under 18'). On average, between 2000 and 2005, 57 percent of all births in Providence were to single mothers. For the same time period, Rhode Island births to single mothers averaged 35 percent.[1]

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1   Rhode Island Department of Health, KIDSNET

A Existing Conditions

Map A.1 Percentage of Households with Children Under 18
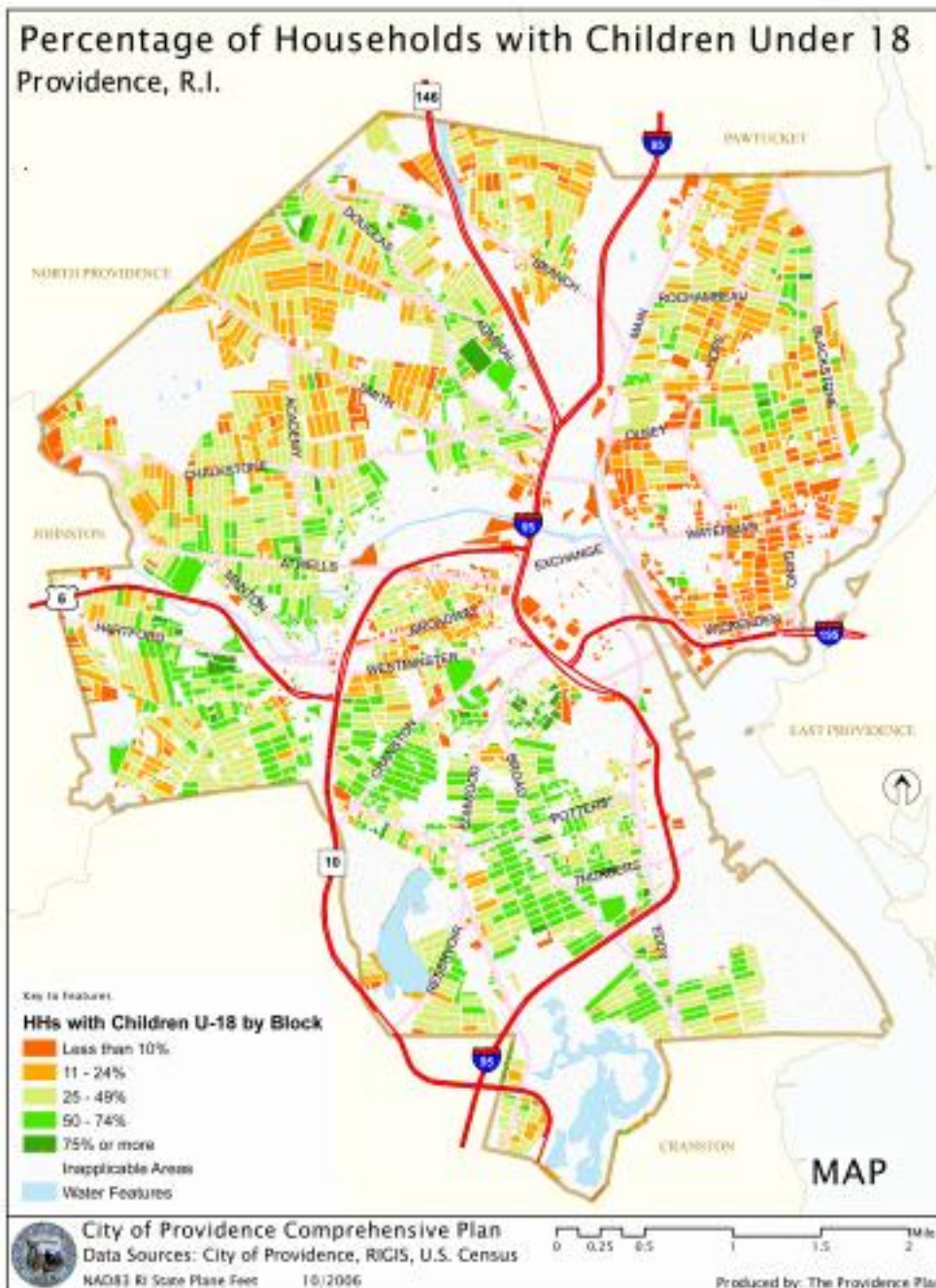
Age and Race

Median age in the city in 2000 was 28 years old. The population is distributed fairly evenly across age groups, with the largest five year age cohort being 20-24 year olds (13 percent of the overall population). Residents age sixty-five and older declined by almost a fifth (17 percent) between 1990 and 2000, while a younger generation, 5-17 year olds, increased by 28 percent (See Figure A.2 'Providence Total Population, 2000').

Figure A.2 Providence Total Population, 2000
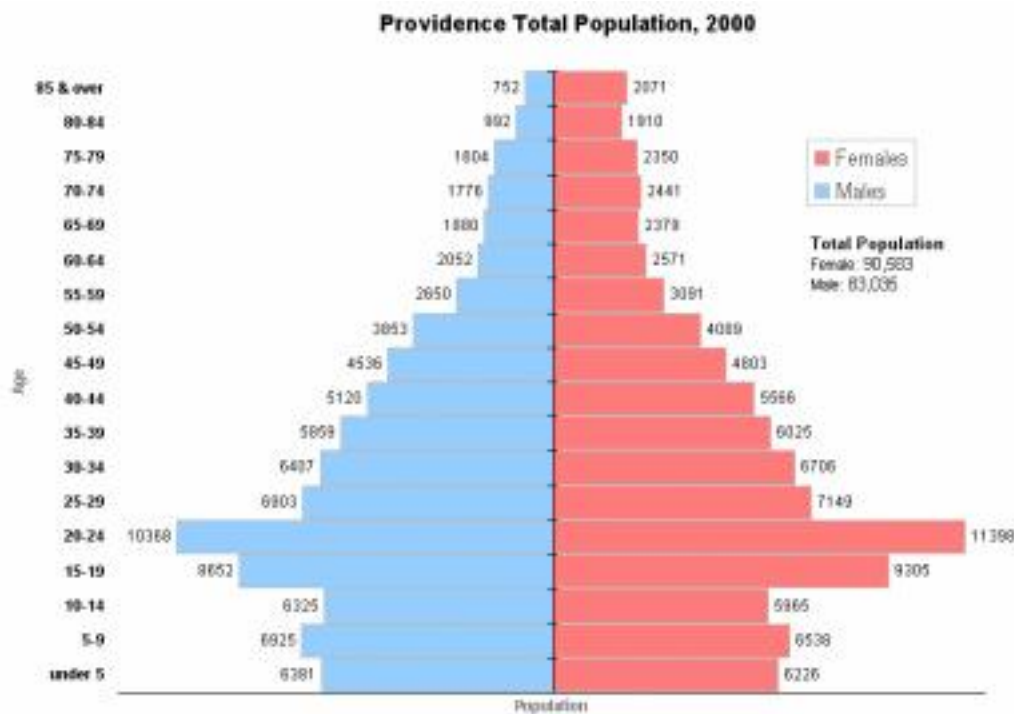
Source: US Census

Enrollment in the city's schools grew by 31 percent between 1990 and 2000, and one in five public school students now receives some type of Limited English Proficiency service. The student body is highly mobile, such that the number of public school students moving into or out of one of the city's public schools over the course of the year is equivalent to one-third of fall enrollment. [2]

The Providence Hispanic population more than doubled between 1990 and 2000, now accounting for 30 percent of the city's total population. The city's non-Hispanic White population dropped to less than half of the overall population (declining 23 percent), creating a "minority" majority in the city. Other minority populations grew modestly, non-Hispanic Black and African American residents grew by nine percent; the Asian, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population grew by 15 percent. (See Table A.2 'Race Composition Changes Between 1990 and 2000', Map A.2 'Percent Minority Population', and Map A.3 'Predominant Race/Ethnicity')

A Existing Conditions

Table A.2 Race Composition Changes Between 1990 and 2000

Race	Census 2000 Count	2000 percent of Total Population	Change 90-2000
Hispanic	52,146	30%	109%
Nonhispanic White	79,451	46%	-23%
Nonhispanic Black or African American	22,103	13%	9%
Nonhispanic Asian, Hawaiian, or Pac. Islander	10,384	6%	15%
Nonhispanic Some other race	3,177	2%	16%
Nonhispanic Two or more races	6,357	4%	n/a
Source: US Census			

Map A.2 Percent Minority Population
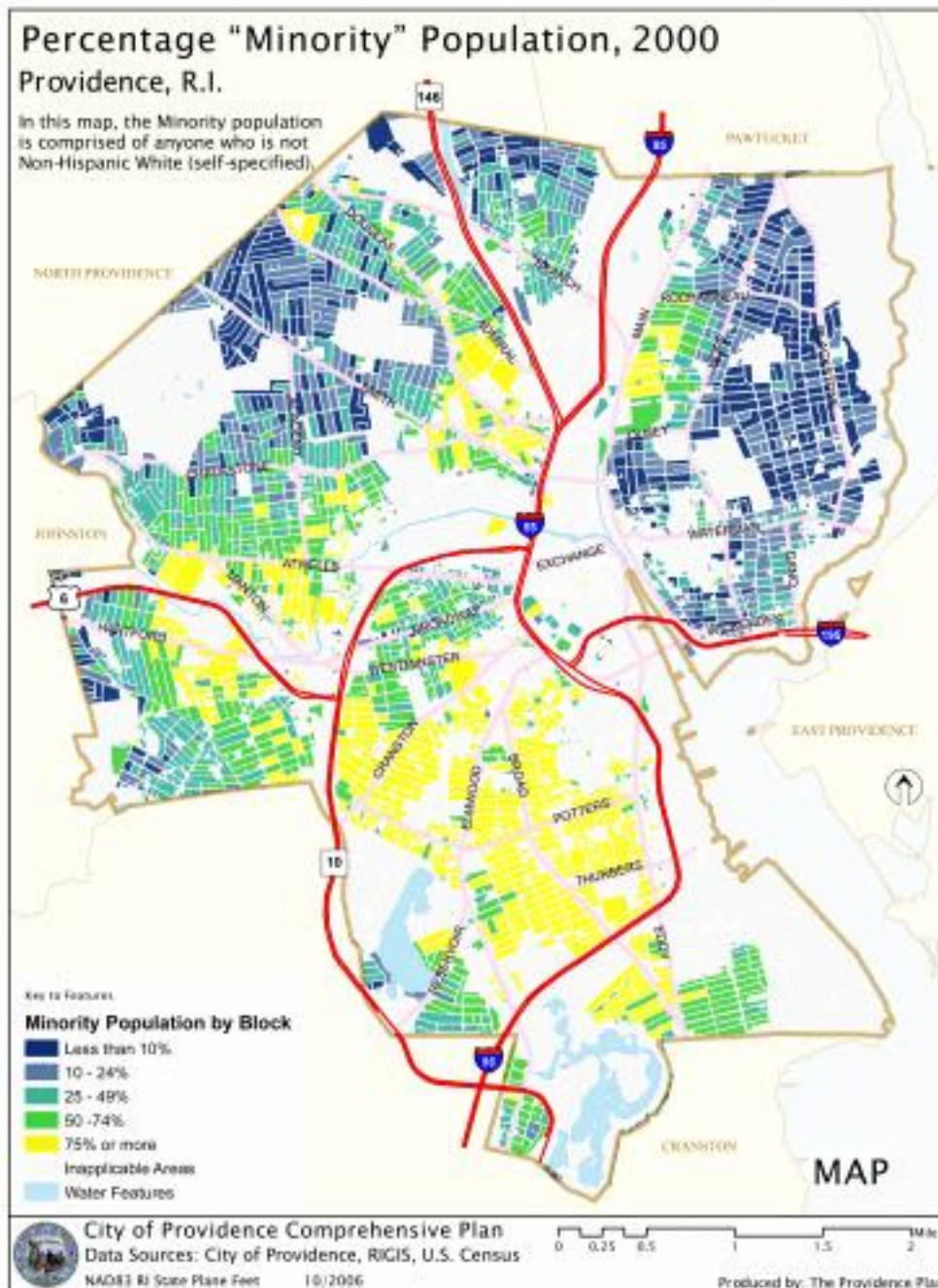
A Existing Conditions

Map A.3 Predominant Race/Ethnicity
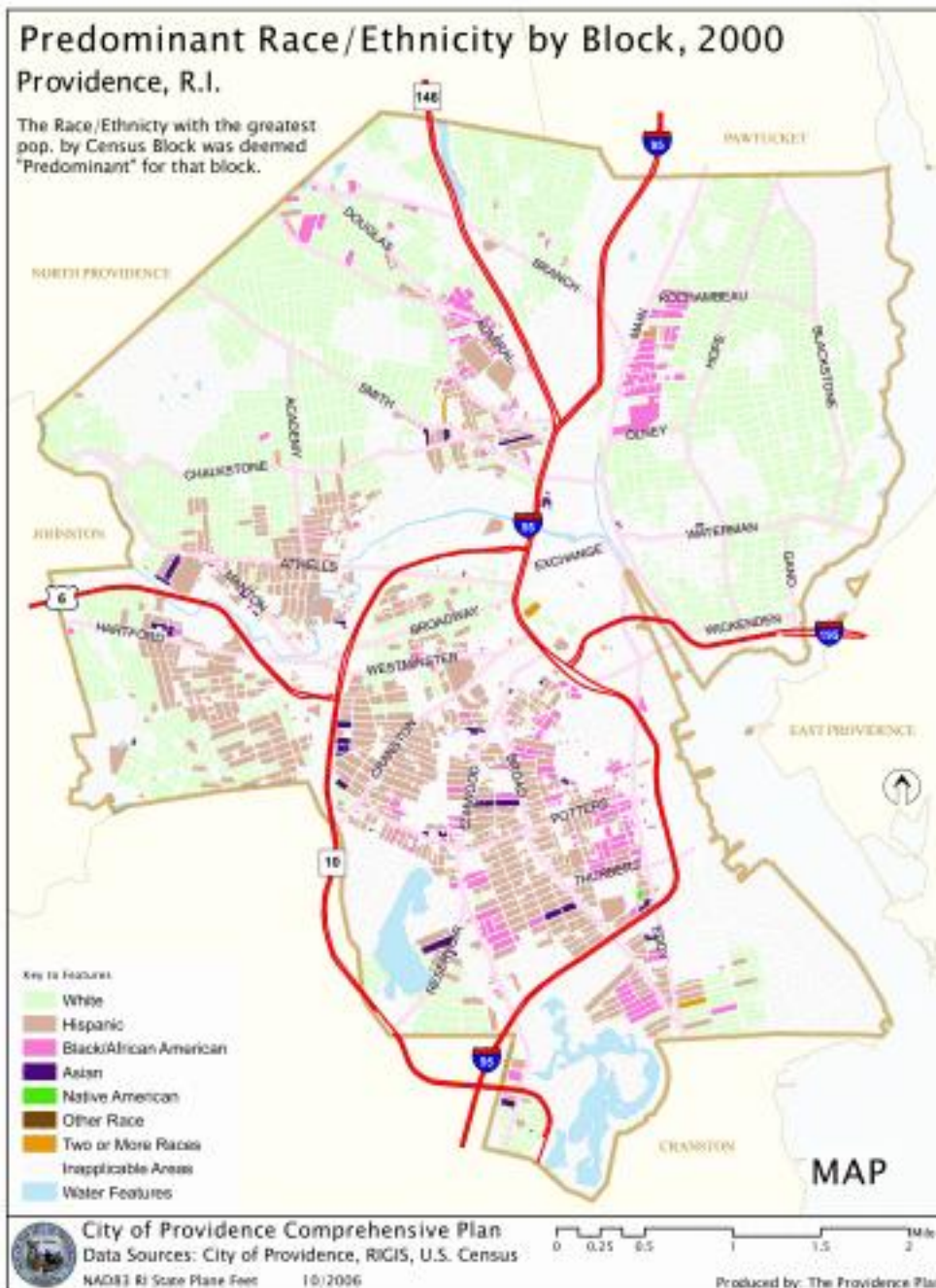
Immigration & Linguistic Isolation

The foreign-born population increased 40 percent between 1990 and 2000, to a quarter of all residents in Providence. Of these 43,947 foreign-born residents, two thirds are not citizens. In Rhode Island, roughly one in ten residents

is foreign born (11.4 percent). The foreign born population includes individuals who are citizens by naturalization and those who are not citizens.[3]

Between 2000 and 2004 Rhode Island was the initial state of resettlement for 1,107 refugees. Liberian refugees represented 78 percent of this population (See Table A.3 'Refugee Arrivals to Rhode Island ').

Table A.3 Refugee Arrivals to Rhode Island

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Burma			5			5
Burundi		2	3		1	6
Cuba	3	1			1	5
Ethiopia			4		3	7
Haiti		2	2	1	1	6
Iran	3					3
Iraq		4				4
Laos					44	44
Liberia	270	251	5	117	223	866
Rwanda			1		2	3
Sierra Leone		2				2
Somalia					21	21
Togo					4	4
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	18	43	20	12	15	108
Yugoslavia	15	8				23

Source: US Office of Refugee Resettlement

The proportion of residents who speak English less than "very well" increased by nearly half since 1990, so that one in five residents currently meets this criteria, a rate exceeded only by Central Falls in Rhode Island. Forty-three percent of the population five years and older speak a language other than English at home, of which 71 percent speak Spanish. With respect to households, slightly more than one in ten (13 percent) are linguistically isolated, meaning that all members of a household who are age 14 or over have some degree of difficulty with the English

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3   The Census does not inquire about immigration status.

language. (See Map A.4 'Linguistically Isolated Households') In the public schools, more students speak Spanish as a first language than English (See Table A.4 'First Language of Providence Students, 2005').

Map A.4 Linguistically Isolated Households
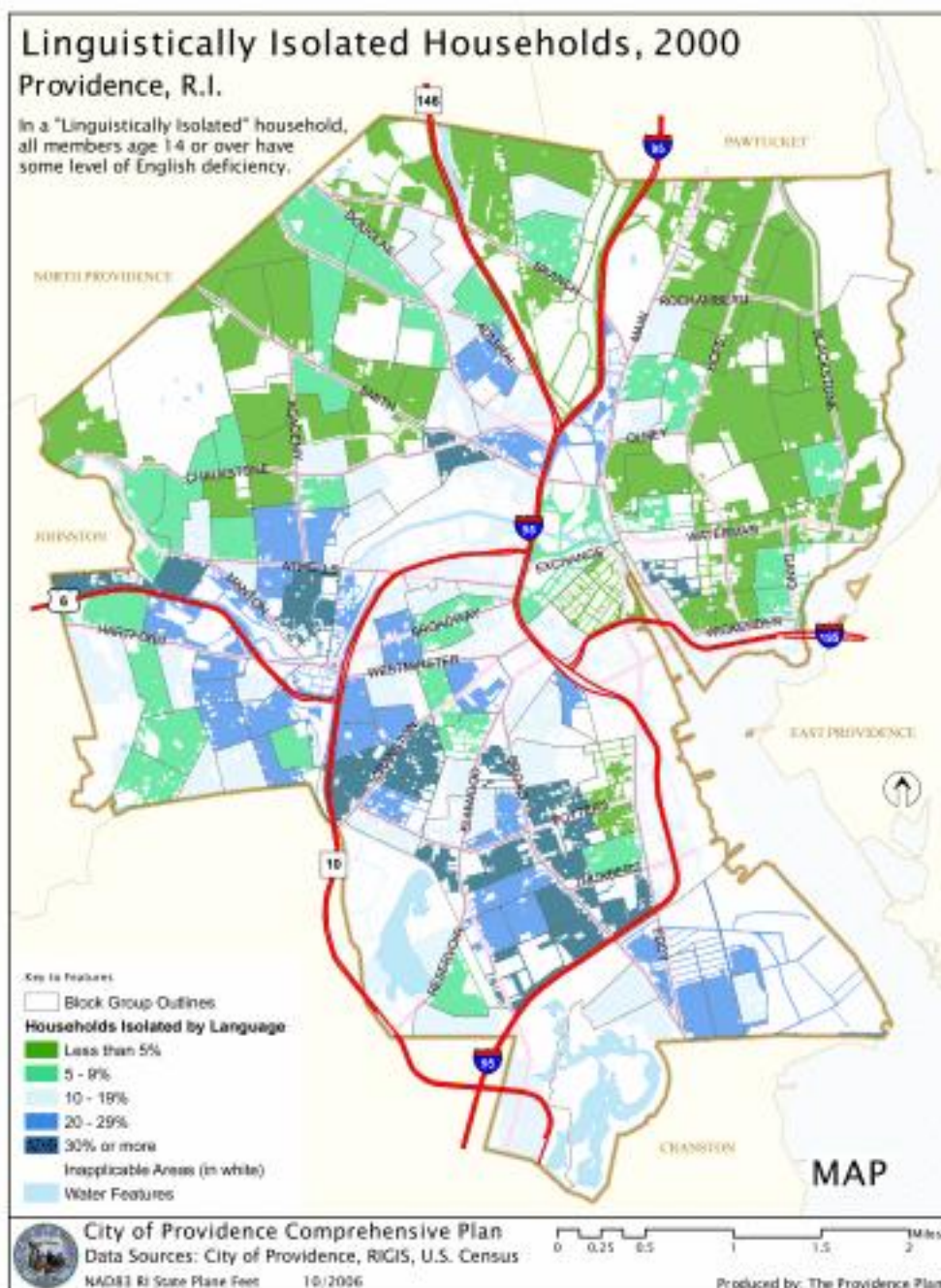
Table A.4 First Language of Providence Students, 2005

First Language	Elementary (%)	Middle (%)	High (%)
Spanish	47.8	47.6	48.0
English	45.9	43.4	40.6
Khmer	2.6	3.4	3.8
Lao	0.6	1.4	1.2
Hmong	0.7	1.2	0.9
Creole	0.5	0.7	1.3
Portugese	0.5	0.5	0.8
African-Other	0.3	0.6	0.8
French	0.2	0.4	0.9
Other	0.7	1.0	1.8
Source: PSD 2005			

Density

The average population density in Providence is 14.7 persons per acre. The density ranges from areas with no population to 723 persons per acre. Of the 11,814 acres in Providence, 6,695 have at least one unit of residential housing. When density is calculated only by residential acres and residential population (excluding group housing), density increases to 25.7 persons per acre (See Map A.5 'Population Density').

Viewed at a larger scale, Providence has a density of 9,402 people per square mile. Comparatively, Boston's density is 12,166 people per square mile. In Rhode Island the population density is 1,003 people per square mile, making it the second most densely populated state in the country, after New Jersey.

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Map A.5 Population Density
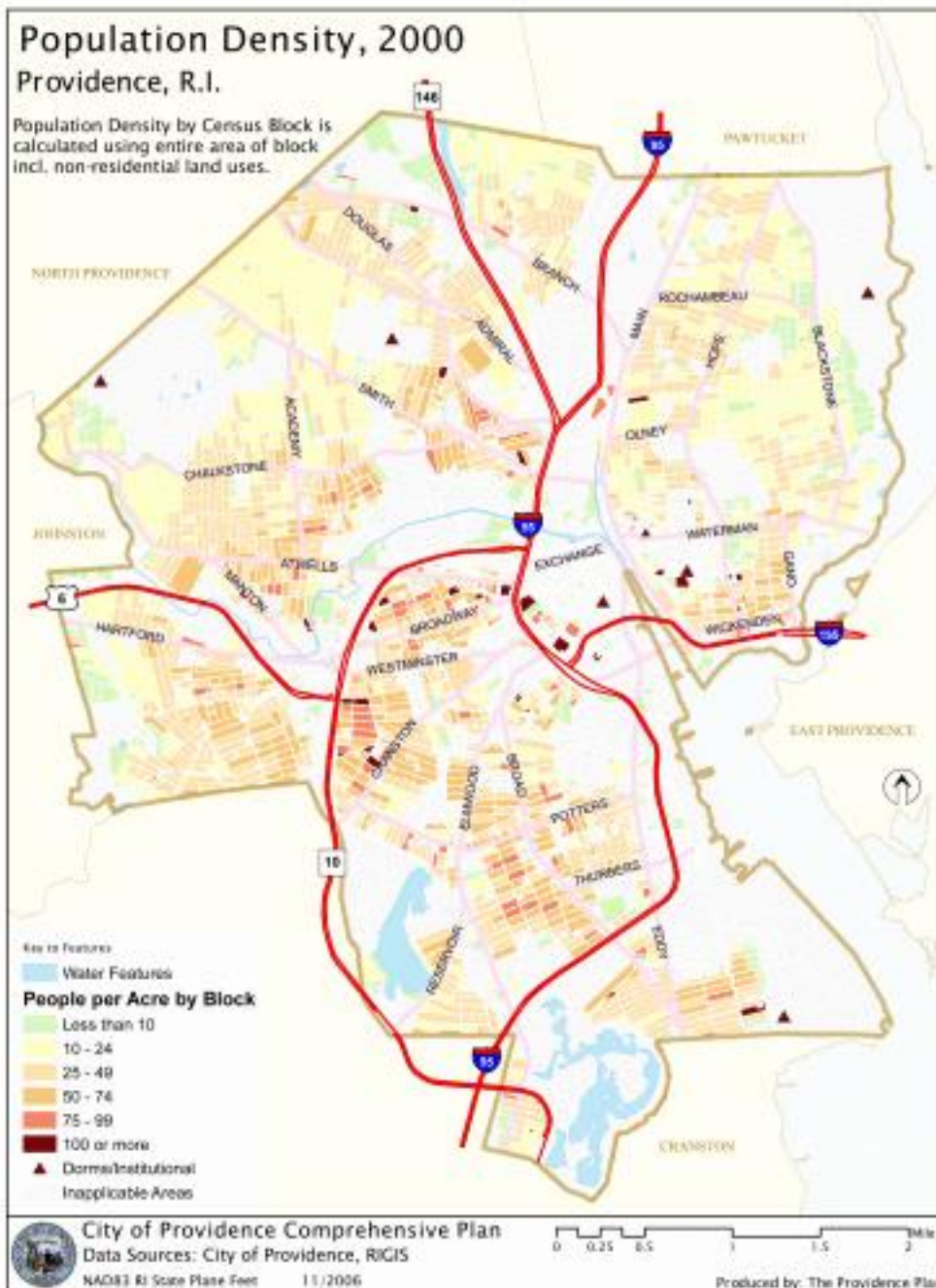
Population Projections

In estimating the future growth of Providence, several factors can be taken into consideration, and analysis can vary in complexity. One simple way to identify future growth is to examine past rates of growth and project them into

the future. This method projects a population of upwards of 180,000 by 2010 (See Figure A.3 'Population Growth, 1970-2010'.)

Figure A.3 Population Growth, 1970-2010
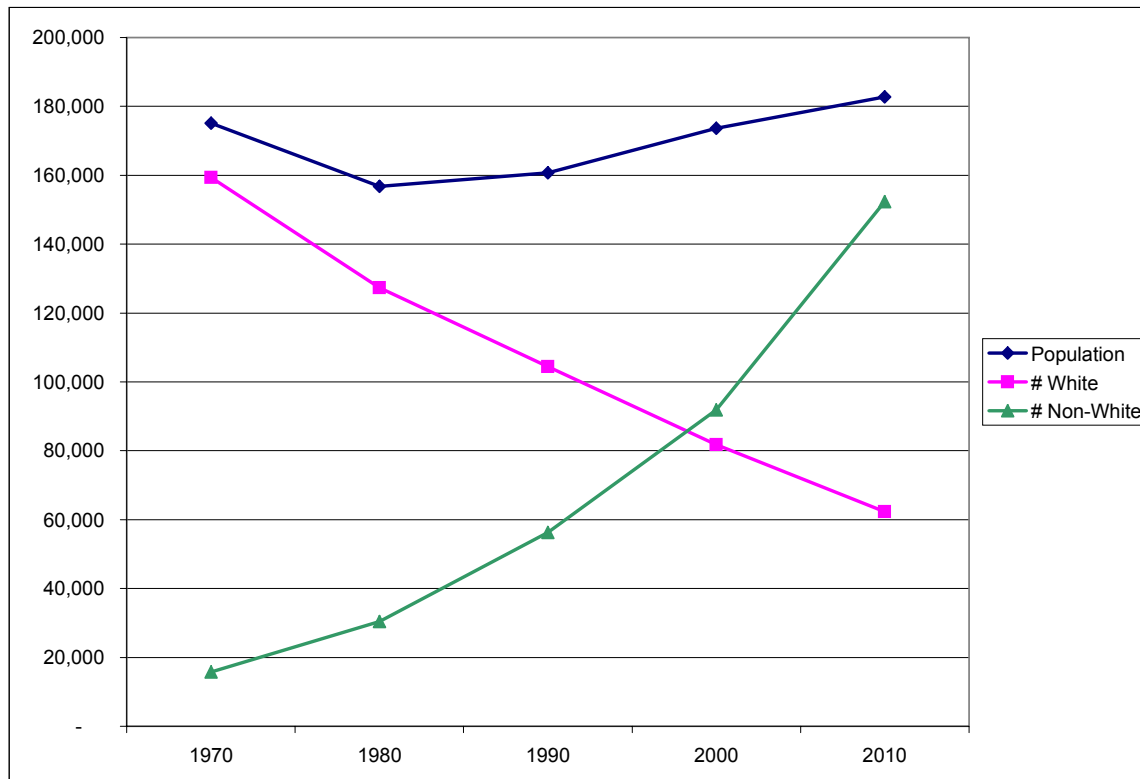
Source: US Census

Between 1980 and 1990, Providence grew in population by 2.5 percent, the City's first positive growth since 1940. Between 1990 and 2000, this rate of growth more than tripled. Assuming a positive rate of growth into the future, the last twenty years' growth can be averaged to project a growth of 5.26 percent by 2010. By breaking this growth down by race, it shows the difference in change between the white and non-white populations. Even between 1970 and 1980, when the overall population declined, the non-white population more than doubled, and these changes in race composition continue (See Table A.5 'Change in Population').

Table A.5 Change in Population

	1970	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1970-1980	Percent Change 1980-1990	Percent Change 1990-2000
Population	175,089	156,804	160,728	173,618	-10.40%	2.50%	8.02%

A Existing Conditions

	1970	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1970-1980	Percent Change 1980-1990	Percent Change 1990-2000
Percent White	91.04%	81.20%	64.90%	47.10%	-10.80%	-20.01%	-27.48%
Percent Non-White	9.00%	19.36%	35.05%	52.88%	115.10%	81.05%	50.87%

Source: US Census

The main concern with the extrapolation technique of projecting growth rates forward is that it does not identify causes of past trends which may not hold true in the future nor does it disaggregate the population by age. Improved projections can be obtained by using a cohort-component projection model which takes into consideration the three main components of population change: fertility, mortality, and migration. These three factors help determine a future rate of growth, by age and race, in five-year intervals to the year 2030.

Input data to develop a cohort model were obtained from the US Census, the RI Department of Health, and the IRS. KIDSNET data from RI Department of Health were used to calculate fertility rates. Census Survival Tables for the United States were used to calculate survival rates and Census population counts for 1990 and 2000 were used as base-year data. IRS data were used to calculate the number of in and out migrants, by county, for the years 2000 to 2004.

Migration trends, when people move into or out of the area, is the most volatile piece of data and most difficult to track. Unlike death rates, which change slowly and predictably, or fertility rates, for which stable trends can be established, migration can change greatly, due to economic changes, and can impact age and race cohorts differently. For these reasons, other available data sources were used to adjust migration rates accordingly.

The school-age population is a reliable data source that can help adjust migration rates among youth according to changes in school enrollment. From 1990 to 2005, overall Providence school enrollment grew on average by six percent, with the white population declining by 21 percent and the non-white population growing by 15 percent (See Figure A.4 'Providence Public School Population, by Race, 1990-2005').

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Figure A.4 Providence Public School Population, by Race, 1990-2005
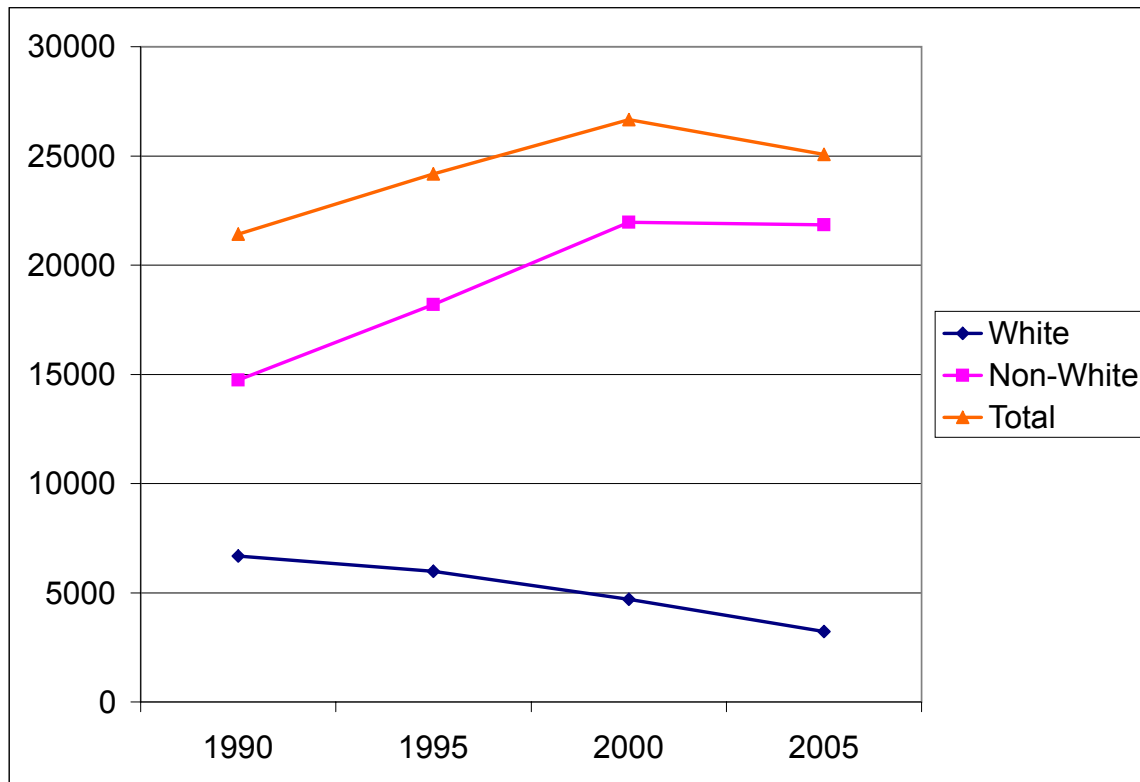
Source: Providence School Department*

School enrollment for particular age cohorts vary, with numbers of five to nine year olds declining over the last 15 years while numbers of ten to 14 year olds grew. These changes by age cohort can inform adjustments to migration rates for these age groups (See Figure A.5 'School Enrollment by Cohort, 1990-2005').

A Existing Conditions

Figure A.5 School Enrollment by Cohort, 1990-2005
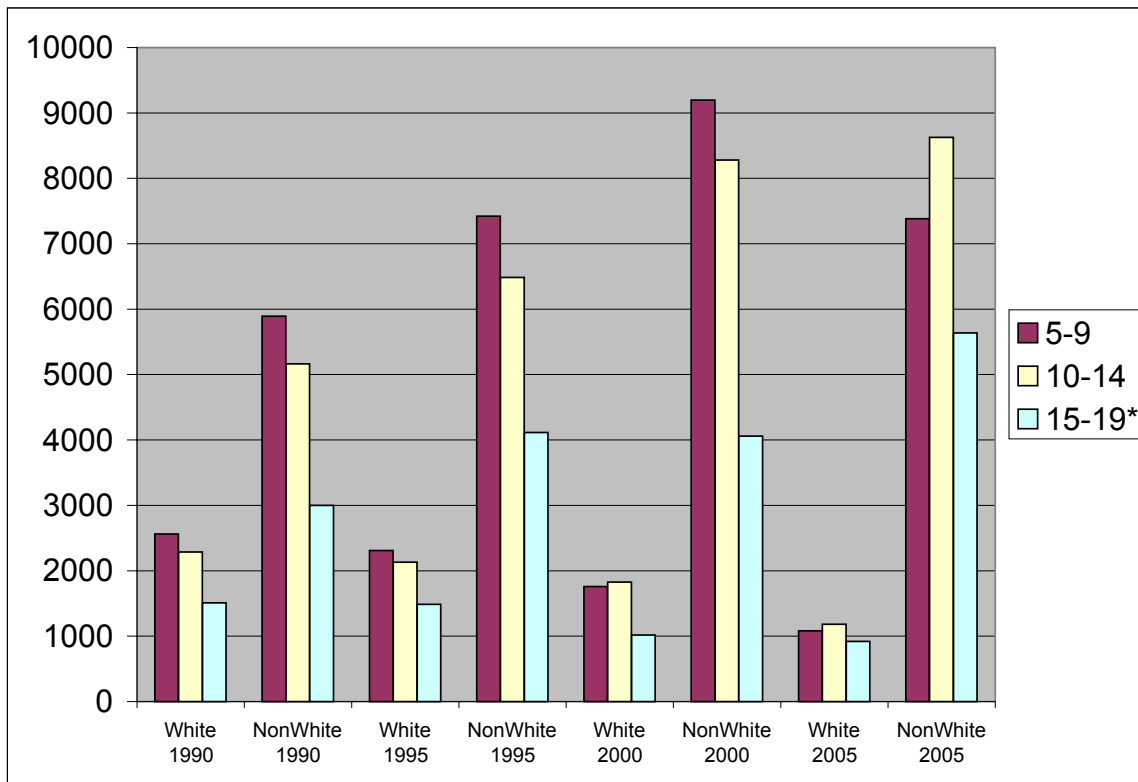
Source: Providence School Department

College and university student populations grew modestly. Only Rhode Island College experienced a slight decline, while Johnson & Wales grew by thirty percent over the same time period (See Figure A.6 'College and University Enrollment, 1990-2005').

Figure A.6 College and University Enrollment, 1990-2005

Source: IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System), Fall Enrollment Surveys

County migration data from the IRS, documents the county of residence based on return addresses for tax filings. Although it does not identify how many residents entered and left Providence, the data can identify trends of whether net migration is positive or negative for the area. Providence County gained modest numbers of residents from 2000 to 2003 and then lost almost 3,600 residents during the 2003-04 tax year. Domestic out-migration, meaning persons who moved from Providence County to another county in Rhode Island or another state or U.S. territory, began declining in the 2002-03 tax year, when the county lost 22 residents, and then rapidly increased to almost 3,800 domestic out migrants leaving Providence County. This recent exodus suggests that the robust growth rate Providence experienced between the 1990 and 2000 Census is leveling and future projections need to be adjusted accordingly. (See Figure A.7 'Providence County Net Migration')

A Existing Conditions

Figure A.7 Providence County Net Migration
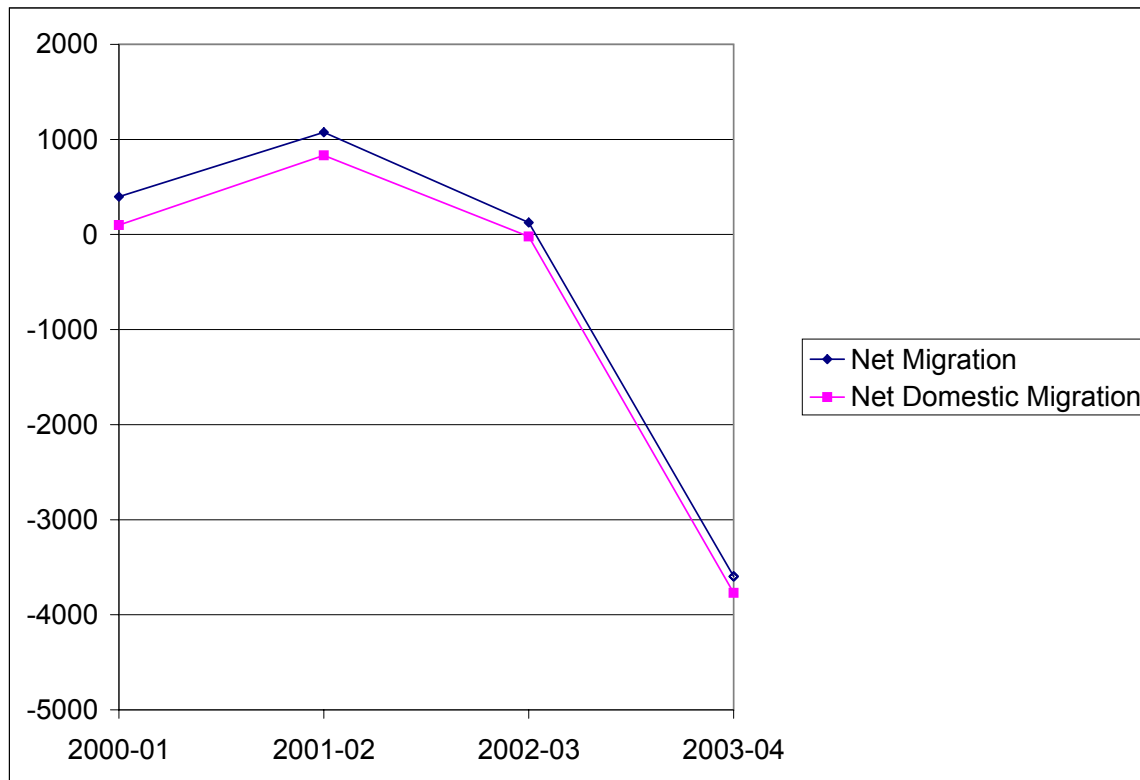
Source: IRS Migration Data

Net migration is the difference between in-migration and out-migration. Positive net migration means more people moved to Providence County from another county than moved from Providence County to another county. Negative net migration means more people moved from Providence County than moved to Providence County. The difference between overall net migration and domestic migration is that domestic migration only includes moves to and from counties within the United States and U.S. territories whereas overall net migration includes moves to and from foreign nations.

Further Population Growth Factors

If current population trends are extrapolated into the future, the population of Providence could rise to almost 300,000. This number is likely far too high. Many factors will influence how the population grows in the long term:

- IRS migration data shows recent decline in new residents (3,600 net loss in 2003-04 tax season) resulting in a loss of roughly 2,000 since the year 2000.
- During the same time period (2000-04) Providence gained 8,000 residents from other Northeast states, 5,675 from New England states alone.
- The biggest loss of residents is to the South (4,700 residents have been lost to Florida since 2000) and also to other Rhode Island counties (5,384).

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- PSD data shows student enrollment is leveling off and aging in place; however, non-migrant IRS numbers are steadily rising, suggesting this aging in place of young people extends into the workforce.
- The younger Providence population reflects a growing non-white population, indicating future households that are on average larger than the previous majority due to higher fertility rates.
- Housing affordability and choice (condominium growth may attract a different household) will determine if the non-migrant population will continue to grow.
- The college age population has grown steadily (Johnson & Wales has grown 30 percent over the last 15 years) indicating a larger population of younger professionals that may stay in Providence.
- Providence has a finite land area. Considering that the city's population peaked at 253,000 in 1940, when household sizes were much larger than today, and the city would need roughly 50 percent more households at today's household size to reach that figure, it is unlikely that the population would reach even that high.

Adjusting the trend lines result in a projected population of roughly 200,000 by 2030 (See Figure A.8 'Providence Population Projection, 1990-2030').

Figure A.8 Providence Population Projection, 1990-2030
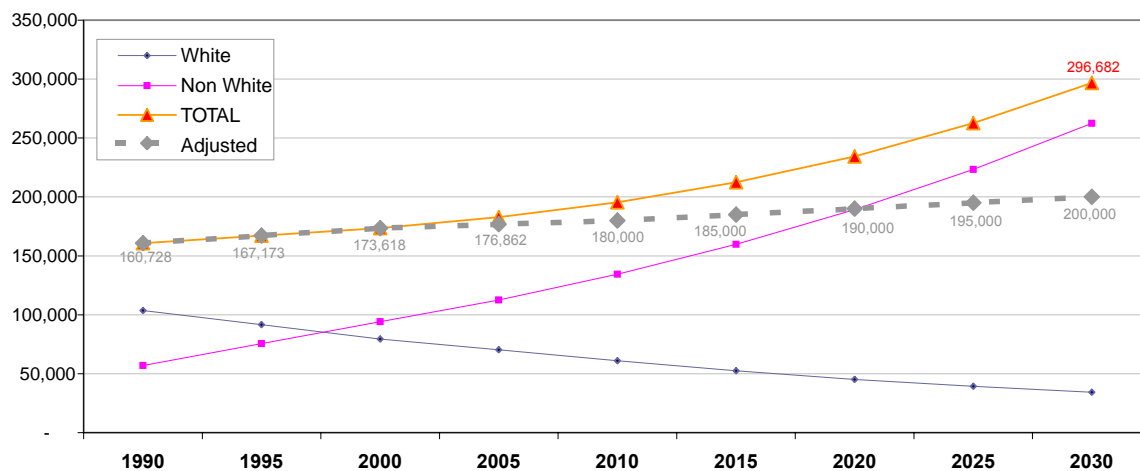
Source: US Census, Analysis by the Providence Plan

A.2 Income

Income of Providence Residents

Medians and Ranges

In 1999, the median family income was $32,058. After climbing by 11 percent between 1979 and 1989, the real median family income in Providence decreased by $6,000 (16 percent) between 1989 and 1999 (See Table A.6 'Providence Median Family Income in 1999 Dollars, 1969-1999'). In contrast, real family income in metropolitan cities throughout the nation (using the Principal City of each Metro CBSA) increased by 2.2 percent between 1989 and 1999. (Note that family income refers to the collective income of all persons within the same living unit in which two or more members are related by blood or law.)

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Table A.6 Providence Median Family Income in 1999 Dollars, 1969-1999

Year	Median	Percent Change
1969	$38,268	-
1979	$34,302	-10%
1989	$38,079	11%
1999	$32,058	-16%
Source: US Census, HUD User		

The table below (Table A.7 'Percent of Providence Families in National Income Brackets, 1969-1999') conveys the difference between the distribution of Providence incomes and the distribution of incomes nationwide. In 1999, the middle 60 percent of U.S. families had an income of between $38,000 and $59,000. In comparison, 48.6 percent of Providence families fit into this same income range in 1999. Three decades prior, Providence's middle class was almost identical to the national standard. So, the share of Providence families with a "middle income" fell almost 12 percentage points between 1969 and 1999. In the same time span, the share of families in the low income bracket rose more than 14 percentage points to represent 39.3 percent of all families. The share of families in the high income bracket decreased marginally (2.7 percentage points).

Table A.7 Percent of Providence Families in National Income Brackets, 1969-1999

National Bracket	Year	Providence Bracket Share
Low Income (Lowest 20%)	1969	24.8%
	1979	31.1%
	1989	30.7%
	1999	39.3%
Middle Income (Middle 60%)	1969	60.5%
	1979	56.7%
	1989	55.0%
	1999	48.6%
High Income (Top 20%)	1969	14.8%
	1979	12.3%
	1989	14.3%
	1999	12.1%
Source: US Census, HUD User		

The real median household income (this figure includes both family and non-family households) in Providence decreased between 1989 and 1999, losing almost $3,000, or 10 percent. This decline follows two decades of real income growth (See Table A.8 'Providence Median Household Income in 1999 Dollars, 1969-1999').

Table A.8 Providence Median Household Income in 1999 Dollars, 1969-1999

Year	Median	Percent Change
1969	$25,258	-
1979	$26,245	4%
1989	$29,756	13%
1999	$26,867	-10%

Source: US Census, HUD User

The distribution of household incomes is presented by the U.S. Census in ranges. Due to the manner in which the census treats income, race, and ethnicity, it is possible to compare the income of Hispanic households to White households but not to households of other races (as the income presentation of all other races does not distinguish Hispanic from Non-Hispanic head of household). In 1999 in Providence, two out of every five households had an annual income of less than $20,000 while only one out of every five had an income of $60,000 or more (See Table A.9 'Percent of Providence Households by Income Range and (available) Race/Ethnicity, 1999'). While similar percentages of Non-Hispanic White households and Hispanic households had "middle incomes" of $30,000-$60,000, these two groups vary sharply in their distribution among the lowest and highest income categories.

Table A.9 Percent of Providence Households by Income Range and (available) Race/Ethnicity, 1999

	Race/Ethnicity of Householder		
	All	Non-Hispanic White	Hispanic any race
Number of Households:	62,327	34,027	14,430
Income Range			
Less than $20,000	40%	34%	48%
$20,000 to $29,999	14%	12%	18%
$30,000 to $39,999	11%	12%	10%
$40,000 to $49,999	9%	9%	9%
$50,000 to $59,999	6%	7%	5%
$60,000 to $74,999	7%	8%	4%
$75,000 to $99,999	6%	8%	4%
$100,000 to $149,999	4%	5%	2%
$150,000 or more	3%	5%	1%

Source: US Census, American Factfinder

Poverty, Working Poor and Public Assistance

A Existing Conditions

Providence's overall poverty rate increased by about 6 percentage points between 1989 and 1999, such that nearly 30 percent of residents were living in poverty in 1999 (See Table A.10 'Poverty Rate in Providence, 1969-1999').

Table A.10 Poverty Rate in Providence, 1969-1999

Year	Rate
1969	18.0%
1979	20.4%
1989	23.0%
1999	29.1%
Source: US Census, HUD User	

Providence's childhood poverty rate – concerning those 18 years of age or younger - was 40 percent in 1999, ten percentage points greater than the city's overall poverty rate and five points higher than a decade prior (See Figure A.9 'Child Poverty Rate in Providence and Comparison Areas, 1990-2000'). For cities of 100,000 population or more, Providence had the fourth highest childhood poverty rate in the nation, after Brownsville (TX), New Orleans (LA) and Hartford (CT). Unlike Providence, other New England cities like Hartford and Boston saw decreases in rates of childhood poverty between 1989 and 1999, while Worcester held steady at 25 percent.

Figure A.9 Child Poverty Rate in Providence and Comparison Areas, 1990-2000

Child Poverty Rate with Comparison Areas, 1989-1999
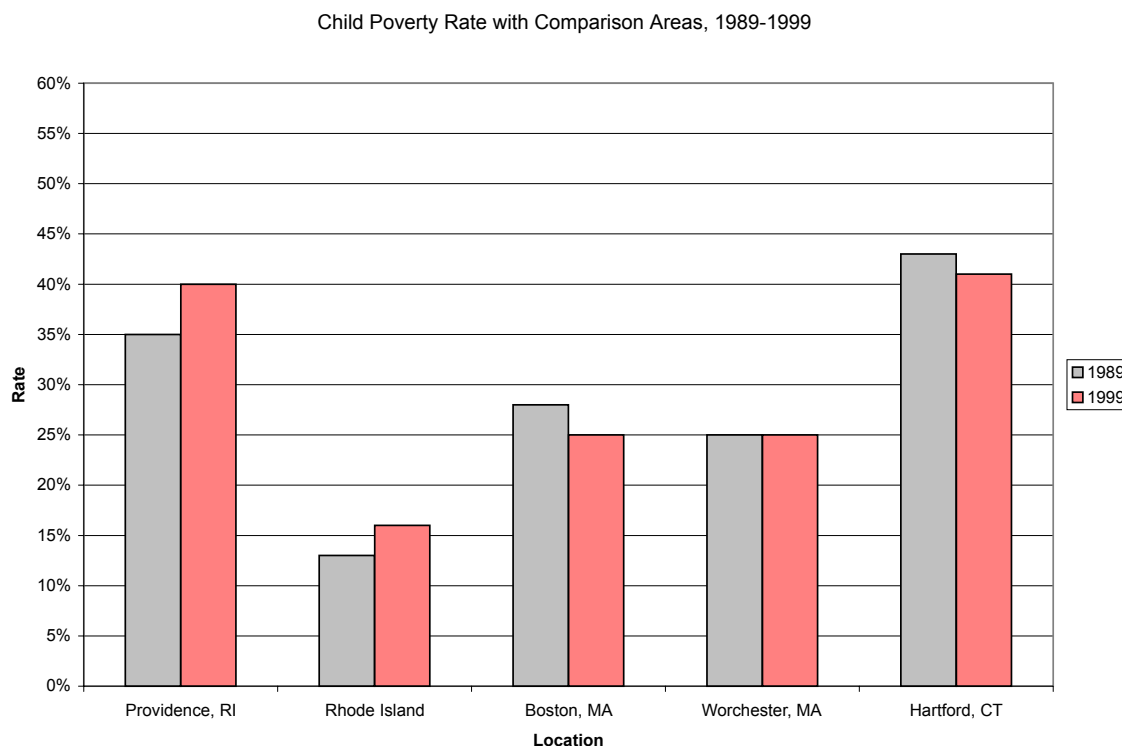
Source: DataPlace by KnowledgePlex & Fannie Mae

Publicly available data through tax return records offer another measure of residents' financial struggles (See Figure A.10 'Tax Returns Claiming EITC with Comparison Areas, 2002'). For instance, more than one-quarter (26 percent) of all Providence tax returns claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit in 2002, a rate that was 12 percent lower than Hartford but about 10 percent higher than both Boston and Worcester. The Providence total of 17,470 tax returns claiming the EITC represented 28 percent of all such returns in Rhode Island, whereas Providence accounts for only 17 percent of all State households.

Figure A.10 Tax Returns Claiming EITC with Comparison Areas, 2002
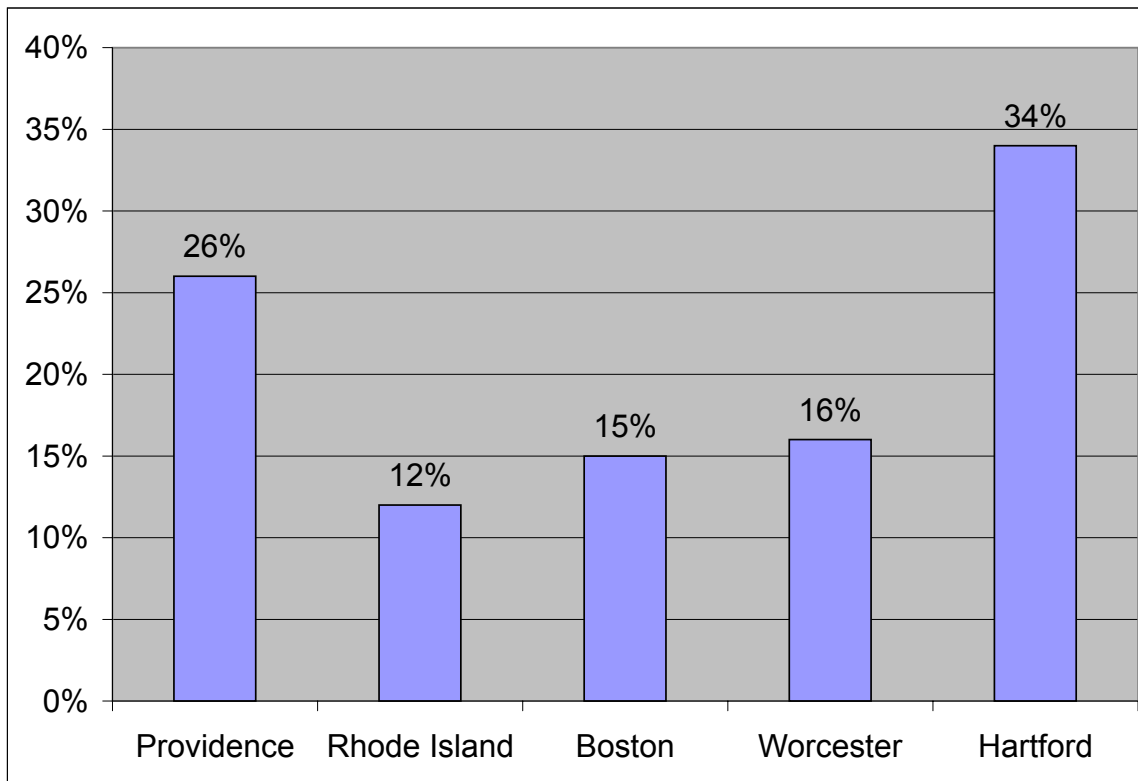
Source: Internal Revenue Service

Education, Language, and Workforce Training

Educational Attainment among Providence Residents

Counter to the changes in real income, the Providence adult population has steadily become more highly educated over the past three decades, such that nearly one-quarter of all residents age 25 or over now have a 4-year college degree or higher (See Table A.11 'Educational Attainment for Providence Population Age 25 and Over, 1970-2000'). However, over one-third of the adult population is still without a high school diploma or equivalent.

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Table A.11 Educational Attainment for Providence Population Age 25 and Over, 1970-2000

Highest Attainment	Year	Share
Did Not Graduate High School	1969	59.4%
	1979	46.6%
	1989	37.2%
	1999	34.2%
High School Graduate	1969	24.3%
	1979	27.3%
	1989	25.0%
	1999	23.1%
Some College or Associate Degree	1969	6.6%
	1979	10.4%
	1989	16.1%
	1999	18.3%
College Graduate or Advanced Degree	1969	9.7%
	1979	15.7%
	1989	21.6%
	1999	24.4%

Source: US Census, HUD User

Income, language, and special needs of the city's students affect student achievement throughout the Providence school district (See Figure A.11 'Characteristics of the Providence Public School Population'). One-quarter of the Providence public school students are eligible for subsidized lunch; 16 percent receive English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual services, and 20 percent receive special-education services. Along with these issues, student mobility is another factor in achievement. For the school year 2004-05 the Providence district average student mobility index (a measure of student movement into or out of a school) was 36 percent, compared to 17 percent for the State.

Figure A.11 Characteristics of the Providence Public School Population

Source: RIDE – Information Works! School Year 2004-2005

A Existing Conditions

Basic knowledge and skills in English and Mathematics are a prerequisite for success in higher education and the workplace. According to the assessment results for 2005 (See Figure A.12 'Achievement Rates among 11th Graders in Providence Public Schools'), a majority of Providence Public School 11th graders failed to achieve proficiency in six of the seven subsections of the assessment. The high school dropout rate in Providence was 27 percent for school year 2004-05, as compared to a 15 percent dropout rate for the State (RIDE-Information Works!). According to a 2006 Rhode Island Economic Policy Council (RIEPC) publication citing the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, for every 100 Rhode Island 9th graders, 72 complete high school, 40 enter college, and 23 complete an associate degree or 4-year degree within six years. RIEPC posits that high school and college non-completion are the most troubling types of "brain drain" for Rhode Island, with an estimated 15,000 students statewide dropping out of high school from 1995-2000 and another 27,000 students completing high school but not pursuing a further degree.

Figure A.12 Achievement Rates among 11th Graders in Providence Public Schools
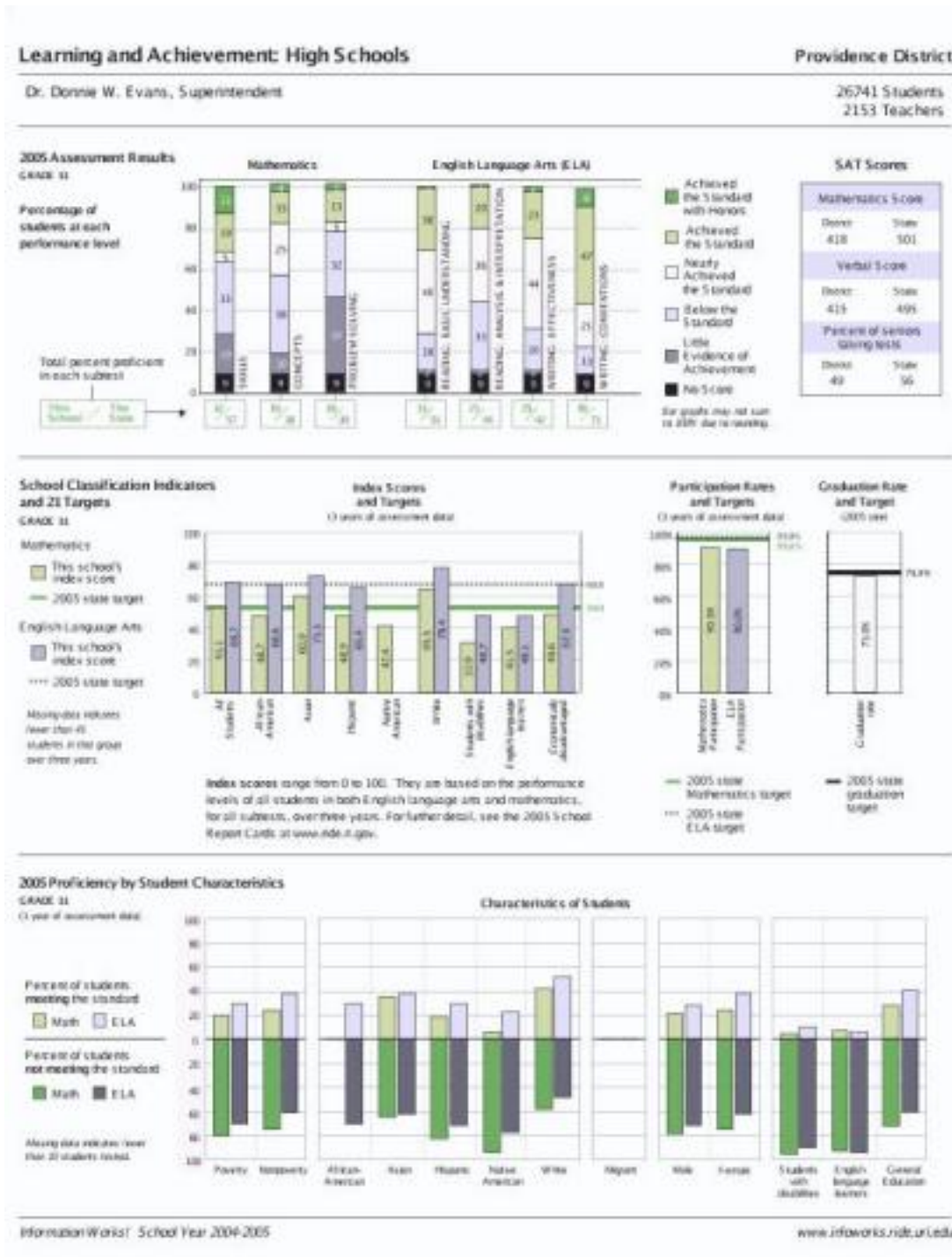
Source: RIDE – Information Works! School Year 2004-2005

A Existing Conditions

The rate of labor force participation among working-age adults with various levels of education offers insight as to who is finding employment and who is not (See Figure A.13 'Labor Force Participation Rates by Education Level, 1990-2000 (R.I. and U.S.)'). Rhode Island rates of labor force participation closely resemble those of the nation as a whole, with less than 45 percent of high school dropouts as active labor force participants compared to almost 80 percent of adults with 4-year or advanced degrees.

Figure A.13 Labor Force Participation Rates by Education Level, 1990-2000 (R.I. and U.S.)

Figure 3-7: Rhode Island and US Civilian Labor Force Participation Rates by Educational Attainment, 2000
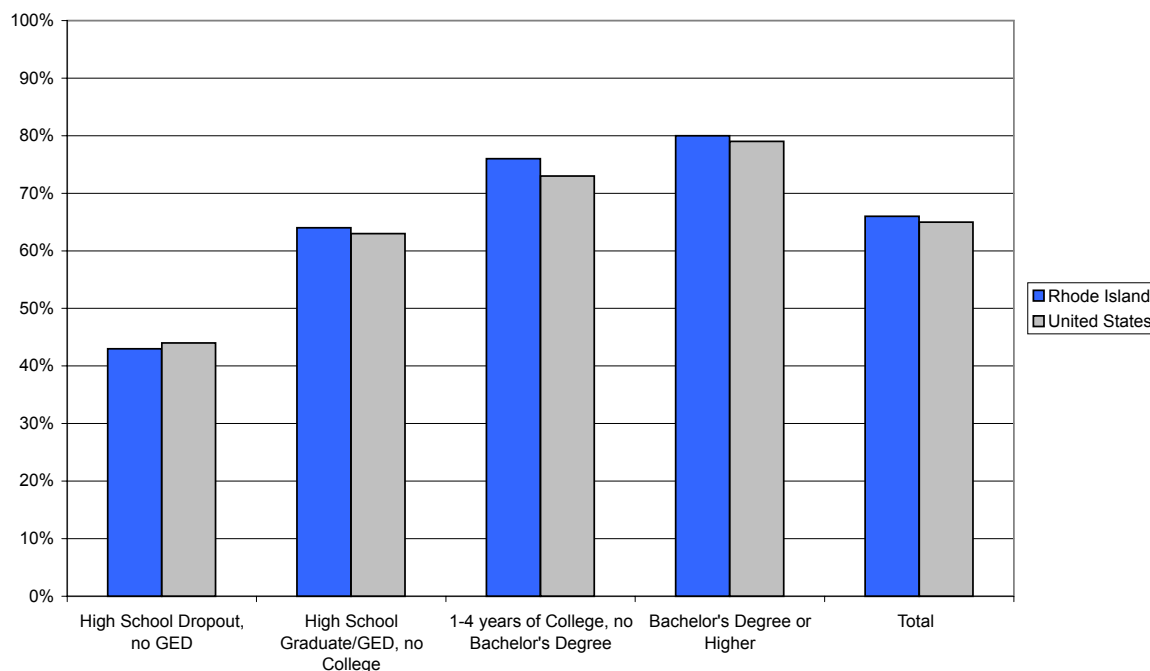
Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, RIEPC

A job type - education level mismatch may be rising in the state of Rhode Island, as the percentage of workers who do not have a high school diploma (low labor force participation rate, as displayed above) is projected to increase, while the share of workers with a college degree (high labor force participation rate) is anticipated to decrease (See Figure A.14 'Change in Education Levels of Rhode Island Workers, 2020 Projection').

Figure A.14 Change in Education Levels of Rhode Island Workers, 2020 Projection

Change in Education Levels of Workers (RI)

Legend:
☐ 2000 (Actual)
■ 2020 (Projected, if current gaps remain)

Categories: Not a high school graduate | High school graduate | Some college | Associate's degree | Bachelor's degree | Advanced degree

Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, these trends are mirrored in CT and MA.
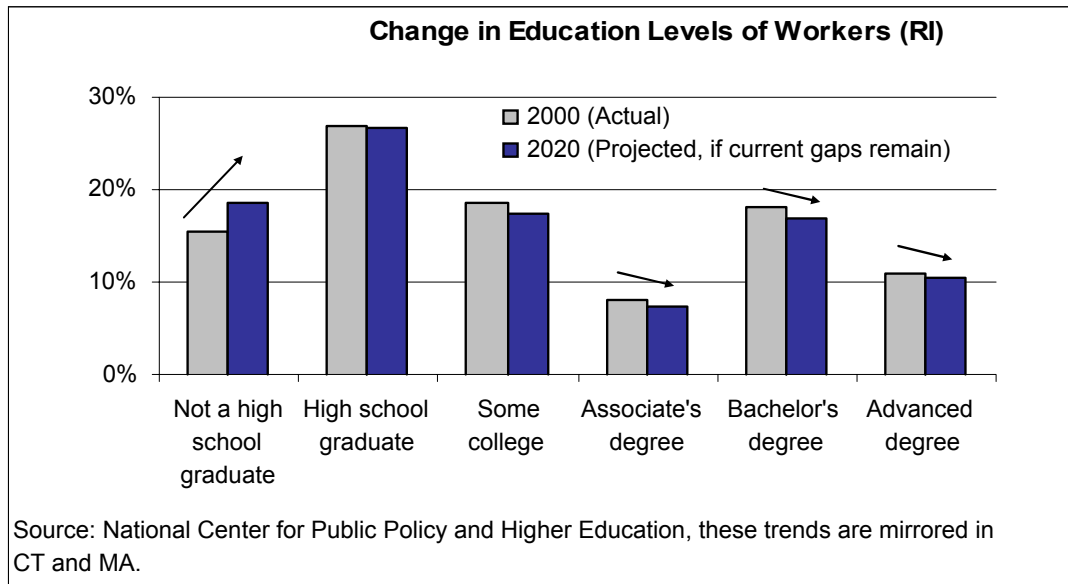
Source: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, RIEPC

English Language Skills

Among the approximate working age population (18-64), 22 percent of all Providence residents responded that they spoke English "less than very well" (See Table A.12 'Providence Population Age 18-64 by Language Spoken at Home and English Difficulty*'). Among the Spanish-speaking population of this age group, 62 percent have English difficulties while the same is true of 52 percent of those speaking an Asian/Pacific Island language and 35 percent of those favoring an Indo-European language. About 59 percent of the working age population report speaking English at home.

According to the U.S. Census, the phenomenon of "linguistic isolation" – when all members of a household who are age 14 or over have some degree of difficulty with the English language – increased by three percent over the decade, such that 13 percent of all households now meet the criteria for isolation. While the rate of linguistic isolation within Spanish-speaking households fell slightly between 1990 and 2000, the existing rate of 38 percent remains high due to strong growth in the Hispanic population.

Table A.12 Providence Population Age 18-64 by Language Spoken at Home and English Difficulty*

Language Spoken at Home	Pop Age 18-64	Pct with English Difficulties
Any Language	110,047	22%
Spanish	29,122	62%
Indo-European languages	8,237	35%

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Language Spoken at Home	Pop Age 18-64	Pct with English Difficulties
Asian and Pacific Island languages	6,544	52%
Other Non-English languages	1,685	21%
English	64,459	-
Source: US Census, American Factfinder		

*Difficulty defined as self-reporting to speak English "less than very well"

A.3 Sustainability and the Environment

Existing Conditions

The City of Providence is highly urbanized, with extensive residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development concentrated within its borders. Impacts associated with these land uses that can negatively affect the environment and natural resources include:

- high traffic volumes and concentrations of vehicle emissions, which affect air quality;
- urban runoff, sedimentation, road salt, and litter, which contribute to the pollution of the city's rivers and Narragansett Bay, and limit recreation opportunities;
- a decreasing amount of open space due to the continued development of the city;
- removal of trees and vegetation for development, which poses challenges to the maintenance and improvement of tree canopy coverage and green space citywide;
- continued erosion of slopes, which contributes to excessive sedimentation of the wastewater system;
- litter on city streets, which detracts from neighborhood character and aesthetics, and contributes to unsanitary conditions;
- development and population growth, which affect the water supply; and
- increasing energy consumption

These factors and others dictate that continued growth and development needs to be carefully managed and held to sustainable standards. The near future will see an increasing focus on environmentally sound development and personal and business practices that are more environmentally friendly.

An understanding of Providence's natural resources must take into account its urban setting; recent rapid growth; industrial legacy; surface water and coastal resources; floodplains and wetlands; water supply and use; waste generation; and air quality. Urban pollution sources include point source pollution from chemical/hazardous materials storage and brownfields contamination, leaking underground gasoline storage tanks; and non-point source pollution from stormwater runoff. These sources pollute the rivers, ponds and coastal resources of the city, and can have negative impacts on recreational activities and the overall quality of life for city residents.

Climate Protection and Air Quality

Air quality is crucial to the quality of life for city residents and has taken on even greater significance in the wake of climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions. Air quality is measured by the concentration of pollutants in the air within a specified time interval. Concentrations are analyzed based on their effects on human health. The EPA maintains standards for classifying air quality in primarily urban areas. Each standard is defined by the

Existing Conditions A

concentrations of five potentially noxious elements: 1) Carbon Monoxide (CO), 2) Sulphur Dioxide (SO2), 3) Total Suspended Particle Matter (TSP), 4) Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), and 5) Oxidants represented by Ozone (O3). There are five air quality monitoring stations in Providence, and two others (in East Providence and Pawtucket), each collecting different types of data that help illustrate the air quality in and around the City. TSP measured by the PM10 standard has remained fairly stable and has only decreased slightly since 1992. Diesel vehicles are a major source.

In Providence, as in all highly urbanized areas, the primary source of air contaminants is motor vehicle emissions. Particularly in the summer months, when the air is humid, air quality may be threatened, relating directly to the number, type and speed of vehicles; the type of road; and the number of idling vehicles, particularly in parking lots. As a developing city, Providence is experiencing increases in traffic volumes, as well as in the number of parked cars, particularly downtown. Overall traffic speed downtown is slower, negatively affecting the quality of air throughout the city. Degraded air quality can also be attributed to industrial emissions and other concentrated urban activities.

Providence is part of the Metropolitan Providence Interstate Air Quality Control region (AQCR 120), which includes southeastern Massachusetts and all of Rhode Island. In the summer months, Providence fails to achieve the federally defined primary or secondary standards for three air pollutants, namely Ozone, Carbon Monoxide and total suspended particle matter. Though ozone levels have improved somewhat since the early 1990s, it is still the most serious air pollution issue in the city. On summer days with particularly high ozone levels Ozone Alert days are declared, health warnings are issued and RIPTA bus service is free. In the Providence metropolitan area, levels are equal to or better than national standards for Sulfur Dioxide and Nitrogen Dioxide.

The City has signed on to the ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) pledge to combat global warming, signifying a commitment to a study of greenhouse gas emissions and enactment of a Climate Action Plan. ICLEI has chosen Providence to be one of a select group of cities to participate in the New England Cities Project, the goal of which is to provide advice, research and technical assistance to help cities accelerate activities they are undertaking to reduce overall energy use, greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution emissions. The project hopes to generate Technical Assistance Guides on specific activities.

The Providence Clean Energy Task Force was created by Ordinance 355 (2007) with the goal of increasing the amount of clean energy purchased by the City.

Surface Water and Coastal Resources

See Appendix A Existing Conditions - Waterfront.

Floodplain Areas

See Appendix A Existing Conditions - Waterfront.

Wetlands

See Appendix A Existing Conditions - Waterfront.

Water Supply

The water supply for the City of Providence is not dependent on surface or groundwater resources within the boundaries of the City. The 4,563-acre Scituate Reservoir system supplies water to the Providence metropolitan area, and is known for its high-quality water. The total capacity is 41.268 billion gallons (an average of over 40 billion gallons flows into the system each year). The watershed of the reservoir system falls within municipalities in northern

Existing Conditions

Rhode Island and southern Massachusetts. The City is therefore somewhat dependent on these municipalities to protect the integrity of the water supply.

While not located in the City of Providence, the Scituate Reservoir and smaller reservoirs belong to the Providence Water Supply Board (PWSB) and are critical water resources for the City and surrounding areas. The watershed surrounding the reservoir system covers nearly 60,000 acres (92.8 sqare miles). Nearly 17,000 acres (25,4 square miles) of this is controlled by the PWSB, an area greater than the size of the City of Providence. Recognizing that more watershed land needed to be controlled in order to assure a continued supply of high quality water to the region, the R.I. General Assembly passed an act in 1989 authorizing the use of eminent domain powers to acquire watershed land or development rights on that land. Since 1990 the PWSB has acquired over 1,440 acres of critical watershed.

Table A.13 Reservoir Data

Scituate Reservoir	3,390 acres	37.011 billion gallons
Moswaniscut Reservoir	282 acres	1.781 billion gallons
Regulating Reservoir	243 acres	428 million gallons
Barden Reservoir	245 acres	853 million gallons
Ponaganset Reservoir	230 acres	742 million gallons
TOTAL	4,563 acres	41.268 billion gallons

Trees and Canopy Coverage

Due to disease and blight, and the development of land area for both buildings and parking areas, tree canopy coverage has diminished in Providence. This has been ongoing since the early 20th century, when there were more than twice as many trees than there are today. Quality of life, public health and efforts to combat climate change and poor air quality necessitate the planting of more trees and green space.

Approximately 400 trees have been planted per year since 1989 by the Providence Neighborhood Planting Program, a street tree planting and maintenance partnership between the Mary Elizabeth Sharpe Street Tree Endowment, the City of Providence and residents of the city. Additional efforts are underway to protect existing trees and promote more public and private tree planting efforts and better landscaping standards.

The City Forestry department recently conducted a comprehensive citywide tree inventory. The results are shown below.

Key Findings of the Providence Tree Tally, 2007

- **24,999 street trees** (includes 409 dead trees)
- **The species are diverse** – over 95 different tree species
- Top species – Norway maple (18.8%), Callery Pear (11.6%), Green Ash (8.6%), Honey Locust (7.4%), London Plane Tree (7.0%), Red Maple (5.6%), Zelkova (4.4%)
- **More than 2/3 of street trees are in either excellent (23.2%) or good (48.9%) condition,** with 18.9% fair, 7.3% poor, and 1.6% dead.

Existing Conditions A

- The trees are weighted toward the **smaller size classes, with 2/5 (39.9%) 6" in diameter or less, and nearly 2/3 (65.1%) 12" in diameter or less**. 27.6% of trees were 13-24" in diameter, and 7.2% were greater than 24" diameter.
- 41.5% of trees had utility wires located above (or through) them.
- 52.4% of planting spaces were sidewalk pits, while 47.6% were lawn strips or lawn areas.
- **The avg. size tree pit was 16.5 sf., and the avg. lawn strip width was 3.89 ft.**
- 27.6% of trees had cracked or raised sidewalks adjacent to them.
- 16.2% of trees had some sort of infrastructure conflict threatening their health, led by close sidewalk pavement (12.0%).
- **Providence's street trees provide $2,932,731 in benefits annually. ($118.23/tree)**

Table A.14 Benefits of Street Trees

Total Annual Benefits of Street Trees, City of Providence			
Benefit	**Amount**	**Sub-Value**	**Total Value**
Energy			
Electricity saved	1684 MWh	$202,132	
Natural Gas saved	633,812 therms	$1,026,528	**$1,228,660**
CO2			
CO2 stored	2,180 tons	$14,564	
CO2 avoided	2,527 tons	$16,945	
CO2 released	504 tons	($3,367)	**$28,143**
Air Quality			
Pollution intercepted	29 tons	$101,096	
Pollution avoided	12 tons	$101,863	
BVOC pollution emitted	2 tons	($8,627)	**$194,334**
Stormwater			
Stormwater intercepted	30.6 m. gallons		**$244945**
Aesthetic/Other			
Incr. property values			**$1,236,649**
		TOTAL	**$2,932,731**

A Existing Conditions

- **38,899 tons of carbon are stored** in Providence's street tree population.
- **For every dollar the City spends on the tree program, we are "paid back" $3.33 in benefits each year.**
- The **replacement value** of Providence's street trees is **$81,855,622**, or **$3,274/tree**.

Source: City Forester Doug Still, June 6, 2007

Green Design and Development/LEED and LID

Save the Bay's headquarters at Fields Point and the Gordon Avenue Business Incubator are examples of "green," sustainable buildings built on environmentally compromised land. Brown University has undertaken several renovations incorporating "green" principles and has a resource efficiency manager.

This plan and emerging City initiatives aim to establish metrics of energy and water consumption and environmental impacts, with the goal of educating residents and developers and promoting further development of green buildings that conserve water and energy, reuse materials, install green roofs, provide green space, and meet other standards of environmental sustainability.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™ is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators tools to have immediate and measurable impacts on their buildings' performance. LEED promotes a whole-building/site approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. Specific LEED programs include:

- New Commercial Construction and Major Renovation projects
- Existing Building Operations and Maintenance
- Commercial Interiors projects
- Core and Shell Development projects
- Homes
- Neighborhood Development
- Guidelines for Multiple Buildings and On-Campus Building Projects
- LEED for Schools
- LEED for Retail

Low Impact Development (LID) refers to storm water management techniques that try to mimic the natural hydrology of a site, using small-scale practices that retain, filter, infiltrate or collect storm water on site for reuse, instead of collecting it in a sewer system and discharging it into surface water bodies. LID reduces storm water volumes and promotes groundwater recharge, protecting water quality and groundwater supplies. Because many LID techniques have vegetation incorporated into their design, they offer aesthetically pleasing storm water management methods that can have the additional benefit of enhancing property values. LID techniques include rain gardens, vegetated swales, dry wells, cisterns for rainwater collection, pervious parking surfaces and green roofs.

RIPDES Permits

There are sixteen active Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) permits located in Providence. Detailed information on the program can be found here:
http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/water/permits/ripdes/stwater/

A.4 The Built Environment

The City of Providence is unique in its historic character and culture. Historically significant areas and structures appear throughout the City. The City recognizes that its rich historic and cultural resources are an asset, and need to be preserved and enhanced; steps need to be taken to protect the City's heritage.

The downtown area, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is rich in historic resources, with elaborate buildings and facades and open spaces. Hundreds of buildings and a number of districts in Providence are listed on the state as well as the national registers. The City has created several local historic districts to protect some of these assets. Examples of Providence's rich historic and cultural heritage include the State Capitol Building, City Hall, the College Hill Historic District, Roger Williams Park, and over twenty additional National Register historic districts and other various architectural points of interest.

In the City of Providence the historic movement was initiated by various local private social organizations. This movement culminated in 1956 with the establishment of the Providence Preservation Society (PPS). The Society was formed by concerned citizens in response to widespread demolition, resulting from active urban renewal and highway construction programs.

In 1956, the PPS joined forces with the City Plan Commission and applied for a federal pilot grant to explore ways to protect the architecture of College Hill. The primary result of the study was the designation of the College Hill Historic District, as well as the creation of the City's Historic District Commission. The Commission regulates all changes made to buildings within local historic districts.

Following the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966, a federal/state coalition was formed. In response to the 1966 legislation, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (RIHPC) was created in 1968. Over the years RIHPC has conducted surveys citywide to identify properties with historical and architectural significance. There are over 3,400 of these properties. A number of neighborhood reports have been completed, as well as a book entitled "Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources." To date the RIHPC has nominated several thousand buildings to the National Register of Historic Places including 25 historic districts and over 90 individual properties in Providence. The coordination of and development review within these districts is the responsibility of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission which implements the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act. If a local district is included in a National District, the local historic district commission must review and approve all exterior renovations.

National Register Districts

1.   Andrew Dickhaut Cottages Historic District

2.   Blackstone Boulevard Realty Plat Historic District

3.   Blackstone Canal Historic District

4.   Blackstone Park Historic District

A Existing Conditions

5.   Bridgham/Arch Street Historic District

6.   Broadway-Armory Historic District

7.   College Hill Historic District

8.   Custom House Historic District

9.   Downtown Providence Historic District

10.   Doyle Avenue Historic District

11.   Elmgrove Gardens Historic District

12.   Elmwood (northern section) Historic District

13.   Freeman Plat Historic District

14.   Hope Street Historic District

15.   Moshassuck Square/American Screw Company Factories Historic District

16.   Oakland Avenue Historic District

17.   Olney/Alumni Avenue Historic District

18.   Parkis Comstock Historic District

19.   Pekin Street Historic District

20.   Pine Street Historic District

21.   Power Street-Cooke Street Historic District

22.   Providence Jewelry Manufacturing District

23.   Rhodes Street Historic District

24.   Roger Williams Park Historic District

25.   Stimson Avenue Historic District

26.   Summit Historic District

27.   Trinity Square Historic District

28.   Wanskuck Mill Village Historic District

29.   Wayland Historic District

Existing Conditions A

30. Wesleyan Avenue Historic District

31. Westminster Street Historic District

Local Historic Districts

In addition to the national register districts, nearly 90 districts and individual properties in Providence have been identified as potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. A number of other areas and properties within the city need further evaluation to determine their potential eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register. These have been well documented by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission.

The Providence City Council to date has designated eight areas as local historic districts. These districts fall under the purview of the Providence Historic District Commission. Structures within the boundaries of these districts may not be altered, repaired, moved, constructed or demolished without review and approval by the Historic District Commission. These districts are:

- College Hill Historic District - Designated 1960; expanded 1990. Approximately 945 properties. College Hill is the site of Providence's original settlement in 1636, and it contains the most distinguished historic architecture in the city. Its name derives from the steep hill rising from the east bank of the Providence River. The district is primarily residential, with commercial uses lining its western edge along the river; institutions such as Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design have also played a major role in the neighborhood's development. The College Hill Historic District contains a wide range of architectural styles, from early colonial to early 20th century three-family houses.
- Stimson Avenue Historic District - Designated 1981. Approximately 32 properties. Stimson Avenue is a quiet residential enclave located on the City's East Side, east of Hope Street. Its collection of Queen Anne and Colonial Revival single-family homes, built in the 1880s and 1890s, is largely unaltered in appearance or use, making this district one of the finest and most intact late-19th century residential areas in the city.
- Broadway Historic District - Designated 1982. Approximately 164 properties. Located in the Federal Hill neighborhood west of downtown, Broadway was widened to 80 feet in 1854, making it the broadest street in the city. With its ample lots and easy access to downtown, it quickly became one of Providence's most fashionable addresses. By the end of the 19th century Broadway was lined with a procession of large, elaborate mansions in a variety of architectural styles (Greek Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and others), erected by Providence's increasingly wealthy merchants and manufactures. Many of these buildings have since been divided into apartments or converted to commercial use, but Broadway retains much of its Victorian character.
- Armory Historic District - Designated 1989, expanded 2004. Approximately 509 properties. The fortress-like Cranston Street Armory 1907 and adjacent Dexter Parade Ground (a large open space formerly used as a military training field) are the focal points of the Armory District, a residential neighborhood located in Providence's West End. Most of the one-and two-family houses were built in the mid to late 19th century; the district contains examples of Greek Revival, Queen Anne, and the Second Empire styles. The neighborhood is the focus of concerted and successful private-sector preservation efforts by the Providence Preservation Society Revolving Fund and the Armory Revival Company.
- North and South Elmwood Historic Districts - South: Designated 1991. Approximately 148 properties. North: Designated 1992. Approximately 123 properties. The Elmwood neighborhood, on the West Side of Providence, developed in response to Providence's booming industrial development in the late 19th century. With easy

A Existing Conditions

access to the factories, the West End and businesses downtown, it was home to artisans, clerks, managers, merchants, industrialists, and business people. Its building stock consists primarily of one- and two-family houses set on large lots; commercial development occurred along the main thoroughfares of Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street. Both Elmwood districts contain distinguished examples of varying architectural designs from the late Victorian era.

- Jewelry District - Designated 1991. Approximately 25 properties. The Jewelry District is a small but intact fragment of a once-larger manufacturing center that today is residential, commercial and industrial in use. The district includes industrial structures and factories ranging in date from 1830 to 1930.
- Industrial and Commercial Buildings District - Designated and expanded 2002. Approximately 275 properties. The Industrial & Commercial Buildings District, or ICBD, is the nation's first non-contiguous local historic district. This district is composed of mid 19th to 20th century industrial and commercial buildings throughout the city. The buildings in this district are reviewed by the Historic District Commission for Demolition and Major Alterations only. The landmark status provides various city, state & federal incentives for rehabilitation and development of these landmark buildings.

Map A.6 Historic Districts

Historic Districts
Providence, R.I.

Key to Features
- Local Historic Districts
- National Register Districts
- Water Features

City of Providence Comprehensive Plan
Data Sources: City of Providence, RIGIS
NAD83 RI State Plane Feet   10/2006

Produced by: The Providence Plan

MAP
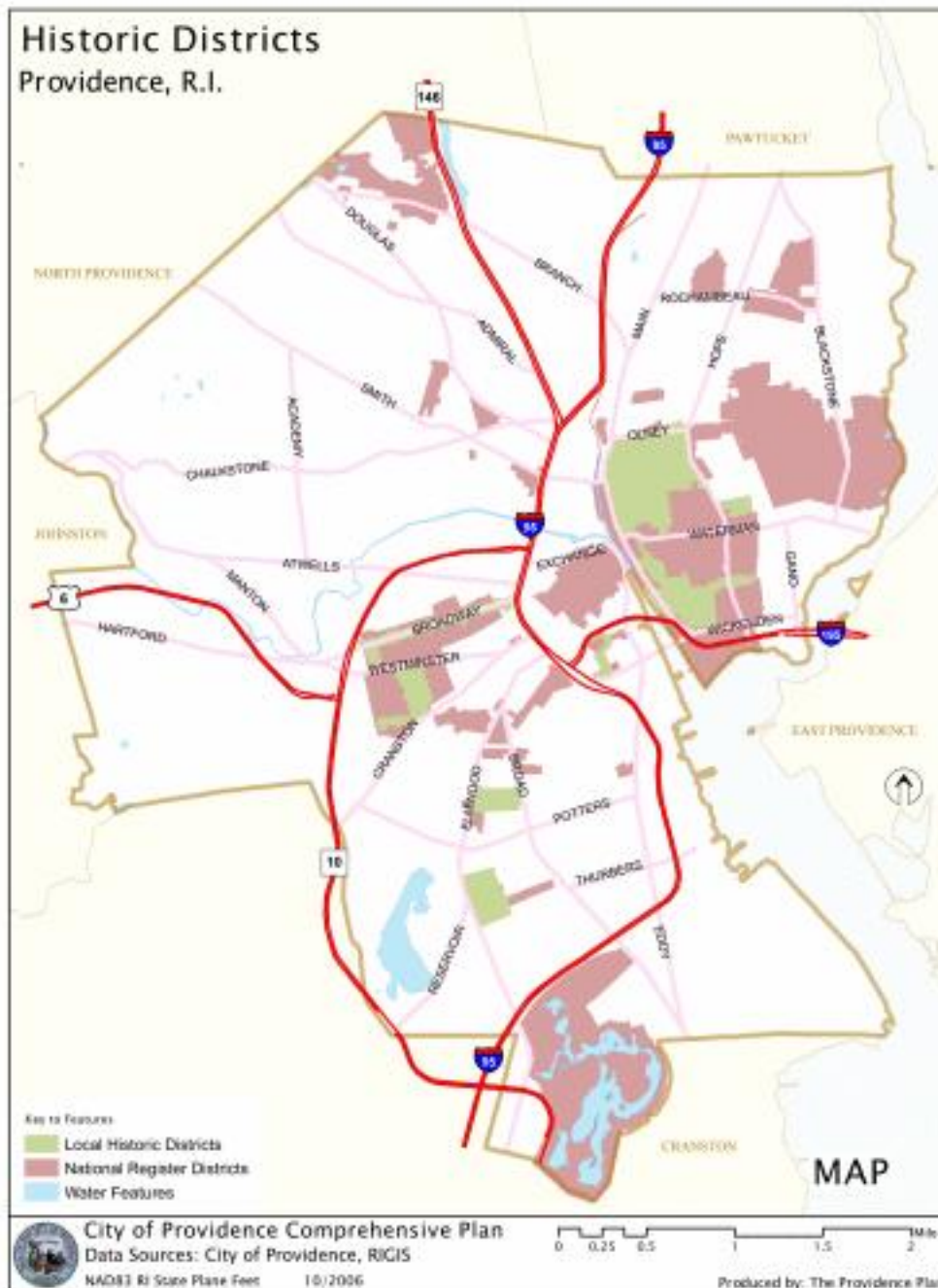
A **Existing Conditions**

Map A.7 Industrial and Commercial Buildings District
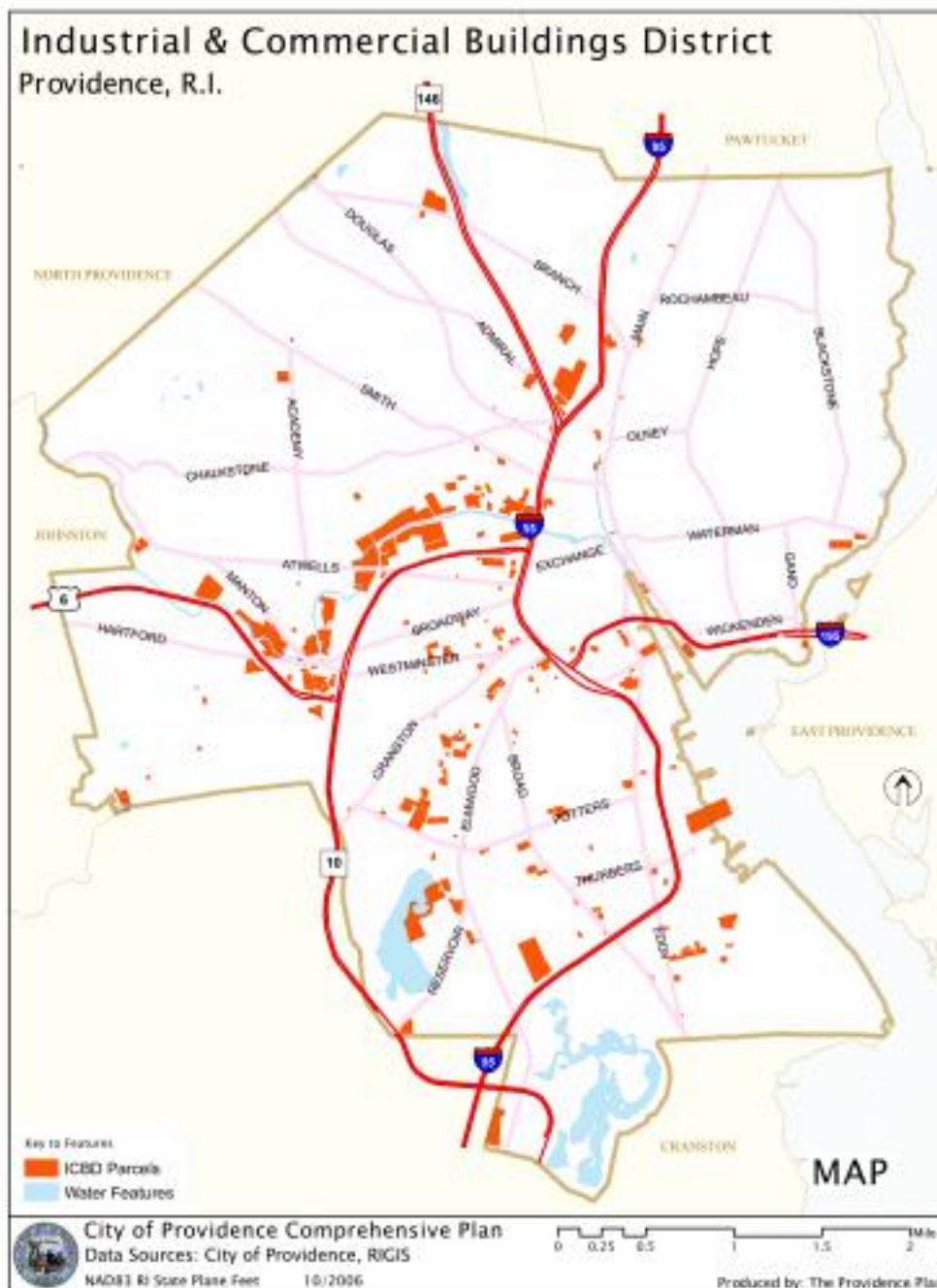
In June, 1988 the State Legislature passed an amendment to the Enabling Legislation (45 24.1) dealing with historic areas. The amendment, among other things, allows cities and towns to specify individual historically significant structures for protection and clarifies the powers and duties of local historic district commissions.

Existing Conditions A

In all historic districts property owners are encouraged to adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" and the "Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings." Adherence to the standards is mandatory whenever federal funds are applied within the National Register historic districts.

A.5 Business and Jobs

Introduction

The employment and incomes of Providence residents are examined through the characteristics of the working age population, including their occupations, education level, language skills, and commuting patterns. The strength and composition of the employment market, along with transportation options and workforce training, are also major determinants of job selection and realized earnings. As home to several colleges and universities, the City has great potential to foster a formidable workforce of creative and high-skilled workers. However, with disconcertingly high rates of poverty and high school dropout, challenges remain to improve adult education and public school achievement in order to raise the earning potential of the current and future labor force.

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

The labor force participation rate is the percentage of working-age people (age 16 to 64) who are either currently employed or are unemployed and looking for work. The participation rate of 57.7 percent in 2000 was three percent less than a decade prior but quite similar to historic levels evidenced by the 1970 and 1980 censuses (see Table A.15 'Providence Labor Force Size and Participation Rate, 1970-2000'). About three out of every five working-age people in Providence are either employed or active job seekers.

Table A.15 Providence Labor Force Size and Participation Rate, 1970-2000

Year	Number in Labor Force	Participation
1970	78,283	57.6%
1980	72,471	57.9%
1990	76,328	60.5%
2000	76,833	57.7%
Source: US Census, HUD User		

The unemployment rate is the percentage of the labor force that is currently unemployed. The annual average unemployment rate represents the mean of twelve monthly unemployment calculations. In calendar year 2005, an average of just over 5,000 members (6.3 percent of the Providence labor force were unemployed (see Table A.16 'Annual Average Unemployment Rate (unadjusted) in Providence, 1990-2005'). The city's unemployment rate is more than one percentage point worse than it was in the year 2000 but substantially better than rates witnessed in the early to mid-1990's. Since 1994, Providence's unemployment rate has remained about one and a half percentage points higher than the rate for the rest of the Rhode Island.

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Table A.16 Annual Average Unemployment Rate (unadjusted) in Providence, 1990-2005

Year	Number in Labor Force	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Unemployment Rate- Rest of R.I.
2005	79,616	5,033	6.3%	4.8%
2004	78,492	4,985	6.4%	5.0%
2003	79,236	5,333	6.7%	5.2%
2002	77,653	4,874	6.3%	4.9%
2001	76,492	4,495	5.9%	4.3%
2000	76,194	3,974	5.2%	4.0%
1999	72,983	3,964	5.4%	4.0%
1998	72,597	4,234	5.8%	4.4%
1997	72,933	4,796	6.6%	5.0%
1996	71,393	4,809	6.7%	5.1%
1995	70,645	5,305	7.5%	6.0%
1994	69,750	5,570	8.0%	6.6%
1993	72,030	6,440	8.9%	7.8%
1992	73,314	7,133	9.7%	8.7%
1991	73,387	6,578	9.0%	8.0%
1990	74,786	5,130	6.9%	6.0%

Source: R.I. DLT - Local Area Unemployment Statistics, ProvPlan calc. for Rest of R.I.

The worker count is the subset of the labor force that is employed at the time of survey. The number of employed Providence residents has swung by 9,000 over the last four decades, with the year 2000 count of 69,676 falling 5,000 workers shy of the 1970 mark. Moreover, while the population of Providence increased by 8 percent between 1990 and 2000, the number of employed residents increased by only 1 percent (see Table A.17 'Employed Providence Residents Age 16 and Over, 2000').

Table A.17 Employed Providence Residents Age 16 and Over, 2000

Year	Number of Workers	Percent Change
1970	74,849	-
1980	65,839	-12%
1990	69,320	5%
2000	69,676	1%

Source: U.S. Census, HUD User

Employment of Providence Residents

According to the 2000 Census, one-third of Providence's working residents are employed in the Management or Professional occupations, while another quarter are in Sales and Office occupations (see Figure A.15 'Employment by Occupation for Working Providence Residents Age 16 and Over, 2000'). One-fifth of working residents hold jobs in Production and Transportation related occupations, while nearly another one-fifth (18 percent) work in Service.

In terms of industries, over one-quarter (27 percent) of employed residents work in Education, Health, and Social Services (see Figure A.16 'Employment by Industry for Working Providence Residents Age 16 and Over, 2000'). The next most common industry of employment is Manufacturing with 18 percent of all working Providence residents, followed by Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Food at 10 percent. No other major industry division, as defined by the census, provides more than 9 percent of the jobs held by Providence citizens.

Figure A.15 Employment by Occupation for Working Providence Residents Age 16 and Over, 2000
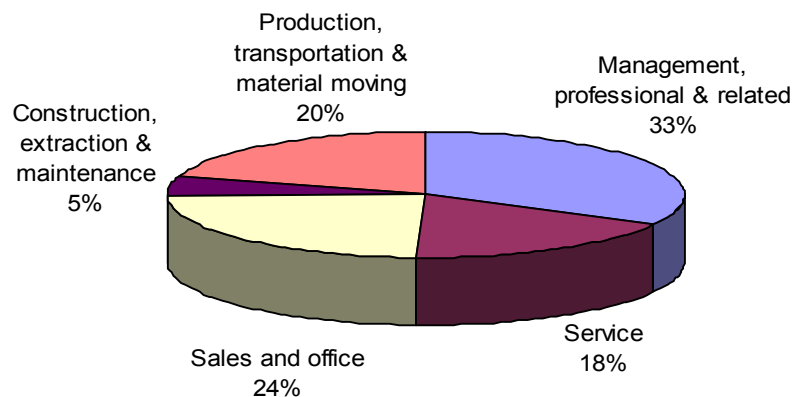
Source: U.S. Census

Existing Conditions

Figure A.16 Employment by Industry for Working Providence Residents Age 16 and Over, 2000
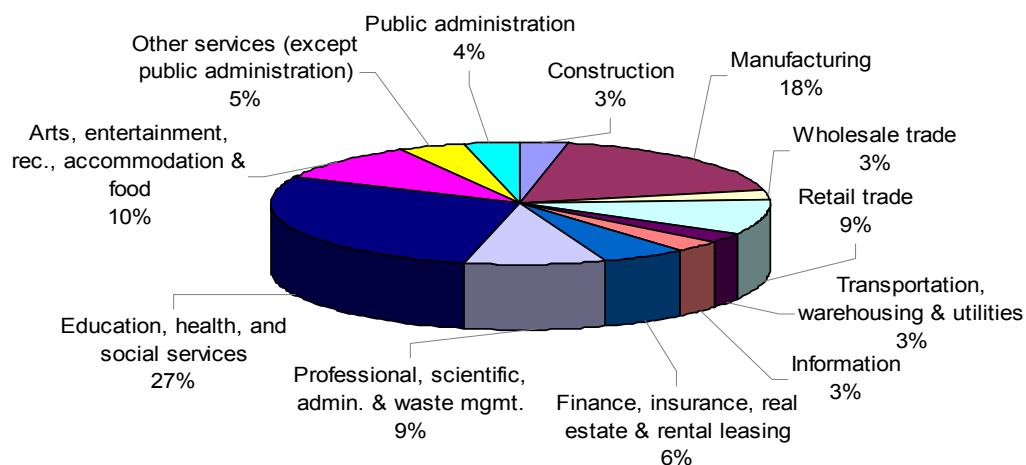
Source: U.S. Census

The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) has prepared projections of how statewide employment will change within occupational categories over the decade of 2002-2012 (Estimates are not available at the city level.). While overall employment is projected to grow by 11.5 percent, several occupational titles are thought to be growing at twice the rate (see Table A.18 'Statewide Occupational Outlook, 2002-2012'). These occupations include Computer and Mathematical (27.8 percent increase), Healthcare Support (27.4 percent) and Community and Social Services (24.2 percent). The largest occupational category in 2002, Office and Administrative Support, is projected to grow at a modest rate (2.3 percent), while another major occupational title, Production, is the sole category anticipated to lose employment (9.3 percent decrease) between 2002 and 2012.

Table A.18 Statewide Occupational Outlook, 2002-2012

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Employment		Openings by		Growth Rate
		2002	2012	Growth	Replacements	
	Total	505,561	563,909	58,348	120,030	11.5%
11-0000	Management Occupations	22,499	25,740	3,241	4,234	14.4%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	20,944	25,310	4,366	3,710	20.8%
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	10,047	12,838	2,791	1,442	27.8%

Existing Conditions A

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Employment		Openings by		Growth Rate
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	8,214	8,618	404	1,822	4.9%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	4,255	5,069	814	979	19.1%
21-0000	Community and Social Services Occupations	9,735	12,095	2,360	1,851	24.2%
23-0000	Legal Occupations	4,884	5,690	806	567	16.5%
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	31,597	37,090	5,493	6,700	17.4%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	7,534	8,417	883	1,381	11.7%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	32,321	38,949	6,628	6,106	20.5%
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	15,868	20,210	4,342	2,462	27.4%
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	10,845	11,641	796	3,133	7.3%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	41,528	50,067	8,539	17,073	20.6%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	17,467	19,279	1,812	3,486	10.4%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	16,006	18,993	2,987	3,802	18.7%
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	50,290	55,223	4,933	16,045	9.8%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	85,604	87,610	2,006	19,310	2.3%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	1,883	3,032	1,149	527	61.0%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	23,267	27,767	4,500	4,371	19.3%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	16,491	18,840	2,349	3,769	14.2%
51-0000	Production Occupations	44,660	40,490	-	10,675	-9.3%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	29,622	30,941	1,319	6,585	4.5%

A Existing Conditions

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Employment	Openings by	Growth Rate
RI DLT - Opportunities: Rhode Island's Occupational Outlook for 2012				

Commuting

At the time of the 2000 Census, just over half of all Providence's employed residents reported that they work in the capital city. Another 38 percent were working elsewhere in Rhode Island, and about 11 percent were employed out-of-state (see Table A.19 'Work Location and Means of Commute for Working Providence Residents Age 16 and Over'). Three-fourths of workers report commuting to work by automobile, while the next most common mode (12.2 percent) was walking to work. Public transportation as a means of commute registered at 7.3 percent.

Many Providence residents work in Boston. As of April 2006, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) daily boarding estimates for commuter rail were 1,102 for Providence; 1,812 for South Attleboro; and 1,897 for Attleboro. The parking capacities are 330 spaces at Providence station; 980 at South Attleboro; and 1,007 at Attleboro (Source:MBTA).

Table A.19 Work Location and Means of Commute for Working Providence Residents Age 16 and Over

Location of Work	Percent
In Providence City	50.5%
In Providence County	78.8%
In Rhode Island	88.6%
Mode of Transit	**Percent**
Drove or Carpooled	75.9%
Walked	12.2%
Public Transportation	7.3%
Bicycle	1.0%
Other Means	1.0%
Worked at home	2.5%
Source: U.S. Census, SF4	

The City of Cranston, immediately south of Providence, is the second greatest contributor of employees to Providence businesses and the second greatest source of jobs for Providence residents. This is likely related to the large state government complex located in Cranston (see Table A.20 'Employment Shed and Commuter Shed'). Warwick, Pawtucket, and East Providence – in that order – are the next largest contributors of Providence-based employees, as well as jobs for Providence residents.

Existing Conditions A

No city or town *outside* of Rhode Island is home to more than one percent of Providence-based employees, and no single municipality *within* the state, other then Providence itself at 31 percent, is home to more than nine percent of Providence-based employees.

Four cities in Massachusetts each provide jobs for at least one percent of Providence's working residents, led by the 1,100 jobs in Boston proper filled by Providence residents. Overall, about 6,800 Providence residents work in Massachusetts. The exchange of commuters with the state of Connecticut is more modest, with about 500 Providence residents traveling to Connecticut and about 400 Connecticut residents coming to jobs in Providence.

In Rhode Island the employment centers other than Providence – defined as areas with more jobs than resident workers – are Newport/Middletown, Lincoln, Warwick, and West Greenwich (DLT, RIEPC).

Table A.20 Employment Shed and Commuter Shed

Where People Working in Providence Live			Where People Living in Providence Work		
Location	**Number**	**Percent**	**Location**	**Number**	**Percent**
Providence, RI	33,938	31%	Providence, RI	33,938	51%
Cranston, RI	10,010	9%	Cranston, RI	6,272	9%
Warwick, RI	8,130	7%	Warwick, RI	3,481	5%
Pawtucket, RI	5,801	5%	Pawtucket, RI	2,962	4%
East Providence, RI	5,163	5%	East Providence, RI	2,286	3%
North Providence, RI	4,916	4%	Johnston, RI	1,488	2%
Johnston, RI	3,274	3%	Lincoln, RI	1,216	2%
Smithfield, RI	2,342	2%	Boston, MA	1,110	2%
Coventry, RI	2,054	2%	Woonsocket, RI	1,065	2%
Cumberland, RI	2,039	2%	North Providence, RI	1,017	2%
Barrington, RI	1,992	2%	Smithfield, RI	856	1%
West Warwick, RI	1,962	2%	Cumberland, RI	624	1%
North Kingstown, RI	1,873	2%	Attleboro, MA	612	1%
Lincoln, RI	1,864	2%	West Warwick, RI	551	1%
Woonsocket, RI	1,229	1%	North Attleboro, MA	468	1%
Scituate, RI	1,197	1%	South Kingstown, RI	439	1%
Bristol, RI	1,180	1%	Fall River, MA	411	1%
Other	21,651	19%	Other	8,373	11%
Total	**110,615**	**100%**	Total	**67,169**	**100%**

Source: U.S. Census Transportation Package, table and maps by RIEPC

A Existing Conditions

The "immediate commuter shed" is defined as all census block groups wholly or partially within a 25-mile radius of Providence City Hall. Over 1.7 million people live within the immediate commuter shed, including 193,000 in the highly-sought 24 to 35 year old age group. There are nearly 300,000 adults with a Bachelor's or advanced degree, and the employed population includes this same number employed in management and related occupations. According to the Census Bureau, households in this commuter shed have a combined income of over $38.5 billion and the median family income is nearly $60,000.

Industry Trends and Comparisons Over the Past Decade

Between 1992 and 2002, Rhode Island private employment grew by 16 percent outside of Providence and by just one percent within Providence. The statewide growth rate for the period was about 11 percent, a considerably lesser rate than all other New England states except Connecticut (see Table A.21 'New England States Employment').

Providence trended in the same direction as the rest of the state for jobs in Construction (up), Manufacturing (down), and Retail Trade (up). However, Providence lost employment in three divisions where the rest of the state gained: Telecommunications and Public Utilities; Wholesale Trade; and Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate. While the city increased employment in Retail Trade and Construction at a significantly greater rate than the remainder of Rhode Island, only in the Services division did Providence trend upward while the rest of the state trended downward (see Table A.22 'SIC Industry Divisions, 1992-2002').

Table A.21 New England States Employment

New England States	All Private Employment		
	2002	Change since 1992	Percent Change
Connecticut	1,409,970	101,358	7.2%
Maine	492,792	80,645	16.4%
Massachusetts	2,789,814	420,999	15.1%
New Hampshire	521,442	111,013	21.3%
Rhode Island	404,079	43,685	10.8%
Vermont	246,576	42,366	17.2%

Source: BLS County Business Patterns

Table A.22 SIC Industry Divisions, 1992-2002

	Providence			Rest of Rhode Island		
	2002	Change since 1992	Percent Change	2002	Change since 1992	Percent Change
All Private Employment	97,381	1,356	1%	306,698	42,329	16%
Construction	2,526	1,143	83%	16,440	5,600	52%
Manufacturing	9,833	-7,719	-44%	54,963	-16,831	-23%
Telecom/Public Utilities	3,288	-1,071	-25%	12,870	2,806	28%

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	Providence			Rest of Rhode Island		
	2002	Change since 1992	Percent Change	2002	Change since 1992	Percent Change
Wholesale Trade	3,111	-1,167	-27%	15,623	1,978	14%
Retail Trade	14,604	5,715	64%	76,042	12,044	19%
Finance/Insurance/ Real Estate	9,153	-2,192	-19%	22,600	9,550	73%
Services	48,102	7,531	16%	77,632	-599	-1%
Source: RI DLT - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, ProvPlan calc. for Rest of RI						

Over the past three years, Providence lost one percent of its private employment while the rest of the state gained three percent, so that in the Third Quarter of 2005, Providence had 23 percent of all private employment in Rhode Island (see Table A.23 'NAICS Industry Divisions, 2002Q3- 2005Q3'). In terms of NAICS industry divisions, Educational Services are most heavily concentrated in Providence, with 60 percent of statewide employment located in the city. Providence also claims at least one-third of statewide employment in four other industries: Utilities (46 percent), Information (36 percent), Administrative & Waste Services (33 percent), and Health Care & Social Assistance (33 percent). Given its share of overall employment, Providence has a relatively low portion of the jobs in several industries such as Wholesale Trade (14 percent), Retail Trade (14 percent), Construction (13 percent), Manufacturing (13 percent), and Transportation & Warehousing (8 percent).

While the rest of the state lost employment in only two industries between 2002 and 2005, Providence saw employment decline in eight industry divisions (not including Government), highlighted by the continued fall of Manufacturing (-20 percent) and Finance and Insurance (-25 percent) – traditionally strong industries in the city.

Table A.23 NAICS Industry Divisions, 2002Q3- 2005Q3

	Providence		Change since 2002 Quarter 3	
	2005 Q3	State Share	Prov	Rest of RI
All Private Employment	97,400	23%	-1%	3%
Utilities	530	46%	-23%	22%
Construction	3,129	13%	5%	17%
Manufacturing	7,003	13%	-20%	-9%
Wholesale Trade	2,300	14%	-8%	4%
Retail Trade	7,157	14%	-6%	0%
Transportation & Warehousing	759	8%	-18%	3%
Information	3,883	36%	-6%	-2%
Finance & Insurance	5,739	22%	-25%	17%

A Existing Conditions

	Providence		Change since 2002 Quarter 3	
	2005 Q3	State Share	Prov	Rest of RI
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1,453	21%	0%	13%
Professional & Technical Services	6,265	30%	4%	16%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1,962	22%	30%	39%
Administrative & Waste Services	8,771	33%	5%	15%
Educational Services	10,028	60%	8%	16%
Health Care & Social Assistance	24,126	33%	7%	7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	962	11%	8%	2%
Accommodation & Food Services	8,604	19%	7%	4%
Other services, except Public Administration	4,726	25%	-1%	5%
Government	14,935	26%	-15%	5%
Source: RI DLT - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, ProvPlan calc. for Rest of RI				

The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) has prepared projections of how statewide employment will change within industrial sectors over the decade of 2002-2012. (Estimates are not available at the city level.) While overall employment is projected to grow by 11.5 percent, several industrial sectors are thought to be growing at twice the rate (see Table A.24 'Statewide Industrial Employment Outlook, 2002-2012'). These industries include Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (27.8 percent increase), Healthcare Support (27.4 percent), Healthcare and Social Assistance (23.2 percent), and Construction (25.0 percent). The second largest industrial sector in 2002, Manufacturing, is projected as the only group to lose employment (-13.5 percent) between 2002 and 2012.

Table A.24 Statewide Industrial Employment Outlook, 2002-2012

NAICS Code	Sector Title	2002	2012	Absolute Change	Percent
	Total All Industries	505,561	563,909	58,348	11.50%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	756	870	114	15.1%
21	Mining	224	276	52	23.2%
22	Utilities	1,159	1,175	16	1.4%
23	Construction	19,317	24,150	4,833	25.0%

Existing Conditions A

NAICS Code	Sector Title	2002	2012	Absolute Change	Percent
33-33	Manufacturing	62,159	53,785	-8,374	-13.5%
42	Wholesale Trade	16,401	16,580	179	1.1%
44-45	Retail Trade	52,699	58,700	6,001	11.4%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	9,649	10,995	1,346	13.9%
51	Information	11,127	12,765	1,638	14.7%
52	Finance and Insurance	24,929	28,455	3,526	14.1%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6,126	6,670	544	8.9%
54	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	18,927	24,190	5,263	27.8%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	6,416	8,000	1,584	24.7%
56	Administrative Waste Services	23,333	25,925	2,592	11.1%
61	Educational Services	44,215	50,260	6,045	13.7%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	69,963	86,190	16,227	23.2%
71	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	7,097	8,905	1,808	25.5%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	40,504	49,520	9,016	22.3%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	17,634	20,390	2,756	15.6%
92	Government	33,961	34,810	849	2.5%
	Self-Employed, Unpaid Family & Unclassified	38,965	41,298	2,333	6.0%

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NAICS Code	Sector Title	2002	2012	Absolute Change	Percent

Source: RI DLT - Opportunities: Rhode Island's Occupational Outlook for 2012

The Providence Metro Area contains about one-tenth of New England's total metropolitan multi-tenant office supply (Table A.25 'Multi-Tenant Office Supply by Major New England City, 2005').

Table A.25 Multi-Tenant Office Supply by Major New England City, 2005

Metro Area	Square Feet	Vacancy Rate
Providence	11,813,731	9.4%
Hartford	14,042,720	16.8%
Worcester	6,835,745	16.3%
Manchester	4,706,284	17.5%
Boston	163,910,157	19.4%

Source: CBRE, Meredity & Grew, ZHA

In 2004 the city of Providence had the lowest office vacancy (8 percent) rate when compared to suburban Rhode Island and both urban and suburban areas of other New England cities such as Boston and Hartford (Figure 4-2).

Table A.26 Office Vacancy Rates, 2004

Area	Vacancy Rate
Suburban Rhode Island	10%
Providence City	8%
Suburban Hartford	17%
Hartford City	20%
Suburban Boston	22%
Cambridge	16%
Boston City	13%

Source: CBRE, ZHA

A little more than one-quarter (28 percent) of Providence's downtown office space is Class-A (Table A.27 'Downtown Office Supply by Office Class, 2004').

Table A.27 Downtown Office Supply by Office Class, 2004

Class	Square Feet	Percent of Total
Class-A	1,579,625	28%
Class-B	3,277,425	57%
Class-C	880,492	15%
Total	5,737,542	100%
Source: CBRE, ZHA		

Between 1999 and 2004, Downtown Providence went from having about 464,000 square feet of unoccupied Class A and B multi-tenant office supply to about 362,000 square feet of unoccupied space (Table A.28 'Downtown Class A and B Multi-Tenant Office Supply, 1999-2004').

Table A.28 Downtown Class A and B Multi-Tenant Office Supply, 1999-2004

Office Square Footage	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change
Total SF	4,844,826	4,915,826	4,785,826	na	4,484,626	4,857,050	12,224
Occupied SF	4,380,874	4,489,759	4,142,000	na	4,122,657	4,495,081	114,207
Source: CBRE, ZHA							

A comparison of the availability and lease rates of office space in various areas of Downtown Providence and other areas of Rhode Island are shown in Table A.29 'Multi-Tenant Office Supply, Downtown 2004' and Table A.30 'Multi-Tenant Office Supply, Suburbs 2004'.

Table A.29 Multi-Tenant Office Supply, Downtown 2004

Districts	Total SF	Avail. SF	Vacancy	Absorption	Avg. Lease Rate
Capital Center	354,391	12,616	3.56%	-4,616	$29.75
Financial	2,825,099	275,857	9.76%	25,582	$22.02
Westminster	548,900	34,500	6.29%	4,500	$14.73
South Main	138,800	5,300	3.82%	-1,275	$17.35
Randall Sq.	195,985	4,500	2.35%	1,484	$19.78
Empire	220,916	0	0.00%	0	$18.79
Promenade	808,500	109,200	13.51%	91,500	$18.55
Jewelry (Richmond)	543,950	44,300	6.88%	7,300	$17.31
Total Market	5,737,542	486,373	8.48%	124,475	
Source: CBRE, ZHA					

A Existing Conditions

Table A.30 Multi-Tenant Office Supply, Suburbs 2004

Districts	Total SF	Avail. SF	Vacancy	Absorption	Avg. Lease Rate
Northern RI	1,497,748	143,399	9.57%	89,001	$14.60
West Bay	2,147,733	151,595	7.06%	63,225	$15.72
East Bay	953,440	161,490	16.94%	-540	$10.61
Suburban Providence	563,776	78,279	13.88%	-8,168	$15.37
Aquidneck Island	913,492	86,400	9.46%	30,064	$11.71
Total Market	6,076,189	621,163	10.22%	173,582	
Source: CBRE, ZHA					

Asking rents throughout the region are shown in Table A.31 'Average Asking Rent per SF with Comparison Areas, 2004'.

Table A.31 Average Asking Rent per SF with Comparison Areas, 2004

Area	Asking Rent per sq. ft.
Suburban Rhode Island	$14
Providence City	$20
Suburban Hartford	$17
Hartford City	$19
Manchester	$16
Suburban Boston	$17
Cambridge	$24
Boston City	$33
Source: CBRE, ZHA	

Sales Activity

Providence has outstripped the region in retail sales and in hotel and restaurant sales (Table A.32 'Growth in Retail, Hotel and Restaurant Sales, 1997-2002').

Table A.32 Growth in Retail, Hotel and Restaurant Sales, 1997-2002

Retail Sales		Hotel and Restaurant Sales	
Place	Growth Rate	Place	Growth Rate

Retail Sales		Hotel and Restaurant Sales	
US	24%	US	28%
MA	26%	MA	27%
RI	38%	RI	42%
Providence	47%	Providence	61%
Source: Census Bureau, Bureau of Government Research and Services - RIC			

Port Activity

The Port of Providence is operated by ProvPort, Inc. The port is a multimodal facility for international and domestic trade with freight rail and highway access to all major cities throughout the northeastern United States and Canada. It handles bulk and breakbulk commodities such as heavy machinery, lumber, chemicals, and bulk coal and salt. ProvPort's 105-acre site offers a variety of transshipment and storage facility options. It features:

- Six deep water berths totaling 3500 linear feet
- Three warehouses totaling 300,000 square feet with ten loading bay doors
- Over 20 acres of paved, open storage area
- On-dock rail access with three rail spurs

In 2004, ProvPort deepened its six berths to a maximum depth of 40 feet at mean low water. The project involved dredging more than six million cubic yards of material from the Providence River to return a seven mile stretch to fully authorized navigational dimensions of 40' deep and 600 feet wide (ProvPort.com).

A.6 Housing

Housing Units

The 2000 Census counted 67,915 housing units in the city of Providence, a two percent increase from 1990. By far the largest unit type increase was the "no bedroom" (or studio), which increased by 66 percent, although it still comprised a very small segment of overall housing units (5 percent) (See Table A.33 'Housing Units by Type' and Figure A.17 'Housing Units by Type, 2000').

Table A.33 Housing Units by Type

	1990	2000	Percent Change
Three or more Bedrooms	25,798	25,852	0.21%
Two Bedrooms	27,039	25,818	-4.52%
One Bedroom	11,905	12,841	7.86%
No Bedroom	2,052	3,404	65.89%
Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census			

A **Existing Conditions**

Figure A.17 Housing Units by Type, 2000
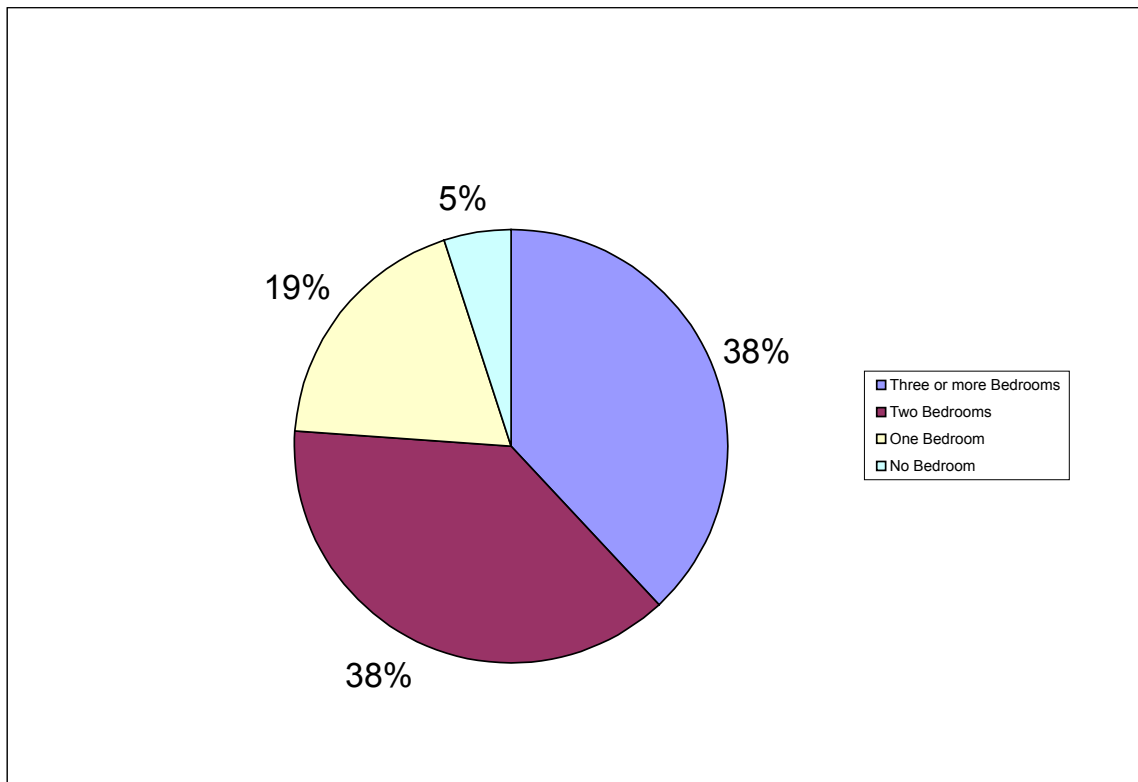
Source: 2000 US Census

Housing Density

The housing density in Providence is 5.7 units per acre of land (67,847 units/11,814 acres). The density ranges from areas with no housing to 412 housing units per acre (see Map A.8 'Housing Density'). Of the 11,814 acres in Providence, 6,695 have at least one unit of residential housing. When density is calculated using only residential acres density increases to 10.1 housing units per acre, or 31 housing units per block. There are thirteen blocks in the city with density over 100 units per acre. Viewed at a larger scale, Providence has a density of 3,675 housing units per square mile.

Map A.8 Housing Density
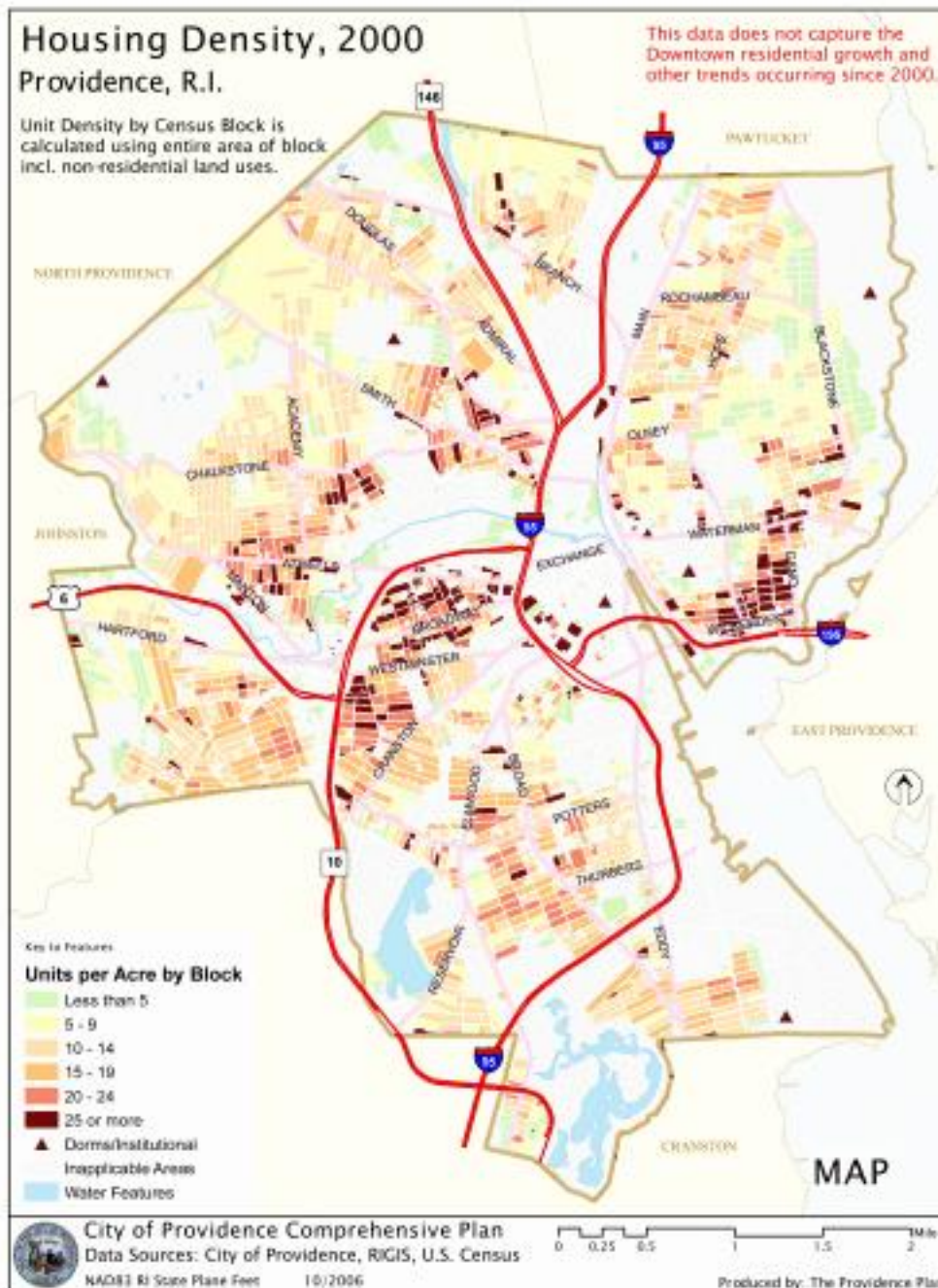
A Existing Conditions

Housing Occupancy & Vacancy

The overall vacancy rate for the city decreased from 11.8 percent in 1990 to 8.1 percent in 2000. This is mostly likely due to the rental vacancy rate which declined from 10.5 percent to 6 percent during this time period, while the homeowner vacancy rate remained relatively stable, increasing slightly from 2.2 percent to 3.1 percent.

Since 2000, there has been an increase in housing units, due to recent development efforts. New types of housing include infill houses in residential neighborhoods, mill and commercial building conversions and high-rise condominiums. With housing costs rising (see below), the vacancy rate has likely declined since 2000.

Housing Stock: Age & Quality

The majority of structures built in the City of Providence are over sixty years old (See Figure A.18 'Percent of Structures Built by Timeframe'). This potentially has an impact on housing costs (heating, repairs) and at-risk property indicators, such as structure fires, which rose to 194 in the fall of 2005 (See Table A.34 'At-Risk Property Indicators'). Lead mitigation can also increase housing costs. The 2002 Lead Hazard Mitigation Law requires owners of high risk properties meet lead safe standards [4].

Figure A.18 Percent of Structures Built by Timeframe

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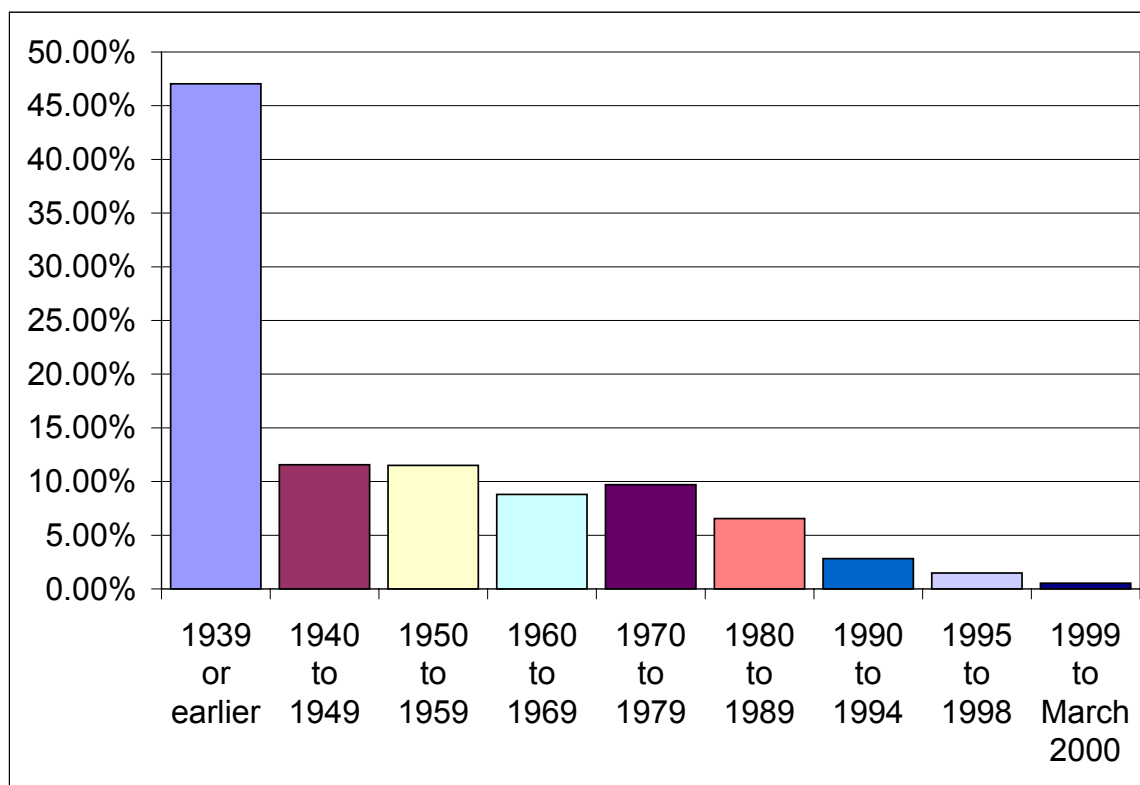
4   High risk is defined as when there have been both three or more children under age six living at the premises with at least environmental intervention blood lead levels and fifty percent of all children under age six who have ever lived at the premises who have been tested for lead, have had at least environmental intervention blood lead levels.

Existing Conditions   A

Source: US Census

Table A.34 At-Risk Property Indicators

	2004				2005				2006
	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Environmental Tickets	252	144	135	148	151	164	141	76	127
Foreclosures	48	40	51	39	38	30	37	72	69 (Jan-Feb only)
Structure Fires	127	121	107	150	143	127	120	194	N/A

Source: City of Providence

Building permits for multi-family dwellings reached a ten year high in the first quarter of 2006 with 60 permits issued. Single family permits were highest over the last ten years in 2005 when 44 permits were issued, equaling the number of multi-family permits for that year (See Figure A.19 'Residential Building Permits Issued, 1996-2006').

Figure A.19 Residential Building Permits Issued, 1996-2006
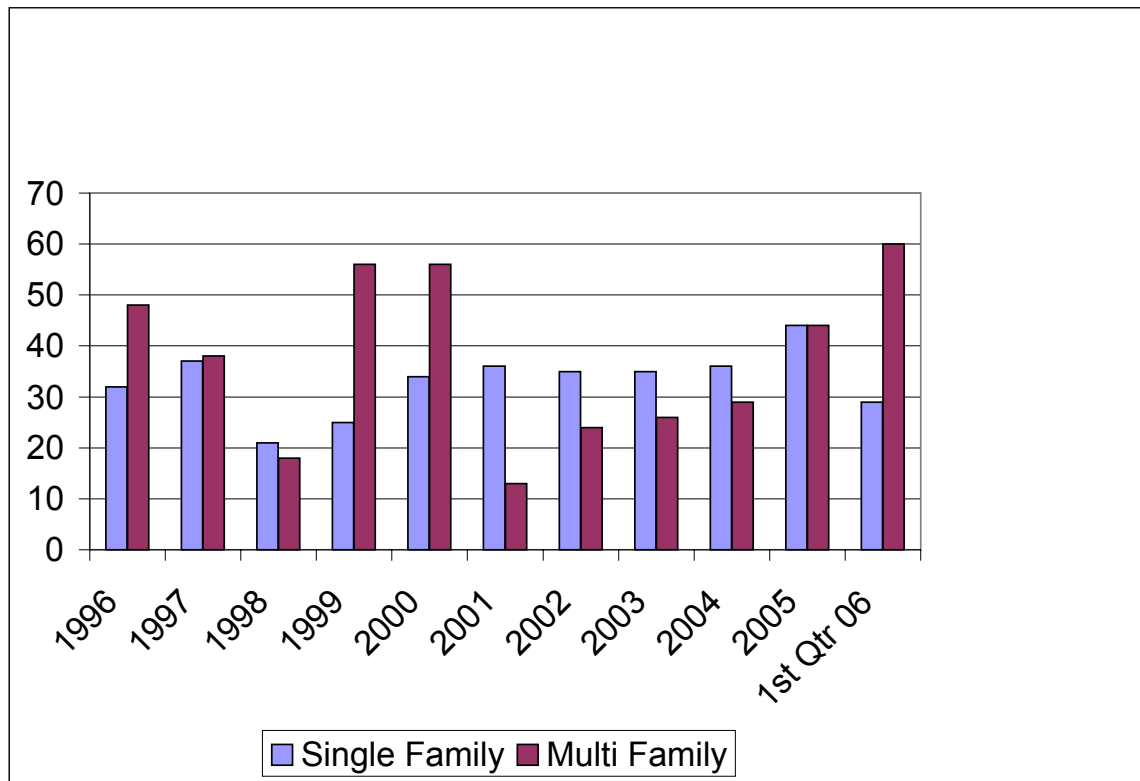
Source: Rhode Island Builders Association

A	**Existing Conditions**

Homeownership

The homeownership rate overall in 1990 was 36.3 percent and declined slightly to 34.6 percent in 2000 (See Figure A.20 'Housing Units, Percentage by Occupancy, Type, & Vacancy, 1970-2000'). However, homeownership rates increased among African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and non-Hispanic White households. Hispanic households experienced the largest increase in homeownership, 4.2 percent.

Figure A.20 Housing Units, Percentage by Occupancy, Type, & Vacancy, 1970-2000
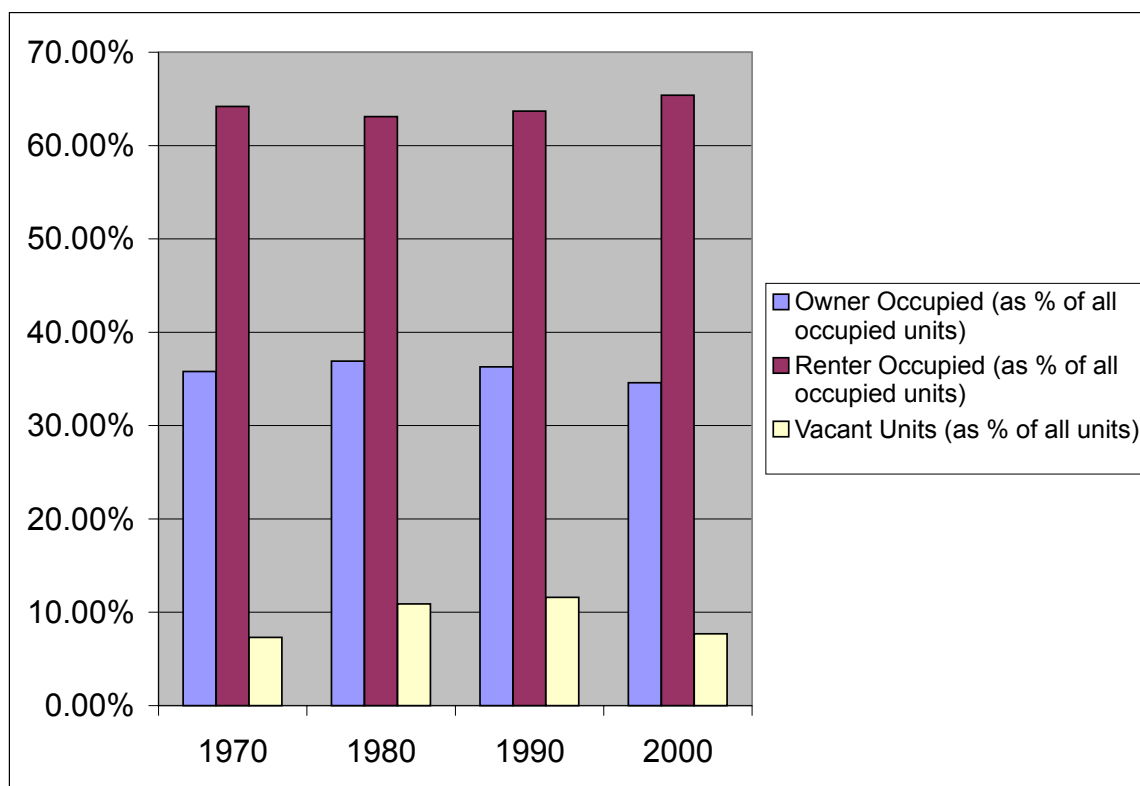
Source: US Census

Owner occupancy maps show two ways to determine homeownership in the city, by property and by unit (see Map A.9 'Percent of Properties with Owner-Occupant' and Map A.10 'Percentage of Units with Owner-Occupant'). The Census provides owner occupancy information based on the percentage of owner- occupied units among all occupied units. The city provides owner occupancy information based on the number of owner-occupied properties, determined by the homestead tax exemption, as a percent of all residential properties. Using the Census method, as depicted in the chart below, thirty-five percent of housing units were owner-occupied in 2000. Using the City data, the owner occupancy for that same year, based on properties, was 62 percent (Federal Hill is the lowest percent, at 41 percent and the Blackstone neighborhood is the highest at 83 percent). Overall, between 2003-04, the City increased owner-occupancy be two percentage points.

Map A.9 Percent of Properties with Owner-Occupant

Pct. of Properties with Owner-Occupant, 2004
Providence, R.I.

Owner-occupancy by block is based on owner-occupant tax exemptions among all homestead exemptions.

Key to Features
Properties Owner-Occ. by Block
- Less than 10%
- 10 - 24%
- 25 - 49%
- 50 - 74%
- 75 - 89%
- 90% or more
- Inapplicable Areas
- Water Features

City of Providence Comprehensive Plan
Data Sources: City of Providence, RIGIS, U.S. Census
NAD83 RI State Plane Feet   10/2006

Produced by: The Providence Plan

MAP
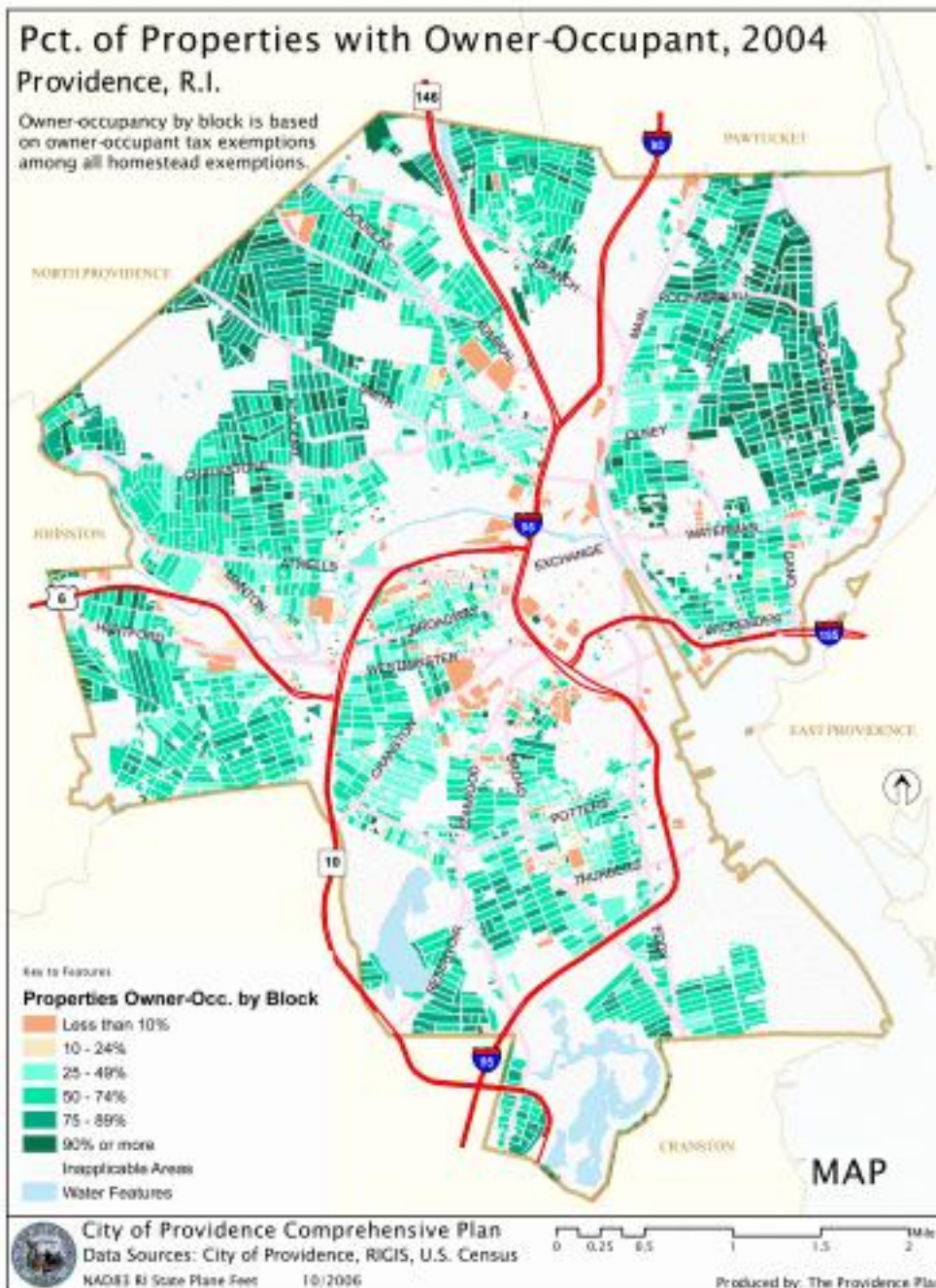
A Existing Conditions

Map A.10 Percentage of Units with Owner-Occupant
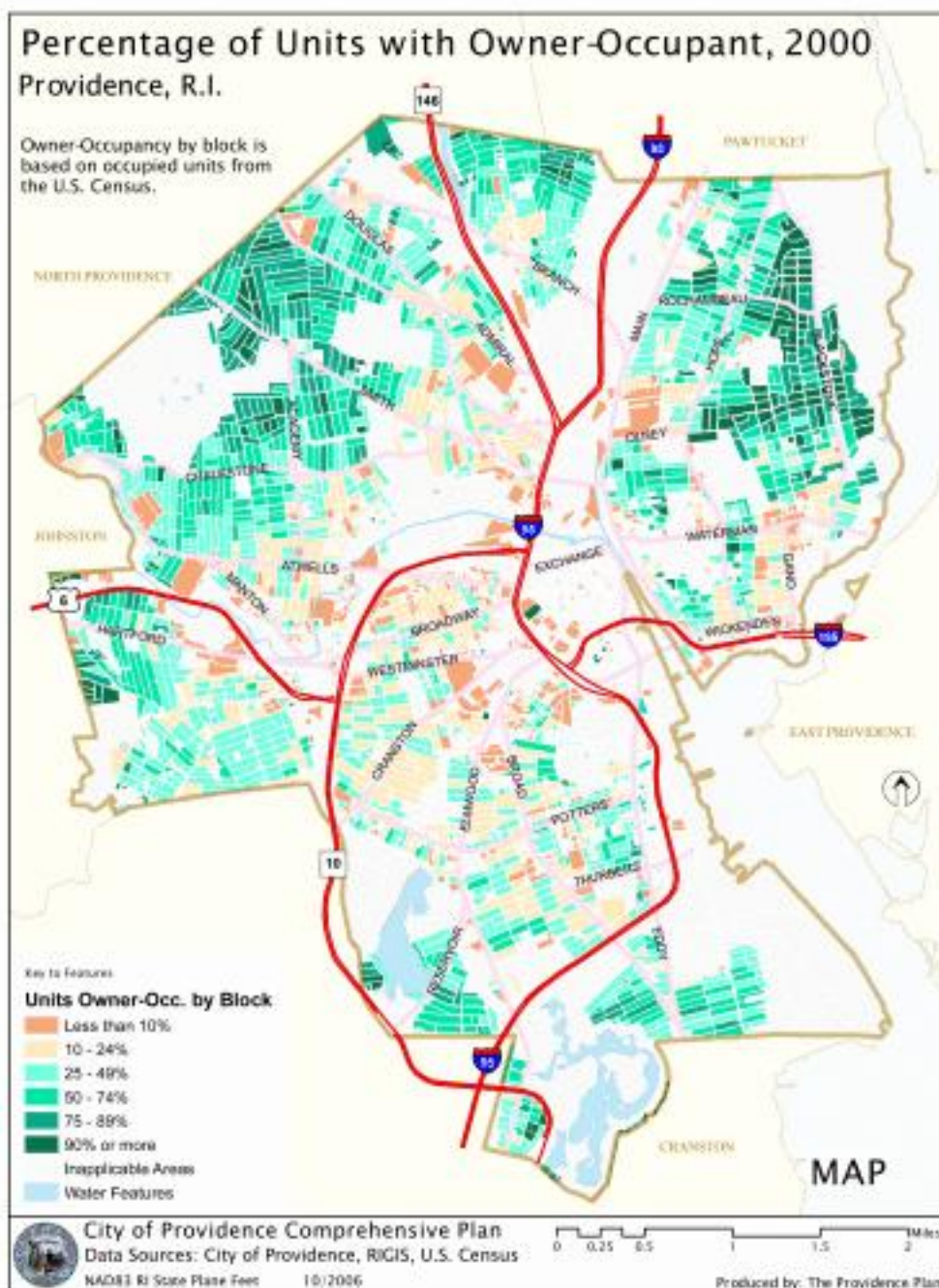
Condominium sales more than doubled between 2000 and 2005, indicating a rise in condo homeowners in the city and reflecting changing household size (Table A.35 'Residential Condominium Sales, 2000-2005').

Table A.35 Residential Condominium Sales, 2000-2005

YEAR	Rhode Island	Providence (not E.Side)	East Side
2000	1,283	66	87
2001	1,371	57	109
2002	1,327	46	87
2003	1,493	53	118
2004	1,759	115	126
2005	2,251	147	205

Source: Rhode Island Realtors Association

Housing prices and property values have soared since the 1980s, in all parts of the city (See Table A.36 'Median Single-Family Residential Sales Price 1980-2005', Table A.36 'Median Single-Family Residential Sales Price 1980-2005', Map A.11 'Residential Sales Activity', and Map A.12 'Assessed Value of Residential Properties').

Table A.36 Median Single-Family Residential Sales Price 1980-2005

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	
RHODE ISLAND	$49,500	$50,000	$49,000	$53,500	$59,000	
PROVIDENCE (not E.Side)	$33,000	$34,500	$35,000	$36,500	$37,000	
EAST SIDE	$71,000	$77,000	$79,750	$74,500	$82,000	
	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	
RHODE ISLAND	$67,000	$88,000	$120,000	$127,000	$128,000	
PROVIDENCE (not E.Side)	$43,500	$59,000	$83,000	$90,000	$95,500	
EAST SIDE	$90,000	$180,000	$164,750	$196,000	$187,000	
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	
RHODE ISLAND	$125,000	$121,000	$117,000	$115,000	$115,000	
PROVIDENCE (not E.Side)	$85,000	$86,500	$84,900	$76,100	$74,000	
EAST SIDE	$185,000	$170,285	$182,000	$169,000	$206,000	
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	
RHODE ISLAND	$115,000	$116,600	$118,000	$122,600	$126,000	
PROVIDENCE (not E.Side)	$69,000	$68,500	$69,000	$72,000	$75,000	

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EAST SIDE	$190,000	$185,000	$205,000	$190,000	$248,500	
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
RHODE ISLAND	$135,976	$156,000	$188,150	$230,000	$264,700	$282,900
PROVIDENCE (not E.Side)	$83,000	$ 97,925	$121,354	$147,750	$185,000	$210,000
EAST SIDE	$294,000	$359,500	$385,000	$392,625	$475,000	$510,000

Source: Rhode Island Realtors Association

Figure A.21 Median Residential Sales Price, 1997-2005

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Least Expensive N'hood	50000	45000	39250	50250	65000	95500	126500	175000	210250
Most Expensive N'hood	199500	188000	231500	269500	360000	418250	385000	446000	450000
CITYWIDE	78000	77500	81000	88500	105000	129000	168500	220000	251500
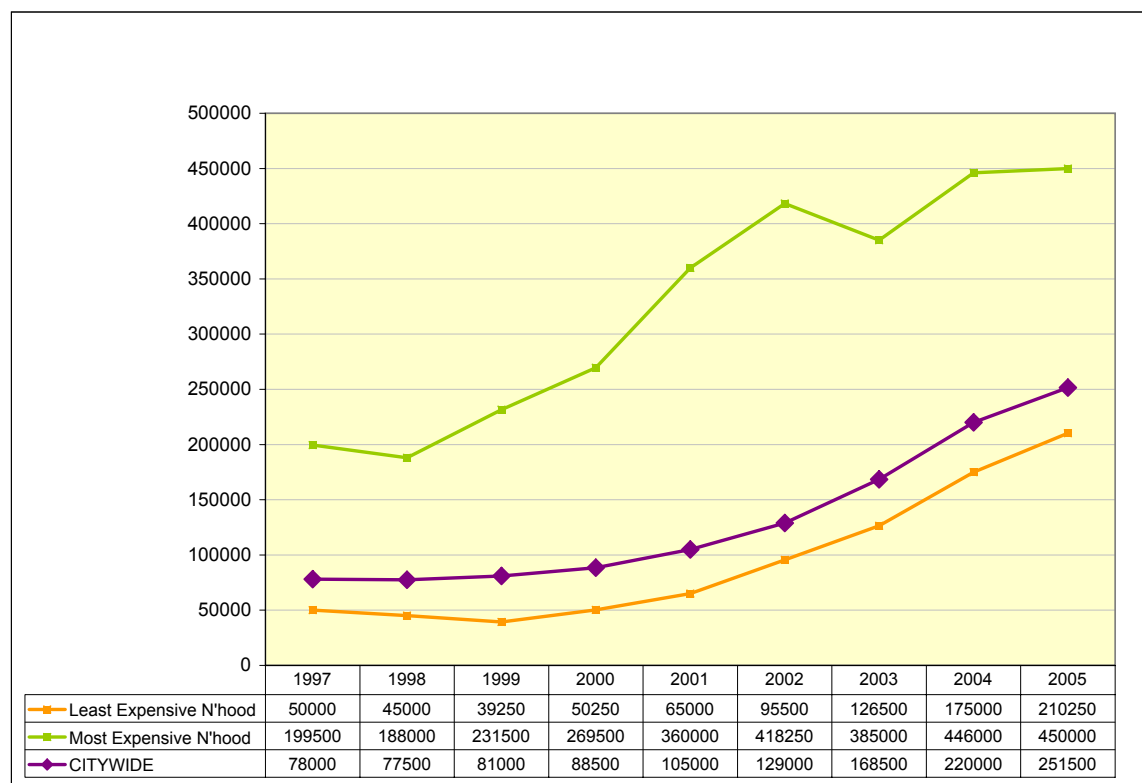
Source: Warren Information Services, Analysis by The Providence Plan

Map A.11 Residential Sales Activity

Residential Sales Activity by Price Range, 2004-05
Providence, R.I.

Existing Conditions

Map A.12 Assessed Value of Residential Properties

Assessed Value of Residential Properties, 2004
Providence, R.I.

Of all properties advertised for tax sale in 2005, tax liens were sold in thirty percent of cases. The number of properties advertised each year has remained between 1,000-2,000 over the last six sales (See Table A.37 'Property Tax Liens Advertised and Sold by Year Citywide').

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Table A.37 Property Tax Liens Advertised and Sold by Year Citywide

	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	2004	2005
	Sale A	Sale B	Sale A	Sale B	Sale A	Sale B	Sale A	Sale B	Sale A	Sale A	Sale A
Advertised	1305	1204	1310	829	955	1691	1680	1313	1279	1787	1510
Sold	157	360	356	193	364	393	418	254	480	329	443
Percent Sold	12.03%	29.90%	27.18%	23.28%	38.12%	23.24%	24.88%	19.35%	37.53%	18.41%	29.34%
Source: City of Providence											

Rental Market

Fair market rents, as determined by HUD, have increased steadily since 2001 (See Figure A.22 'Fair Market Rent Increase by Bedroom Size').

Figure A.22 Fair Market Rent Increase by Bedroom Size
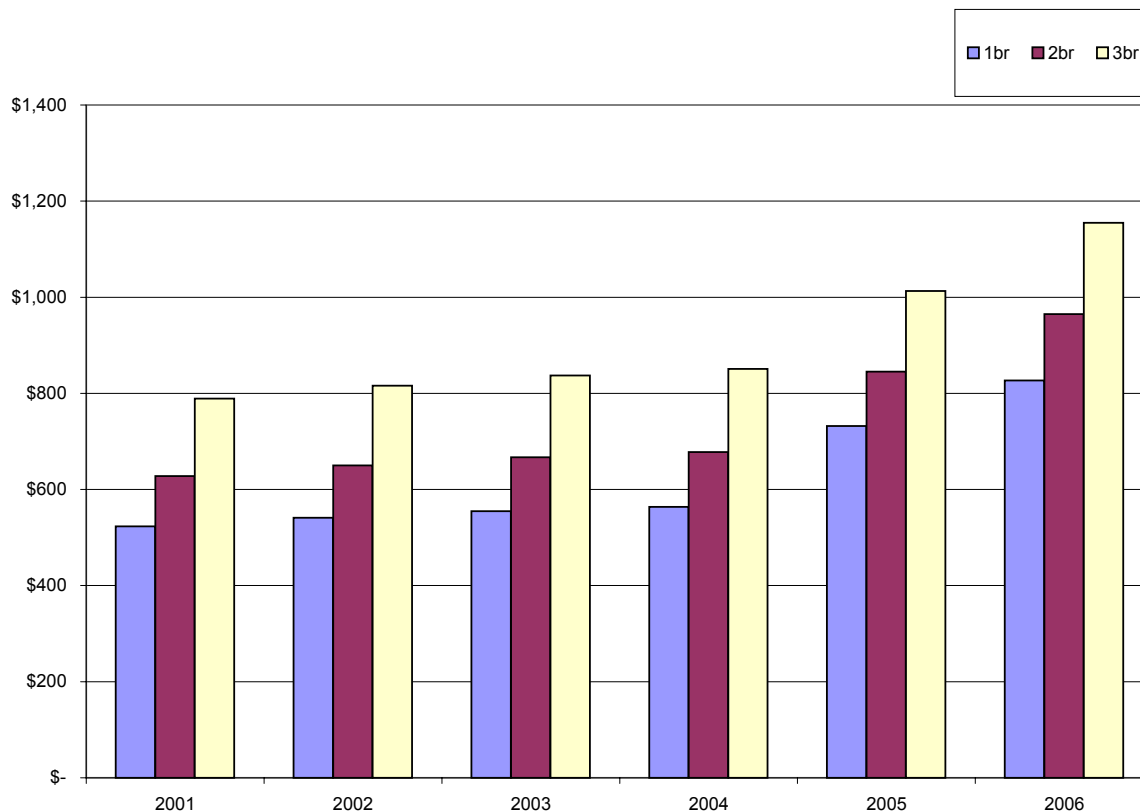
Source: HUD

A	**Existing Conditions**

Rhode Island Housing's 2005 Year End Rent Survey reveals advertised rents for select neighborhoods, with the East Side remaining the most expensive area in the city. In all neighborhoods, however, a two bedroom will cost at least $1,000 (See Figure A.23 '2005 Advertised Rents by Neighborhood').

Figure A.23 2005 Advertised Rents by Neighborhood
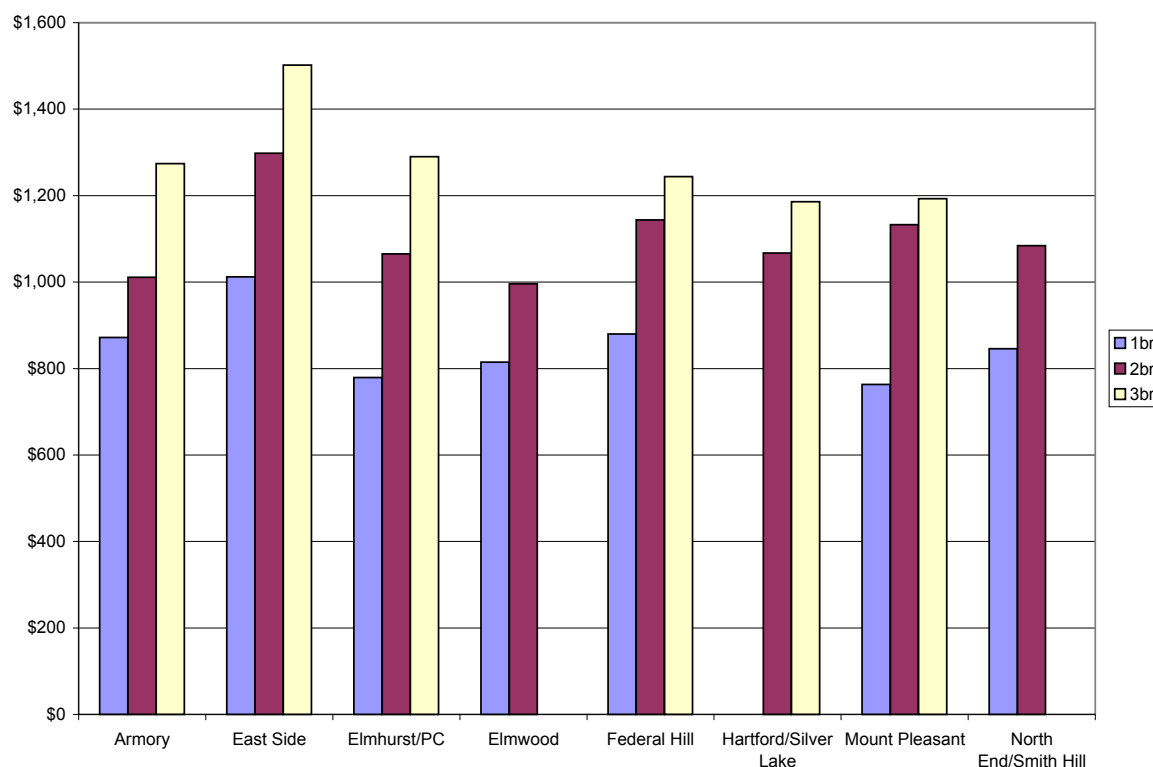
Source: Rhode Island Housing

Housing Affordability

According to Rhode Island Housing (RIH), Providence has 9,550 units of housing affordable to people of low or moderate income. This amounts to 14.13 percent of the total number of dwelling units in the city, and makes Providence one of only five communities in the state that exceed the goal of 10 percent set by Rhode Island General Law 45-53. [5]

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5 When calculating this percentage, RIH requires the housing to meet the definitions from two state laws: R.I.G.L. 42-128-8.1 defines what a household pays for affordable housing: "Affordable housing" means residential housing that has a sales price or rental amount that is within the means of a household that is moderate income or less. In the case of dwelling units for sale, housing that is affordable means housing in which principal, interest, taxes, which may be adjusted by state and local programs for property tax relief, and insurance constitute no more than thirty percent (30 percent) of the gross household income for a household with less than one hundred and twenty percent (120 percent) of area median income, adjusted for family size. In the case of dwelling units for rent, housing that is affordable means housing for which the rent, heat, and utilities other than telephone constitute no more than thirty percent (30 percent) of the gross annual household income for a household with eighty percent (80 percent) or less of area median income, adjusted for family size. R.I.G.L. 45-53-3 requires the housing to be subsidized and kept affordable for a long period of time: "Low or moderate income housing" means any housing whether built or operated by any public agency or any nonprofit organization or by any limited equity housing cooperative or any private developer, that is subsidized by a federal, state, or municipal government subsidy under any program to assist the construction or rehabilitation of housing affordable to low or moderate income households, as defined in the applicable federal or state statute, or local ordinance and

Nevertheless, many households are cost burdened when it comes to housing. With a median household income substantially less than the area median income, more than half of Providence's renters pay in excess of 30 percent of household income in rent (See Table A.38 'Rent vs. Incomes').

Table A.38 Rent vs. Incomes

Average rent on a 2-bedroom apartment	$1,097
Income required to pay rent (assuming affordability = 30% of income to rent)	$43,880 annual salary (post tax)
Median household income (2000)	$26,867
Households paying more than 30% rent to income (2000)	53.4%
Population with adjusted gross income under $49,999	82.2%
Source: dataplace.org, Rhode Island Housing Annual Rent Survey	

Public and Assisted Housing

The Providence Housing Authority (PHA) owns and manages 2,604 units of public housing in the city. These units are located in fourteen development locations, including 244 scattered site developments. The scattered site units are single-family and duplex style homes, with no more than ten units at each location. Developments range in size from 24 units (Sunset Village) to 508 units (Hartford Park).

PHA maintains waiting lists for both public housing and Section 8 assistance. As of December 2004, there were 975 families or individuals on the public housing waiting list and 423 on the Section 8 waiting list, which has been closed since October 1998. There are an additional 1,687 families on the pre-application wait list. Of those on the Section 8 wait list, 76 percent make less than thirty percent of the city's median family income and 73 percent are Hispanic.

A.7 Mobility

Roadways

Providence encompasses 18.5 square miles of land, however in that 18.5 square miles, are some 372 miles of roadway. This road network includes interstate highways, state roads, and local streets. The City benefits from two interstate highways and a network of state highways as well. The highway system carries traffic through the State of Rhode Island to Connecticut and Massachusetts, and has a regional significance in terms of highway travel and transport. The relocation of interstate 195 is underway, and is scheduled for completion in 2010. The removal of the current highway structure will be complete by 2012 and will allow for the reconnecting of portions of the street grid in the Downtown. Providence's strategic location at the head of Narragansett Bay is the reason why it was an early hub of the road and railway systems.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) has classified the highway and street systems throughout the state based on Federal Highway Administration (FHA) standards. This "functional classification" of streets and highways focuses on the various functions that roads serve. The two basic roadway functions are :access to property

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that will remain affordable through a land lease and/or deed restriction for ninety-nine (99) years or such other period that is either agreed to by the applicant and town or prescribed by the federal, state, or municipal government subsidy program but that is not less than thirty (30) years from initial occupancy.

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and travel mobility. Most roads perform both functions, but in varying combinations. This relationship ultimately determines the functional classification of a road. The three classifications - local, collector and arterial reflect the access/mobility relationship as described below. In general roadways are classified according to the following criteria: local, emphasis on land access function; collector, relatively even balance between land access and through traffic; and arterial, emphasis on high level of mobility for through movement.

In urban areas (as defined by the US Census Bureau) such as Providence, the functional classification system is broken down as follows:

1. Principal Arterial Street
    a. Interstate
    b. Connecting link of a rural principal arterial
    c. Connecting link of a rural minor arterial
    d. Other principal arterial (non-connecting link)
2. Minor Arterial Street
3. Collector Street
4. Local Street

RIDOT has also identified those road networks which receive federal aid for improvements as outlined in "Federal Aid Systems." New listings of federally-funded improvement recipients are published on a regular basis. In Rhode Island, Interstates 95 and 195 receive federal aid, as do Routes 1, 1A, 10 ,146, 44, 7, 6, and RI-195. In addition, a significant number of smaller "urban routes" receive federal aid for road improvements.

Mass Transit

Bus

Providence is the hub of RIPTA bus service and is well served by RIPTA routes. Bus ridership is currently about 98,000 per day throughout the RIPTA system with about 75,000 riders going to and from downtown Providence every day. Overall ridership has increased from about 18,900,000 (annually) in 1999 to 24,500,000 in 2006 (a 29% gain). It is expected that increased downtown economic activities and continued population growth throughout Providence will help in attracting more people to use bus service.

RIPTA has 254 buses and operates them at an average cost of $6.85 per vehicle mile. The system cost per passenger is $2.97 and costs are covered by the State (60%), the Federal Government (15%) user fees and miscellaneous sources (25%). In addition to operating 254 buses, RIPTA also operates 135 paratransit vans, 17 Flex service vans and the Providence to Newport Ferry. The bus fleet is continually modernized through the purchase of new vehicles. During FY2006 36 new, low floor clean diesel buses were added to the fleet. Additionally 25 older buses were retrofitted with diesel particulate filters to lower their emissions, and seven older buses were completely rehabilitated with new drive trains, undercarriages and interiors. RIPTA also recently completed evaluation and master planning for a new paratransit operations and support center at Elmwood Ave to meet major operational needs, including the construction of indoor bus storage to limit overnight bus idling.

Rail

Providence rail commuters and travelers are served by an extensive Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and Amtrack system. The MBTA runs twenty-one commuter rail trains from Providence to Boston each

weekday, 12 during rush hours. Amtrack provides both regional and Acela Express service from Providence to Boston and to the New York region as well.

Freight Rail

There is also freight rail service to the Port of Providence, the Providence Gas Company and a number of other industrial businesses, facilitating freight train traffic of more than 2,000 railroad cars per year in the area. Active Providence and Worcester Railroad (P&W) line cross Allens Avenue at several points and run along its center.

Biking and Walking

Pedestrian access in Providence is one of its special characteristics. Many individuals walk to work, students walk to schools and neighborhoods enjoy pedestrian access to local community area. All traffic studies and transportation plans should include elements providing for ease of pedestrian movement.

The Blackstone River Bikeway will be connected to the Providence Bike Network in Spring 2007. The Providence Bike Network will also connect to the East Bay Bicycle Path at the Interstate 195 bridge in Providence. The Providence Bike Network will consist of signed and striped routes for bicycles throughout the city, facilitating bicycle use.

Air Travel

Providence is ten miles north of T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, Rhode Island. The proximity of the airport to the City is a benefit to both businesses and the tourism industry. In addition to T.F. Green, Providence is in close proximity to two smaller airports: Smithfield/Lincoln and Quonset Point.

Port of Providence

The City of Providence maintains an active Port, equipped to handle thousands of tons annually from all over the world. The Port of Providence is the second largest deep water port in New England. It is an important regional distribution center for petroleum and other products. In addition the Port has serviced, and could service again, cruise ships and other water-related recreational facilities, including docking and mooring.

The industrial waterfront is linked to the Atlantic Ocean, 27 miles away, by a navigational channel in the Providence River. The channel provides safe passage for deep draft vessels, and has been manually widened over the years. In the early 1970's the channel was deepened to 40 feet below mean low water from Narragansett Bay to Fields Point to Fox Point. This allows deep draft ocean vessels to use the dock north of Fields Point.

Waterside access from the channel to the port area is provided by two types of facilities. The Municipal Wharf serves ships containing general and bulk cargo, while privately owned piers located north of the Municipal Wharf serve ships and barges carrying petroleum or other bulk cargo. The Municipal Wharf provides six berths varying in depth from 35 to 40 feet, deep enough for current shipping needs. The pier area north of Municipal Wharf provides seven usable berths ranging in depth from 21 to 27 feet.

Parking

Providence is a city whose basic development pattern was established long before automobile and truck traffic became prevalent. It is therefore a city into which parking must be fit, rather than one that was developed with parking in mind from the outset. Parking is especially difficult in downtown; but residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas outside of downtown also face parking problems.

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Outside the downtown area parking is accommodated by zoning requirements and on-street parking regulations. The Department of Traffic Engineering has instituted a pilot overnight on street parking program and if successful, has plans to expand the pilot program. Downtown, the Department of Traffic Engineering has updated all of the parking meters. The new meters include multi-space meters (also known as pay and display) as well as computerized meters that accept parking cards and quarters. The new meters charge $1.00 per hour and have time limits that range from 15 to 10 hours.

A.8 Arts and Cultural Resources

Arts and Cultural facilities and organizations contribute greatly to the quality of life for residents of the City, state and region. They educate and entertain, and are also an important part of the City's economy.

Libraries

Library services to the public are provided by the Providence Public Library, an innovative private nonprofit organization which receives city, state and private support. The central/main library is located in the downtown area, and eight branch libraries are found in various neighborhoods of the City. This is discussed in greater detail in the community services and facilities section.

In addition to the central and branch libraries, there are fifteen other private and public libraries in the City. Brown University's John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library has a capacity of one and a half million volumes. Famous for rare collections are the Providence Athenaeum, the Annmary Brown Memorial, the John Carter Brown Library and the John Hay Library.

Performing Arts Venues

Performing arts theaters in the city include the Providence Center for the Performing Arts, which seats 3,200 people, the Veterans Memorial Auditorium which seats 2,200, and the Lederer Theater, home to the nationally-known Trinity Repertory Company. The Dunkin' Donuts Center which seats 13,500 was opened in 1972 and hosts sports, exhibitions and cultural events. Recently transferred from the City to the State of Rhode Island, "the Dunk" is being renovated and connected to the the Rhode Island Convention Center, which features 137,000 square feet of exhibit, pre-function and meeting space.

Educational Institutions

In the City of Providence are facilities for seven colleges and universities including: Brown University; Rhode Island School of Design (RISD); Providence College; Rhode Island College; Johnson and Wales University; Roger Williams University and, The University of Rhode Island Extension, all of which add to the cultural landscape of the City.

Arts and Cultural Organizations

Providence is home to well over 100 arts and cultural organizations. From small theater companies to symphony orchestras, dance troupes to opera companies, the groups reflect the rich cultural and ethnic diversity of the City.

A.9 People and Public Spaces

Existing Facilities

The Providence park system has changed dramatically since 1993 when the last comprehensive look at the park system was undertaken. Major park investments in the 1993-2006 period totaling approximately $68 million included:

- Approximately $15 million in city and state funds invested in neighborhood park renovations and in new parks. More than 60 neighborhood parks received improvements and 16 new neighborhood park spaces were acquired and developed.
- Approximately $20 million in state and city funds invested in new Downtown Providence parks along the Woonasquatucket and Providence Rivers creating a "stage" for Water Fire and other park programming.
- Approximately $15 million in city, state, and private funding invested in Roger Williams Park and Zoo transforming a once tired park into a unique city and state recreational resource.
- Approximately $8 million in city, state, federal, and private funding invested in a new Roger Williams Park Botanical Center scheduled for completion in 2007.
- Approximately $6 million invested in new or significantly renovated neighborhood recreation centers that are the anchors of indoor recreation in the neighborhoods.
- Approximately $4 million invested in outdoor high school athletic facilities.

The investment in parks has not only created newer and safer park facilities, but also the investments have significantly increased recreational and park programming opportunities in Providence. New facilities include:

- 9 new neighborhood water parks
- canoeing, sailing and boating opportunities
- a new Downtown outdoor skating rink
- a new par 3 golf course for youth
- 16 new walking tracks
- a new multi-mile wooded trail system at Neutaconkanut Hill
- a new community garden and off leash dog area at Gano Street Park
- a regional destination along the Downtown river walk system.

These changes reflect a gradual change in the park system from one dominated by sports and playgrounds to a system with many more family and life fitness activities. In addition, the effort in the past 10 years was also focused on providing playgrounds in the south side neighborhoods that were formally deficient in playgrounds accessible to a constituency often without cars. See Table A.39 'Outdoor Recreational Facilities and Indoor Recreation Centers' for a summary of the existing park and recreation facilities in Providence and shows the changes that have occurred since 1993. See also Map A.13 'Open Space and Recreation' for a map of the current park and recreation system.

Table A.39 Outdoor Recreational Facilities and Indoor Recreation Centers

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES					INDOOR RECREATION CENTERS	
	1993	2006	Change		*Center*	*Neighborhood*
Basketball Courts (full court)	26	35	9		Selim-Rogers	Smith Hill

A Existing Conditions

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES					INDOOR RECREATION CENTERS	
Basketball Courts (half court)	3	7	4		Joslin	Manton/Olneyville
Bocce Court	1	1	0		R.F. Kennedy	Elmhurst
Playgrounds	44	58	14		Vincent Brown	Mount Hope
Skateboard	0	1	1		Davey Lopes	South Providence
Tennis Courts	32	34	2		Zuccolo	Federal Hill
Softball Fields	20	16	-4		South Side	South Providence
Handball Courts	1	3	2		Sackett	Elmwood
Volleyball Courts	3	3	0		Neutaconkanut	Silver Lake
Walking Tracks	4	20	16		West End	West End
Wooded Trail Systems	1	2	1			
Football Fields	6	4	-2			
Soccer Fields	9	11	2			
Swimming Pools	6	6	0			
Little League Fields	14	21	7			
T-ball Fields	0	2	2			
Baseball Fields	10	8	-2			
Water parks	0	9	9			
Sailing Center	0	1	1			
Golf Courses	1	2	1			
Outdoor Skating Rink	0	1	1			
Fresh Water Docks	1	4	3			
Salt Water Docks	3	12	9			
Canoe/kayak Launch	0	2	2			
Fresh Water Boat Ramp	1	3	2			
Salt Water Boat Ramp	0	1	1			
Community Gardens (in parks)	0	4	4			
Off-leash dog runs	0	2	2			

Map A.13 Open Space and Recreation
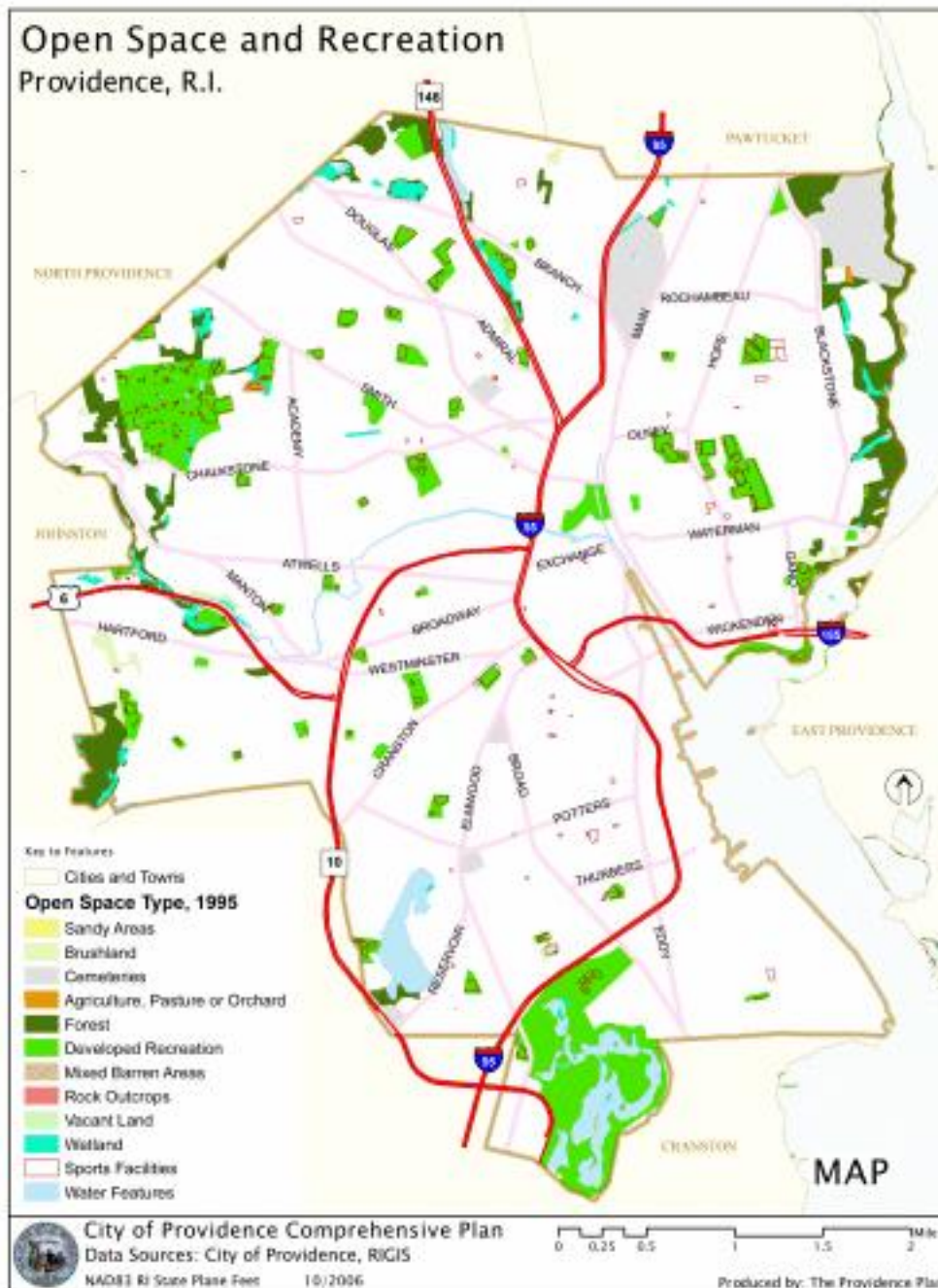
One of the major elements of the park system is also of course Roger Williams Park which serves as a neighborhood park for surrounding neighborhoods, as a citywide park, and as a regional destination. As summarized in Table A.40 'Roger Williams Park- Features and Facilities', Roger Williams Park is more than home to the Zoo—it is also home

A	**Existing Conditions**

to numerous attractions. More than 1,5000,000 visitors a year come to Roger Williams Park with the Zoo attracting more than 500,000 visitors.

Table A.40 Roger Williams Park- Features and Facilities

Features
--435 acres in size
--105 acres of ponds and lakes
--10 miles of park roads with 5 historic bridges
--12 miles of walkways and walking paths
--Listed on the National Register of Historic Places
--Home to a dozen historic and commemorative major public sculptures
--Home to more than 200 species of trees
Facilities
--The Zoo includes 50 exhibits and more than 750 animals, birds, and aquatic creatures
--Museum of Natural History and Planetarium contains 250,000 artifacts, 6 exhibit halls, and the only public planetarium in the region
--Carousel Village includes a carousel, Hasbro Playground, and seasonal rides
--Botanical Center scheduled to open in 2007
--Temple to Music, an outdoor performing arts area that is the site of numerous festivals and fundraising events
--The Casino, a premier indoor event space that accommodates 150+ events a year
--Boathouse, summer location of paddleboats, canoes, and tour boat rides
--Morsilli Tennis Courts, the only public clay courts in Rhode island
--Tim O'Neil Baseball Fields
--Japanese Garden, recently renovated into a premier showcase garden

Existing Management of the Park and Recreation System

Responsibilities for the management of the providence park and recreation system are allocated among five city agencies. See Table A.41 'Management of the Park and Recreation System'. In general, the Parks Department has responsibility for maintenance and capital improvements for the actual park sites in the City. School athletic facilities are maintained by the School Department. The Public Property Department maintains the City's recreation centers and the pools. The Recreation Department operates 10 indoor recreation centers and the 6 outdoor pools in the City and Camp Cronin in Narragansett.

Table A.41 Management of the Park and Recreation System

Type of Facility		Parks Dept.	Recreation Dept.	School Dept.	Public Property	Arts, Culture, & Tourism
Pools		Capital Improvements, Maintenance	Operation, Programs		Capital Improvements, Maintenance	
Waterparks		Capital Improvements, Maintenance	Operation, Programs			
Conley Stadium				Operation, Capital Improvements, Maintenance		
School Athletic Sites				Operation, Capital Improvements, Maintenance		
Triggs Golf Course		Operation				
Recreation Centers			Operation, Programs		Capital Improvements, Maintenance	
Skating Rink		Operation, Capital Improvements, Maintenance, Programs				

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		Responsibility				
		Parks Dept.	Recreation Dept.	School Dept.	Public Property	Arts, Culture, & Tourism
Camp Cronin			Operation		Capital Improvements, Maintenance	
All Other Park Sites			Athletic Permits, Summer Lunch Program			Programs

Existing Programming Efforts

The Parks Department, the Recreation Department, and the recently created Arts, Culture & Tourism (ACT) Department (created in 2003), share city initiated programming responsibilities for the park and recreation sites. The Parks Department provides significant programming and educational activities through the Zoo (see Table A.42 'Zoo Education Programs in 2006') and the Museum. And soon, the Department will be embarking on horticultural programs at the new Botanical Center.

Table A.42 Zoo Education Programs in 2006

Program	# of Participants	Field Trips	# of Participants
Early Education Programs	1,863	Overall groups	62,366
Family Programs	623	Providence schools	3,384
On-grounds Tours	926		
Scout Programs	285		
Zoo Overnights	1,233		
Zoomobile Outreach	13,493		
Zoo Camp/Travel Camp	1,034		
TOTAL	19,457		

Many neighborhood groups initiate and oversee festivals and events in Roger Williams Park, the Bank of America City Center, and in neighborhood parks. The Parks Department provides logistical support, such as staging and electricity, for these events. The Parks Department also provides logistical support to the hugely successful WaterFire events each year that are held Downtown on park riverfront land.

The Arts, Culture, and Tourism Department teams up with the Parks Department to hold major concert series and events in Waterplace Park and in approximately a dozen neighborhood parks each summer. These efforts are part of an overall strategy to make the park spaces come alive and allow residents to connect with each other and with their parks.

The Recreation Department is responsible for coordinating all formal athletic permits for baseball, soccer, softball, basketball, and football leagues in neighborhood parks; running athletic clinics; providing youth and adult recreation activities at the indoor recreation centers; operating a summer lunch program in scores of outdoor and indoor sites; providing transportation to several activities and events; and, most recently, hosting after school programs in the neighborhood recreation centers through the Public After School Alliance (PASA). The programs at the neighborhood recreation centers vary, depending on the demand in the neighborhood, and range from basketball, soccer, boxing, volleyball, and whiffle ball to performing arts, computers, yoga, and tae kwon do. And for the last two years, the Recreation Department has run "Adventure Camp", in collaboration with the North End Collaborative, and offered summer programs at Roger Williams Park, Camp Cronin, and private recreation venues.

Upcoming Park Development and Planning Efforts

There are several current and near term development and planning initiatives that will have a positive effect on the Providence park and recreation system. Some of the major efforts are summarized below:

Interstate 195 Relocation

The current re-location of I-195 through Providence that is expected to be completed in 2011 will create over eight acres of new park land along the east and west banks of the Providence River in the area currently occupied by the I-195 bridge over the river. A recent design competition for these parks indicates that these two new downtown park spaces will be great additions to the Providence waterfront. Funding will come from the I-195 project.

The I-195 relocation will also substantially enhance India Point Park. A new fifty-foot wide landscaped pedestrian bridge from East Street in Fox Point will significantly increase pedestrian access over I-195 to India Point Park. New streets from Fox Point under I-195 to India Street will improve vehicular access to the park. The park is also benefiting from additional 2 acres of land and from over a million dollars of improvements along the park edge along India Street. These enhancements include: walkways, entrances, and landscaping.

In sum, unlike many major highway projects along urban waterfronts in other parts of the country, the I-195 project will actually increase and enhance public access to the Providence waterfront.

Brownfields to Green Fields

There are several parks to be built on remediated and reclaimed brownfield sites that are in various stages of planning and development. Remediation of the former Riverside Mills site on Allepo Street in Olneyville has recently been completed and a seven-acre park will be developed in 2007. The new Riverside Park will open almost a half-mile

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of the Woonasquatucket River to public access and provide much needed green space in the densely populated Olneyville neighborhood.

Just across the river and Rt 6, a new park at the former Lincoln Lace mill site will be taking shape in 2008. A portion of the site was remediated in 2006 and the remainder of the site will be under go remediation in 2007. This six-acre site will also provide access to the Woonasquatucket River, will link with the existing Merino Park, and provide additional park space for the Hartford neighborhood.

Since 1993 new park land along the shores of the Mashapaug Pond has been purchased and developed. An additional shoreline park at Mashapaug Pond is being considered for development in the 2008-2009 timeframe at the former Gorham Foundry site. Remediation has yet to begin in the area of the proposed shoreline park. This new park will complement a new Central YMCA facility that is being developed at the former Gorham site.

Finally, a city-owned six-acre site at the Port of Providence is being land banked for eventual remediation and park development. This site is being tentatively planned as festival site.

Bike Trails

Providence is surrounded by state constructed bike paths, but there have been none built in the City, except for a short leg of the East Bay Bike Path in India Point Park. In 2007, the first off-road bike path will open in Providence—the Northwest Bike Path will extend from the Johnston line along the Woonasquatucket River to the new Riverside Park in Olneyville and will be known in Providence as the Woonasquatucket Greenway. It will continue, mostly on road, to Water Place Park. A separate leg of the new bike path will also be built through the new Lincoln Lace park site and through Merino Park.

The East Bay Bike Path will receive an upgrade as it lands in Providence from the Washington Bridge to India Point Park. This work will be done in the 2008-2009 timeframe as part of the I- 195 project.

A three-mile bike path, mostly off-road, is currently being designed for Roger Williams Park. Funded by a federal enhancement grant through RIDOT, the project will be built in 2008.

Roger Williams Park Zoo

The Zoo is currently embarked on a major transformation that will take place over the next several years. Renovations to the Elephant Building and Exhibit began in 2006 and when completed in 2008 will enable the Zoo breed elephants at the facility. An even larger effort to build a new Polar Bear Exhibit and North American Exhibit is currently being designed. Construction of these exhibits is scheduled to begin in 2008.

Neighborhood Park Renovations

While the neighborhood park system has send tremendous investment since 1993, continued re-investments will take place in the next five years to accommodate growing demand for better parks and for new recreational activities. Additional soccer fields, water parks, community gardens, walking tracks and wooded trail systems, off-leash dog runs, and up-dated playground equipment will be the major focus of upcoming neighborhood park renovations.

Historic Preservation

The Parks Department is not only the steward of 1,300 acres of park land in the city, it is also the steward of hundreds of acres of historic sites, landscapes, and facilities located throughout the park system. In the last 13 years,

park preservation efforts have focused on the landscape, buildings, and public sculpture in Roger Williams Park and on public sculpture restoration in Downtown and in several neighborhood parks.

Several new efforts to restore or preserve historic park assets are in various stages of planning, including the following:

- Renovation and Re-use of the Esek Hopkins Homestead
- Renovation of the Roger Williams Park Casino
- Restoration of the Betsey Williams Cottage in Roger Williams Park
- Continued Renovations of Historic Public Sculpture in all Parks
- Renovations and Gravestone Repair at the North Burial Ground and at Locust Grove Cemetery.

Current and Near-Term Issues Facing the Park System

While the Providence park and recreation system is significantly improved from where it was 13 years ago, and while current planned projects will enhance Providence neighborhoods, the park and recreation system faces major challenges in the next five years. These can be summarized as follows:

- Non-city fund sources and creative community partnerships will need to be developed and expanded to make to improve park maintenance. No other issue is more important than this one.
- More land and new types of synthetic turf will be needed to meet the growing demand for soccer fields in the city.
- Creating and expanding new recreational opportunities in existing parks for walking and exercise, programming, boating and canoeing, and community gardens will be needed and will help promote community ownership of park spaces.
- Residents need more access to information about city parks and what they offer.
- Several city parks paces offer opportunities for being linked to each other and creative ways should be developed to link existing and future park spaces.

A.10 Community Services

Water Supply

Water is delivered to the City of Providence by the Providence Water Supply Board (Providence Water), which supplies over 600,000 customers in Providence and neighboring communities. Average daily consumption is approximately 68 million gallons across the system. Providence receives its water from the Scituate Reservoir Complex, which has a total water surface area of almost 4,600 acres and a capacity of 36.6 billion gallons at the spillway. Maximum safe yield from the reservoir is 83 million gallons per day. During peak demand times such as the summer, demand can routinely reach 90 to 95 million gallons per day, exceeding the safe yield by several million gallons. The reservoir collects 785 million gallons of water for every inch of rain received by its 92.8 square mile watershed. The City owns 26.7 square miles of this watershed, an area much larger than that of the city itself.

Demand has peaked at up to 136.2 million gallons, approaching the plant capacity of 144 million gallons per day. For the period July 2004 – June 2005, Providence residents and businesses consumed 864.1 million cubic feet of water, 29% of the total system wide consumption (exclusive of municipal uses, such as fire hydrants). Rhode Island Hospital is Providence Water's largest customer.

Reserve storage is provided by four large underground concrete reservoirs: the Neutaconkanut Reservoir in Johnston, the Longview Reservoir in North Providence, and the Aqueduct and Lawton Hill Reservoirs in Cranston. A smaller storage tank is located in Smithfield. In the event of a water system failure, the five storage reservoirs would have the capacity to support average consumption levels for 1.7 days or maximum consumption for 0.9 days.

Over the last 19 years, water consumption has actually dropped in Providence by 8.8%. This is likely due to greater conservation efforts spurred by environmental concerns, increased sewer rates and the large decline in industrial use (Table A.43 'Water Usage by Type, Cubic Feet'). Providence Water predicts that the population of the area it serves will increase 5% by 2020.

Table A.43 Water Usage by Type, Cubic Feet

	July 1, 1986 – June 30, 1987	July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005	Percent Change
Residential	453,908,257	606,100,000	+33.5%
Commercial	185,686,716	205,500,000	+10.7%
Industrial	307,902,391	52,500,000	-82.9%

Wastewater

Wastewater service is provided by the Narragansett Bay Commission, which serves 360,000 people in 10 area communities. The NBC treats all of Providence's wastewater at the Field's Point Wastewater Treatment Facility, which it owns. This facility treats an average of 42 million gallons of waste per day and has a maximum capacity of 65 million gallons per day.

NBC is constructing a series of massive underground tunnels intended to reduce problems with the current combined sewer system, which lets untreated sewage out into the environment whenever its limited capacity is exceeded, as in periods of heavy rainfall. The tunnels, to be completed in three phases over the course of 20 years, are as deep as 250 ft below the surface and total about six miles in length. The construction of Phase 1 is projected to cost $576 million by the time it is completed in 2007 and will reduce sewage overflow by 40%. Upon completion of the entire system, NBC expects overflow to be reduced by 98% with the result that shellfishing grounds will be closed 68% less frequently in upper Narragansett Bay and 95% less frequently in the lower bay.

Solid Waste

Waste generated by Providence residents and businesses is collected and taken to the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation's landfill in Johnston. The RIRRC has been a strong advocate of recycling. However, despite the fact that the recycling rate has increased over the past 10 years, waste generation at the state level, in absolute terms, has grown by a larger amount and the quantity of municipal solid waste being handled by the Landfill has therefore grown steadily over that time period.

The statewide per capita municipal waste generation rate in 2004 was approximately 0.59 tons per year, an increase of about 26% from the 0.47 tons generated per person in 1994. Providence residents generate waste at a rate of 0.51 tons per capita annually and the city as a whole generates 14.5% of the waste collected by RIRRC. However, the city generates only 9.3% of the materials sent to the RIRRC's recycling center (the Materials Recovery Facility or MRF), indicating a lower than average recycling rate (Table A.44 'Solid Waste Generation, 2004').

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Table A.44 Solid Waste Generation, 2004

Municipality	Estimated Population July 1st 2004	Landfilled	Diverted					Total			
		Refuse Tons	Materials Recovery Facility Recycling	Composted	Scrap Metal (White Goods)	Other Recycling	Tires	Total Waste Generated	Tons Per Capita	Overall Diversion Rate	MRF Recycling Rate
Providence	175,496	82,261	7,440	1,063		68.28	84	90,916	0.5181	9.50%	8.30%
Barrington	16,891	6,900	2,449	4,488	472	6.57	14	14,329	0.8483	51.80%	26.20%
Central Falls	19,144	7,588	708	26	44	74.95	1	8,443	0.441	10.10%	8.50%
Cranston	80,082	33,935	7,602	7,759	218	31.99	25	49,570	0.619	31.50%	18.30%
Newport	26,164	8,166	2,371	1,148	227	10.18	0	11,923	0.4557	31.50%	22.50%
North Kingstown	26,816	7,309	3,625	341	39	20.62	8	11,344	0.423	35.60%	33.20%
Pawtucket	73,154	36,185	3,845	731	392	56.96	42	41,251	0.5639	12.30%	9.60%
Warwick	85,661	32,738	10,665	15,228	818	33.33	83	59,565	0.6954	45.00%	24.60%
Total	1,059,616	479,112	79,644	58,169	8,057	537	718	626,237	0.591	23.50%	14.30%
Providence Portion	16.6%	17.2%	9.3%	1.8%	0.0%	12.7%	11.7%	14.5%			

Source: RIRRC *MRF rate represents MRF recycling as a percentage of Landfilled waste plus MRF recycling.

A Existing Conditions

Roads

Altogether, there are about 490 miles of public and private road in Providence. Of these, about 35 miles are limited access highway (52 miles including ramps) and an additional 34-plus miles of surface roads are designated as numbered state or US routes. [6] The combined area of all the paved roads in Providence is approximately 2.7 sq mi, which with the addition of the city's public and private sidewalks, parking areas and driveways (1.0 sq mi, 2.1 sq mi and 1.0 sq mi, respectively), give it a paved area of 6.9 sq mi or 37.5% of its total. [7]

Energy

Natural gas and electricity are both provided in Providence by National Grid, a large energy distribution company based in the United Kingdom. Until the summer of 2006, natural gas had been supplied by the Southern Union Company through it's subsidiary, New England Gas Company, which National Grid purchased for $498 million and the assumption of $77 million in debt. [8] National Grid now supplies approximately 245,000 customers with natural gas in Rhode Island in addition to the 477,000 Rhode Islanders it already supplied electricity to.

National Grid does not actually generate any electricity in Rhode Island, but rather acts solely as a distributor. The only large-scale power plant in Providence is the 426-megawatt natural gas-fueled Manchester Street Power Station. The station is owned by Dominion Resources Inc. of Virginia and is large enough to power 105,000 homes. [9]

Shelters

It is hard to pin down the exact number of beds available in homeless shelters because the status of those in need and the type of housing vary so widely. For example individual shelter organizations may lease apartments scattered throughout the city (Table A.45 'Shelters'). Additionally, there are services available in nearby communities that the Providence homeless population takes advantage of. Shelter capacity also varies with demand. For instance, during wintertime, when demand increases, approximately 88 overflow beds are made available at Harrington Hall, a facility jointly operated by the State and the Urban League located in Cranston. [10] The construction of a new State Police headquarters at the Pastore Complex in Cranston, will displace the residents of the Welcome Arnold shelter located there. However, the state government has pledged to accommodate every displaced individual elsewhere. [11]

Table A.45 Shelters

Shelter Type	Capacity
Emergency	134 (+112 at Welcome Arnold in Cranston)
Transitional	256
Permanent	451
Source: Providence Housing and Homeless Needs Assessment & Strategic Plan, Consolidated Plan 2005-2010	

6   Calculated by the Providence Plan using RIGIS e911 Roads as edited for use by Providence Public Safety
7   Calculated by the Providence Plan using Planimetrics aerial survey data and Providence land area of 18.4 sq mi
8   http://www.nationalgrid.com/corporate/Investor+Relations/Financial+news/2005-06/160206.htm
9   http://www.dom.com/about/companies/generation/index.jsp
10   *We Are Here to Stay* (Rhode Island Family Life Center), 2005
11   http://www.ri.gov/press/view.php?id=2103 (Office of the Governor)

Police & Fire

The Police and Fire Departments are headquartered in the Providence Public Safety Complex at 325 Washington St. This 130,000 square foot structure, which recently replaced an outdated and insufficiently sized building, was completed in 2002 and also houses Municipal and Housing courts. An accompanying parking garage has space for 520 vehicles.

Fire:

Including a location within the Public Safety Complex, the fire department has 14 stations distributed throughout the city. Fire equipment includes 14 pumpers (4 reserve), 8 ladder trucks (6 reserve) and 6 rescue units (6 reserve). Additional vehicles include 33 cars and trucks, 11 repair vehicles and 4 small boats.

Police

The Police Department has an authorized staff of 498 officers, including 64 sergeants, 19 lieutenants and 15 other higher-ranking officers. An additional 97 civilian staff members are authorized. [12] These figures give Providence a ratio of 2.9 police officers per 1000 residents. [13] The average ratio for cities of comparable size is 1.9 officers per 1000 residents across the U.S., while in New England the average ratio is 2.8. [14]

Providence has a system of community policing designed to build the community's trust in the police department by reducing its anonymity. Officers are permanently assigned to specific neighborhoods, allowing them to build relationships with residents and partnerships with local organizations. The community policing initiative also relies on neighborhood substations, which have been donated to the police department by their respective owners.

Hospitals & Emergency Treatment Centers

The seven hospitals in Providence have a total of almost 2,000 beds (Table A.46 'Hospital Beds in Providence').

Table A.46 Hospital Beds in Providence

Hospital	Beds
Butler	100 [15]
Miriam	247 [16]
Rhode Island	719 [17]
Roger Williams	220 [18]
St Joseph Hospital for Specialty Care	104 [19]
Veteran's	119 [20]

12   Providence Police Dept., as of April 28, 2006
13   Calculated using Census 2000 population figures
14   FBI Uniform Crime Report, 2004
15   Butler Hospital
16   http://www.lifespan.org/tmh/about/
17   http://www.lifespan.org/rih/about/stats.htm
18   Office of Administration, Roger Williams Hospital
19   http://www.specialtycareri.com/about.asp
20   Department of Public Relations, Veteran's Hospital and http://www.va.gov/visn1/providence/

A Existing Conditions

Hospital	Beds
Women and Infant's	137 and 120 Bassinets [21]

Though there has been a decrease in the number of hospital beds in the city since the previous comprehensive plan, there has also been a large scale transition toward outpatient care for procedures that would previously have required a hospital stay [22].

Nursing Homes

There are 23 nursing homes in the city, up from 17 at the time of the previous comprehensive plan. There are an additional 40 residential complexes primarily catering to the elderly. [23]

Education

Public Schools

There are 45 active schools run by the Providence School Department, with a total enrollment of 25,212 students.

Realizing the Dream is the Providence Public School District's comprehensive strategic plan to accelerate student achievement. Components of the strategic plan include a new college ready vision and mission; guiding beliefs; district goals; and district priorities and reform strategies.

Providence Public School District Priorities

Vision

The Providence Public School District will be a national leader in educating urban youth.

Mission

The Providence Public School District will prepare all students to succeed in the nation's colleges and universities and in their chosen professions.

Guiding Beliefs

- All children can achieve at high levels.
- The education of Providence's youth is the collective responsibility of the entire City: schools, district, partners, businesses and the broader community.
- It is the responsibility of district and school staff to work collaboratively to create a school culture that supports teaching and learning by:
    - ensuring that the right people are in the right positions and
    - doing the "right things" and doing them right the first time.
- All individuals associated with schools and the school district will demonstrate respect for others.

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21   http://www.womenandinfants.com/body.cfm?id=710
22   Department of Public Relations, Veteran's Hospital and http://www.va.gov/visn1/providence/
23   Providence Plan research (InfoUSA, Crossroads, City of Providence)

Existing Conditions A

- Strong leadership and highly qualified teachers are absolute requirements for reaching the District's vision and mission.
- Students, staff and community partners will demonstrate truthful, moral and non-discriminatory conduct.

District Goals

- Increasing student achievement
- Building capacity through an infrastructure of support
- Strengthening parent and community engagement

District Priorities

1. **Effective Academic Programs:** All Teaching and Learning programs are research-based and outcomes-driven.
2. **Cost Effectiveness:** This District is a responsible steward of the public trust and maximizes utilization of each dollar.
3. **Safe, Caring & Orderly Schools:** All schools are safe, caring and orderly to enable all teachers to teach and all students to learn.
4. **Public Confidence in the School Department:** The community has confidence in Providence Public Schools and the District office.

Strategies for Achieving Priorities

Priority 1: Effective Academic Programs

A. Develop and implement Providence Effective Schools Initiative (PESI): This initiative is designed to create a school culture that supports teaching and learning. It is grounded in research and best practices in professional development and school culture, as well as in the "Seven Correlates of Highly Effective Schools."

- *Principal as Leader*: The principal leads, manages and communicates the total instructional program to staff, students and parents.
- *Clearly Stated Vision and Mission*: The school's vision/mission is clearly articulated and understood.
- *High Expectations*: The staff believes, demonstrates and promotes the belief that all students can achieve at a high level.
- *Assessment and Monitoring*: Student academic progress is monitored frequently with a variety of measures.
- *Instructional Delivery*: Teachers consistently use effective teaching practices and allocate a significant amount of time to instruction in essential content and skill areas.
- *Safe, Caring and Orderly Environment*: The school's atmosphere is orderly, caring, purposeful and businesslike.
- *Parent and Community Involvement*: Parents support the school's mission and play an active role in its achievement.
- *Professional Development*: Professional development for all faculty and staff supports the instructional program.
- *School Culture*: The school's culture (climate) is responsive to and supports the needs of the students, parents and community.
- *Ethics in Learning*: The school community is innovative in modeling and building a school culture that is characterized by integrity, fairness and ethical practice.

A Existing Conditions

B. Implement K-8 schools

C. Extended learning opportunities

D. Institute full-service schools

E. Review and revise district's vision and mission

F. Ensure highly qualified teachers in every classroom

G. Implement high school renewal plan

H. Improve instructional technology

I. Develop the Providence Education Foundation

J. Revise HR policies, procedures and practices

K. Evaluate and restructure programs including

- K-12 curriculum and instructional methods
- English Language Learner Services
- Special education
- Fine arts (music, art, etc.)
- Athletics
- Health and physical education

Priority 2: Cost Effectiveness

A. Best financial practices

B. Continue the pursuit of external funding (grants from foundations, governmental agencies, etc.)

C. Curriculum audits

Priority 3: Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools

A. Complete review and revision of Code of Conduct

B. Promote and explore uniforms for elementary and middle school students

C. Review and expand emergency management plan and readiness level of school staff

D. Develop strategic plan for facility improvement

E. Alternative Schools

Priority 4: Increasing Public Confidence

A. Create and implement a communications plan

B.   Finalize implementation of a district call center

C.   Expand adult education for parents

D.   Increase involvement and coordination of key stakeholders

E.   Increase collaboration with Unions and professional associations

F.   Build consensus and support among local, state and national governmental stakeholder

Independent Public Schools

There are a number of charter schools in Providence that are licensed by the state Department of Education.

Providence After School Alliance:

The Providence After School Alliance (PASA) is a partnership of public and private organizations working to expand and improve after school opportunities for youth. PASA does not provide programming directly, but rather acts as an intermediary organizing and assisting existing providers. PASA has divided Providence into five regions it calls "AfterZones," which allow it to target its services at the highest concentrations of youth and foster a sense of community within regions of the city.

Private Schools

Providence has 30 private schools, of which nine are Catholic and two Jewish. Total enrollment in private schools for the fall of 2003 was 7421. However, some of these schools attract a significant number of students from outside the city limits (Figure A.24 'Private School Enrollment by Grade Level, 2003'). [24]

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24   *Private School Survey 2003-2004* (National Center for Education Statistics)

A Existing Conditions

Figure A.24 Private School Enrollment by Grade Level, 2003

Private School Enrollment by Grade Level, 2003

Source: Dept. of Ed. Private School Survey, 2003-2004
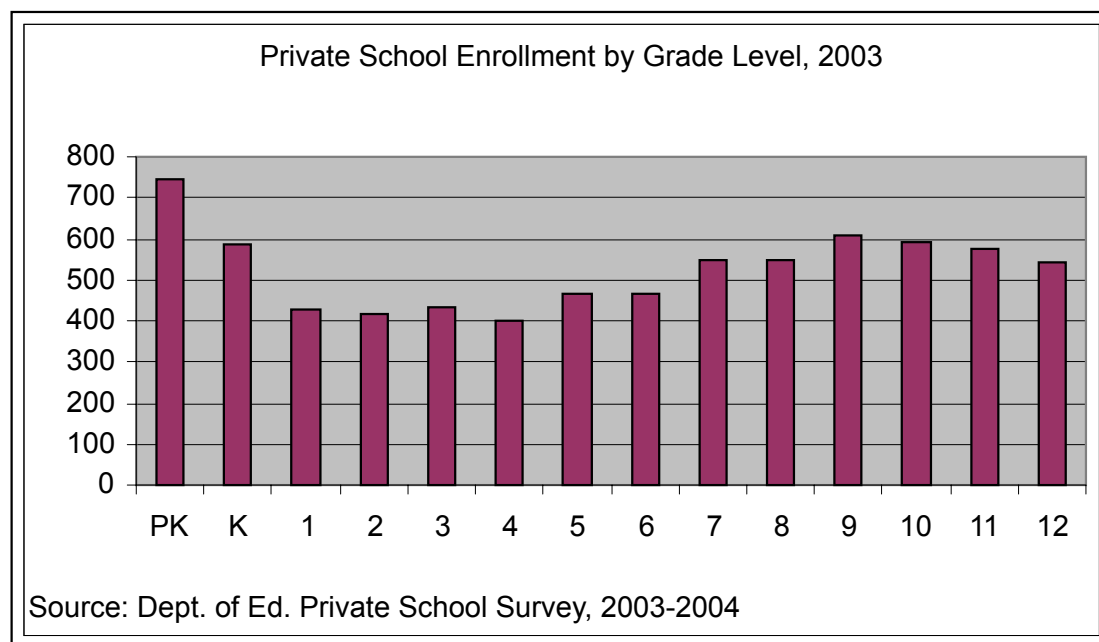
Colleges and Universities

Relative to the overall population of the city, Providence has a substantial student population, and institutions of higher education are important parts of the city's culture and economy. Beginning in fall 2006, entering freshmen will have the option of direct matriculation at the Feinstein Providence Campus of the University of Rhode Island (Table A.47 'College and University Enrollment').

In Fall 2005, CCRI (Community College of Rhode Island) enrolled 3451 students at its Providence campus, however, only 174 were full time students there. The rest were either part-time students or split their time between Providence and other campuses.

Table A.47 College and University Enrollment

College or University	Total Enrollment	Estimated Number of Students Living Off Campus
Brown University	7,809 [25]	1,562 [26]
Johnson & Wales University	9,982 [27]	7,087 [28]

26   http://www.brown.edu/Administration/Institutional_Research/facts/CDS2005_2006.pdf
25   http://www.brown.edu/web/facts.shtml
28   http://www.jwu.edu/prov/reslife/halls.htm
27   Eileen Richardson, Office of Research and Development, Johnson & Wales Univ.

Existing Conditions A

College or University	Total Enrollment	Estimated Number of Students Living Off Campus
Providence College	5,468 [29]	1,410 [30]
Rhode Island College	8,871 [31]	8,031 [32]
Rhode Island School Of Design	2,258 [33]	1,008 [34]
University of Rhode Island (Feinstein)	4,000 [35]	4,00026
Total	38,388	23,098

Public Works Facilities and Services

The Providence Department of Public Works (DPW) is located in four facilities in the City: its Headquarters at 700 Allens Avenue, Equipment Maintenance at 20 and 40 Ernest Street, and the Transfer Station and Salt Shed at 140 Terminal Road. The DPW's eight divisions are responsible for the following duties:

Administration Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for all payrolls, control and processing of all billings (snow vendors, sanitation contracts, street sweeping and the State landfill), and all permits related to the department, such as dumpsters, refuse vehicles, utility and vending licenses on the public right-of-way.

Engineering Division

The Engineering Division is responsible for reviewing all site plans for new development within the City. All building starts are reviewed for proper roadway and sidewalk grade and construction, drainage, curbing and sewage. Claims involving the right-of-way and sewer claims and icy road conditions are investigated. The division operates the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier under the direction of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. The division issues utility, physical alteration and sewer permits.

Environmental Control

The Environmental Control Division is responsible for the administration of two private contracts: sanitation and street sweeping. It also oversees the City's Drop and Dump Center. The Division's enforcement section issues citations for violations of the trash and garbage ordinances.

Highway Department

The Highway Department Maintains 370 miles of City-owned roads and nearly twice that amount of sidewalks. It is responsible for snow operations (sanding, salting and plowing), painting, installing guardrails, pothole repair, handicapped curb cuts, small roadway resurfacing, curb settings, traffic island installations and drainage patches.

30   Office of Institutional Research, Providence College
29   http://www.providence.edu/About+PC/Fast+Facts/
32   Office of Institutional Research and Planning, Rhode Island College
31   http://www.ric.edu/oirp/Enrollment%20ReportFall%202005.pdf
34   Brian Janes, RISD Director of Residential Life
33   Steven Berenback, RISD Registrar
35   http://autocrat.uri.edu/1346.html

A Existing Conditions

Bridge Maintenance

The Bridge Division is responsible for the maintenance of the 53 City-owned bridges. Responsibilities of this division include the replacement of rotted and deteriorated wooden stringers, asphalt patching, fence and guardrail installations and painting. Major repairs are contracted to private vendors.

Sewer Construction

The Sewer Division maintains the City-owned storm and sanitary sewer lines, 20,000 manholes, 4,000 inlets and 12,000 catch basins.

Garage Maintenance

The Garage Division is responsible for the entire Department's rolling stock of vehicles and equipment. Personnel install and maintain all sanding and plowing equipment, backhoes and compressors, and perform routine and other maintenance of vehicles and miscellaneous equipment.

Assessment of Public Works Facilities and Services

Public Rights of Way

The conditions of the city's public rights of way, which include streets, sidewalks and bridges, range from poor to excellent. The Pavement Needs and Management Program serves as a planning tool for the maintenance of these public rights of way. The 1996 and 2000 Neighborhood Bond Funds have been used to support the resurfacing of roads and sidewalks citywide. The computerized management system evaluated the structural integrity of the 53 city-owned bridges.

Fox Point Hurricane Barrier

The Fox Point Hurricane Barrier is operable and will effectively prevent a storm surge from inundating downtown Providence. The facility will be transferred shortly from the city to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Transfer Station

The City of Providence's Transfer Station is a currently licensed but non-operational facility that city residents can use to dispose of large items such as construction and demolition debris and appliances, etc.

Rolling Stock

The city's Department of Public Works maintains a fleet of approximately 141 cars and trucks, and 16 other utility vehicles such as street sweepers, fork lifts, etc. The condition of the city's rolling stock of vehicles and equipment ranges from fair to excellent, due to the age of the vehicles, which ranges from 1967 to 1999. The Department of Public Works routinely requests upgraded equipment in its Capital Improvement Program requests.

Human Services

Human services are provided to Providence residents through a combination of state, local and private organizations. These include the State Departments of Human Services, Health and Retardation, Health, Elderly Affairs, and the Institute of Mental Health. Local and other organizations include the Mayor's Drug Taskforce, and private organizations

such as the Providence Community Action Program, a consortium of multi-service centers, United Way, the Urban League and other private organizations.

Funding for these human service programs is from federal, state and private sources; while responsibilities for service delivery often overlaps depending on the location and type of the service provided.

The Providence Department of Planning and Development allocates and distributes Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) from the Federal Housing and Urban Development Agency. The City allocates between 15-20% of its CDBG funds to support human services in the city. Funds are distributed annually on a competitive basis, with community centers traditionally receiving a substantial percentage of the funds.

The City, through several departments and support agencies is involved in: substance abuse programs; providing assistance to the elderly and homeless; acting as the City's representative in addressing the AIDS crisis; and, conducting a human services needs assessment.

The Providence Community Action Program, Inc. (Pro-CAP) is a nonprofit private organization that is aimed at fighting poverty at the local level. Pro-CAP provides a variety of services and programs, at different locations in the City and supported by federal, state and private funding. In 1989 it was estimated that at least one in every five city residents received help from a program administered by Pro-CAP. These programs include elderly/handicapped transportation, federal commodities distribution, emergency shelter/interim housing for women and families, weatherization and housing assistance services.

In addition to Pro-CAP there are several other private organizations that deliver human services in the City. There is a consortium of multi-service centers located in the city. Each multi-service center is run independently, with its own Board of Directors, staff and funding/support. These centers provide services that are specifically required by the local community served by each center. Examples of these services include child care, counseling, information and comprehensive referral for social services, emergency food and clothing, language classes, senior citizen programs, youth programs, adult education programs, nutrition programs, specific health screenings, and general community services such as scouts and cadets. The centers respond as quickly as possible to changing needs, based on changing demographic characteristics of the serviced population.

The multi-service community centers include:

- DaVinci Center for Community Progress;
- Elmwood Community Center;
- Federal Hill House Association;
- Hartford Park Community Center;
- Joslin Community Center;
- Mount Hope Neighborhood Association;
- Nickerson Community Center;
- Silver Lake Annex Center;
- Capitol City Community Centers;
- Washington Park Community Center; and,
- West End Community Center.

A Existing Conditions

Funding for the multi-service centers is from a combination of the Child Care Food Program, CDBG funds, CSEG funds, VPTA funds, RI Department of Human Services, Legislature Circuits, Department of Elderly Affairs, United Way and fund raising and donations.

On any one funding round, the multi-service centers, Pro-CAP and other service providers could all compete with each other for funds. Coordination of funding and services provided would strengthen the ability of the service providers to operate in the City.

There is a myriad of other agencies providing human services include the United Way, the Urban League, Vietnam Veteran's Association, International Institute and the Visiting Nurses Association. As the city's population has diversified, there has also been an expansion of agencies that are dedicated to the needs of immigration, cultural assimilation and reducing linguistic isolation.

A significant portion of City residents receive some form of public assistance. Twelve percent of the population receive assistance for families with dependent children (AFDC); two percent receive General Public Assistance (GPA); seventeen percent receive food stamps, four percent receive social security insurance, and three percent receive medical assistance.

Providence also has 14 senior centers offering volunteer opportunities, recreation, group activities, counseling, information and referral, and continuing education to the elderly. Some centers also provide hot lunches, outreach, transportation and health services. These centers are:

- DaVinci Community Center
- East Side Senior Center
- Elmwood Senior Center
- Federal Hill Community Center
- Fox Point Senior Center
- Hamilton House Senior Center
- Hartford Park Senior Center
- Jewish Community Center
- Nickerson House Senior Center
- Silver Lake Annex Center
- Smith Hill Senior Center
- St. Martin dePorres Senior Center
- Washington Park Community Center
- Westminster Senior Center

Overall, funding for senior services is not distinguished from human services funding in general. Some senior centers are located within community centers which serve many different needs in the local neighborhoods. Other housing, nutrition, transportation, and social services are extended to seniors in a variety of city programs that are not specifically dedicated to the elderly.

Given the likelihood that Providence's elderly population will increase in the coming years, more services may be required. The Mt. Pleasant/Elmhurst neighborhood currently lacks a senior center. The Westminster Senior Center, in downtown Providence, receives no city funding for its operations and is in danger of closing due to cutbacks in federal and state aid. Transportation services for the elderly, which now only provide rides to and from medical appointments and meal programs, do not address the need for transportation to shopping centers, social and

recreational activities, and personal care providers such as hairdressers. Finally, adult day care centers, providing a safe, supervised environment for frail elderly and functionally challenged adults, may become more needed.

The City provides some property tax relief to its senior citizens in the form of deductions and homestead exemptions. (The homestead exemption is available to all eligible homeowners, not just the elderly.)

With the change in the demographic structure of the city, the demands on the human service delivery system is expected to increase significantly.

The critical issues facing City and private social and human service agencies include: the homeless; the changing needs of the new ethnic communities; location of group homes; funding for human and social service provision; affordable housing; adolescent pregnancy and teen parents; substance abuse; and, elderly programs.

Human services programs have adapted and continue to adapt to address these issues. Continued public and private sector fund raising efforts will be necessary to support human service programs, as will expanding the public/private network of agencies and support groups which serve as basic human service providers.

Library Services

Founded in 1875, the Providence Public Library is a private, non-profit corporation consisting of a central library downtown and nine branch libraries – Fox Point, Knight Memorial in Elmwood, Mount Pleasant, Olneyville, Rochambeau on the East Side, Smith Hill, South Providence, Wanskuck and Washington Park.

The Library serves both the residents of the city of Providence and those of the state and provides back-up assistance to other public libraries in Rhode Island. The mission of the Library is to provide and facilitate access to information for the community at-large and other libraries by offering materials, staff support and centers for meeting and learning.

Since 1989 the Central Library has served as the State Reference Resource Center (R.I. General Law 29-6-9). Residents of the state call or come directly to the Central Library to meet their needs for specialized information, library services or materials. Others receive materials at their local public library obtained from PPL. Library staff offers training workshops for staff at other public libraries and provides leadership and support in identifying and advocating innovations that enhance library services statewide.

The Providence Public Library serves as the central site for the Cooperating Libraries Automated Network (CLAN), a consortium of public libraries in Rhode Island sharing a computer network for cataloging and lending library materials and providing easy access to member libraries' resources.

The Library houses and operates the central computer system which services the 48 CLAN members with online circulation, a patron database, a MARC bibliographic database, and an online public access catalog. The system, as currently configured, has over 500 terminals in 73 locations throughout Rhode Island. The Data Processing Department is responsible for day-to-day operation and maintenance of the system, including backup of the database, troubleshooting system problems, troubleshooting peripheral equipment problems at all member libraries, answering questions from users and general system and database maintenance. The department is also responsible for the operation of the telecommunications network, which provides both local and Internet services for the 73 remote locations throughout the state. The staff provides training in basic system functions for new member libraries and ongoing training for existing members on request. The Library's Assistant Director Support Services and Head of Data Processing are responsible for detailed operational planning and implementation. Examples of this work include major hardware and software upgrades and the installation of the telecommunications network.

A | Existing Conditions

Programs & Services

The library has identified four core service strengths and subcategories of services related to each of the four.

Access to Information:

<u>Collections</u> – the library's holdings number more than one million items including general materials, printed materials, electronic resources, audio/visual collections, citizenship materials, and special collections.

<u>e.library</u> - comprises programs in all ten locations and addresses the issue of the digital divide. Less than half of the residents of Providence currently have personal computers at home. The role of the library in providing access to and training in technology is critical. PPL computer labs currently offer 80 computer instruction classes each month for patrons of all ages. The PPL technology department also provides training for non-profit agencies and schools. PPL electronic resources include several databases, which are available from within the library and also from remote locations, e.g. home, office, or school.

<u>Outreach</u> - librarians and library staff are the foundation of PPL's service strengths. Librarians visit schools, agencies, daycares, senior centers, and other city organizations. Specialists in such fields as early childhood, technology, business, and the arts facilitate these partnerships.

Education:

<u>Early Childhood</u> programs address the first five years of life that are critical for healthy physical and cognitive development. PPL provides a wide array of programs assisting parents in providing healthy environments for their child's development.

<u>Student Support</u> programs provide children from K-12 with literacy-based enrichment programs. These programs not only provide a safe place but also help children progress through programs such as Creating Readers, Whiz Kids, and Math PIE and SLICE, and LEAP afterschool programs.

<u>Literacy</u> programs have long been a traditional focus for Providence Public Library. Libraries have served as a tool for new immigrants to become introduced to their new country. The Family Writing Center (family literacy) program serves as a model program for the entire state. Learners from more than 30 nations have participated in learning English.

Community Enrichment:

<u>Special events, exhibits, and partnerships</u> are an important part of service, particularly to residents of low income and minority neighborhoods. Providence Public Library has not only hosted world renowned authors, artists, and musicians, but has also mounted exhibits of work by school children and local artists, and sponsored book discussions, film discussions, and neighborhood meetings.

<u>Art ConText</u> is a partnership between PPL and the RISD Museum, which places artists in residence at neighborhood branches, thus helping to bring the arts to previously underserved populations.

Economic Advancement:

<u>Individuals, Entrepreneurs, and Businesses,</u> as well as educational institutions, cities, and non-profits are assisted through PPL's collection in business; patent and trademark; government documents; and foundations. Assistance with resumes,

and job searches is routine. Small home based business and middle-sized business, as well as the job seeker, individuals looking for investment information and grassroots organization seeking grant funds, depend heavily on the library.

There are fifteen other libraries in the city, including those at colleges and universities.

General Government

The administrative offices of City Government are housed in at least ten buildings, four of which are leased, located throughout the city. At present space requirements are adequately met for most departments, although there are various discrepancies in the quality of office space and equipment between departments and agencies.

Personal and real property owned by the City is the responsibility of the Department of Public Properties. These include buildings, real estate, schools, civic property and any property associated with a city agency. The Department is currently involved with the renovation of the schools, renovation of 14 fire stations, and the renovation of four recreation facilities including, the Joslin, Danforth, South Providence, and Zuccolo facilities.

To assist with the development and maintenance of public buildings, the City established the Providence Building Authority, which has the power to float bonds, and does not require a City referendum for securing funding for public projects.

A.11 Land Use

The following series of maps is from Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan.

The maps where drawn by hand and distinguished uses with hatch marks. Residential, non-residential and institutional uses are presented on three separate maps. In this interim plan, these maps are combined to form one land use map, color-coded by land use.

A **Existing Conditions**

Map A.14 Residential land use map

Map A.15 Non-residential land uses

PROVIDENCE 2000
THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
PROPOSED LAND USE : NON-RESIDENTIAL

LEGEND

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
LIMITED COMMERCIAL
GENERAL COMMERCIAL
LIMITED MANUFACTURING
MANUFACTURING
DOWNTOWN MIXED USE
OPEN SPACE
PUBLIC SPACE
WATERFRONT MIXED USE

Department of Planning and Development
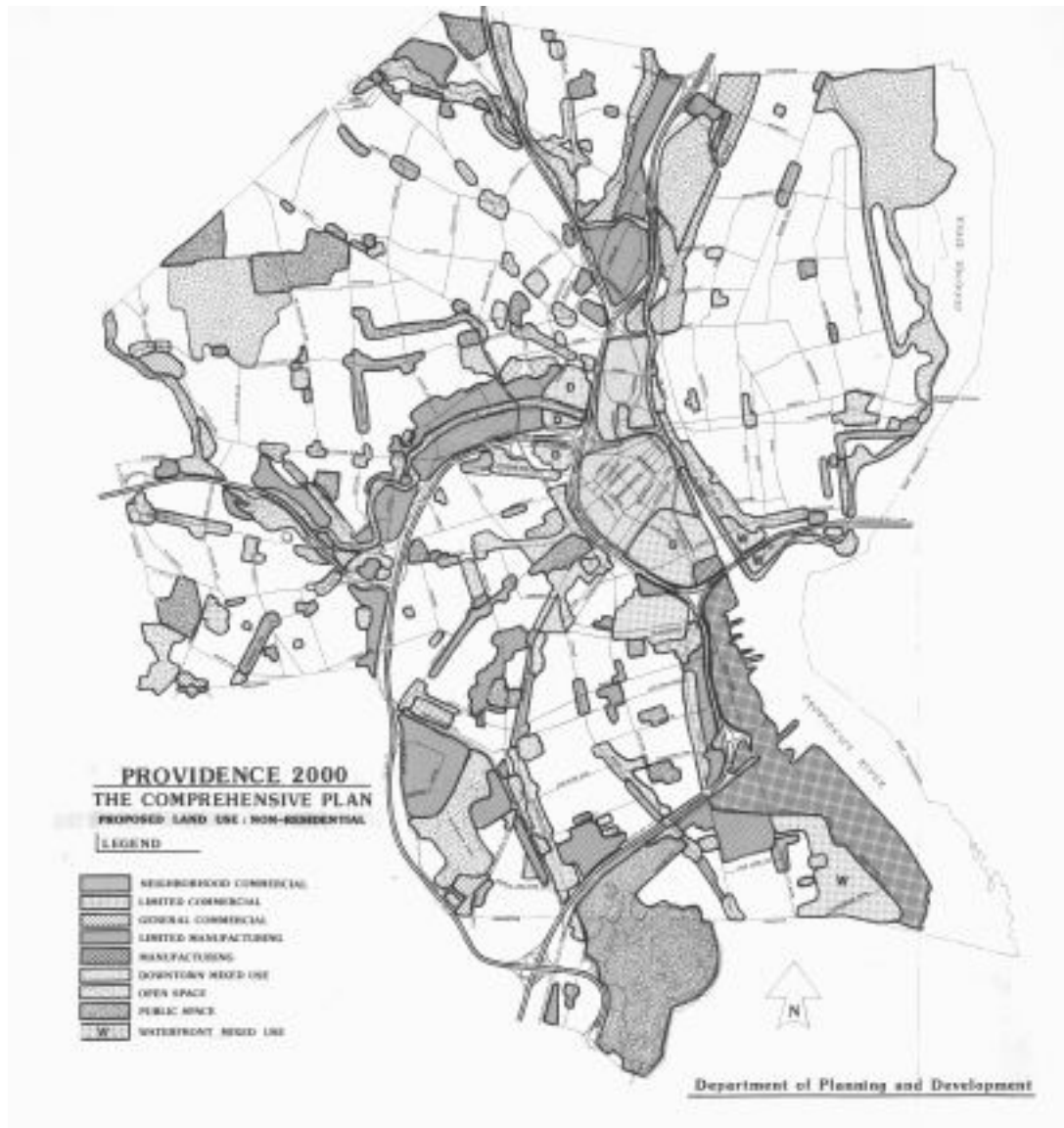
Existing Conditions

Map A.16 Institutional land uses

This map identifies the areas where there are land use changes proposed.

Map A.17 Proposed Changes to Land Use
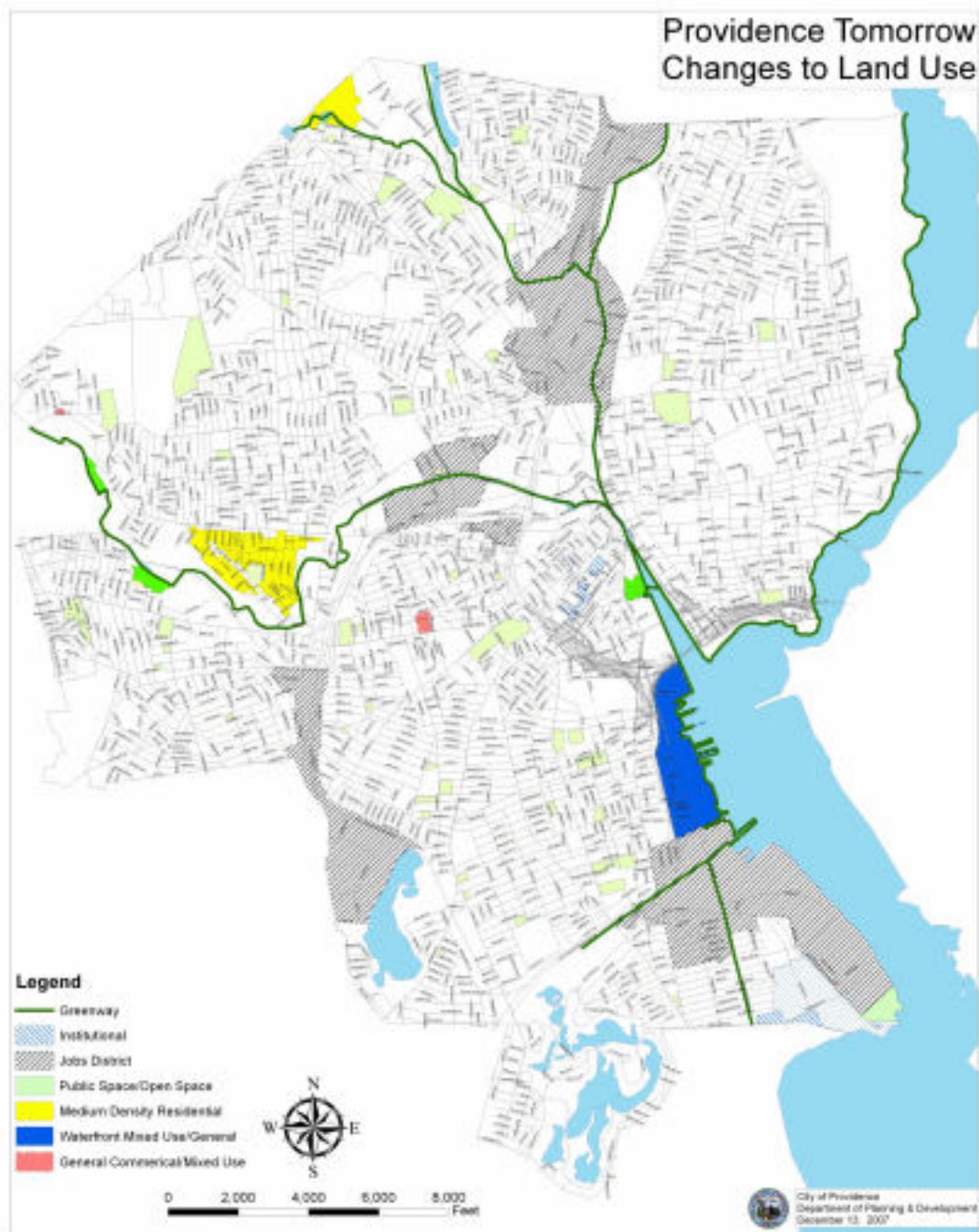
A.12 The Waterfront

Coastal Resources and Surface Water

A Existing Conditions

The City of Providence is traversed by the West River, the Woonasquatucket River, the Moshassuck River, and the Providence River. The Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck are channelized in downtown Providence. The Seekonk River, which flows into the Providence River and then into Narragansett Bay, forms the eastern boundary of the City. Canada Pond and Mashapaug Pond are large bodies of fresh water in the City. Other ponds include Geneva and Whipple's ponds. Several ponds are located in Roger Williams Park, including Roosevelt Lake, Pleasure Lake, Deep Spring Lake, Fenner Pond, and Bellefont Pond.
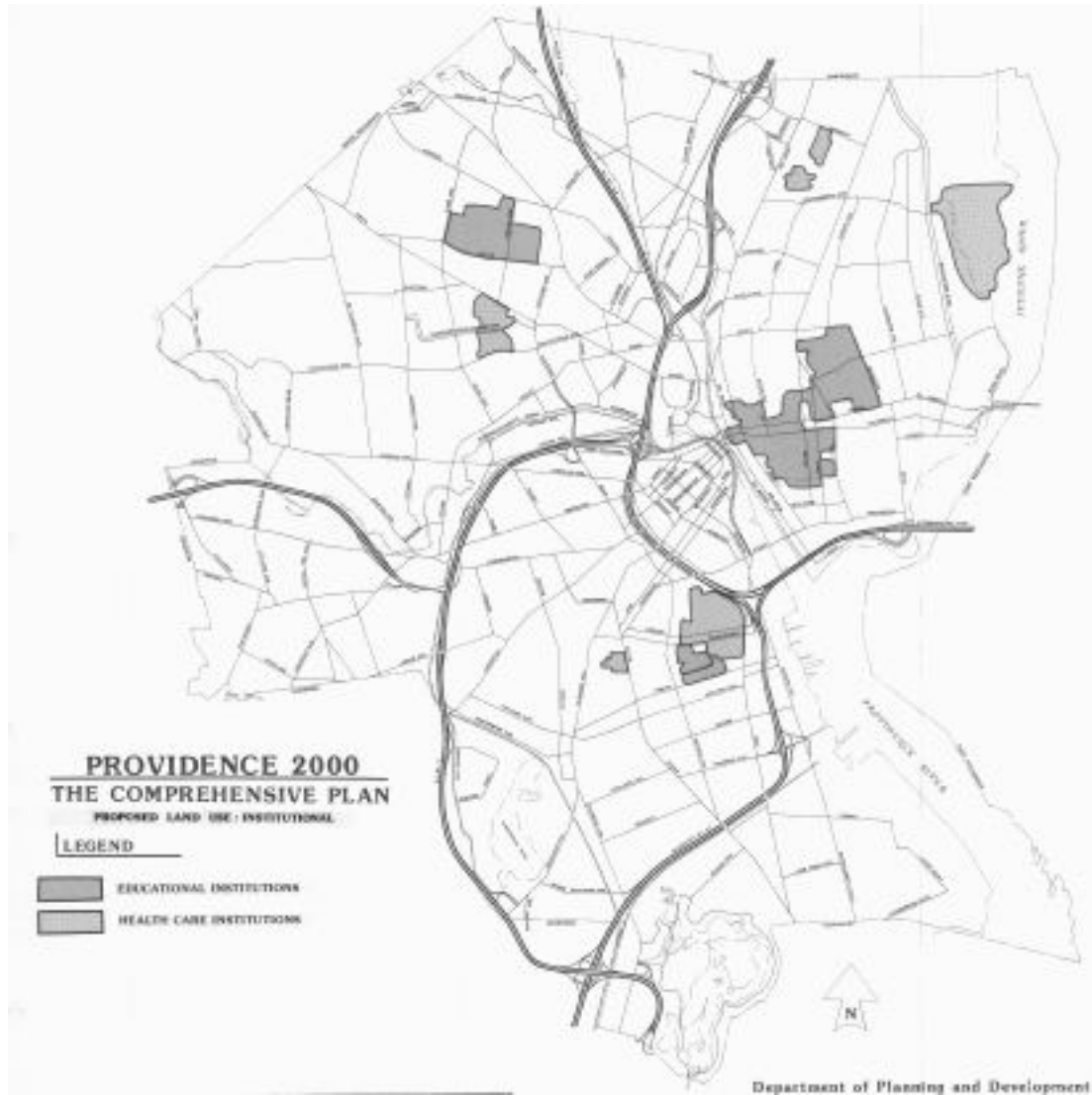
The primary navigable waters within the boundaries of the City of Providence are Providence and Seekonk rivers. These rivers have been dredged for regular ship traffic and will continue to need periodic dredging. In addition to the commercial, industrial and cargo-related activities associated with the Port of Providence, these two rivers have a number of regular recreational users including crew teams and sailing groups. Navigable waters contribute to the coastal and cultural heritage of the city and provide economic development and recreational opportunities.

Rhode Island Water Quality Standards are administered and enforced by the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), Division of Water Resources. Surface and groundwater resources are classified according to their quality and possible uses for consumption and recreation or other activities. The Seekonk River is classified as Class SC, which is appropriate for boating, secondary recreational activities (i.e. not swimming), fish and wildlife habitats, and industrial cooling. The Providence River is also classified as Class SC. The Woonasquatucket River is a Class C river with the same uses considered appropriate. Significant water quality problems are associated with combined sewer overflows (CSOs), which discharge into the Moshassuck, West, Seekonk, Woonasquatucket and Providence Rivers. The cumulative discharges from these CSOs into Narragansett Bay over the past eight decades resulted in the permanent closing of 5,600 acres of shellfish beds due to bacterial contamination, and the degradation of the water quality and aesthetics of the city's rivers. The ongoing CSO abatement project is well on its way to eliminating this problem, but is still 10 to 15 years from completion (for greater detail see Community Services and Facilities).

Providence Harbor directly receives the discharges of homes, businesses, industries, and stormwater runoff. Protecting and preserving water quality are important considerations when weighing waterfront development options, particularly in relation to paving, drainage and runoff.

The City of Providence is located at the northern end of Narragansett Bay. The Port of Providence extends along a segment of the Providence River shore and is the state's principal general cargo and petroleum port. The Providence shipping channel is dredged to an authorized depth of 40 feet. Primary land uses along the coastline include industrial and commercial uses, public land, and the Fields Point Wastewater Treatment facility. Some segments of shoreline and water in the port area are in derelict condition, with abandoned piers and sunken barges.

The Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) is the primary agency charged with planning for and protecting all Rhode Island coastal areas and zones. Chapter 23 of the Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) authorizes the Council to approve, modify, set conditions for, or reject proposals for development or operation within, above or beneath the inland edge of the coastal feature. The Port and adjacent waterfront area near Allens Avenue is classified by CRMC as a Type 6-Industrial Waterfront and Commercial Navigation Channel, which is defined as a water area that is extensively altered to accommodate commercial and industrial water-dependent and water-enhanced activities. See SAMP, below, for further details.

In 1984, the CRMC published a document entitled "Providence Harbor: A Special Area Management Plan." This document outlines specific policies and proposals for Providence Harbor, and seeks to achieve five (5) major goals:

1.   Maintain balanced and compatible shoreline uses;

2.   Improve water quality;
3.   Encourage port development;
4.   Increase shoreline recreational opportunities and public access; and
5.   Encourage coordination and consultation.

A new Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) is being developed for the Metro Bay Region, which includes Providence, Pawtucket, East Providence, and Cranston. All development proposals that occur within two hundred (200) feet of the water's edge fall within the purview of the CRMC, and must conform to the policies determined by the Council. Water type classifications dictating water and near-land-side use are currently being reassessed (2007). This could result in reclassification of current type designations, redefined designations, or even creation of new water types. In 2006 CRMC also established the Urban Coastal Greenways (UCG) policy, providing optional regulations for projects located within CRMC jurisdiction in the Metro Bay Region. These regulations offer flexible options for urban coastal areas, such as compensation that allows an applicant to reduce UCG width in exchange for enhancements such as public access and habitat conservation.

The Metro Bay SAMP Inner Harbor and Rivers Zone covers that stretch of the Woonasquatucket River between the Providence Place Mall and Atwells Avenue. Recommendations for river restoration and revitalization of the river and its environs are being developed through CRMC in consultation with stakeholders and local government. This SAMP effort will also serve as guidance for implementation of the Urban Coastal Greenways policy.

"The Metro Bay Urban Coastal Greenways policy requires applicants within the Metro Bay SAMP area to use Low Impact Development (LID) to the greatest extent possible to manage storm water runoff. LID refers to a suite of storm water management techniques that aim to mimic the natural hydrology of a site. LID uses small-scale distributed practices that retain, filter, infiltrate or collect storm water on site for reuse, instead of collecting it in a sewer system and discharging it into surface water bodies. LID reduces storm water volumes and enhances groundwater recharge, protecting water quality and groundwater supplies. Because many LID techniques have vegetation incorporated into their design, they offer aesthetically pleasing storm water management methods that can enhance property values by doubling as landscape amenities. LID techniques can also be used as educational tools to raise awareness about storm water and its environmental effects. LID techniques include rain gardens, vegetated swales, dry wells, cisterns for rainwater collection, pervious parking surfaces and green roofs."[36]

Floodplain Areas

Floodplains are important natural features, providing extra storage capacity during storms too large to be accommodated by a river or water body, or too great to be absorbed into the ground. The City of Providence is subject to flooding, partly due to the funnel-like shape of Narragansett Bay, which amplifies the height of a storm surge as it moves up the Bay, resulting in the highest flood levels in the state occurring along the Providence River. To address this problem the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier was built at Fox Point in 1966 to protect the downtown area. The barrier requires frequent maintenance and improvement. The Army Corps of Engineers assumed control of the Hurricane Barrier in 2006.

Floodplain areas cover certain areas of the City and are influenced by: 1) hurricanes and strong storms along the waterfront, in areas not protected by the Hurricane Barrier at Fox Point; and 2) overflow from rivers, ponds and the accumulation of water in depressed areas due to sustained heavy rainfall and/or melting snow.

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36   *Draft Recommendations for the Management of the Woonasquatucket River Promenade Street District, July 2, 2007.*

A Existing Conditions

The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), have been "modernized" (2007) by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and delineate eight flood zone classifications. The maps are now GIS-based and are more publicly accessible and user-friendly. The new maps do not include new data; an update is expected within the decade. The maps are on file in the Providence Department of Planning and Development. The Floodplain Management Guidelines (43 FR 6030) establish specific requirements of compliance with Executive Order 11988 by all federal agencies. Before any development may commence, the significance of a floodplain must be determined. Therefore, the project must conform with or significantly outweigh the following requirements of the Order to:

- Avoid direct or indirect support of floodplain development wherever a practicable alternative exists;

- Reduce the risk of flood loss;

- Minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health and welfare; and

- Restore and preserve the natural and beneficial floodplain values.

Sea Level Rise (SLR) is a growing concern. The 2001 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) model conservatively estimates a three to five foot rise by 2100 (some others predict higher SLR). SLR is caused primarily by thermal expansion of seawater, but also by melting glaciers and icecaps, reduced ice sheet surface mass (melting), and increased flow rate.

The 2007 State of Rhode Island Evacuation Study Inundation Map was prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers, New England Division in cooperation with FEMA Region I for the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (RIEMA).

Wetlands

Wetlands are those areas "inundated by surface or groundwater with a frequency sufficient to support vegetative or aquatic life." They provide a filtering function and can contribute to the maintenance or enhancement of water quality. Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. DEM rules enforce the Fresh Water Wetlands Act, restricting wetlands alterations and development. Although the City is 90 percent developed, wetland areas still exist, primarily within the base floodplain areas along the West River, the Woonasquatucket River, the Moshassuck River, the Seekonk River, and Mashapaug Pond.

Dams

There are 11 dams within the municipal boundaries (most of the city's ponds were formed by damming). According to RI DEM data supplied through Rhode Island Geographic Information Systems(RIGIS), there are no other dams apart from the eleven within the City that have a direct effect on property within Providence (Spectacle Pond Dam is near the line in Cranston but has no direct effect on Providence water bodies).

Compliance with City and State Regulations B

B | Compliance with City and State Regulations

Appendix B Compliance with City and State Regulations

Providence Home Rule Charter and Code of Ordinances

Section 1014 of the Providence Home Rule Charter requires the City Plan Commission to prepare a comprehensive plan for the city. This charter provision identifies issues to be addressed in the plan as well as requirements for periodic evaluation, implementation and adoption procedures.

The City Code of Ordinances expands on this requirement and directs the City Plan Commission to make "careful studies of the construction, resources, possibilities and needs of the city with reference to its future and progressive development ..." (Section 2-249, Providence Code of Ordinances).

Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act

In addition to serving as a key management and planning document for the City of Providence as spelled out in the City Charter, this plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act. This Act mandates the development of a comprehensive plan and establishes minimum standards for content and plan preparation.

B.1 Plan Content

There are nine specific elements that must be included in local comprehensive plans; furthermore, each of these elements must be integrated with existing and future land use. The required elements have all been included in this plan. To make the plan less bureaucratic and easier for the general public to understand and use, many of the element names have been changed. Additionally, elements have been created to reflect the importance of the resources involved.

- Statement of Goals and Objectives – Each element of Providence Tomorrow contains one overarching goal and a series of objectives and strategies to achieve that goal.
- Land Use – This element is referred to as Land Use.
- Housing – This element is referred to as Housing.
- Economic Development – This element is referred to as Business and Jobs.
- Natural and Cultural Resources – This element has been split into three separate elements to reflect the importance of each distinct asset. Sustainability and the Environment addresses the protection of natural resources. The Built Environment focuses on historic preservation and and enhancing our strong urban design. Arts and Cultural Resources includes goals and strategies for continuing to improve the city's thriving arts and cultural community.
- Services and Facilities – This element is referred to as Community Services and Facilities.
- Circulation – This element is referred to as Mobility.
- Open Space and Recreation – This element is referred to as People and Public Spaces.
- Implementation Program – The strategies contained in each element represent the implementation plan for that element. Additionally, the last chapter of the plan, entitled A Work in Progress contains a broader implementation strategy for the entire plan. This section identifies the actions needed to ensure continual progress in achieving the goals of the plan, including monitoring, updates, and amendments to city ordinances.

Compliance with City and State Regulations   B

B.2 Plan Implementation

The Act mandates that a community's zoning ordinance must be made consistent with the goals and objectives and the land use pattern contained in the plan within eighteen months after the plan is adopted. Furthermore, the Act requires extensive local plan review by state agencies to ensure that local comprehensive plans are consistent with the State Guide Plan. As a result, local comprehensive plans are one implementation tool to achieve the objectives established in the State Guide Plan. These requirements ensure state and local coordination on key issues that impact the ability of both the state and local governments to achieve their visions.

The Providence Home Rule Charter provides further guidance on implementation of the comprehensive plan, specifically requiring that:

- No public or private improvement or project or subdivision or zoning ordinance be initiated or adopted unless it conforms to and implements the comprehensive plan and elements thereof.
- No capital improvement be funded unless that improvement is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- All development and project plans and proposals and all privately developed projects and developments which require approval by the city council or by other city boards, commissions or committees be submitted by the appropriate aforementioned public agency to the director of the department of planning and urban development for determination as to compliance with the comprehensive plan and its elements. All appeals from the director's decisions shall be submitted to the City Plan Commission for a determination as to compliance with the comprehensive plan.

B.3 Plan Preparation and Adoption

To ensure that local plans continue to reflect changing conditions as well as local and state objectives, the Act requires that communities update their plans every five years. Providence Tomorrow is an update to Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted by the City Council in 1994 and approved by the State of Rhode Island in 2002. Due to the delay in state approval, Providence 2000 is valid through May 6, 2007. Since Providence 2000 was originally prepared in the early 1990s, a thorough analysis of changes in existing conditions and objectives was needed. To ensure that the goals and objectives reflect current community goals, the City embarked on an intensive community planning process to solicit feedback on community priorities. The ideas generated through this planning process resulted in an overall change to the format of the plan, from goals and objectives based on geography to goals and objectives based on community values. As such, while this plan update retains the vast majority of the basic concepts inherent in Providence 2000, it resembles a new plan due to its reorganization and renewed focus on community values.

B.3.1 Community Involvement

The process of updating Providence 2000: The Interim Comprehensive Plan was initiated by the Mayor and City Council with one primary goal: that the community be involved at every step of the process. With this in mind, the Department of Planning and Development crafted an innovative process to encourage public discussion and debate of ideas. Community meetings and events were designed to be interactive, with planning staff talking with the public instead of always talking to them. As a result, Providence Tomorrow is founded on the ideas and concepts that the community voiced through the 10 month process from the first community meeting to adoption of the plan.

B Compliance with City and State Regulations

The charrette model of community involvement that was used in the preparation of this interim plan is the same model that will be used to develop neighborhood plans over the coming years. As defined by the National Charrette Institute, a charrette is "a collaborative planning process that harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a feasible plan that represents transformative community change."

In June 2006 members of the DPD staff attended a three day charrette manager training held by the National Charrette Institute. During this training, staff learned how to plan for and effectively facilitate charrettes.

Kick–off Event: July 26, 2006

The update of Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan started in July 2006 with a three–hour interactive public workshop at the Roger Williams Park Casino. Notice of the workshop was provided through a joint press release of the Mayor and City Council, postcards to neighborhood leaders, on the City's webpage, and an advertisement in Providence En Espanol.

The purpose of the workshop was to explain the process and timeframe for updating the plan, share information on key demographic changes that had occurred since the plan was written, and begin to understand key community values and issues. The workshop was attended by over 200 people representing most of Providence's neighborhoods.

During the workshop, we asked two questions:

- What do you like best about living in Providence?
- What would you change?

Through small group discussions, participants identified and voted on the top responses. Each group then had the opportunity to present their ideas to everyone. Through this workshop, several themes emerged:

People liked:

- The diversity of Providence
- The multitude of arts and cultural opportunities
- The small scale neighborhoods
- The walkable nature of the city
- The historic architecture

Key areas of improvement were also identified:

- Public transportation
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety and connections
- Gentrification
- Schools
- Pollution to land and water
- Parking - in commercial areas
- On–street overnight parking in residential areas

Compliance with City and State Regulations B

Citywide Charrette: October 10–14, 2006

In October 2006, the City hosted a five-day series of public workshops known as a "charrette" to discuss the community's goals on several different topics.   One of the primary goals of the process was to listen to residents and business owners describe their vision of the city. The intensive process provided numerous opportunities for public participation and resulted in key themes and concepts that have become the foundation for Providence Tomorrow. Three hundred thirty-seven people attended one or more of the sessions. The following summary provides insight into the interactive process that was used during the charrette.

Topics of the public sessions

The nine public sessions were centered around key elements of Providence's Comprehensive Plan such as Parks, Art and Culture, Housing, Economic Development, the Built Environment, Transportation and the Environment. The charrette also tackled the issue of growth and change in two evening sessions by asking participants to use buildings blocks on city maps to show where future housing and job growth should be accommodated.

Session nuts and bolts

The 2 ½ hour sessions were divided into three parts. The first was focused around small group discussions, with each table developing a 'wish list' specific to that topic. Next, each group shared the items from their table's wish list by categorizing them into Facts, Needs, Goals and Concepts. These categories were identified on the wall, and each item was written on a card and pinned up. As each group completed this step, the wall became full of ideas, priorities and suggestions. Members of the charrette team distilled all of the cards into themes and wrote guiding principles to capture what had been said. The group facilitator hosted a general discussion about growth and change with the entire group, and asked participants to think about how future growth would impact the topic, such as economic development or transportation for example. Participants brainstormed both the potential positives and negatives of future growth. To wrap up each session, participants were asked to 'vote' with sticky dots for the facts, needs, goals and concepts that they thought were most important, and also to identify whether they did or did not approve or agree with the guiding principles that were developed by the charrette team.

Stations

There were several 'stations' that participants could complete without attending the full 2 ½ hour sessions. These were designed to accommodate those who had a short time to dedicate to the charrette, and wanted a quick and easy way to give their feedback and ideas. There was a planning survey station, a photo room where participants could pin up photos of what they liked best of Providence and what they would like to see improved. Also, there was a 'wish list' station, and a station to identify facts, goals, needs and concepts.

Stakeholder Luncheons

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, key stakeholders were invited to a luncheon to be briefed on the charrette process and the outcomes of the week, and to seek feedback on the charrette topics. The charrette studio was open, so that stakeholders could walk through and see of the work that had been generated through the week. Elected officials, commission members, statewide agencies, planning directors from adjacent communities and planning organizations such as the Rhode Island American Planning Association were invited to the stakeholder luncheons.

Where Do We Grow?

B Compliance with City and State Regulations

Using building blocks to represent the projected growth in the city over the next 10 years, participants were asked to locate where growth should take place on a large scale city land use map. The sessions were interactive, fun and sometimes contentious as groups discussed their goals and values and as trade offs had to be made in order to accommodate all of the projected growth. The rules were simple; all of the blocks had to be used! Over two nights, theme started to emerge and there were many similarities among the final plans that the groups developed.

Friday work day

After a busy three days, the charrette team spent Friday working on pulling all of the information into a summary report that was handed out at the open house on Saturday. The Mayor and City Council members came by the charrette studio to be briefed on the work that happened throughout the week.

Wrap up and Open House

Saturday morning the charrette studio was open for anyone to stop by and see what had happened through the week. A summary report of the charrette sessions was handed out.

Citywide Charrette Follow–Up Meetings: December 4–6, 2006

Following the citywide charrette, the Department of Planning and Development began the process of updating the existing goals and policies based on the input received during the charrette. As part of this process, staff met with the Directors of City Departments and outside agencies that are responsible for implementing portions of the Comprehensive Plan.

On December 4th, 5th, and 6th, the Department hosted three community meetings in different areas of the city to get feedback on the preliminary goals and objectives that had been developed based on the charrette workshops and meetings with the implementation team. These meetings were attended by 135 people. At each meeting, staff presented an overview of the key themes generated during the charrette and how those concepts had been integrated into the Plan. Following the presentation, residents were given the opportunity to ask questions about the preliminary goals in a one-on-one format with planning staff and supply written comments and questions. These comments were used by staff to refine the goals, objectives and strategies of the draft plan.

B.3.2 Public Hearings

On February 27, 2007, the Department of Planning and Development presented the draft of *Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Plan* to the City Plan Commission. Residents were given the opportunity to provide comments on the draft plan from February 27th to May 15th through an interactive on-line comment system, as well as through hard copies and comment cards placed at libraries and community centers throughout the city. The Department received 524 comments from over 100 individuals during this comment period.

City Plan Commission Public Hearings

The City Plan Commission held two public hearings to solicit additional public comments on the draft plan. The first public hearing was held at the Times[2] Academy in the Charles neighborhood on April 12th and the second public hearing was held at the Meeting Street School in Lower South Providence on May 15th. Forty-three residents provided comments at these two public hearings.

City Plan Commission Workshops/Plan Adoption

Compliance with City and State Regulations   B

From May to August 2007, the City Plan Commission held 11 workshops to discuss each chapter of the Plan in detail, taking into consideration the comments received from residents during the public review period. On August 23, 2007, the City Plan Commission voted unanimously to adopt *Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Comprehensive Plan* and forward it to the City Council with numerous changes from the February 2007 draft.

City Council Public Hearing/Plan Adoption

The Plan adopted by the City Plan Commission was submitted to the City Council on August 30, 2007. The Council's Ordinance Committee held a public hearing on October 1st, and on October 22nd, the Plan was passed out of committee with several changes. The full City Council gave first passage to the revised Plan on November 1st. On November 20th, the City Plan Commission reviewed and commented on the changes made to the Plan. The Plan was then given final approval by the Council on December 6th, and the ordinance adopting the Plan was signed by the Mayor on December 17, 2007.

B Compliance with City and State Regulations

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Overview C

C Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Overview

Appendix C Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Overview

Providence's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is another tool to carry out Providence Tomorrow. The CIP is a tool to implement plans, react to capital improvement needs, to see projects through to completion, and to monitor the city's capacity to fund needed projects. The city's program is designed to coordinate needs assessment, finance, planning, and decision-making. In short, the CIP should be the primary tool by which decision-makers can effectively manage capital improvement efforts throughout the city.

A CIP serves two purposes: it establishes a city's policies and goals for the future and serves as a means to communicate and coordinate financial needs, estimates and budgets. Implemented correctly, the CIP enables a city to evaluate projects based on the goals and objectives as established in its comprehensive plan. By basing a CIP on the comprehensive plan the city can measure how effective its program has been in achieving its goals and objectives in the past and can set a framework to insure greater success in the future. The CIP also offers a base from which future costs to a city can be programmed so that sound financial decisions can be made.

Seen as a process, the CIP sets a city's goals regarding physical development and maintenance; translates those goals into criteria; measures and compares project requests submitted from all departments and places them in priority based on how the projects meet the established city goals; prepares a document reflecting that analysis with recommendations; lists projects that should be funded; and details the proposed funding mechanism(s).

Joining comprehensive planning with capital improvement budgeting reinforces the concepts that communities should plan for growth and change and should budget for the expenditures that they must make to achieve the planned growth. By tying the CIP to a comprehensive plan, a community is able to develop a capital needs list. Providence's CIP is included in the Comprehensive Plan as an implementation element in Chapter 13.

As required by the Providence Home Rule Charter, the Department of Planning and Development and the Finance Director must develop the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) annually. The CIP documents capital requests from all City agencies for a period of five years, analyzes these requests with respect to the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and prioritizes the requests.

Parties Responsible for Implementing Providence Tomorrow

D

D Parties Responsible for Implementing Providence Tomorrow

Appendix D Parties Responsible for Implementing Providence Tomorrow

The following table identifies the key city agencies that are integral to the successful implementation of Providence Tomorrow.

Table D.1 Implementation Responsibilities by City Department

Agency	Type	Elements [1]	Responsible For:
Office of the Mayor	Administrative	All	Implementing the Plan by setting priorities, directing City departments and agencies, and preparing annual budgets that allocate needed resources
City Council	Legislative	All	Adopting the Plan, ensuring that all City ordinances are in conformance with the Plan and allocating resources through the annual budget and Capital Improvement Program approval process.
City Plan Commission (CPC)	Board/ Commission	All	Ensuring that subdivisions, land development projects and institutional master plans conform to the Plan, reviewing and approving the Capital Improvement Element; and providing recommendations to the City Council regarding the conformance of proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments and right-of-way abandonments with the Plan
Conservation Commission	Board/ Commission	Sustainability and the Environment	Promoting sustainability and conservation throughout the City
Downcity Design Review Committee (DRC)	Board/ Commission	Built Environment, Land Use	Ensuring that all development within the Downcity Design Review Overlay district conforms to the Plan
Historic District Commission (HDC)	Board/ Commission	Built Environment	Preserving historic resources through the administration of Local Historic District regulations on design and demolition.
Water Supply Board (WSB)	Board/ Commission	Sustainability and the Environment, Land Use, Community Services, Business and Jobs	Providing an adequate, safe water supply to Providence residents and businesses

1   The elements listed in this table represent primary responsibilities. Coordination between agencies will be required on all elements.

Parties Responsible for Implementing Providence Tomorrow

D

Agency	Type	Elements [1]	Responsible For:
Zoning Board of Review (ZBR)	Board/ Commission	All	Ensuring that all zoning variances and special use permits conform to the Plan
Arts, Culture and Tourism (ACT)	Department	Arts and Culture, Business and Jobs	Promoting the arts both externally and internally through programming and partnership with local and regional arts organizations
Finance	Department	All	Ensuring that the City has the financial resources to implement the Plan and allocating required resources through the Capital Improvement Program.
Inspection and Standards (DIS) and Fire Inspection Bureau	Department	Land Use, Built Environment, Sustainability and the Environment, Housing	Ensuring that all development is consistent with the Plan, the Zoning Ordinance and building and life safety codes through permitting and inspections
Parks (Board of Parks Commissioners)	Department	People and Public Spaces, Built Environment, Sustainability and the Environment	Maintaining and improving all green and/or open spaces such as parks, cemeteries, recreational areas and the urban forest
Planning and Development (DPD)	Department	All	Ensuring that the physical growth and development of the City conforms to the Plan by reviewing development proposals for consistency with the Plan, preparing the Capital Improvement Program, administering housing programs and preparing amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance as needed.
Public Property	Department	Sustainability and the Environment, Built Environment, People and Public Spaces, Community Services and Facilities	Planning, designing, constructing and maintaining city property under its jurisdiction, including new construction and alterations and repairs
Public Safety (Police and Fire)	Department	Community Services	Ensuring the safety of all city residents and businesses
Public Works (DPW)	Department	Sustainability and the Environment, Built	Constructing and maintaining local roads, sidewalks and city-owned sewer lines; ensuring

1   The elements listed in this table represent primary responsibilities. Coordination between agencies will be required on all elements.

D Parties Responsible for Implementing Providence Tomorrow

Agency	Type	Elements [1]	Responsible For:
		Environment, Land Use, Community Services and Facilities, Transportation	the orderly flow of traffic on city streets and collecting/disposing solid waste and recyclables
Recreation	Department	People and Public Spaces, Community Services and Facilities	Planning and administering recreation programs for all age groups, and for such other programs and services as may assigned
Schools	Department	Community Services and Facilities, Arts and Culture	Educating and preparing all children to become responsible, productive members of society
Providence Off-Street Parking Authority	Quasi-City Agency	Built Environment, Mobility	Funding and constructing parking facilities.
Providence Public Building Authority (PPBA)	Quasi-City Agency	Sustainability and the Environment, Built Environment, People and Public Spaces, Community Services and Facilities	Funding and constructing public buildings.
Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA)	Quasi-City Agency	All	Ensuring that the redevelopment of blighted areas is consistent with the Plan
Providence Economic Development Partnership (PEDP)	Non-Profit Corporation	Business and Jobs, Built Environment, Arts and Culture	Providing financial and technical assistance to businesses and organizations to help grow the Providence economy
Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC)	Quasi-State Agency	Community Services, Land Use, Sustainability and the Environment	Operating the city wastewater system and completing the CSO Abatement project in coordination with the DPW
Providence Public Libraries (PPL)	Non-Profit Corporation	Community Services	Providing library access to all Providence residents who desire their services

In addition to the agencies listed above, the following state and federal agencies are essential to the successful implementation of Providence Tomorrow: Rhode Island Division of Planning, Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Coastal Resources Management Council, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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1   The elements listed in this table represent primary responsibilities. Coordination between agencies will be required on all elements.

Glossary E

E Glossary

Appendix E Glossary

- **Active recreation** – Leisure-time activities, usually of a formal nature and often performed with others, requiring equipment and taking place in prescribed places, sites or fields. This term may include activities such as organized sports.
- **Art in City Life Ordinance** – Adopted in 1980 by the Providence City Council, this ordinance requires one percent of total project cost for the reconstruction or remodeling of any building, decorative or commemorative structure, park, street, sidewalk, parking facility or utility paid for in whole or in part by the City to be expended on works of art.
- **Artist Residence Tax (Credit) Break** – Adopted in January 2004 by Rhode Island General Assembly, the Artist Tax Exemption Act provides relief from the sales & use tax and the state income tax to artists that live and work in various defined economic development zones throughout the state.
- **Arts and Culture Revolving Loan Fund** – A joint program of the Providence Economic Development Partnership and the City of Providence Department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism; it provides short-term low interest loans of up to $25,000 to arts organizations.
- **Blight** – Physical conditions including, but not limited to, the existence of unsuitable soil conditions, the existence of dumping or other unsanitary or unsafe conditions, the existence of ledge or rock, the necessity of unduly expensive excavation, fill or grading, or the necessity of undertaking unduly expensive measures for the drainage of the area or for the prevention of flooding or for making the area appropriate for sound development, or by reason of obsolete, inappropriate, or otherwise faulty platting or subdivision, deterioration of site improvements, inadequacy of utilities, diversity of ownership of plots, or tax delinquencies, or by reason of any combination of any of the foregoing conditions, is unduly costly to develop soundly through the ordinary operations of private enterprise and impairs the sound growth of the community.
- **Brain drain** – The phenomenon of the emigration of highly educated and/or talented populations to larger urban areas that often have more diverse opportunities.
- **Brownfield** – Abandoned, idled or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.
- **Built environment** – The manmade elements of a city including buildings, streetscapes, and public plazas.
- **Capital improvement project** – A five-year financial plan for the city's capital improvements. The five-year CIP is updated annually.
- **Capital Center Project** – A redevelopment project that expanded the Providence downtown area by relocating railroad tracks; uncovering waterways; constructing bridges, river-walks, parks, an amphitheater, the Rhode Island Convention Center, a hotel complex, a mall, and other major venues.
- **Charrette** – A public design workshop in which designers, property owners, developers, public officials, environmentalists, residents, and other persons or groups of people work in harmony to achieve an agreeable project.
- **Character districts** – Areas of a community which have special physical characteristics that distinguish them from their surroundings and contribute to their individuality.
- **City Charter** – The governing document of the municipality. See also ***Providence Home Rule Charter***.
- **Climate Action Plan** – A Local Action Plan developed through a multi-stakeholder process that describes the policies and measures that it will take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve the emissions reduction target. Most plans include a timeline, a description of financing mechanisms, and an assignment of responsibility to departments and staff.

- **Coastal Buffer Area** – Land area adjacent to a shoreline or other coastal feature that is, or will be, vegetated with native shoreline species and which acts as a natural transition zone between the coast and adjacent upland development.
- **Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC)** – A Rhode Island State management agency with regulatory functions. Its primary responsibility is the preservation, protection, development and, where possible, the restoration of the coastal areas of the state via the issuance of permits for work with the coastal zone of the state.
- **Cohort-Component Projection Model** – A statistical tool used to assess of the size and composition of a region's population and how it will change in the future.
- **Combined Sewer Outfall Abatement Program** – An initiative of the Narragansett Bay Commission which aims to curb the combined sewer outflow in Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls. The Combined Sewer Outfall Abatement Program was originally approved in March of 1993. In June of 2001, construction began on an extensive underground system which, when completed, will drastically reduce the combined sewer outflow of the abovementioned municipalities.
- **Commercial corridor** – A primary commercial street.
- **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** – A flexible federal grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs including housing rehabilitation, community development, public facilities development and economic development.
- **Community development corporation (CDC)** – An organization with a 501(c)(3) tax certification that works on local housing and economic development issues.
- **Community garden** – A private or public facility for cultivation of fruits, flowers, vegetables, or ornamental plants by more than one person or family.
- **Commuter shed** – The area from which people do or might commute from their homes to a specific workplace destination, given specific assumptions about maximum travel time or distance.
- **Comprehensive plan** – A plan for development of an area which recognizes the physical, economic, social, political, aesthetic, and related factors of the community involved, pursuant to chapter 22.2, title 45 of the General Laws of Rhode Island.
- **Condominium** – Real estate, portions of which are designated for separate ownership and the remainder of which is designated for common ownership solely by the owners of those portions. Real estate is not a condominium unless the undivided interests in the common elements are vested in the unit owners.
- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)** – The effective use of design tools and techniques within the built environment in order to reduce the fear of as well as the incidence of crime, and to improve overall quality of life.
- **Density** – The number of dwelling units per unit of land.
- **Design review** – The process wherein a site plan and elevations are submitted to the city for examination and evaluation of the technical elements of the submitted materials as well as determination of how well the plan and design meets officially adopted criteria.
- **Donor community** – A community that assumes the bulk of the economic burdens, such as service agencies and locally undesirable land uses, in a given area without reaping the associated tax benefits.
- **Downcity –** A limited area of downtown Providence bordered by I-95 to the west, the existing I-195 alignment to the south, Smith Street to the north, and Providence River/North Main Street to the east.
- **Dredging** – To enlarge or clean out a water body, watercourse, or wetland.
- **Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)** – A federal tax credit provided for certain people who work and have earned income under a particular amount.

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- **Effective Schools Initiative** – A list of ten dimensions of school effectiveness created by the Providence Public School District to improve school quality throughout the city's school district.
- **Eminent domain** – The authority of a government to take, or to authorize the taking of, private property for the following purposes: public ownership and use; public utilities, including telecommunications, and common carriers; eliminating an identifiable public harm and/or correcting conditions adversely affecting public health, safety, morals, or welfare, including, but not limited to, the elimination and prevention of blighted and substandard areas, as defined by RIGL 45-31.
- **Employer Homeownership Challenge** – A proposed program by the City of Providence that will utilize City funds to leverage contributions from private employers. Targeted population are renters who wish to move up to homeownership.
- **Environmental justice [k17]** – Equal protection from environmental hazards for individuals, groups, or communities regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status. This applies to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, and implies that no population of people should be forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of negative environmental impacts of pollution or environmental hazard due to a lack of political or economic strength levels.
- **Enterprise Zone** – A specific geographic area consisting of economically distressed census tracts, designated by The Rhode Island Enterprise Zone Council in accordance with R.I.G.L. § 42-64.3, to stimulate economic revitalization, promote employment opportunities, and encourage business development and expansion in distressed areas. Enterprise zones encourage economic growth and investment in distressed areas by offering state tax credits to eligible member businesses located within the zone boundaries.
- **Erosion control** – Techniques employed to prevent or reduce erosion or sedimentation and are typically necessary when ground disturbance occurs.
- **Extrapolation** – The extension of a relationship between two or more variables beyond the range covered by knowledge, or the calculation of a value outside that range.
- **Fair Market Rent (FMR)** – Gross rent estimates determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to be the cost of modest, non-luxury, rental units in a specific market area. FMR includes the shelter rent plus the cost of all utilities, except telephones. Generally, an "affordable" rent is considered to be below the Fair Market Rent.
- **Farmer's market** – The offering for sale of fresh, locally produced agricultural goods directly to the consumer at an open air market, and which is designated a community activity.
- **First Source Program** – Also known as Providence Connects, First Source is a program that implements City Ordinances 21-93 and 21-94 (circa 1985), requiring businesses in the City of Providence who receive aid in cash or in-kind from the City to enter into an agreement with the City to hire Providence residents from a list to be maintained by the Department of Planning and Development. Aid includes tax concessions, and/or abatements, federal grants and direct City funding. The ordinance was designed 'to encourage the retention of working, home owning families, who live and work in Providence'.
- **Floodplain** – An area that has a one percent (1%) or greater chance of inundation in any given year, as delineated by the federal emergency agency pursuant to the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968.
- **Floodway** – The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height.
- **Flood zone** – Land areas with a predetermined risk of flooding, as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- **Form-based codes** – A method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm by controlling physical form primarily, and land uses secondarily.

- **Geographic information system (GIS)** – A computer-generated mapping system for collecting, storing, analyzing and integrating information about physical and man-made features on maps.
- **Global warming** – An increase in the near surface temperature of the Earth. Global warming has occurred in the distant past as the result of natural influences, but the term is most often used to refer to the warming predicted to occur as a result of increased emissions of greenhouse gases.
- **Green** – A term implying environmental sustainability.
- **Green building** – Structures that incorporate the principles of sustainable design – design in which the impact of a building on the environment will be minimal over the lifetime of that building. Green buildings incorporate principles of energy and resource efficiency, practical applications of waste reductions and pollution prevention, good indoor air quality and natural light to promote occupant health and productivity, and transportation efficiency in design and construction, during use and reuse.
- **Green roof** – A green roof consists of vegetation and soil, or a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane. Additional layers, such as a root barrier and drainage and irrigation systems may also be included.
- **Greenfields** – Untouched land and open areas where there has been no prior industrial or commercial activity.
- **Greenhouse gas emissions** – Human-caused emission of gasses which trap heat in the atmosphere.
- **Green space** - A publicly accessible open space characterized by grass, foliage, plants and other natural and vegetative features.
- **Greenway** – Areas, either publicly or privately owned, intended to provide active and passive recreation and open space along the waterfront and to provide connections between open spaces.
- **Growth corridor** – Areas located along key commercial and transit corridors in the city where development is likely to occur in the future.
- **Growth district** – Areas centered around the city's downtown core, the waterfront and manufacturing areas where development is likely to occur in the future.
- **Harbor management plan** – A plan providing a long-range vision for the controlled growth and development of harbor and shoreline areas. Harbor management plans provide a comprehensive evaluation of municipal harbor management activities; a detailed assessment of current and/or proposed harbor management programs, ordinances and regulations to ensure compliance with applicable state regulatory and management programs; and a framework for delegation of primary authority and responsibilities for consistent municipal harbor management.
- **Hazard mitigation plan** – A plan designed to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a hazardous event.
- **Historic preservation** – The identification, evaluation, protection, rehabilitation, and restoration of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and artifacts significant in history, architecture, archeology, or culture.
- **Historic district** – A zoning overlay district designed to protect historically significant structures in the city. The city's eight local historic districts are regulated by the Providence Historic District Commission.
- **HOME Program** – A federal grant that provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use – often in partnership with local nonprofit groups – to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or private direct rental assistance to low-income people.
- **Homeland security** – The broad effort by all levels of government – federal, state and local – to protect the territory of the United States from hazards, both internal and external, natural and man-made.
- **Household** – A family and/or one or more unrelated persons, including servants, and not more than two (2) boarders, who share the same dwelling tand use some or all of its cooking and eating facilities.
- **Housing bond** – A bond that is issued by local housing authorities throughout Rhode Island to finance the construction of municipal housing development projects.

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- **Housing stock** – The total number of residential units in a given location.
- **International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI)** – An international association of local governments and national and regional local government organizations, founded in 1990, that have made a commitment to sustainable development. ICLEI runs the Cities for Climate Protection Program, which assists cities in adopting policies and implementing measures to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and enhance urban livability and sustainability.
- **Impervious surface** – Any hard-surfaced, man-made area that does not readily absorb or retain water, including but not limited to building roofs, parking and driveway areas, graveled areas, sidewalks, and paved recreation areas.
- **In-migration** – Population movement into an area during a given period.
- **Incubator** – A facility dedicated to the start-up and growth of small businesses, accomplished through management and facility support systems.
- **Industrial and Commercial Buildings District** – Adopted by the City of Providence in 2002, this thematic, non-contiguous local historic district provides protection for listed historic commercial and industrial buildings throughout the City.
- **Infill development** – The construction of a building on a vacant or underutilized parcel located in a predominately built up area.
- **Infrastructure** – Facilities and services needed to sustain residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and other activities.
- **Institutional Master Plan** – Plans prepared by health care and educational institutions, submitted to the city, that detail short, mid and long-range growth and expansion plans.
- **Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)** – An act of the federal government intended to develop a national intermodal surface transportation system, and which authorized funds for highway construction, highway safety programs, mass transit programs, and other transportation-related programs. It was preceded by the Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 and followed by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and most recently in 2005, the Safety Accountability Fairness Efficiency Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).
- **Intermodal transportation** – The ability to connect, and the connections between, various modes of transportation.
- **Jobs district** – Areas intended for industrial, manufacturing, commercial and office uses to support business growth and expansion. Residential uses are prohibited in these areas.
- **Knowledge-based industry** – Industries which are intensive in technology and human capital.
- **Land bank** – The purchase of land by a local government or non profit agency for use or resale at a later date. Banked lands have been used for development of low- and moderate income housing, expansion of parks, and development of industrial and commercial centers
- **Land development project** – A project in which one or more lots, tracts, or parcels of land are to be developed or redeveloped as a coordinated site for a complex of uses, units, or structures, including, but not limited to, planned development and/or cluster development for residential, commercial, institutional, recreational, open space, and/or mixed uses as may be provided for in the zoning ordinance.
- **Land use** – The occupation or utilization of land. Some examples are residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and agricultural.
- **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)** – A green building rating system.
- **Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Import Facility** – Shipping terminals where LNG is offloaded, stored, re-gasified and injected into pipeline systems or trucks for delivery to end users.

- **Live/Work** – A structure or portion of a structure combining a dwelling unit or rooming unit with an integrated work space principally used by one or more of the residents.
- **Local historic districts** – A group of buildings, properties or sites that have been designated by the City as historically or architecturally significant.
- **Locally undesirable land uses (LULU)** – A term that has been applied to uses such as prisons, hazardous waste facilities, landfills, power plants, and other uses perceived by the public as posing a health or safety risk.
- **Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)** – Created by the Federal Tax Reform Act of 1986 as an alternate method of funding housing for low- and moderate-income households.
- **Massing** – The three-dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width and depth.
- **Master plan** – An overall plan for a proposed project site outlining general, rather than detailed, development intentions. It describes the basic parameters of a major development proposal, rather than giving full engineering details. Required in major land development or major subdivision review.
- **Median income** – Median income is the amount which divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and half having income below that amount.
- **Metropolitan Transportation Planning Initiative** – Program created in 2006 based on findings of Transit 2020 Working Group; its purpose is to define the best responses to the transit-related challenges faced by the Providence Metropolitan Area in the years ahead and how a robust transit system can reduce congestion, improve environmental quality, promote development of the urban core, preserve open space and protect the character of Rhode Island, and promote economic development in the Metropolitan Area.
- **Micro loan** – A small start up loan, typically under $10,000.
- **Mixed-use** – A mixture of land uses within a single development, building, or tract.
- **National Register District** – An area, listed on the federal Department of the Interior's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation, that is significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.
- **Neighborhood Markets** – A program of Providence's Department of Planning & Development which uses public and private resources to revitalize key commercial corridors within the city in partnership with local merchant associations.
- **Neighborhood Plan** - Plan for one or more of the city's official neighborhoods.
- **Net migration** – The difference between in-migration and out-migration during a specified time frame. Net migration can be either positive or negative. Positive net migration indicates net in-migration, while negative net migration indicates net out-migration.
- **Node** – A strategic spot in the city that serves as a center or hub of activity, often located at major intersections or distinguished by a landmark.
- **Non-point pollution** – Non-discreet sources of pollution such as agricultural land with fertilizers that are carried from the land by runoff, or automobiles.
- **Out-migration** – Population movement out of an area during a given period.
- **Open space** – means any parcel or area of land or water set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring the open space; provided that the area may be improved with only those buildings, structures, streets, and off-street parking, and other improvements that are designed to be incidental to the natural openness of the land.
- **Parcel** – A lot, or contiguous group of lots in single ownership or under single control, and usually considered a unit for purposes of development. Also referred to as a tract.
- **Passive Recreation** – Activities or uses that are informal and generally do not require specialized facilities or equipment, such as walking, sitting, picnicking, board and table games.

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- **Pavement Management Program** – A Rhode Island State Department of Transportation program that provides for highway work not already performed as part of routine maintenance. Such work includes resurfacing, striping and signing, minor drainage improvements, minor guardrail improvements, crack sealing, chip sealing, retaining wall repair, and sidewalk and curb repair.
- **Pedestrian Oriented Development** – Development which is designed with a primary emphasis on the street, sidewalk, or connecting walkway access to the site and building, rather than on auto access and parking lots. In pedestrian oriented development, buildings are typically placed relatively close to the street and the main entrance is oriented to the street sidewalk or a walkway.
- **Physical Alteration Permit** – Granted by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, the purpose of the permit is to allow for alterations to curbs, sidewalks, highway access, storm-water disposal, construction within the state highway right-of-way, and traffic signals.
- **Plan** - When capitalized, the work Plan refers to Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Comprehensive Plan. When the word plan is used in all lowercase letters, it refers to other specific plans.
- **Point pollution source** – A stationary location or fixed facility from which pollutants are discharged; any single identifiable source of pollution; e.g. a pipe, ditch, ship, ore pit, factory smokestack.
- **Population density** – Population per unit of land area.
- **Poverty level** – Defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, families and unrelated individuals are classified as being above or below the poverty level based on a poverty index that provides a range of income cutoffs or "poverty thresholds" varying by size of family, number of children, and age of householder. The income cutoffs are updated each year to reflect the change in the Consumer Price Index.
- **Property Tax Relief Credit** – A State of Rhode Island's property tax credit available to Rhode Island residents whose total income does not exceed $30,000. The refund is calculated based on the amount by which property taxes (or rent) exceed a percentage of the household income.
- **Providence Housing Trust (PHT)** – A City of Providence management agency designed to provide resources to create, rehabilitate and preserve affordable housing throughout the city.
- **Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan** – Adopted in December 1994, this document was a guide for future growth and change in the city, setting forth the city's policies for public and private actions. Succeeded by Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Comprehensive Plan.
- **Providence Bicycle Network** – A system of designated bike routes extending throughout Providence
- **Providence Home Rule Charter** – Adopted in September of 1980, and amended in March of 2007, this document establishes the powers of the city government and authorizes them exercise those powers.
- **Providence Off-Street Parking Authority** – A City of Providence agency whose purpose is to assist in the development of off-street parking facilities through site assembly and financing.
- **Public Realm** -- Publicly owned streets, sidewalks, rights-of-ways, parks and other publicly accessible open spaces, and public and civic buildings and facilities.
- **Quality of life** – The attributes or amenities that combine to make an area a desirable place to live.
- **Retail destination** – A center of retail/commercial activity.
- **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)** – Provided by the Providence Economic Development Partnership, this program is designed to encourage job creation and new investment in business ventures located in the City of Providence by providing below-market rate, short term loans for business or for projects that have difficulty obtaining conventional commercial financing.
- **Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act** – This state law, adopted on June 11, 1988, requires every city and town in Rhode Island to adopt a local comprehensive plan. Each local comprehensive plan must discuss the following nine elements: goals and polities, land use, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, services and facilities, open space and recreation, circulation, and implementation.

- **Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Open Space Grant** – A State program that provides funds towards the construction of a variety of open space venues, such as playgrounds, ball fields, walking paths, boat launches, picnic areas, and landscaped gardens, and are given to communities throughout the state.
- **Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission** – The Rhode Island state agency for historical preservation and heritage programs. The commission operates a statewide historical preservation program that identifies and protects historic buildings, districts, structures, and archaeological sites. The Commission also develops and carries out programs to document and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Rhode Island people.
- **Right-of-way** – A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, prescription, or condemnation and intended to be occupied by a street, trail, water line, sanitary sewer, and/or public utilities or facilities.
- **Riparian land** – Land that is traversed or bounded by a natural watercourse or adjoining tidal lands.
- **Riparian flow** – High water flows that access parts of an active floodplain on a regular basis.
- **Risk Watch** – A program of the National Fire Protection Association, designed to teach children how to recognize and avoid certain types of unintentional injuries, and to help children cope with natural disasters.
- **Runoff** – The rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation water flowing that has not evaporated or infiltrated into the soil, but flows over the ground surface.
- **Rural** – An area not included in the boundary of an urban area.
- **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)** – A federal law, enacted on August 10, 2005, that guaranteed $244.1 billion in funding for highway, highway safety, and public transportation projects SAFETEA-LU succeeded the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)
- **Satellite cities** – Smaller municipalities adjacent to a major city which is the core of a metropolitan area. Satellite cities differ from suburbs, subdivisions and bedroom communities in that they have municipal governments distinct from that of the core metropolis and employment bases sufficient to support their residential populations.
- **Sea level rise** – Long-term increases in mean sea level, often attributed to the greenhouse effect and associated global warming.
- **Site planning** – The process of creating a development plan for one or more lots on which is shown the existing and/or the proposed conditions of the lot.
- **Smart Growth** – Policies, legislation, regulations, procedures and strategies that attempt to achieve more compact, efficient, mixed-use development, tied to existing infrastructure and facilities by using such techniques as transfer of development rights, growth boundaries, targeted public and private investments, impact fees, open space and farmland preservation, and flexible zoning and subdivision regulations with established parameters.
- **SmartCode** – A model integrated development code that incorporates Smart Growth and New Urbanist principles, Transect-based planning, environmental and zoning regulations, and regional, community and building-scaled design provisions.
- **SmartWay and SmartWay Elite** – Based on a US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Greenhouse Gas and Air Pollution rating system, SmartWay and SmartWay Elite are designations given to those vehicles that score well on both the Air Pollution and Greenhouse Gas Scores.
- **Solar access** – The availability of, or access to, unobstructed direct sunlight.
- **Special needs housing** – Housing, usually with supportive services in place, that serves the specific needs of the disabled community.
- **Specific Plan** - Plans based on geographies other than the official neighborhood boundaries such sa the waterfront, and other topic-based plans such as economic development.

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- **State Historic Tax Credit** – Provided by the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program, this credit is given to those who restore historic income-producing buildings in order to make preservation work more affordable. The credit equals 30% of the cost of approved rehabilitation work. In order to qualify, the project must cost at least as much as half the value of the building (50% of adjusted basis). Those whose preservation projects are approved receive the credit on their state income tax return.
- **Stakeholder** – Anyone who may be affected by a decision. Someone who has a stake or interest in the outcome of a decision, often involving land or real property.
- **Stewardship** – A sense of personal responsibility for taking care of something that is not one's own.
- **Storefront Improvement Grant** – Provided by the Providence Economic Development Partnership, businesses can apply for this reimbursable matching grant for visible exterior improvements to retail locations throughout Providence.
- **Stream stabilization** – Techniques used to combat soil erosion at stream banks and to establish a stable stream system that maintains equilibrium with natural forces on and in the stream.
- **Street tree** – A tree located in the public right-of-way between the sidewalk and the street.
- **Street grid** – The existing network or pattern of streets within a city.
- **Suburban** – A city's outlying area, usually characterized by lower population and residential densities.
- **Suburbanization** – The process of population movement from within towns and cities to the rural-urban fringe.
- **Surface parking** –Paved areas at-grade used for vehicle parking.
- **Sustainability** – The capacity to meet environmental, economic, and community needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Tax stabilization** –A limit on the amount of taxes applicable to a particular tax payer for a specified time period usually 10 – 15 years (tax usually stabilized at a pre-development rate). Used as an incentive to encourage or direct development in a particular way, usually with public benefit obligations included in the tax treaty.
- **Traditional Neighborhood Design** – An approach to planning and urban design that emphasizes the development patterns and characteristics of small, older communities such as a mixed land uses, grid street patterns, pedestrian circulation and amenities, open spaces, and architectural character-all of which create a strong sense of community.
- **Transit** – Passenger services provided by public, private, or nonprofit entities including commuter rail, rail rapid transit, light rail transit, light guideway transit, express bus, and local fixed route bus.
- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)** – The concentration of development at nodes along public transit corridors, either light rail or bus routes.
- **Transitional area** – An area in the process of changing from one use to another or an area which functions as a buffer between land uses of different types or intensity.
- **Transportation** – The movement of people and goods from one place to another.
- **Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)** – A list of transportation projects that the State of Rhode Island intends to implement using federal highway and transit funds.
- **Tree canopy** – The square footage of land area covered by a tree's canopy at the tree's maturity.
- **Urban** – Of, relating to, characteristic of, or constituting a city. Urban areas are generally characterized by moderate and higher density residential development, commercial development, and industrial development, as well as the availability of public services required for that development, specifically central water and sewer, an extensive road network, public transit, and other such services.
- **Urban agriculture** –The practice of agriculture within or surrounding the boundaries of cities.
- **Urban design** – The process of organizing the contextual elements of the built environment such that the end result will be a place with its own character or identity.

- **Urban Fabric** – The physical form of towns and cities. See also *Urban design*.
- **Vehicle Excise Tax** – A tax on registered motor vehicles and trailers that cities and towns are authorized to administer and collect.
- **Vehicle Miles Traveled** – The total distance traveled by all motor vehicles of a specific group in a given area at a given time.
- **View corridor** - The line of sight from a defined public vantage point (i.e. a park, open space, public right-of-way, etc.) looking toward an object or area of significance.
- **Water Type Classifications** – The six categories of coastal waters defined by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program. The classification types impact land and water activities within a 200 ft. area contiguous to shoreline features and range from waters in natural, undisturbed conditions to waters predominated by industrial activities.
- **Water-Dependent Uses** – An activity which can only be conducted on, in, over or adjacent to a water body because such activity requires direct access to that water body, and which involves, as an integral part of such activity, the use of the water.
- **Watershed** – The total area above a given point on a watercourse that contributes water to its flow; the entire region drained by a waterway or watercourse that drains into a lake or reservoir.
- **Watershed Lands** –Land surrounding a water body's natural area of drainage.
- **Wayfinding** – A comprehensive and coordinated system of signage and other visual cues used to aid navigation and orientation in the built environment.
- **Wetlands** – Land such as a swamp, marsh, bog or fen (not including land that is being used for agricultural purposes and no longer exhibits wetland characteristics) that: is seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water or has the water table close to or at the surface; has hydric soils and vegetation dominated by hydrophytic or water-tolerant plants, and; has been further identified, by the RIDEM or by any other person according to evaluation procedures established by the RIDEM, as amended from time to time.
- **Zoning** – The reservation of certain specified areas within a community or city for building and structures, or use of land, for certain purposes with other limitations as height, lot coverage, and other stipulated requirements.
- **Zoning Ordinance** – The ordinance and accompanying zoning map enacted by the City Council pursuant to Section 45-24-27 through 45-24-72 of the RIGL (the Rhode Island Zoning Enabling Act of 1991), which sets forth the regulations and standards relating to the nature and extent of uses of land and structures.
- **Zoning Overlay District** – District(s) as established in the zoning ordinance that is superimposed on one or more districts or parts of districts and that imposes specific requirements in addition to, but not less, than those otherwise applicable for the underlying zone.

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Providence Tomorrow: The Interim Comprehensive Plan