



Riverside Square

Revitalization Assessment and Recommendations

East Providence, Rhode Island

January 2023



Acknowledgments

This research was made possible by the following participants.

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Project Overview

The Riverside Square Revitalization Assessment is a collaborative effort between Roger Williams University students in Dr. Ginette Wessel's Interdisciplinary Planning Workshop course, Dr. Elaine Stiles' Building Documentation and Research Methods class, City of East Providence planners, GrowSmart RI planners, and Riverside residents and community groups. This assessment took place from August to December in 2021 and 2022.

The project supports multiple concurrent planning efforts. The project demonstrates the need for developing Main Street initiatives in local Rhode Island communities. GrowSmart RI is undertaking an initiative to develop a state-wide approach to Main Street revitalization. They seek to implement a program that will provide organization and support for people working to promote, activate, and beautify our main streets, downtowns, and village squares. In this regard, the students assessed the existing business activity, streetscape conditions, local history, mobility options, public amenities, and stakeholder perspectives in Riverside Square and created alternatives for improvement.

The project also supports the City of East Providence's Mixed-Use Overlay Zoning Ordinance for Riverside Square and Bullocks Point Ave that will enhance business diversity and residential opportunity. Students identified the assets and challenges of expanding residential and mixed-use development on opportunity sites near Riverside Square.

This report is informed by community participation from the neighborhood residents and city officials. On November 8th, 2021 and November 7th, 2022, the students hosted community open house events at the Riverside Congregational Church with 100 attendees. The open house provided an opportunity to collect resident perspectives, share the students' research, and engage the community. A variety of community groups and stakeholders were also interviewed individually throughout the project.



Riverside Square from Riverside Square Market Analysis, 2017.



Riverside neighborhood US Census Tracts from ESRI.

The project area primarily includes the Riverside Square which has 33 parcels and 28 buildings in the commercial area. It also has 22 ground floor businesses. The neighborhood of Riverside is located in the City of East Providence which is part of Providence County in Rhode Island. Resident input and community data derived from the Riverside neighborhood boundary that is defined by US Census Tracts 106, 107.01, and 107.02.

Riverside’s convenient geographic proximity to Providence and coastal assets have shaped its growth overtime. Riverside Square marks the neighborhood downtown via the intersection Bullocks Point Ave and the East Bay Bike Path (a former rail line). Riverside Square offers local eateries, shops, churches, historic buildings, and serves as a connection point to waterfront access to the south and west for its residents and visitors. Riverside Square has unique qualities and assets as well as opportunities to improve economic development and the built environment for current residents and new visitors. This community-driven revitalization process considers the rich history and voices of Riverside and fosters ideas for future improvement.

Main Street Approach

Rhode Island is full of traditional commercial districts – where we go for brunch or a stroll, where we bring our out-of-town guests, shop for gifts, and run into friends and neighbors. Our main streets, downtowns, and village squares are the centers of our communities, provide an environment where small businesses can thrive, and make RI a unique, interesting, and fun place to live, work, and visit.

Working under the framework long-established by the National Trust Main Street Center, GrowSmart’s Rhode Island Main Street initiative will draw upon best practices from around the country to help maintain and grow our unique and beloved places as vibrant anchors for businesses and communities.

The National Trust Main Street Center’s “Four Points” approach to main street and downtown revitalization includes organization, promotion, design, and economic vitality:

- Organization establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various groups who have a stake in the commercial district. By getting everyone working toward the same goal, a Main Street program can provide effective, ongoing management and advocacy for the district.

- Promotion takes many forms, but the goal is to create a positive image that will rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence in a district. Advertising, retail promotional activities, special events, and marketing campaigns help sell the image and promise of the Main Street to the community and surrounding region. Promotions communicate a district’s unique characteristics and offerings to shoppers, investors, business owners, and visitors.

- Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape and creating a safe, inviting atmosphere. It takes advantage of the visual opportunities inherent in a commercial district by directing attention to all its physical elements: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, landscaping, merchandising, displays, and promotional materials. Its aim is to stress the importance of design quality, to educate people about design quality, and to expedite improvements.

- Economic Vitality strengthens a community’s existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. This is accomplished by retaining and expanding existing businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, converting unused or underutilized space into productive property, sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of business people, and attracting new businesses that the market can support.



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1.1 Chepachet Village, Gloucester, Rhode Island

Year Program Founded

The Chepachet Village Revitalization Plan was founded in 1991, and amended and furthered in 2020.

Population of Village

The population of Chepachet Village was 1,675 people as of 2010, and the population of Gloucester was 9,764 in 2010.

Main Street Area

The main street area in Chepachet Village is 528 acres, about 1.5 miles long.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders involved in the Chepachet Village Revitalization Plan include:

Town of Gloucester, Gloucester Heritage Society, Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, CivicMoxie, LLC

Grants/Funding Sources

Rhode Island Foundation Community Grant
\$250,000 grant from the National Park Service's Historic Revitalization Program
\$400,000 grant from Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management for maintenance and recreational facilities in Gloucester Memorial Park
Town contribution of \$225,000 towards the Gloucester Memorial Park rehabilitation project
Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission awards the Town \$14,000 to hire a historic preservation consultant
Rhode Island Historic Preservation Tax Credit
Rebuild RI Tax Credit Program
State Preservation Grant

Location and Background

Chepachet Village is located in the town of Gloucester in northwestern Rhode Island. The

entirety of New England was shaped by years of glacial movements during the ice age, leaving a surface of sporadically deposited rock formations and a layer of till. As the ice melted and moved, it left the granite bedrock exposed in what remains some of the tallest peaks and elevations in the state. Chepachet Village is the largest of the seven villages in Gloucester. The town of Gloucester is 54.8 square miles plus 2.017 square miles of waterways. The present eastern boundary of Gloucester lies along the Seven Mile Line established in the 1600s during Roger Williams' agreements with the Native Tribes. As colonists continued to settle locally, the town developed in farming and industry reliant on the many waterways. The village became an important stage coach stop, and therefore, commercial center during the time after the Revolutionary Era as well. The end of World War II brought suburban sprawl and population growth to the area.

Comparatively, Chepachet Village is approximately 1.5 miles long and is dissected by Putnam Pike (Route 44). Further, the main street commercial area of Chepachet Village is about .5 miles long, also centered on Route 44, which is a heavily trafficked and high speed area with minimal pedestrian amenities. Pedestrians can walk the commercial area in about 15 minutes, or drive the length of the commercial area in one minute. Also, there are minimal marked dedicated spaces for pedestrians to cross Route 44. Route 44 connects with New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Gloucester directly borders Connecticut and the Rhode Island towns of Burrillville and Foster. Route 44 is the most direct route between Chepachet Village and Providence, which is approximately an 18 mile trip, or half hour drive.

The village remains divided by rivers and lakes, with the Chepachet River intersecting with Route 44 and supplying the Smith and Sayles Reservoir. The Chepachet River begins in the center of town and flows northward, where it joins the Clear River in Burrillville to form the Branch River, which eventually flows into the Blackstone River.

Historically, the waterways significantly contributed to the financial development of Glocester during the Industrial Revolution when water power enabled mill production. The Chepachet River became a compactly settled area with towns centered around the employment opportunities at the mills and accompanying roadways between towns further connected industries and eased travel between Connecticut, Massachusetts, and more uniformly in Rhode Island. By 1809, there were seventeen mills reliant on water power and operating within a 30-mile radius of Providence. The industry continued to change in scale and production by the 1830s, and the invention of steam power no longer restricting locations of the mills. While many of the mill buildings remain in the landscape, they majorly stopped production in the early twentieth century. Presently, there are multiple publicly managed recreation spaces along the river within Chepachet Village, including Spring Grove Beach, Hopkins Woodland Forest, and Glocester Memorial Park.

Historical Background

Present day Rhode Island was inhabited by the Narragansett, Wampanoag and Nipmuc Tribes for thousands of years prior to European colonization, with the Narragansett Tribe maintaining authority above the surrounding tribes. The Nipmuc Tribe occupied what became Glocester and the woodland area of Rhode Island. A concentration of artifacts along waterways suggest the rivers and streams in Rhode Island provided trade routes and connection points between the many tribes.

In 1638, Englishman Roger Williams entered into an arrangement with the Narragansetts to establish settlements in the Providence Plantations, using the Pawtucket River as a boundary marker. “Glocester,” after the English Duke of Gloucester, was established in 1639, three years after English settlement in Providence. By 1660, the Providence Plantations extended seven miles west of Fox Point, the ‘inlands,’ to twenty miles west of Fox Point, ‘the outlands,’ incorporating present day Glocester. However, Providence and Glocester did not separate



Figure 1.1 Chepachet Village Lawton Owen Mill (Chepachet Village 2020 Revitalization Plan)



Figure 1.2 Chepachet Village Tavern (Chepachet Village 2020 Revitalization Plan)



Figure 1.3 Brown & Hopkins Country Store (Chepachet Village 2020 Revitalization Plan)



into separate towns until nearly one hundred years later. On April 16, 1806, Glocester was divided again, with the northern half renamed to Burrillville. Originally, most of today's Providence County was included in the Town of Providence, but increasing population and the relatively long distance from the rural areas to the seat of town government in Providence resulted in a division of the town. in 1731. Glocester was one of the new towns carved out of Providence. It originally included the present town of Burrillville which, in turn, was set off from Glocester in 1806.

The earliest record of European settlement in Glocester began in 1706 when Abraham Tourtellott and John Smith established farms and estates near Acote's Hill. The eighteen hundreds were marked with agricultural development, and much of the land was cleared for farming.

Origins

The Chepachet Village Revitalization Effort began with the 1971 nomination and inclusion of the Chepachet Village district on the National Register of Historic Places, and became the first village in Rhode Island to be listed. By the 1990s, the revitalization effort focused on the economic stability and communal space in the main street area of Chepachet Village. The 1991 Chepachet Village Planning Project identified the scope of the effort and developed a list of recommendations and implementation steps to spur economic and historic revitalization, focusing on infrastructure, investment and how to entice business development. The amended report in 1997 outlined methods to stimulate economic activity and historic tourism, establishing goals for the town to repair brick sidewalks and add crosswalks, lamp posts, trees, signage, and a roundabout in the Village District. Further, funds were allocated to improve Memorial Park, a major recreation for the residents, and to improve and repair historic structures including the Town Hall.

According to the 2020 revitalization plan report, Glocester, with the support of state and federal agencies, has received and utilized "over \$15 million in infrastructure investment contributing to the Village's character as a historic, walkable commerce center including new brick sidewalks and crosswalks, period lighting, street trees, planters, new signage and a new roundabout replacing the only stoplight in the district which has significantly improved traffic flow through the Village." The 2020 Plan in collaboration with Civic Moxie, LLC, which remains the active plan, aims to take an inventory of existing structures and devise a plan for best methods to revitalize them and provide a plan for strategic funding due to impacts from COVID-19 business shutdowns. The main outcome of the plan will be for properties to undergo rehabilitation efforts during the five-year-long investment plan.

Economic Development

According to the 2020 Plan, the existence of an already idyllic town center with a concentration of small shops is a large attraction for existing foot traffic, noting any future changes and implementations of plans should capitalize on the established character of the town rather than rebranding. Overall, Glocester is primarily residential, with less than 4% of the total area dedicated to commercial spaces and manufacturing activities. Accordingly, local taxes are primarily from residential activities.

However, Chepachet Village is the primary concentration of commercial activity within Glocester, with 36 of 42 establishments supporting the economy. Of these establishments, 17 are retail stores. Specifically, 7 of the 17 stores are antique stores, which contribute to the "historic character and identity of the Village, providing a regional and visitor destination." Other businesses include local restaurants, cafes, healthcare facilities, grocery stores, and auto services. Notably, a majority of the businesses and attractions are locally owned establishments.

The 2020 report identified opportunities for additional businesses to fill the service gaps, including additional restaurants and food related services, home furnishings, and professional services, which would compliment the existing businesses. For the existing under-used spaces, CivicMoxie suggests the town take an extensive inventory of these spaces that are within the core business sector that could be then renovated for future use. Priority would be given to local artisans and craft artists looking for a place to produce and sell their products, and then look to recruit differing business types into the Village. The Gloucester Farmers Market and the Gloucester Scarecrow Festival are events that support businesses presence.

Further, CivicMoxie, LLC proposed the businesses in the Village form a group to coordinate marketing efforts, such as events on websites, posters, handouts, maps, and social media engagement. A business guide can help reach customers and visitors with coordinated and themed activities in collaboration with other resources, such as the Rhode Island Commerce and Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

Land Use

The Town of Gloucester, including Chepachet Village, is governed by a town zoning ordinance with subdivision regulations regulating both residential and commercial development. The town formed a Historic District Commission in coordination with the establishment of the Chepachet Village nomination to the National Register in 1991 and followed by the adoption of the Village District zoning ordinance in 2012. The zoning ordinance is designed to increase pedestrian-friendly mixed-use construction, increase adaptation/reuse of existing structures, and find uses for empty lots. Further, The role of the Historic District Commission (HDC) is to review development proposals to ensure proposals comply with both the Town’s comprehensive plan and Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation. Alternatively, the role

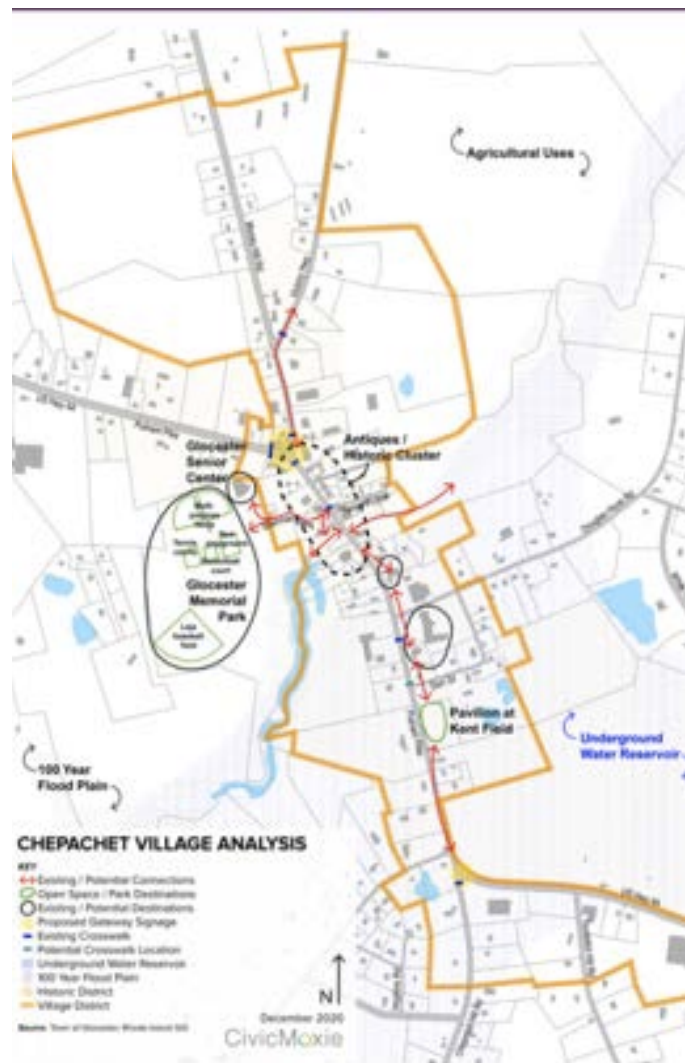


Figure 1.4 Village Analysis (Chepachet Village 2020 Revitalization Plan)

of Village District is to support ongoing mixed-used development of the existing buildings and vacant space without altering the historic character and feeling of the historic district.

Of the two districts characterized, the Center District includes more mixed-use buildings with recreational facilities, retail, commercial, and residential uses, which are all accessible by foot. The Center District contains a concentration of antique stores and other small businesses, a Senior Center, and borders Memorial Park. This park was also the subject of revitalization and improvements from historic grants from the Park Service and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. The park uses a large swath of land



immediately west of the Center District and includes a baseball field, tennis court, basketball court, a new playground, as well as multi-purpose fields. This park becomes a central recreation space for residents and visitors especially where events that may take place there have the proximity to the commercial center that benefits business traffic. The Chepachet Village Analysis Map shows the brainstorming CivicMoxie, LLC went through as they depict using red arrows in the area between the commercial center, the park, and senior center as places where connections can be strengthened, either through increased sidewalk/pedestrian access, lighting, signage, etc. The map also shows potential locations of work such as new crosswalks, signage, and potential destinations due to their land use and those of adjacent plats.

Preservation

The Chepachet Village Revitalization Project focus area overlaps with the National Register District nomination area from 1971, later joining the Blackstone Valley National Corridor District in the late 1990s. The National Register nomination recognized the Chepachet Village's significance as one of the early European settlements in the state and place of concentrated contribution to Rhode Island as the forefront of the Industrial Revolution. Chepachet Village continues to serve as the commercial center of Gloucester, and displays representation of the town's overall history. Further, the historic district encompasses more than 50 structures of historical and architectural significance.

CivicMoxie, LLC proposed to identify historic properties in the 2020 plan by developing a two-tier priority list of existing structures organized by the amount of repair required and the proximity to existing foot traffic and activity potential. This allows the town to set goals and split up the renovations based on timing of funding and business needs using the National Park Service grant the town was awarded which amounted to \$250,000. The 2020

report identified five properties of top priority for preservation, including the popular Tavern on Main restaurant, which was constructed in 1800 and then renovated with an attached home in 1850. Additionally, the properties in need of preservation efforts are the 1814 Lawton Owen Mill, 1800 Gloucester Hotel, 1800 Franklin Bank, and 1800 tavern with an undated barn. The report also identified a next list of priorities, including the 1802 Masonic Hall, 1780 Lydia Slocum House, 1868 William Hawkins House and Store, 1809 Brown and Hopkins Country Store, and 20th century commercial building. Notably, the Brown and Hopkins Country Store opened in 1809 and remains the oldest operating store in the country. Arguably one of the most unique historic sites in Chepachet Village is the Circus Lot, which was the site of Hachaliah Bailey's circus tents in 1822 and 1826 where he presented Betty The Learned Elephant, who was later murdered in Chepachet. The Village presented a memorial plaque in 1976 and has remained an icon of communal identity.

Fortunately, many of the properties are structurally sound, which support ongoing mixed uses and support the economic infrastructure. The Plan depicts the major sources of funding for projects could come through grants awarded to preservation councils in town and redistributed, coming from places like the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission and other preservation based funds. Reconnecting the town and its history by implementing signage, stories, and programs at events and other spaces will also bring a sense of pride for the character of the town with its residents as well.

Despite the recognized history and presence of Native Tribes in Rhode Island, and confirmed in the Gloucester area, the historic district and revitalization plan in Chepachet Village are notably lacking inclusion or representation of the tribe's many influences on the landscape.



Housing

According to the Gloucester town website, the population of the town as a whole in 1990 was 9,227, with a population density of 162 persons per square mile. By 2010, the population only increased to 9,746. According to the 2010 census, the population of Chepachet Village was 1,675 people and did not change by 2020. Therefore, the population of Chepachet Village made up approximately 17.2% of the town's total population. However, the population of Gloucester increased to 10,210 people.

Housing in Chepachet Village is sparse, with concentration of 86% of the properties designated as commercial spaces. Single family housing neighborhoods surround the main street area on the smaller streets connecting with Route 44, including Old Mill Lane, Tanyard Lane, and Sherman Lane. The only apartment complex in Chepachet Village is the Pine Meadows complex on Route 102, just half a mile away from the main street area. However, the complex is an income restricted senior living facility. Further, the Gloucester Housing Authority office is located just south of the main street area, about half a mile off of Route 44. As of the 2020 report, based off of the 2014-2018 ACS, there are 4,238 housing units, with 88.2% of those units being owner occupied. Additionally, there are 3,748 households, averaging 2.68 people per unit. The median home value was \$277,500, while rental units cost approximately \$1,031 per month.

The 2020 Plan recognizes the difficulty and cost prohibitive character of a town without sewage or water systems, so new developments will need to coordinate with the town to explore options in septic and water use based on plats to help facilitate new construction. The plan further suggests emphasizing second floor mixed use proposals to potential developers with emphasis on federal historic tax credit availability, while non-historic structures should be put in contact with local credit unions to discuss lower interest rates for a less challenging process. Implementation

of charts and diagrams on the town's permit and license processes can also be a fundamental tool for efficient developments that can bring revitalization that much closer. The 2020 Plan closes with an extensive list and breakdown of all priority properties that could be of use for refurbishment and mixed-use adaptation. There is also a workforce housing grant through Rhode Island Housing that opens about \$7 million in funding for projects all over the state, as well as additional guidelines and references for successful implementation of reuse of unused upper flood spaces in the Village, which could open a large housing market and therefore more customers to use the historic district's retail and accommodations.



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Figure 1.3 Brown & Hopkins Country Store (Chepachet Village 2020 Revitalization Plan)

Figure 1.4 Village Analysis (Chepachet Village 2020 Revitalization Plan)

1.2 Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Overview

The Downtown Woonsocket Collaborative is the main initiative facilitating the revitalization of Main Street in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. Woonsocket was incorporated as a city in 1888 and consists of just over 40,000 residents as of 2010. The heart of Woonsocket is its historic downtown area, defined as Main Street and the adjacent riverfront area. Main Street has two anchors: the Museum of Work and Culture and the Stadium Theatre. Woonsocket is located in the Blackstone River Valley, in the north-east corner of Rhode Island.

Year Program Founded

The Downtown Woonsocket Collaborative was founded in 1989 under the name Woonsocket Main Street Riverfront Initiative.

Population

As of the 2010 census, Woonsocket includes 77.7% of the residents identifying as White. 53.5% of Woonsocket is described as being between the ages of 25 and 64. As described in the 2012 comprehensive plan, “according to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines, 64% of all persons in the City qualify under the definition of low/moderate income”.

Transportation

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) is the public bus option in and out of Woonsocket. The comprehensive plan for the city, written in 2012, highlights the difficulties encountered by RIPTA when serving the city.

“The existing bus service is insufficient to meet the needs of job seekers looking for second or third shift work as the buses do not run frequently enough, there are not enough express routes, the buses do not enter many of Woonsocket’s neighborhoods, and do not arrive at several major employment centers...”

A privately run, non-profit transportation service is run by Northwest Transportation Service, Inc. This organization serves indigenous, elderly, handicapped and disabled residents. However, the comprehensive report points out that the most vulnerable still do not have access to adequate transportation. “Low-income residents have fewer options than the elderly or disabled and should be targeted for future programs.”

History

The city of Woonsocket enjoys the Blackstone River Bikeway which is currently over 18 miles long. The bikeway connects to the Main Street “district” and is an important public transportation access point. The city has a long history, like other New England towns, of great industrialization. The once thriving industry has trended towards a recent pattern of disinvestment heading into the latter half of the 20th century. It’s most significant period was



Figure 1.5 Woonsocket City Hall.
Source: Kenneth Zirkel



Figure 1.6 Stadium Theater.
Source: Lauren Clem

during the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century. According to the comprehensive plan, “The growth of the railroads led to further industrial growth and to the development of extensive mill complexes, most of which were involved in the textile industry. These mills attracted immigrant laborers, the first of which came here in the 1840s from Ireland and several other European nations. These immigrants were followed by great numbers of French Canadians from Quebec in the 1870s and 1880s. A wave of Ukrainian immigrants came to Woonsocket in the early 1890s. Each of the immigrant groups brought with them vestiges of their native cultures, and established their own parishes and church complexes as centers of social activity. Of all these groups, the French Canadians have left the greatest mark on Woonsocket. Their influence is evident in the names of streets and places throughout the City.”

Stakeholders

As a non-profit organization, the Downtown Woonsocket Collaborative’s focus is the “revitalization of Woonsocket Main Street Area.” The collaborative partners include the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, Neighborhood Works, Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, and the City of Woonsocket. The organization relies on donations and outside grant funding. Most recently, the Collaborative received funding from the Rhode Island State Council of the Arts for a “Back in Time” mural.

Location

In 2003, the City commissioned another Main Street/Riverfront Revitalization Plan, called the Downtown Riverfront Revitalization Plan, prepared by the Urban Design Group. These plans offered several suggestions on ways to improve the city’s downtown core and riverfront area. Some of these recommendations have come to fruition, while others have not. In 2009, the City initiated a Wayfinding Master Plan for downtown Woonsocket, which represents the City’s evolution in ideas for revitalizing the Main Street. There have been plenty

of challenges as outlined in the comprehensive plan, “Main Street suffer[s] from the surrounding vacancies, the lack of pedestrian traffic in the area, marginal commercial uses, and questionable levels of design control. It is a challenge for the city to stimulate appropriate development along Main Street.”

Origin

The Collaborative has created a series of community events to bring pedestrian traffic as well as support small business vendors. They invite local food and beverage vendors as well as artists with handmade wares to participate. They sponsor events like Arts in the Valley and a food and wine event which is happening at a new, local brewery called Lops which opened in 2019. Events like Murder at the Museum, Twilight on Blackstone and an annual Main Street Holiday Stroll are important to the community’s identity. While Covid-19 has impacted some of the community events, they remained resilient. Social media, their website, and the local newspaper, The Valley Breeze, are some of the ways in which the Collaborative is doing outreach and gaining publicity.

Economic Development

Woonsocket’s economy revolves around industrial park development such as the Highland Corporate Park. Currently, the city is the home of CVS Health Corporate Headquarters. CVS is Rhode Island’s only Fortune 50 Company, and Woonsocket’s number one corporate citizen, with local employment of approximately 3,500 people as of 2012. There is substantial employment in healthcare, retail, and food service.

Preservation

Woonsocket has an impressive number of historic resources. There are over 30 National Register Historic Sites and 8 National Register Historic Districts. Two of the listings anchor downtown.



Land Use

Downtown has mostly commercial and industrial zoning. In the 2012 Comprehensive Plan, it discusses the creation of a Main Street Overlay. As of the 2019 zoning regulations for the city, there is a Main Street Area and Downtown Overlay District. The district regulates the development and use of land, buildings, improvements, and facilities in the Main Street area; allows additional permitted uses that encourage further growth and concentration of art, cultural and entertainment attractions; promotes the use of vacant and underutilized properties; and encourages a walkable vibrant environment.

The comprehensive plan indicated, that most future residential development in Woonsocket will consist of rehabilitation and infill in the city's older, dense neighborhoods.

Additional Information

The 2012 comprehensive plan has indicated that there have been multiple buildings lost to demolition, abandonment, neglect and disrepair. There were plans to begin a public outreach and education campaign to gain support for reinstating a Local Historic District Commission. Still, this process seems to have stalled. The city would benefit greatly, especially the Main Street area, by instituting a local historic district commission to ensure the continuation of historic character and fabric of its built environment. The Woonsocket Historic Society is small but enthusiastic about the city's rich history. The relationship between a local historic district commission and the historical society is a benefit for not only the Main Street but the entire city.

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1.3 Manchester, Connecticut

Year Program Founded

The Downtown Manchester Special Services District (DMSSD) was founded in 1992 and joined Connecticut Main Street in 2005.

Population

The population as of 2020 in the entire town was 59,713, and in the urban center was 36,379 (Wikipedia 2022d). The median household income as of 2015 was \$61,571.

Main Street Area

About .8 mile, along Main Street (CT Route 83) from Hartford Road north to Center Street (US Route 44) including “approximately 132 taxable properties,” and about 57 acres of land. (Downtown Manchester Special Services District 2022c) (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ArcGIS Organization 2019) and (Town of Manchester Planning Department 2010)

Stakeholders

Stakeholders for the Connecticut Main Street program include:

- Business and property owners
- Town of Manchester
- Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce
- Local faith-based organizations
- Imagine Main Streets, non-profit founded to revitalize Manchester Main Street through the arts

Grants/Funding Sources

Funded by an additional tax levy on the properties within the DMSSD boundaries
Districts commissioners establish an annual program budget
Normal mill rate for the 132 properties in the DMSSD or “District S”: 44.81 mills
Rate lowered approximately three mills as part of the “Downtown 2020” initiative
To calculate the mill rate: Multiply the assessed value of the property by the rate, then divide by 1,000. [Example: property valued at \$100,000.

Multiply by “District S” rate and then divide by 1,000. Total annual property taxes: \$4,481] (State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management 2022) DMSSD’s FY 2022-23 budget: \$183,750, (\$10,000 decrease over FY 2021-22, due to tax reduction in 2021).

Location

Manchester is located about 10 miles east of the state capitol, Hartford, along Interstates 84 and 382. Manchester is on the eastern edge of the Hartford urban area, and adjacent to rural towns. Secondary highways US Routes 44 and 6 traverse Manchester east to west. CT Route 83, which forms Main Street in Manchester, is a principle regional north-south route between Glastonbury, CT and Springfield, MA for towns east of Hartford.

Background

Between 1830 and 1930, Manchester became the largest silk-weaving location in the US due to the Cheney Brothers’ Mills, which employed about 25 percent of the town by the late 1920s. During this period, the town grew into the main commercial center within the area of northeast of Hartford. Manchester is known as the “Silk City.” The town’s ties to this historic industry remain central to the identity of Manchester: the town’s seal depicts a silk thread beneath a mulberry tree (on which 19th century American entrepreneurs attempted to cultivate silkworms, with limited success).

Other than a brief production boost in the early 1940s during WWII, the Great Depression, foreign competition, and the development of synthetics led to a gradual decline in the American natural-silk industry. The Cheney family sold their mills in 1955, while other silk production left Manchester for southern states. Over the next 30 years, the textile industry continuously declined in Manchester and other nearby communities, permanently depressing the area. The last Manchester textile mill operation ceased in 1984.

Principal modern industries include the production of engineered fibers, plastics, electronic equipment, aircraft components, and medical devices; machine tools; steel metal fabrication; and printing. Closer to highway connections, there are several warehouse and distribution facilities in the town.

The Shoppes at Buckland Hills, located about five miles northwest of the DMSSD, anchors one of the largest regional retail concentrations in New England, offering over 300 hotel rooms, restaurants, and entertainment venues. Development of these highway-adjacent retail centers drew the economic life of Manchester away from the traditional downtown core (i.e., the location of the DMSSD)(State of Connecticut 2022). Additionally, Manchester Community College, a two-year public institution with about 2,100 full-time students is located about three miles west of the DMSSD.

Origins

A referendum vote of downtown property owners established the Downtown Special Services District, as the area is officially known, in 1992. This was in response to changing economic conditions brought on by the loss of the once-dominant textile industry, and the recession of the early 1990s which affected New England particularly severely. In addition, the completion of the Buckland Hills Mall (now known as the Shoppes at Buckland Hill) in 1990 stagnated the retail life along the Main Street corridor.

Economic Development

Buildings within the DMSSD now hold more than 1 million square feet of space, with a total appraised value of about \$50 million and a total taxable value of about \$36 million. To sustain the economic viability of Main Street, the DMSSD hosts a series of ongoing events throughout the year, and a detailed calendar is available on the district's website.

Annual, ongoing events include:

"2nd Saturdays Downtown," monthly on the second Saturday from June to October. In cooperation with Main Street businesses, the DMSSD hosts outdoor



Figure 1.7 Manchester Main Street, Planning and Economic Development Department



Figure 1.8 Manchester Main Street, Phelan 2013

markets, pop-up shops, art exhibits, live music, and other activities, with each Saturday changing slightly as the mix of participating businesses and events changes.

"The Spring Butterfly Stroll" in May: Founded in 2021 to symbolize Manchester's emergence from the COVID-19 'cacoön,' which includes strolling on Main Street to see butterfly themed artwork.

"Cruisin' on Main" in August: Started by DMSSD in 2001 and is now managed by the Town of Manchester. The event features antique and classic vehicles lined on Main Street with food, live music, and activities.

Preservation

There are three historic districts within or adjacent to the DMSSD.

1. Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District, listed in 1978, includes three buildings in the DMSSD: 1. The 1905 former Manchester High School at 1146-1180 Main Street, built by



the Cheney Family, and presently used as senior housing. 2. The 1925 South United Methodist Church at 1226 Main Street. 3. The 1915 Bennet Academy at 1151 Main Street. The Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District Commission serves in an advisory role regarding proposed changes to resources within the district. The commission has no regulatory role.

2. Manchester National Register Historic District, listed in 2000, expands upon The Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District. Its boundary lies just west of the DMSSD.

3. The Main Street National Register Historic District was listed in 1996 and includes 50 contributing resources along Main Street.

Architectural guidelines were adopted in 2017, and revised in 2019, for the areas zoned CBD within the DMSSD (see below, “Land Use.”) The guidelines are administered by the Planning and Economic Development Department, which manage changes to existing structures and encourage new construction in contextual scale and vocabulary with the existing district. The guidelines are intended for a lay audience, and include a general primer on common architectural styles and materials in the district supplement with illustrations demonstrating application of the guidelines’ principles.

Land Use

The DMSSD comprises approximately 57 acres of land, with 41 acres of the district zoned CBD, 11 acres zoned (Residential A), and the remaining five acres are zoned Business III.

Town of Manchester Zoning Definitions:
CBD - “The Central Business District ‘CBD’ zone is a mixed-use district intended to provide retail, service, institutional, entertainment, and residential activity and compact development serving a regional market. The district is intended to have a strong sense of place and be a vital social, cultural and economic center for Manchester.”

Allowed uses in this zone include retail shops, personal services, restaurants, brew pubs, theaters, health clubs, bakeries, banks, grocery stores, public libraries, offices, schools, clubs, day care, alcohol sales, telecommunications equipment installations, and sidewalk cafes. The zone allows upper-story residential uses.

Residence A- Allowed uses in this zone include single-family homes, day care, libraries, parks facilities, greenhouses, offices, and camouflaged telecommunications equipment.

Business III- Allowed uses within this zone include department stores, day care, automobile sales, schools, and places of worship. Outdoor entertainment is allowed during certain hours. Significantly, buildings in this zone can have by-right upper-story residential uses. (Town of Manchester 2022c)

Downtown 2020

In 2019 the town’s Planning & Economic Development launched the “Downtown 2020” initiative, a two-year program (since extended into 2022) with the goal of “increasing vibrancy and economic opportunity Downtown through incentivizing transformational private development, lowering special district taxes, and achieving key public improvements.” The goal will be accomplished through tax relief, no-interest loans, and street improvements.

No-Interest Loans

The Manchester Downtown Investment Fund Loan Program offers no-interest loans to property owners to complete needed building upgrades. Conceived after the Planning and Economic Development Department staff counted 18 potential businesses which recently declined to locate within the DMSSD due to the buildings’ code non-compliance, the loan incentivizes projects to upgrade life-safety, mechanical, and other building systems.



The loans are offered on a 10-year term, with up to \$75,000 of the balance convertible to a grant after five years of repayment. Loans over \$100,000 also require a 1:1 matching budget of façade improvements along with code upgrades. The loans come with technical support. In conjunction with this loan, the DMSSD offers separate grant funding to loan recipients toward the use of a code consultant.

The town funded the program with \$750,000, and planned to make up to four grants in phase I. The first loan in 2019, awarded to 1115 Main Art, LLC, totaled \$200,000 and helped fund the installation of a new fire-suppression system, accessibility modifications, and electrical upgrades so that a mixed-use project consisting of arts, café, and gathering spaces could locate in a former furniture store. The building now anchors the southern end of the district. The program gave a second loan, also for \$200,000 to Chris Soverns and Tom Napolitano to upgrade 623 Main Street.

Complete Streets

The initiative's third area is a comprehensive redesign of the Main Street corridor within the DMSSD, between Center Street and Hartford Road, into a "Complete Street." Work will include traffic, pedestrian, and bicycle safety improvements, the creation of additional public gathering spaces, and an enhanced streetscape. The project aims to increase the safety of Main Street to all modes of transportation including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit riders. The project is currently unfunded, but remains a priority for the town.

The Downtown 2020 Initiative won a Connecticut Main Street Center 2020 Award of Excellence in the Planning category. (Connecticut Main Street Center 2022b)

Transit

Main Street is served by CT Transit Bus 83.

Social Media

The DMSSD has an active social-media presence:

Instagram: @downtownmanchesterct

Facebook: downtownmanchesterct



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1.4 New Britain, Connecticut

Year Program Founded

The New Britain Downtown District, Complete Streets Roadmap: Master Plan for Downtown New Britain program began in 2008, was amended in 2012, and remains ongoing.

Population

The population of New Britain was 73,847 as of 2020.

Main Street Area

New Britain is a 124-parcel area, equivalent to 13.4 square miles.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders for the The New Britain Downtown District, Complete Streets Roadmap include: Mayor Erin E. Stewart, New Britain Downtown District Board of Commissioners and Executive, Director, Milone & Macbroom, Department of Planning and Development & Director William Carroll, City Public Works and Parks & Recreation Departments, Capitol Region Council of Governments, Central CT Regional Planning Agency, ConnDOT, New Britain Chamber of Commerce, Polonia Business Association, Greater New Britain Arts Alliance, Central Connecticut State University, Community Central, Department of Housing and Urban Development, CT Main Street Center, Bike Walk Connecticut, neighborhood organizations, businesses, and the general public.

Grants/Funding Sources

Phase 1: \$250,000 from City

Phase 2: Grant Amount: \$966,000, City Investment: \$533,000

Phase 3: Grant Amount: \$3,304,400, Req'd match \$826,100, \$680K in STP Funds

Phase 4: Grant Amount: \$2,880,000, Req'd match \$320,000

Phase 5: FTA Grant: \$1,600,000 with \$400K match, Misc. Grants: \$800K,

State Bonds: \$2.1M, State Maintenance: \$700K, City

Investment: \$2.3M

Phase 6: LOTCIP Grant: \$3,000,000

Phase 7: OPM Grant: \$2,000,000

Phase 8: LOTCIP Grant: \$3,000,000

Location and Background

The topography in New Britain, Connecticut consists of soft hills with sparse forestry. The preserved park spaces feature local vegetation and trees. There are two streams running through the city, which remain undisturbed by construction and development.

Prior to European settlement, New Britain, Connecticut was the territory of the Tunxis Indians, who established permanent residence in the area. European colonists began to settle in the area in the mid 17th century, initially calling the area the Stanley Quarter, followed by the Great Swamp settlement, and finally into what we know today as New Britain in the mid 18th century. At first, the European colonists were primarily Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, but by the mid 1800s, the city became more diverse with Irish-catholics, Germans, and Swedes immigrated. By the First World War, the diversity in New Britain included European and Eastern European influences, becoming home to the largest concentration of Assyrians, Armenians, Poles, and Swedes in the US, such that 80% of the population were immigrants by 1930. The 20th century also saw an influx of people from Puerto Rico, Latin America, and South America.

The city's vast growth was attributed to the booming industrial scene. New Britain became known as the 'Hardware City of the World,' producing tools, appliances, hardware, and metal items like nails, bolts, screws, nuts, and hinges, such that the city's motto became "Industria implet alveare et mele fruitur," which translates to "Industry fills the hives and enjoys the honey." Some of the prominent industrial companies were North and Judd, Stanley Works, Landers-Fray and Clark, and Russell and Erwin and Corbin, whose influence became iconic elements of the New Britain fabric. Metal-working remains one of the principal modern industries in New Britain.

The population has remained steady, with about 73,000 people since the 1950s, aside from a 10,000 person increase between 1960 and 1970, which dropped back to the average by 1980. It is projected there will be a slight increase in population in 2025 by about 1,000 people. The typical age range is between 29-47, with the average age in 2020 being 32 years old. Further, New Britain is also home to a sizeable veteran population, with approximately 1,200 veterans from the Vietnam, Gulf and Korean Wars.



Figure 1.9 Historic Postcard Image (Familypedia, N.D)

According to a 2019 American Community Survey, about 54% of the household incomes in New Britain earn \$49,999 or less per year. Comparatively, only 15% of households earn \$100,000-\$199,999 per year, and a mere 2% earn over \$200,000 a year. A significant number of housing units were built prior to 1939, contributing to the historic aesthetic of the community.



Figure 1.10 Walnut Hill Park & WWI Memorial (Allyana, 2022)

Today, the population of New Britain reflects the settlement patterns and immigrant history of the area. The top three ethnic groups found within the area of modern New Britain include White (non-hispanic), White (hispanic) and Black or African American (non-hispanic). Notably, the Polish Genealogical Society of Connecticut and the Northeast, Inc. was founded locally and continues to thrive.

New Britain houses Central Connecticut University, Charter Oak State, and Lincoln Technical Institute, likely contributing to the influx of younger residents. The city also features a modern art museum, grocery stores, a hospital, schools, and a great deal of green space for residents and visitors to experience the natural environment.



Figure 1.11 Present Day View (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020)

Origins

The New Britain Downtown District was developed in 1983, and contained 124 parcels, which were designated as a Municipal Special Services District. The downtown revitalization plan was established in 2008, which included an organized project plan



and identification of areas for improving pedestrian safety and vehicle accessibility. In 2011, the city published a master plan and began the first phase of the revitalization program. The early phases of the project included a \$572 million CTfastrak Transit-Oriented Development Pilot Program to add transit along the 9 miles between New Britain and Hartford, in coordination with the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and funded with assistance from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The first phase also provided for \$250,000 of improvements to the downtown streetscape.

In 2011, the city released an updated plan outlining the remaining phases of revitalization and timeline for completion followed by the 2013 Complete Streets Masterplan. The updated plan aimed to unify the downtown area through preserving the aesthetics of New Britain's history and creating a beautiful and functional streetscape. The goal of the 2013 plan was to create balance between transit, vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian use of the street. This plan was funded through grants from HUD, CRCOG, and CTDOT. The Complete Streets Master Plan remains the current plan, and is continuously supported and organized by a long list of stakeholders, including residents, public officials, members of arts communities, etc. Stakeholders wanted to work with the established amenities New Britain already offers and refocus on significantly improving the safety, wellbeing and accessibility of the downtown area.

By 2020, the Complete Streets projects significantly improved the streetscape, walkability, and accessibility of the downtown area, thus increasing the economic sustainability of the community and sparking new interest and private investment in nearby vacant properties. The completion of the Beehive Bridge provided an architecturally interesting and safe connection between Downtown

New Britain, the New Brite Plaza District, and Little Poland, allowing for more foot traffic throughout the district. This bridge contributes towards the goal of creating an active entertainment and business corridor in the downtown area.

One of the goals of the Complete Streets redevelopment plan was establishing more effective wayfinding and placing more signage to connect people with the local cultural and historic places. Wayfinding of any kind is crucial to successfully planning a town or city for residents, visitors, etc. to be able to find their way around and support the accessibility of resources.

Another element of the plan was the NBDD Facade Grant, which aimed to revitalize store fronts in compliance with the aesthetic and integrity of historic New Britain and provide support for local business owners. Guidelines for the overall design of the storefronts focus on the physical aspects of a well rounded commercial/mixed use area that features storefront designs and any issues they face, maintenance, and typical public amenities. Applicants in the downtown district can receive up to \$10,000 per to pay for Correction of Exterior Code Violations, painting and siding, historical lighting restoration, signage, awnings, repairs, opening restorations, and other types of historical rehabilitation and preservation.

Economic Development

The Complete Streets Master Plan, and previous renditions, outlined strategies for ongoing economic development and sustainability. A portion of the Main Street area makes up "Little Poland," which is primarily commercial with the most successful mixed-use commercial corridor in downtown and the largest retail shopping area in New Britain. Notably, the study efficiently analyzed each area individually, recognizing each key features, existing conditions, and design challenges moving forward. Following the implementation of the Main Street corridor revitalization program, there has been a



steady increase in the amount of trade both within the state and with neighboring states throughout the past decade. It can easily be said that the increase, and projected continuing increase, of trade and business activity within New Britain's Main Street corridor has a great deal to do with the revitalization effort. Increasing the safety, aesthetic quality and accessibility of the main streets within the downtown area encouraged the positive relationship that consumers have with more local businesses which allows for a wider range of advertisement and more diverse groups of people coming into the area.

Further, the plan addressed the events and activities hosted in New Britain that invite new visitors and residents alike to engage with the businesses and landscape. Some of the events include a car show, a holiday tree lighting, Main Street Market, and Hoops for the Homeless. Another event idea proposed in the plan was for more direct business involvement, where there would be some sort of storefront display competition between the downtown businesses. In terms of other outreach methods, the plan mentions expanding the distribution of the weekly newsletter and adapting it to be multilingual. The strategic plan also includes the development of a social media strategy to supplement the revamped town website and subscription service for the newsletter. Lastly, the city wants to develop a relationship with local radio stations, especially the Spanish-speaking stations, to reach new audiences and promote the area.

Preservation

The 124-parcel New Britain Downtown District is part of the National Register of Historic Places, meaning it has been nationally recognized as an area of significance supporting the story of American history, and it is eligible for additional grant programs and tax credits. A few of these include New Britain City Hall, New Britain Armory, and the Trinity Methodist Church. New Britain City Hall building first opened in 1886 as Hotel Russwin. The conversion of the building into what is now City



Figure 1.12 Downtown Development Update, 2020



Figure 1.13 Downtown Development Update, 2020



Hall began in 1909. New Britain Armory, also built in 1886, had fallen out of commission and was left in a state of disrepair by 1986 when it went up for public bid. The Greater Hartford Architecture Conservancy took control of the building and renovated it to become Armory Court, for low-income housing. The Trinity Methodist Church was built in 1889. By 2000, the congregation couldn't afford to maintain the structure and it was set to be demolished. Local citizens came together to save the church, which is now Trinity-on-Main, a community space, non-profit art center, and education facility.

Housing

While the majority of development in the downtown area is retail or commercial, there are a handful of properties on Main Street identified for mixed use (retail, commercial, and residential) development in the updated Downtown Development Plan, including 222 Main Street, The Doris Building (27 Main Street), and the Berkowitz Building (608-686 Main Street). 222 Main Street had been vacant for years and will be renovated in the near future to include a retail/restaurant space at the ground floor with 44 market-rate apartments above. The Doris Building, which has been partially vacant for years, will be redeveloped with 15-20 apartment units, but whether they will be market rate or affordable units is still undetermined. Lastly, the Berkowitz Building will be transformed into a mixed-use development with retail and residential space.

The study recognized most people in New Britain own their homes and there are concentrations of medium density housing scattered throughout New Britain. However, it is unclear whether the city plans to incorporate low income or affordable housing units in the ongoing revitalization plan and what percentage of the community would be eligible or in need of those units. The average income per household is approximately \$47,000, which places the area of New Britain comfortably within the middle class range. That being said, the need for affordable housing won't be zero, but it will not

be as high as it would be in other towns and/or cities with a significantly lower average household income.

Additional Asset

Another asset to New Britain's Downtown is the relationship between the downtown district and Central Connecticut State University. The city has mentioned the university as fundamental partners in business development and introducing substantial diversity and consumers in the market. The school's Institute for Technology and Business campus is located in the heart of the downtown, providing opportunities for the city, local businesses, and students to collaborate and make connections. According to the city's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, the city aims to continue strengthening the working relationship between the city and school and proposed opportunities for students and businesses to engage together.



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1.5 Roslindale Village, Boston, Massachusetts

Year Program Founded

1985

Population

The 2021 population of Roslindale Village is approximately 230 people with approximately 29,386 people living in Roslindale neighborhood in 2020.

Main Street Area

Roslindale Village, also called Roslindale Square is a small, distinct area of Roslindale neighborhood which itself is a satellite suburb of Boston, Massachusetts. Roslindale Village is approximately 0.06 square miles. The district encompasses Adam's Park which is a triangular park space that is bounded by Washington Street, Poplar Street, and South Street which are lined with commercial and



Figure 1.14 Roslindale Baptist Church.
Source: Wikimedia Foundation

municipal buildings. Roslindale Village is surrounded by residential neighborhoods on all sides having a commuter rail station to the east near the Arnold Arboretum.

Program

Roslindale Village Main Street program is a non-profit organization established in 1985 as one of the first Main Street revitalization programs in the country. It began with the help of then City Councilor Thomas Menino and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Roslindale Village Main Street has a volunteer board of directors constituted of residents, professionals, and business owners working to connect members of the community together, collaborate with stakeholders and business owners, and provide organizational and administrative oversight for projects and events.

Grants and Funds

The program's primary donors are Boston Main Streets Foundation and Peregrine Group LCC. Other groups include The Cooperative Bank (TCB), Cummings Electric, Birch Street House and Garden, among several other local businesses, banks, churches, individuals, and families.

Location

Roslindale was originally a part of Roxbury when Roxbury was first settled in 1630. Roslindale established their first independent parish in 1712 but remained a part of Roxbury until the latter half of the 19th century. Along with Jamaica Plain and West Roxbury, Roslindale separated from Roxbury and combined into an independent town in 1851 to maintain their "separate agricultural town," later joining the city of Boston in 1873. Roslindale Village is the historic center of Roslindale, where much of its historic architecture originated.

Roslindale Village has a vibrant and successful cluster of smaller "mom and pop" shops providing various services. Roslindale Village Main Street program provides a business directory on their website to connect residents to their local economy.

A large majority of the commercial business in the area include industries related to food and drink, medical and wellness, salon services, retail, and community resources. The remaining minority of industries constituting white collar services are banking, legal, tax services, and a few auto-repair shops. This is the result of establishing clear goals and principles to guide their revitalization; focusing on local ownership, a sense of community, self-reliance, local empowerment, and distinctive architecture.

There is a commuter rail station in Roslindale Village that takes 45 minutes to get to Downtown Crossing. The closest MBTA station is Forest Hills that is along the Orange Line.

Population

In 2020, of Roslindale's 29,386 residents, 45.7% are White, 20.6% are Black/African, 25.1% are Hispanic/Latino, 3.5% are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 5.2% are some other or multiple races. About 40.7% of Roslindale's residents speak a language other than English in their homes.

Economic Development

In the first three years of Roslindale Village Main Street's operation, Roslindale Village saw 33 facade changes, 43 commercial building rehabilitations, 29 net new businesses, and 132 net job gains; totaling over 5 million dollars in investments.

One neighborhood event that has been created by the revitalization effort is the weekly farmer's market that takes place every Saturday and moves indoors during the winter months. The market hosts vendors from local businesses, farmers, and musicians giving residents and other customers an opportunity to socialize and support the local businesses. In 2018, Roslindale Village Main Street hosted its annual tree lighting ceremony and Small Business Saturday simultaneously. The event drew nearly 350 residents enjoying free hot chocolate, making ornaments, and visiting with Santa.



Figure 1.15 Revitalized 1911 Roslindale Substation.
Source: Historic Boston



Figure 1.16 Arnold Arboretum.
Source: American Public Gardens Association



Figure 1.17 Roslindale Congregational Church.
Source: UCC



Preservation

There are currently no historic districts in Roslindale. Despite this, Roslindale Village’s revitalization incorporates the reuse of historic buildings to maintain the community’s sense of character. Roslindale Village is the historic center of Roslindale with buildings from the neighborhood’s 19th century growth.

There are only two Roslindale properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Roslindale Congregational Church is timber framed, shingle style, and is influenced by the Richardsonian Romanesque style of 1893. The Roslindale Baptist Church began construction in 1884 as a wooden church with substantially intact stick-style ecclesiastical architecture, including wooden clapboard and carpenter gothic revival style windows and moldings. Together, the two churches are important resources for Roslindale Village because they add to the Village’s strong collection of late 19th and early 20th century architecture.

Recently, Roslindale Village Main Street received preservation awards from Preservation Massachusetts and the Boston Preservation Alliance for the Roslindale Substation. The Main Street program partnered with Historic Boston, Incorporated, and Peregrine Group to develop a 1911 historic substation for commercial use and 44 rental units. Since opening in 2017, the Substation has hosted two local breweries, retail space, and offices.

Historic Boston outlines the historic properties that could benefit from restoration and renovation. Their list includes Fairview Hall at 47 Poplar Street built in 1891, the Delfino Building at 754 South Street built between 1898 and 1905, and the Prescott Building at 17 Poplar Street built in 1929. As of 2011, recommended strategies for these buildings include nomination for the National Register of Historic Places, feasibility for renovation utilizing historic, and “non historic” tax credits offering assistance to property owners to develop strategies and grants

to promote the preservation of historical integrity, facades, and minimum maintenance.

Another notable structure includes the Mary Baker Eddy House, located at 175 Poplar Street. It was built in 1879 and designed by the same architect who designed the original buildings of Boston College.

Land Use

Roslindale Village is encompassed by the Roslindale Square Neighborhood Design Overlay District. The overlay district is intended to protect the existing scale of architecture, character of residential neighborhoods, integrity and concentration of historic buildings, and quality of the pedestrian environment.

Roslindale neighborhood is a quiet suburb when compared to Boston-proper due to its lack of meaningful nightlife. Much of Roslindale is residential. The western half of the neighborhood, closer to West Roxbury, is mostly rural and suburban with single and double family homes. The northern and eastern parts of the neighborhood, closer to Jamaica Plains and Mattapan, are more densely populated with double-family and triple-decker homes.

Roslindale Village is currently a vibrant commercial district with several small businesses such as; food markets, bakeries, and restaurants. Several of the food shops in Roslindale Village include bakeries, a fish market, an Italian butcher/deli, a Halal butcher, a wine shop, a Mexican specialty food store, a Middle Eastern market, and a cheese shop. Roslindale Village also has several popular restaurants, attracting many patrons out of Boston-proper.

The Arnold Arboretum, which borders Roslindale Village to the north, is about 280 acres offering residents open green space. The Arnold Arboretum is a nature preserve protected and supported by Harvard University for the study of temperate

woody plants in North American and Eastern Asian flora. It is freely open to everyone and offers educational programs for visitors.

Housing

Many of Roslindale Village's colonial homes are now condos that house Boston's growing population. There is also a strong mix of single-family homes, Boston's iconic triple-deckers, and smaller apartments. The Roslindale Zoning Board approved two projects for Roslindale Village: a new 18 unit condo to be built at the intersection of Washington Street and Archdale Road, and three new floors to be added to a one-story building on Poplar Street to accommodate nine new apartments. The new condo will replace an auto-repair shop and will have parking and ground-level retail space. Two of the 18 units will be sold as affordable housing.

Redfin considers Roslindale's housing market to be "very competitive." Currently, the average sale price of a home is about \$660,000 which is nearly \$280,000 above the median sale price of a home nationwide. In 2020, only 4.8% of Roslindale 12,114 housing units were vacant, with approximately 2.5 persons on average in each unit.

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1.6 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts

Year Program Founded: 1998

Main Street Area

Washington Gateway Main Street program oversees a 1.4 mile stretch of road in between Herald Street and Melnea Cass Boulevard.

Program

Washington Gateway Main Street program focuses on land use, economic development, housing, and the preservation. The mission statement of the program is: "Washington Street will be a safe, inviting, tree-lined boulevard that draws people to its parks, shops, cafes and quality services. Known for its efficient transportation, vibrant architecture, abundance of artists, and its cultural, age, and economic diversity, it will be a shopping destination for the unusual and ordinary, and a desirable place to live, work, shop, and visit."



Figure 1.18 Washington Gateway Street View.
Source: Washington Gateway Main Street

Location

Planned in 1801 by Charles Bulfinch, Washington Street saw prosperity towards the end of the 19th century. The street enticed theater-goers at the Windsor and Columbia theaters. Restaurants provide for theater-goers as well as residents. The street is lined with Victorian era row houses and parks, many of which still exist in some form today. Originally a bustling location within a vastly developing Boston, Washington Street drew large crowds of immigrant families to the community establishing it as one of the most diverse neighborhoods.

Origins

Former Mayor, Thomas M. Menino, established the Washington Street Task Force in 1995. Within two years, a group known as the Washington Gateway Main Street group split off from the task force after having been founded by Sheila Grove and Randi Lathrop. This group set out and established the plan and goals that have shaped the face of this community. The mayor and director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, John F. Palmieri, are heavily involved in the program.

Economic Development

The Washington Gateway Main Street program has fostered the growth of roughly 60 new businesses. "By 2007, \$600 million in targeted investment had transformed the street." The revitalization is now "making the corridor a destination for local services, home furnishings, art, and dining." The community has seen growing prosperity where the shops and restaurants are open relatively late into the evening. The community also does fundraising efforts that are coordinated with several of the art galleries and restaurants on the street.

Preservation

The historic row houses that were created in the mid 19th century still stand and are a key part of the communities history. Today, historic Federal-era and Victorian structures, many listed and designated on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973

and 1983, are intermixed with contemporary loft developments. The community contains the largest church in New England, the Cathedral of the Holy Cross. The church was completed in 1875 and has undergone an extensive series of preservation initiatives. Several of the parks along the street have undergone preservation and beautification efforts due to their historic nature. Blackstone and Franklin Square are two parks that can be dated back to the original development of the Washington Street neighborhood.

Housing

The Washington Gateway Main Street program sought to limit housing displacement. “To prevent the displacement often associated with gentrification, the city focused on housing opportunities for a range of family household incomes.” The housing within the neighborhood has been developed with high density due to new zoning initiatives.

The draw to Washington Street is that a large portion of the developed housing stock is affordable for community members. “Nearly 60% of the 1,750 new and renovated housing units are affordable, with an emphasis on owner-occupied housing.” The focus on new housing development within the area has transformed the neighborhood into an affordable and diverse community.

Additional Information

Washington street has undergone a physical transformation since the foundation of the Washington Street Task Force. “The state’s transit authority and highway department spent \$54 million on landscaping, the strategic installation of 18-foot brick sidewalks, granite curbing and crosswalks, lighting, and sheltered canopies that serve as stops for the new Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit.”



Figure 1.19 Gateway Corridor. Source: Washington Gateway Main Street



This has helped to increase transit accessibility within the community as well as the walkability of the community. “By 2007, \$600 million in targeted investment had transformed the street.” The community has several volunteer groups that promote the beautification and preservation of the community. There are also pushes for increased street art throughout the community. Livening the street even more with donations can express the opportunity to pay artists to paint electrical boxes and large murals on walls.

Washington Gateway Main Street program is a success story of the potential for Main Street programs within the US. Their initiatives have a balanced focus on the economy, housing, and community. The community has invested heavily into their street aesthetic as a way to improve the quality of life. Several fundraising efforts have been set up bringing food trucks to the neighborhood and thus encouraging a lively street life. The community is now active during all times of the day making Washington Street safe and full of activity.

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Figure 1.20 Main Street Food Trucks.
Source: Washington Gateway Main Street

1.7 Boyne City, Michigan

Year Program Founded

Boyne City was invited into the Michigan Main Street program in 2003

Population

As of 202, the recorded population in Boyne City was at 3,810 people.

Main Street Area

The area apart of the revitalization efforts included 11 square blocks encompassed within Boyne City's main street.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders involved in the revitalization of Boyne City's main street include:

Michigan Economic Development Corporation
Michigan State Housing Development Authority
State Historic Preservation Office
Main Street America
Michigan Main Street
Northern Lake Economic Alliance
Networks Northwest

Grants/Funding Sources

The program received \$16,412,766 in public reinvestment and \$29,132,799 in private reinvestment.

Location and Background

Boyne City is in northern Michigan on the southeastern end of Lake Charlevoix. The first non-native settlers landed in Boyne in 1856 and promptly named the area after a river in their home country of Ireland. The town's development was slow until the Army Corps of Engineers completed an infrastructure improvement project to dredge the Charlevoix Channel in 1884. This allowed ships to pass between Lake Charlevoix and Lake Michigan. Boyne City became an industrial boomtown as the forests of northern Michigan could be harvested and shipped throughout the Great Lakes. While water transportation allowed for the shipping of

lumber to other port settlements, the Boyne City & Southeastern Railroad was established in 1893 to send freight inland. These two transportation methods were critical to the Boyne City lumber industry and are credited for the town's rapid growth around the turn of the century. By 1910, the community was known as the lumber capital of northwestern Michigan as migrant laborers traveled across the region to the small lumber town. The population of Boyne City peaked at over 5,000 residents, the majority of which worked at the mills. The community amassed a small downtown district with a variety of businesses to support the Boyne City residents.

The 1920s marked the end of the lumber industry in northwestern Michigan and an economic downturn in Boyne City. As the natural forests of the region were depleted, lumber workers were forced to travel long distances to find trees to harvest. The mills were unable to turn profits causing the town's lumber industry to collapse. After the closure of the lumber mills, Boyne City's population experienced a substantial decline that left only 2,600 residents by 1930 (City of Boyne City, 2022). Today, the Boyne City Central Historic District is one of the few remnants of the town's former glory. While railroad service continued for freight and passenger transportation through much of the twentieth century, it was eventually abandoned and later dismantled in 1982. The town has shown steady population growth since the mid-twentieth century and has 3,810 residents as of 2020. The leading industry in Boyne City is manufacturing which employs 18.7% of the workforce, followed by accommodation and food services at 13.9%. The community has a median age of 42.9 and a median household income of \$55,357. 95.3% of the population is white, with 1.1% of the community being born outside of the United States (Data USA, 2022).

Origins

The revitalization effort in Boyne City began in 1994 with the creation of the Boyne City Downtown

Development Authority. Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, a local economic development agency, was a valuable proponent in the establishment of this committee. Their contributions have amounted to several grants and assistance in the planning effort (Baumann, Jamie, 2013). The Authority utilized the State legislature adopted in 1975, which permitted the investment of public funds into infrastructure and redevelopment districts. The program started using tax increment financing to reinvest revenues on private investment back into the community (Downtown Development Authority, 2010, 1). After showing the dedication of the community through the early stages of the Downtown Development Authority, Boyne City was invited into the Michigan Main Street program in 2003. This program is part of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and is an affiliate of Main Street America. Boyne City was one of the first four towns to partner with Michigan Main Street and is a model for future Main Streets across the state. Boyne City Main Street encompasses four separate zones: the Central Business District, Transitional Commercial District, Waterfront Marina District, and the General Commercial District (Figure 1.21). The program has a Board of Directors appointed by the City Commission and serves a four-year term. The America Main Street Four Point Approach provides the guidelines for the rehabilitation effort through four committees: economic vitality, design, promotion, and organization (Boyne City Main Street. "What We Do." 2022)

Economic Development

Since the inception of the Boyne City Main Street program in 2003, public and private reinvestment in the Central Historic District has totaled over \$45 million. This funding contributed to the creation of 104 new businesses and 69 building improvement projects. The revitalization process could not have been possible without the support of the community and the 57,000 hours of volunteer work. The success of this project has driven storefront vacancies down to a rate of 1% (Boyne City Main Street. "Main Street 2020 Impact Report." 2021).

In the 2004 market study of Downtown Boyne City, urban planning analysts determined the tourist industry was a growing market the town could improve upon in future development. Boyne city is located between two major leisure activity centers: Lake Charlevoix and Boyne Mountain Resort. The calm water and scenic views of Lake Charlevoix make Boyne City an attractive summer boating town. Boyne Mountain Resort is five miles from the downtown area and is a popular destination for winter sports activities. With these existing assets in place, the revitalization district can draw tourists into the downtown to support its growing businesses. Boyne City Main Street aims to restore and improve the historic downtown to make the area a leading tourist destination in the region. The Main Street program has supported businesses by providing numerous grants, design assistance,



Figure 1.21 Boyne City Main Street District, (Boyne City Main Street)



market data, and access to the Small Business Development Center (Boyne City Main Street. Downtown Boyne City Market Study, 2004, 3). Boyne City Main Street has created a list of year-round events to help support local businesses in the historic downtown district. Stroll The Streets is a summer-long event happening Friday evenings where live musicians are performing on every street corner. Boyne Thunder is an annual boating event in Lake Charlevoix that showcases high-performance boats from around the country. Other sponsored events include Holly Jolly Boyne, Chocolate Covered Boyne, Boyne Appetit, and Buff Up Boyne. The town also holds an outdoor farmers market twice a week at Veterans Park that moves to an indoor pavilion in the winter (Boyne City Main Street. "Events." 2022).

Preservation

In 2015, the National Register of Historic Places recognized downtown Boyne City as a historic district. The town is also home to two landmarks on the National Register. The Boyne City Water Works Building, constructed in 1910, was built to keep up with the demand of the growing lumber industry (Figure 1.22). The pump station was abandoned and scheduled for demolition in 2010 before public outcry convinced the town to restore the building. Today, the building serves as a booster station for the city water system and has public restrooms for



Figure 1.22 Boyne City Water Works Building (1910), Graph

people visiting Water Works Park on the adjoining property (National Register of Historic Places. Michigan Boyne City Water Works Building, 1998). The second historic landmark in the town is the Wolverine Hotel, which opened in 1912 as a high-class hotel for the lumber community (Figure 1.23). The hotel changed ownership multiple times in the late twentieth century before it closed in 2008. The building underwent rehabilitation after receiving a grant for \$1 million and reopened as a historic hotel destination (National Register of Historic Places. Michigan Wolverine Hotel, 1986). The historic district and landmark accreditations open the community to several benefits and foster town growth, such as eligibility for the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program, which allows businesses in the designated areas to receive a 20% tax credit.

The establishment of the Boyne City Historic District has also increased the number of grants received to rehabilitate buildings. Property owners in the historic district can receive awards from outside organizations and private investors in addition to the Boyne City Main Street program. While the historic district certification bolsters local businesses through economic benefits, it is also a supporting component of the town's marketing plan. Boyne City advertises itself as a small town with a rich past to attract tourists who enjoy historic downtown environments. The Boyne City Heritage Center sponsors two walking tours: one passes through the commercial district, while the other visits Victorian-



Figure 1.23 Wolverine-Dilworth Hotel (1912), Unknown

era houses, churches, and parks. Audio descriptions of the properties are posted online to explain their context and significance relative to the making of the town.

Land Use

Boyne City Main Street aims to maintain and expand its mixed-use downtown to facilitate a vibrant and multi-faceted community. In an effort to preserve the scenic waterfront, development in the town is removed from the coastline with greenscape acting as a buffer. Several public parks meet the water’s edge to form this natural cushion including Peninsula Beach, Sunset Park, and Veterans Park. Main Street resides in the “downtown core” zoning district, which calls for retail, office, residential, and public uses (Figure 1.24). The downtown core incorporates 11 blocks or 81 acres with 279 parcels of mixed-use vicinity, including 21 restaurants, 20 retail stores, and 114 residential units (Boyne City Main Street. “Main Street 2020 Impact Report.” 2021). The commercial strip is concentrated on

Water Street and a portion of South Lake Street. The buildings are one to two stories tall and sit on the edge of the sidewalk with zero lot frontage. The ground levels have storefronts for restaurants and retail stores, while the second floors have residential spaces. The downtown core has over a thousand public parking spaces along storefronts and in dedicated lots to accommodate shoppers and residents. By placing parking lots on the back side of the commercial strip, the downtown area uses less space, which improves the walkability and overall Main Street experience.

The support of the Boyne City Main Street program has decreased vacant storefronts and improved a cohesive downtown district. The town is working to address remaining vacancies by participating in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program offered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. This program identifies underutilized properties and prioritizes them for future development. Boyne City currently

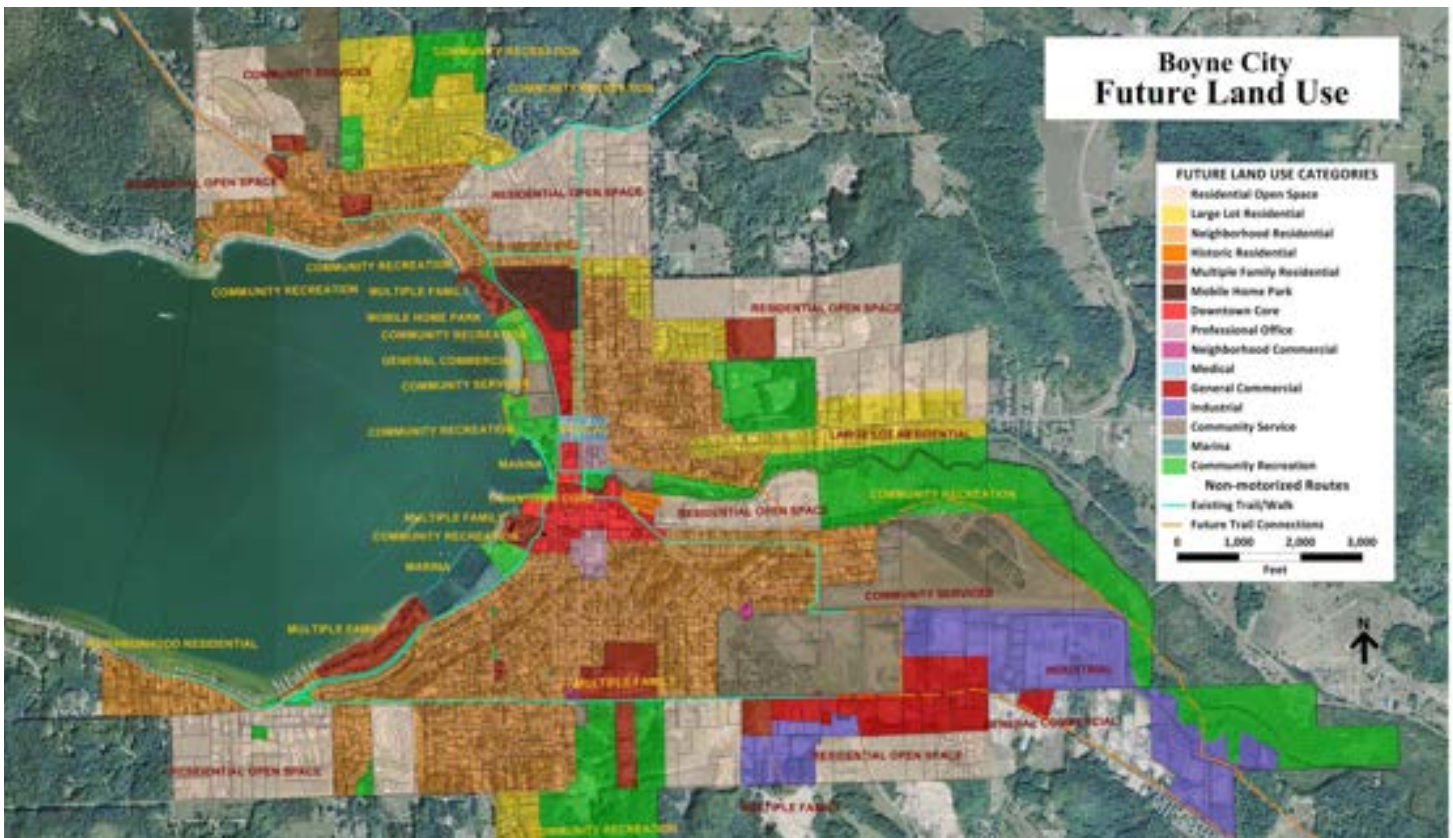


Figure 1.24 Boyne City Land Use, Boyne City Planning Commission



identifies three properties in the Main Street district as Redevelopment Ready Community-certified sites (Boyer City Planning Commission. Boyne City City of Boyne City Master Plan 2015, 2015, 22). By encouraging investors to develop specific properties, Boyne City Main Street can better support the town's development.

Housing

Housing opportunities are scarce in the Boyne City Main Street district. While the area is classified as a mixed-use zone, commercial and public uses are dominant over residential properties. In the downtown commercial strip, about half of the businesses have residential units on the upper floors (Figure 1.25). The built environment surrounding the Main Street district is less dense and zoned for residential purposes. This zone features open-lot single-family houses with a median household value of \$126,100 as of 2013. 75% of homes are owner occupied, with the remainder being renter occupied. As a town that is focusing its future development around the tourist industry, the lack of temporary housing and short-term rentals in Boyne City could prove detrimental.

The lack of housing availability and rising costs are affecting residents. While it is generally assumed the cost of housing should not exceed 28% of an occupant's income, 41% of Boyne City residents are spending more than 35% of their income on housing. A shortage of affordable housing in the



Figure 1.25 City Main Street Storefronts, Barton

Main Street district makes it vulnerable to losing its residents moving to less expensive housing in neighboring areas. The housing issues continue with the patterns of occupancy caused by the town's recreational assets. 24.7% of housing space is for seasonal use, meaning almost a quarter of residential properties are vacant for half of the year (Boyer City Planning Commission. Boyne City City of Boyne City Master Plan 2015, 2015, 39). Although seasonal residents contribute to the economic development of the town during the summer months, they also cause a dramatic fluctuation in commercial activity and make the off-season harder for business owners. Furthermore, houses are being left vacant in an area where availability is a rising concern.

The Boyne City Main Street program has made significant strides to improving housing availability and affordability. First, the growing issues with housing availability are addressed in the most recent town master plan from 2015. The plan includes a list of steps to reach adequate housing conditions, starting with a new housing feasibility study. Outside of the Main Street district, housing development projects and programs are already underway to improve housing conditions. The Boyne City Housing Commission was established to help low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities find housing by providing federal and state-funded rental assistance.

The Commission sponsors several housing developments reserved for people qualifying under the HUD Section 8 income requirements. Further, the city supported the construction of a new waterfront affordable housing center, Fox Run, with 145 housing units, which opened in 2022 on the waterfront of Lake Charlevoix. The developer partnered with a manufacturer to build 145 manufactured homes (Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, 2020).

Additional Information

Boyne City Main Street has an immense catalog of studies and plans created to improve the community. Since the beginning of the Downtown Development Authority in 1994, residents and community leaders have shown their commitment to revitalizing their home. These efforts have not gone unnoticed, and the town has been featured in several publications. In 2019, Boyne City was a semifinalist in the 2019 Main Street Award competition and the following year was titled the 2020 Great American Main Street by Main Street America (Main Street America, 2020).



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1.8 Federal Hill, Baltimore, Maryland

Year Program Founded

The Federal Hill Main Street program was founded in 2001 by the Federal Hill Neighborhood Association.

Population

The Federal Hill area has a population of 3,000 people. The median Income as of 2000 is \$62,466, and currently is \$85,310. As of 2000, Racial/Ethnic characteristics consisted of: 87.3% White, 9.0% African American, 0.2% Native American, 2.1% Asian, 0.6% from other races, and 1.3% from two or more races.

Main Street Area

“Federal Hill comprises about 24 city blocks just south of the Inner Harbor. At its northeast corner, Federal Hill Park rises steeply from Key Highway overlooking the downtown skyline and providing open recreational space for the community.” (The City of Baltimore 2018)

Stakeholders

The stakeholders involved in the Federal Hill Main Street program include:
City of Baltimore
Baltimore Main Streets
Main Street America
Residents of Federal Hill
Businesses

Grants/Funding Sources

Baltimore Main Streets
Main Street America
City of Baltimore
State of Maryland
South Baltimore Gateway Partnership (SBGP)
Visit Baltimore

Funding Received in 2021 included “Over \$450,000 in grant funding, including \$274,530 in pass-thru grant funding for Fed Hill Main Street businesses”. (Federal Hill Main Street n.d.)

Funding distributed through the Baltimore Main Streets program from 2000-2014 for 683 façade improvement matching grants were awarded in these nine neighborhoods, totaling nearly \$3.6 million dollars. The program also leveraged approximately \$12.9 million in private investment (The City of Baltimore 2022).

Location and Background

The City of Baltimore was established by charter in 1730, becoming ‘Baltimore Town.’ The charter provided each family received a one-acre lot located between the harbor on the south; the Jones Falls River and marsh on the east; woods on the north; and large gullies on the west. Baltimore town was generally quiet until 1753 when Dr. John Stevenson, a physician and merchant, founded a new business to ship flour overseas to Ireland. The geographic location of Baltimore provided a significant advantage over other port cities because of the proximity of the wheat fields to the coast line reduced shipping time and costs. As business rapidly expanded, the economy boomed and supported the restructuring of the city layout. Trails connecting to the fields were paved into proper roads and new mills and warehouses were constructed. As industries changed over time, many of the wheat production facilities were adapted to textile mills and factories.

As economic opportunities became more abundant, the city attracted more immigrant populations, which led to a rapid expansion of residential and commercial spaces, stretching the city limits. By the late 18th century, the Navy capitalized on the existing shipping infrastructure in Baltimore and established a large naval base. As the city grew, the original northern shoreline of the Inner Harbor had to be extended two blocks south in order to accommodate the growth.

However, the construction of the Erie Canal in 1825 created competition for port accessibility and reliability, which sparked the establishment of the B&O Railroad company. The B&O Railroad

was the world's first railroad, providing long distance passenger travel and shipping. The railroad development spurred other innovations, such as the telegraph, which coincided with a spike in immigration. However, in 1904, Baltimore suffered a devastating fire, which destroyed 140 acres, 1,526 buildings, and burned out 2,500 companies. As the city rebuilt its infrastructure, the city made significant improvements to its layout, including widening twelve streets, moving utilities underground, and constructing a public plaza and multiple wharves.

During a population swell in the 1910s to 20s Baltimore completed a major annexation, expanding from 30 square miles to 90 square miles; this additional area had a more suburban look to it. When World War II approached the industrial resources and infrastructure were retrofitted to make anything the war effort required, this contributed to the war as well as the Baltimore economy in a big way. In the 1950s and 60s, there was some long overdue attention paid to the downtown which had not seen many if any new buildings on a large scale since the 1920s. (Baltimore City Planning n.d.)

The Federal Hill is the concentrated commercial and residential neighborhood in Baltimore. “Federal Hill comprises about 24 city blocks just south of the Inner Harbor. At its northeast corner, Federal Hill Park rises steeply from Key Highway overlooking the downtown skyline and providing open recreational space for the community. The neighborhood retains remarkably intact streets of largely residential properties reflecting the eras in which they were built and the economic status of their early residents” (The City of Baltimore 2018).

“Glass making, canning, packing, fertilizer production, brewing, baking, and paint manufacturing all thrived in Federal Hill over the years, often owned and operated by European immigrants. African Americans have made their homes throughout Federal Hill as well from before



Figure 1.26 Federal Hill Main Street, Baltimore Maryland, 2021. www.fedhill.org

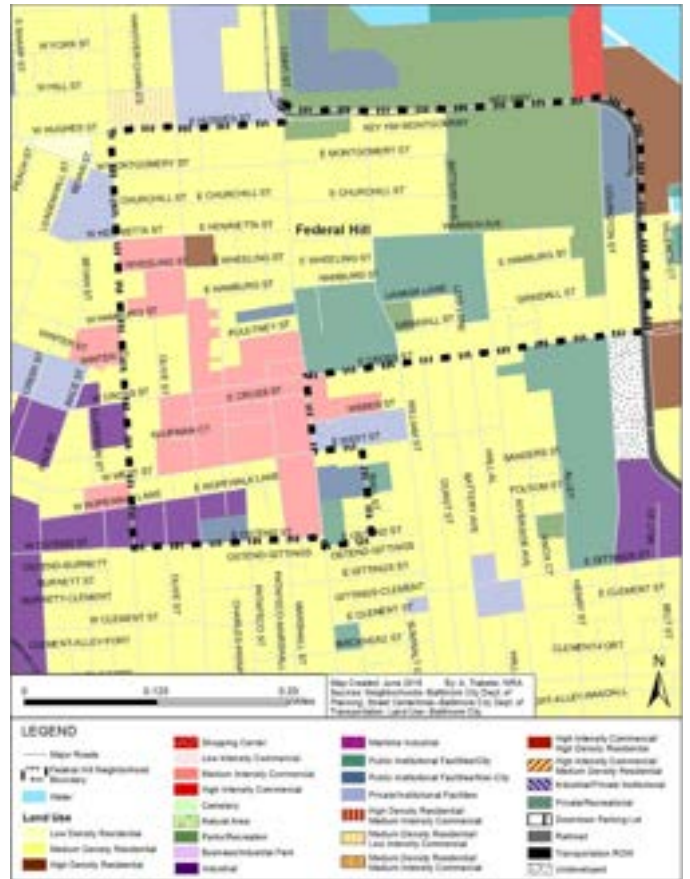


Figure 1.27 Land Use Map, Department of Transportation Baltimore City, South Baltimore Gateway Complete Streets Plan Federal Hill Chapter, 2017.



the Civil War. In the mid-20th century as maritime industry and other uses shifted along the Inner Harbor, the desirability of Federal Hill as an urban neighborhood was recognized by those who joined long-time residents in restoring and renovating properties as part of the back-to-the-city movement beginning in the late 1950s” (The City of Baltimore 2018).

Origins

The Baltimore Main Street revitalization effort began in the late 1990s through the mid-2000s in response to the high rates of local violence, drug addiction, death by AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, and lead poisoning in 1999. The schools were also performing at a much lower rate than comparable neighborhoods and cities. To turn these statistics around and revitalize the entire city of Baltimore, with a focus on particular neighborhoods, one of the first efforts was to “reduce violence through a three-pronged approach: more and better drug treatment, youth intervention, and more effective policing.”

Secondarily, the astonishing progress in the last six years is the result of deliberate and comprehensive changes in the City’s bureaucracy. Through the CitiStat program, Baltimore is moving from a traditional spoils-based system of local government to a new results-based system of government. CitiStat is an accountability tool that tracks the activities of City agencies.” The stakeholders involved in this pivot of trajectory include but are not limited to city officials of Baltimore, neighborhood associations, Baltimore Main Streets, Main Street America, and the residents who continuously advocated for this change. (Baltimore City Planning n.d.) (Pratt Free Library n.d.)

Economic Development

The Main Street Program for Maryland was established in 1998 and has since rehabilitated over 251,000 buildings, produced \$61.7 billion dollars in investment, and created over 528,557 new jobs across the state. (Preservation Maryland 2021)

Additionally, according to Sam Sessa at the Baltimore Sun: “More than 80 businesses have opened since 2000, providing 270 new jobs in the neighborhood. Federal Hill Main Street has rehabbed 58 historic structures and received \$350,000 in public investment and more than \$1 million from private donors” (Sessa 2018).

To support new businesses in Federal Hill, there are two tabs on the Federal Hill Online website dedicated to small businesses. The first is a resources tab which directs business owners on how to start their own business, how to find them, securing a workforce, building & sites, and Maryland statistics and data. Secondarily, there is a tab on the website to feature small businesses and their stories, which is a great spotlight. There is also a guided walking tour that you can interact with on the website on your phone to learn some history as well as great spots to patronize (Federal Hill Online n.d.). Additionally, the neighborhood participates in small business Saturday which helps promote shopping locally and consciously. (Federal Hill Main Street n.d.)

Preservation

The Federal Hill neighborhood is designated a Baltimore City Historic District and is listed as a National Register Historic District. Being in a National Register Historic District provides no protections from demolition or development by private owners, it does however protect against federal/state-funded projects (highways, eminent domain, etc.) Whereas being designated a Baltimore City Historic District has quite a few more protections and benefits such as eligibility for tax credits/incentives, protection and review of alterations, distinction to the district, sense of community, and most importantly protects from demolition and inappropriate development. I do not believe that there are any structures individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the boundaries of Federal Hill. (The City of Baltimore n.d.)



Land Use

“Medium density residential is the most prominent land use in the neighborhood. The primary commercial corridors are along Light Street, Charles Street, Cross Street and West Street. The Cross Street Market is a historic icon in the neighborhood for commercial activity. Historic Federal Hill is the dominant park/recreation land use in the neighborhood, along with Rash Field at the Inner Harbor just north of the neighborhood boundary. Institutional land uses include the Baltimore City Public School Federal Hill Preparatory School.” (South Baltimore Gateway Complete Streets Plan Federal Hill Chapter 2017)

The entire area of Federal Hill is 70 acres, or 24 city blocks. Ten of those acres are dedicated open green space known as Federal Hill Park. According to the Land Use Map included at the end of this report from the Federal Hill Chapter of the Baltimore Gateway Complete Streets Plan, the majority of land use is medium density residential with some centrally located medium intensity commercial around E. Cross street. The other considerable uses are blocks of public and private institutional buildings and a small amount of industrial activity on the fringes. (The City of Baltimore 2017)

Housing

“The historic neighborhood retains remarkably intact streets of largely residential properties reflecting the eras in which they were built and the economic status of their early residents. Likely the oldest house in the district at 130 East Montgomery dates to the late 1700s, built of wood with side gables. This form continues in many early examples in Flemish bond brick construction with gabled roofs and dormers. Simple Greek Revival row houses are found throughout the district, along with many Italianate row houses, along with a few detached houses with small front gardens.” (The City of Baltimore 2018) The Housing Authority of Baltimore has no units within Federal Hill.

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Figure 1.27 Land Use Map, Department of Transportation Baltimore City, South Baltimore Gateway Complete Streets Plan Federal Hill Chapter, 2017.

1.9 Kendall Whittier, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Year Program Founded

The Kendall Whittier Main Street program (KWMS) was founded in 2010.

Population

The current population of Tulsa, Oklahoma’s metropolitan area is just over 1 million residents according to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Main Street Area

The covered area is substantial with approximately 33 blocks within the program’s “service area” centering on Whittier Square and fanning out along commercially oriented streets spurring from Lewis Avenue.



Figure 1.28 Circle Theater. Source: Rich Fischer

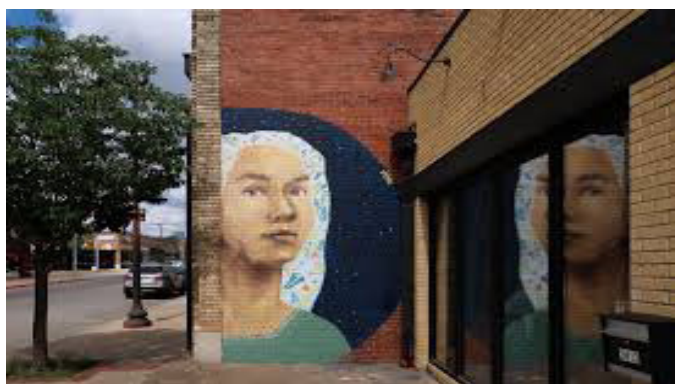


Figure 1.29 “Selfie Wall” Mural. Source: Brecklyn Hudson

Stakeholders

The stakeholders of the community are the Tulsa Planning Office, Oklahoma Department of Commerce – Oklahoma Main Street, and Oklahoma Arts Council.

Grants and Funds

The funding for the community comes from the Kendal Whittier Improvement District supporting \$60,000 per year. KWMS also touts over “\$158 million in private dollars reinvested” and lists sponsors on its website including Fowler Toyota, Williams Companies, Tulsa Food, Tulsa People, Tulsa Habitat for Humanity, and the George Kaiser Family Foundation although it does not list individual contributions.

Location

Kendall Whittier was the first suburban commercial development in Tulsa, at the beginning of the 20th century. This coincided with the establishment of the University of Tulsa nearby in 1907. The neighborhood saw its greatest era of economic growth between the 1920’s and the Second World War after the designation of US Route 66, which ran through Whittier Square. In the post-war years, and particularly with the construction of the interstate highway in the 1960’s, the area went into rapid decline. The area became mostly vacant and associated with a seedy atmosphere as the existing businesses were mostly “adult” oriented. After the success of the Main Street program, the area is home to an eclectic array of businesses with food and drink, art and music, and an independent film theater. At least half of employment in the larger neighborhood is within the manufacturing or educational services industries.

The neighborhood is one of the most diverse in all of Tulsa, with “students, young professionals, families, and seniors” as well as being a center for Hispanic food and culture with a growing population. The neighborhood is easily accessible by the freeway, which bisects the historic neighborhood, although this division remains a

scar separating the population and businesses from cohesion. The streetscape otherwise provides easily navigable thoroughfares. In terms of public transportation, there are five bus routes with numerous stops within the bounds of Kendall Whittier that provides easy access to the main commercial hubs. Although the area has strong potential for biking with some routes already planned, there are currently no dedicated bike lanes within the main street area.

Origins

In 1991 the City of Tulsa completed its Kendall-Whittier Neighborhood Masterplan to begin stabilizing and revitalizing the area. The project was funded by the city on one hand and a combination of the university, local businesses, and community churches on the other. The portion of the plan focusing on the Whittier Square was updated in 1996 to provide more detailed analysis for future redevelopment.

While these efforts laid the groundwork for the revitalization that was to come, it took the establishment of a local main street program in 2010 to give the neighborhood the kick start it needed. Working from a core of local businesses including the local independent movie theater, Circle Cinema, and an art store named Ziegler Art & Frames, Kendall Whittier Main Street began its revitalization. By partnering with these businesses for events, the main street group was able to draw people into the area who could see its potential.

Economic Development

The economic progress made in the area since the founding of the Main Street program has been considerable. As of 2018, 39 new businesses started. During the period from 2012 to 2018, commercial property values increased 46%. The main street program describes its overall progress the following way:

“When KWMS got its start in 2010, the district had a 35 percent occupancy rate. Thanks to

community-led business recruitment and retention efforts, occupancy has grown to 100 percent today. Kendall Whittier is now home to a mix of galleries, breweries, restaurants, and non-mainstream retail. . . . KWMS has seen a total of 350 jobs created and \$158 million private dollars reinvested.”

The original director of the program pointed to the series of public events and programs as the key to their success in bringing new people to the area and attracting new businesses. Among these are bi-monthly farmers markets, art installations and murals, free yoga lessons in the park, and a monthly concert series on a pocket park created by placing rolls of AstroTurf over a parking lot. Kendall Whittier Main Street also has their own facade renovation grant program that has awarded over \$40,000 to local businesses. During the COVID pandemic, KWMS did not want to lose any of their progress establishing new businesses and started another one-time grant fund for rent abatement.

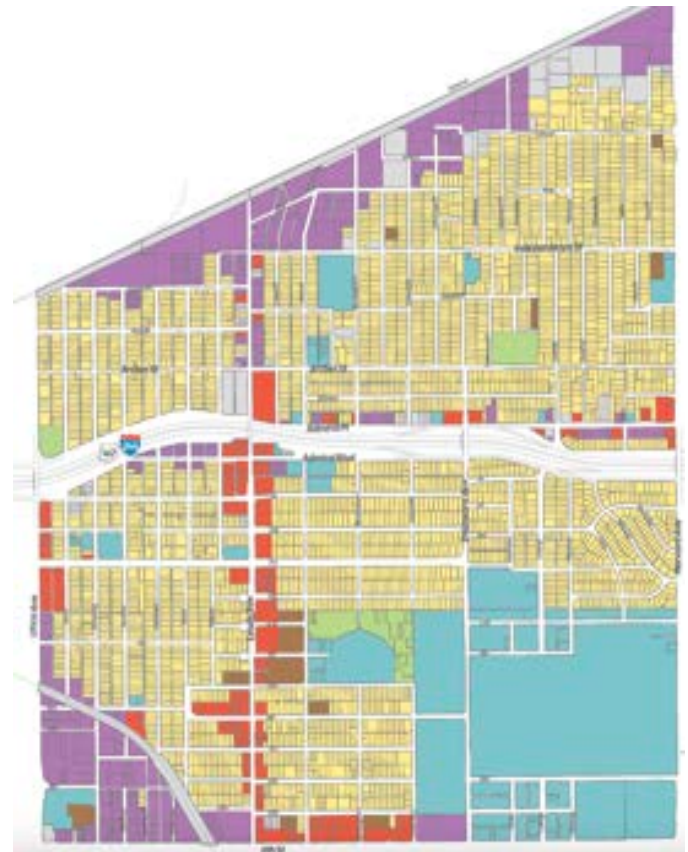


Figure 1.30 Zoning Map.
Source: Tulsa Development Authority



Preservation

Whittier Square is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district as well as being designated a local historic district by the Tulsa Historic Preservation Commission. As a local historic district, proposals for exterior renovations or repair must be approved via design review by the city's preservation commission. There are three other properties listed as individual properties in the neighborhood, The Circle Theater, Phillips 66 Station No. 473, and the Tulsa Monument Company. Because of their designation, the individually listed properties and contributing structures within the Whittier Square Historic District can qualify for Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit for projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which will refund 20% of qualifying expenses.

Land Use

The entire corridor along Lewis Avenue going through Whittier Square is already zoned and utilized as a mixed-use development. Much of the area surrounding Lewis Avenue is residential. There is some limited industrial and business park use at the southeast corner. The remaining area in the district consists of a mixture of open space parkland and the university campus, which is also considered public, open space land. There is very little vacant land in the district, limited to a few small parcels abutting the expressway.

Housing

The housing stock within the Kendall Whittier neighborhood is predominantly detached single family homes on either side of Lewis Avenue. While it is not entirely clear to what extent mixed use has penetrated the commercial stock along the main corridor, the zoning allows for it. There are also a few blocks of high density, multi-family residential housing on the east side of Lewis Avenue south of Whittier Square.

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1.10 Lafayette, Louisiana

Year Program Founded

In 2014, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) developed the Downtown Lafayette Action Plan as their main regional economic development tool. The plan was created to replace the previous 1989 Growth Management Program. The Downtown Lafayette Action Plan works in relation to the Comprehensive Plan developed for the entirety of the Parish Lafayette sits within.

Population

Downtown Lafayette has a total population of 3,611 residents. The entirety of the City of Lafayette has a total of 131,034 residents while the County has a total of 247,147 according to ESRI 2021 population data.

Main Street Area

The entirety of downtown Lafayette covers 0.86 square miles. Jefferson St is a major roadway that runs north/south through the center of downtown and acts as a primary hub of activity, stretching appx. 1.4 miles from the intersection of W. Grant St and Jefferson St. (where you'll be greeted by a welcome sign reading "Downtown Lafayette") to the end of Jefferson St. where it intersects with US Route 90.

Program

The DDA is the key stakeholder and commanding organization of downtown Lafayette's revitalization efforts. The authority works in unison with the subdivision Downtown Lafayette Unlimited (DLU). The DLU is a private, non-profit corporation that is member-based. The two organizations have worked to develop the Downtown Lafayette Action Plan and implement several programs that provide grant opportunities to businesses to bring back historical significance to downtown Lafayette.

Stakeholders

The DDA acts as the primary stakeholder in the development of downtown Lafayette providing the

grants for several development programs business. "The DDA is funded with property tax assessed on commercial buildings within the district and has a budget of approximately \$450,000 per year". The Downtown Lafayette Unlimited has a total of 220 members, each of which also act as a stakeholder as they pay membership dues. The DLU saw 90% growth in membership in 2019 as more residents of the community and business owners wanted to take part in the development of their downtown. Other stakeholders include local architects, interior designers, downtown residents, business owners, and preservationists residing within the community.

Grants and Funds

The DDA provides grants for the following programs; Blade Sign Program which the DDA covers up to 90% of the cost, but not to exceed \$2,000; Facade Improvement Grant Program which the DDA covers up to 50% of the cost, but not to exceed \$20,000; Storefront Awning Program which the DDA covers up to 50% of the cost, but not to exceed \$2,500; Retail Tenant Improvement Program which is a reimbursable grant by the DDA covering up to 50%, but not to exceed \$3,000 for spaces under 1,500 sq. ft. or \$5,000 for spaces greater than 1,500 sq. ft.

Location

Lafayette is in the center of the region of Acadiana, located in Southwest Louisiana. Acadiana is home to the Cajun ethnic group and Creole people; two groups that play a large role in the culture of Lafayette. With a heritage of Caribbean and French descent, music such as Cajun and Zydeco have come out of Acadiana, along with food dishes such as jambalaya and gumbo. Downtown Lafayette is a vibrant, cultural hub with several museums, galleries, and public art pieces across the downtown. A great deal of restaurants and retail benefit downtown's economy, while major tech companies have begun to also bring in hundreds of jobs.

Lafayette is the largest parish of the city, making it the central hub for activity bringing in people



from all over Acadiana and beyond. Lafayette is at an advantage for success due to factors such as a pleasant climate, proximity to the University of Louisiana, and the connection to the I-10/I-49 corridor. There are five railroad crossings within the downtown area, and a public bus service. Approximately 49.8% of residents in downtown Lafayette are White while 46.8% of residents are Black. The median age of residents is 34.9, of which 60% are considered white collar, alluding to the fact that the area attracts a younger group of professionals, possibly those working in the technology industry.

Origins

Working with business owners and developers, the Downtown Lafayette Action Plan aims to further the physical, economic, and cultural development of the downtown. The DDA's board members consist of two officers, and five additional staff members. The DLU was established in 1983 as a private, non-profit organization. The DDA and DLU work hand in hand to uphold the main street program and ensure

success for the community. Stakeholders outside the realm of the DDA or DDU are primarily business owners within the community, or individuals professionally interested in urban development such as architects or preservationists that reside within the community.

The Downtown Lafayette Action Plan sets out to increase the amount of high-quality residential units downtown, improve streetscapes and transportation opportunities by bicycle and public transportation, and transition to mixed use zoning. In 2013, the DDA established the Development & Design Center (DDC) to help implement the plan by working with stakeholders, coordinating with property owners, and providing schematic designs to developers and owners upon request.

Economic Development

In recent years, several tech companies have landed in downtown Lafayette, bringing in hundreds of jobs to the community. CGI (a global international technology firm) is expanding into a 50,000 sq.



Figure 1.31 Downtown Lafayette. Source: Travel, Lafayette

ft. space in the Versailles Centre. Its placement in downtown has already provided 500 jobs and projects to reach 800 by 2023. In addition to CGI, several other tech companies are bringing jobs including Waitr (200 jobs), and the Opportunity Machine (400 jobs). Retail and restaurants also play a large role in the economy. Since 2018, 14 new businesses have opened. Vestal is a new restaurant where the food is sourced from local vendors and artisans and prepared in house.

Downtown Lafayette also hosts several events that bring in visitors and publicity to the local businesses. Every second Saturday, museums, galleries, or studios host events as a part of the Art Walk event series. Downtown Alive! is an event produced by the DLU, creating an outdoor street party concert series that brings in visitors to the various restaurants lining the downtown streets.



Figure 1.32 Iconic Signage. Source: Travel, Lafayette



Figure 1.33 Rooftop View of Downtown Lafayette. Source: Travel, Lafayette

Preservation

Lafayette has a vast history, first being documented in 1815, establishing itself as the town of Vermilionville in 1820, and later, the city of Lafayette in 1884. There are several historical buildings located downtown that have been preserved and still exist today. The Preservation Alliance of Lafayette works to preserve these buildings along with maintaining attractive historical neighborhoods by restoring, rehabilitating, and developing properties for adaptive re-use in respect to the US National Park Service Historic Preservation Guidelines. The Preservation Alliance has documented 72 notable properties for historic preservation across the city. The Downtown Lafayette Action Plan's grant programs also work to preserve historical significance by providing grants for storefront development from signage to the additions of awnings to create a cohesive, culturally significant downtown.

As a part of the DDA's preservation initiative, a large three-dimensional sign spelling out "LAFAYETTE" was erected downtown (Figure 1.32). The sign acts as a symbol of the history and culture of downtown as it is repainted multiple times a year by local artists. The sign has become an iconic landmark like the sign overhead at the top of Jefferson St welcoming visitors into downtown. Art plays a large role in the preservation of downtown as it tells stories of Lafayette's past and future. It also plays a significant role in the development of the community as it brings people in potentially boosting opportunities for tourism and in turn benefiting downtown's economy. Additionally, it provides a sense of culture and insight into the history of downtown and the significance of the community.

Land Use

Downtown currently consists of 29 restaurants, 39 retail spaces, 7 sleeping accommodations, 15 galleries, museums, and theaters, and 4 parcels which also double as event venues. There is not much green space aside from four parcels. Most of the land use is commercial with some single

and double family homes and a few apartment complexes. As a part of Downtown Lafayette's Action Plan, the goal is to hope to create more mixed-use development with an intention to follow streetscape models from their sister city, Paris. Using Paris as a base model, the DDA plans to transition from single and double story buildings to buildings that are three to five stories high. By doing this, it will allow for mixed-use buildings with businesses on the ground floors and residential above with comfortable exterior public spaces that are walkable.

Housing

Housing opportunities are severely lacking in downtown Lafayette. Many people currently reside in the suburbs or rural areas of Acadiana and must commute into downtown for work. As of 2014, the downtown accommodates less than 1% of the region. Providing high-quality city living is the primary goal of Downtown Lafayette's Action Plan. In doing so, the plan creates an environment that is walkable, bikeable, transit friendly, and car friendly. Currently, there are plans to develop over 200 new residential units. The primary interest is having young professionals move into one-bedroom units that are possibly new graduates or people working in the tech center who desire a live-work lifestyle.

Additional Information

The Downtown Lafayette Action Plan contracted Agora Partners in 2020 to help inform a comprehensive capital improvement plan and programming strategies for the downtown parks. The DDA and DLU are pursuing an amenity-based strategy to program Parc Sans Souci. They are focused on developing small activity "hubs" or "nodes" for scheduled programs and to produce sustained daily activity in the parks. Zones of activity include music/performance, skateboarding, Y-Lafayette, Splash Pad, playgrounds, dining and table games.

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1.11 Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Town/State

Located in Forsyth County, North Carolina, downtown Winston-Salem is a hub of cultural and economic development in the center of the city. Winston-Salem is part of a larger community known as the Piedmont Triad consisting of Greensboro to the east, Winston-Salem to the west, and High Point to the south. Winston-Salem has formed the nation's 75th largest metropolitan statistical area, with a population of over one and a half million. Winston-Salem has a strong business community and is one of the country's most desirable places for entrepreneurs.

Year Program Founded

The Main Street program was founded in 2013, but built off of a previous Downtown Plan of Winston-Salem from 2001.

Population

Downtown Winston-Salem is the fourth largest metropolitan area in North Carolina, with a population of 244,000 people. The population of the area is constantly growing, adding around 2,000 people. The three most common ethnic groups are White (Non-Hispanic), African American, and White (Hispanic). The average age of the area is mid-30s.

Main Street Area

The core area comprises of four urban districts: Courthouse Square, Theatre District, Arts District, and Twin City Quarter. The area consists of approximately 32 blocks, but are unequal in size and connect through multiple different streets and avenues. These districts are walkable serving shops, entertainment, restaurants, and hotels. The downtown area becomes full of activity and the uniqueness of each district helps establish the downtown's character and identity.

Location

Winston-Salem has been referred to as the "Camel City" after the world-famous Camel cigarette

Stakeholders	Grants / Funds
City-County Planning Board (CCPD)	Capacity Building Grants (\$25,000/year)
Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership (DWSP)	Capital Campaign Grants (\$100,000)
Wake Forest Innovation Quarter (WFIQ)	Small Grants (\$1,000)
Winston-Salem Business Inc. (WSBI)	
The Arts Council of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County (ACWSFC)	
City of Winston-Salem (CWS)	
Forsyth County Board of Commissioners	
NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT)	
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center (WFBMC)	
Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce (WSCC)	

Figure 1.34 Stakeholder List. Source: The Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership



Figure 1.35 Aerial View of Downtown. Source: Downtown Winston-Salem



Figure 1.36 Art District. Source: Downtown Art District



brand, created by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. The tobacco company became the city's largest employer and made the city at one point the largest city in the state. The tobacco industry plays a major role in the historical context of the city.

Despite downtown Winston-Salem serving as a "hub" for various modes of transportation, most residential areas are outside of the downtown area which makes the car the primary mode of transportation. The number of cars on the roads is constantly increasing, which is accounted for through employment and population growth in the downtown area. The plan seeks to improve the area's walkability, connectivity, bicycling, public transportation, and parking amenities.

Economic Development

The downtown area remains not only the geographic center of Forsyth County, but it is also a center of job creation, tax generation, arts, and entertainment. Downtown remains one of the largest employment centers in the Piedmont Triad region with 25,000 employees working within a one-mile radius and is expected to double over the next 20 years. The arts and entertainment opportunities have increased dramatically since 2006, and the downtown has been established as a regional retail entertainment destination. The expansion of events continues and jobs and entrepreneurship rises. Winston-Salem has a proud history of innovation and entrepreneurship, with many companies starting in the downtown area, ranging from manufacturing to banking to doughnut shops.

In 2011, 14 new start-up businesses were established in the downtown area and most of the 80-plus restaurants have been started locally. Bringing in tourist is not hard, where an estimated 1,000,000 out of town guests visit annually. Different attractions such as the Winston-Salem Dash minor league baseball team, Old Salem, Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts, Stevens Center, and Millennium Center are all assets for the community.

Other events and festivals include fairs, Oktoberfest, brewing festivals, brewpubs, and film fests. These events happen throughout the year, bringing in visitors year round.

Preservation

To date, 14 downtown projects have been historic rehabilitation projects. There are multiple landmarks, blocks, and districts that are on the National Register of Historic Places. The Arts District/Downtown North is a National Historic District, with many landmarks in the area and in the surrounding districts. Landmarks such as the Main Post Office Building, Safe Bus Company, and multiple buildings along W 4th Street provide the proof that history is important to the community. The Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission has a role in protecting and enriching the county's historical, architectural, and archaeological heritage through the preservation of historic resources.

Land Use

Each district has unique functions that bring people into the downtown area: Courthouse Square is more of an urban gathering place and mixed-use development; the Art District is more historical, full of character of the past and present; the Theater District is an entertainment center; and the Twin City Quarter is largely hotels, a convention center, and mixed-use development. Given the history of downtown Winston-Salem, a vast majority of the area is designated for mixed-use. One exception that is outside of the major downtown area is the historic Holly Avenue Neighborhood that is primarily residential. There are a small number of parks in the downtown area including Civic Plaza in Courthouse Square, Winston Square Park in the Theatre District, Corpening Plaza in the Skyline District, Arts Park in Goler Heights, and Crystal Towers Park in West Side Mixed-Use area. Multiple parks, plazas, and greenways can be found within Wake Forest Innovation Quarters.



Housing

The skyline of Winston-Salem is full of high-rise buildings, which promotes a large amount of human interaction and efficient land use. The downtown area has a concentration of high-density office development. Several housing developments can be located, such as West End Village, Trader's Row, and One Park Vista. When compared to other major metros, the cost of living stands out for its affordability. Winston-Salem is ranked among the top 25 cities nationally in terms of housing affordability according to the June 2019 index and has a lower cost of living than Raleigh, Charlotte, and many other urban centers across the country. The plan pushes for more residential housing options, hoping to add high-rise residential developments. The challenge is to provide condominiums and apartments at a variety of income levels. As of today, there are 15 different housing complexes, and 3,028 total units under construction. Many of the apartment and housing complexes are multi-level income and serve studio,

one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom apartments.

Additional Information

The Arts District is known for its historic character and vibrant streetscape. Known as "City of Arts and Innovation" the district was founded in 1950 and is the first municipal arts council in the country.

There are multiple colleges and universities in the area. Salem College, is the oldest women's school in the country and 13th oldest college. Wake Forest University is a private university with a liberal arts curriculum. Winston-Salem State University is a historically black university that is ranked among the top public universities in the south, specifically for programs such as motorsport management and nursing. Forsyth Technical Community College is one of the largest community colleges in North Carolina, serving over 30,000 students each year offering over 200 programs.



Figure 1.37 3D Site Plan. Source: J. Sinclair

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Chapter 2: People and Social Capital

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Riverside Open House November 8, 2021, Riverside Congregational Church. Figure Source: Author.



2.1 People and Social Capital

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the stakeholders, social capital, and community priorities in Riverside. This chapter explores the community through interviews, maps, and infographics using US Census information. The data was collected for Census Tracts 106, 107.01, and 107.02. These census tracts are consistent with the Riverside Square Market Analysis conducted in 2017.

The following data is sourced from Esri's Community Analyst which produces data reports and infographics to demonstrate data trends. Their partners in collaboration to provide this data include: American Community Survey (ACS), Current Population Survey, Esri, GfK MRI, Data Axle, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, and Current Employment Statistics programs. The vintage of the data is 2015-2019, 2021, 2022, and 2026. US Census Tracts in this study include 106, 107.01, 107.02. These census tracts include 12 block groups.

Population

As of 2022, the population of Riverside was 12,625 people. In 2000, the population was 13,709 people. This shows that the population has decreased by 1,000 people over the past 22 years. Figure 2.1 shows the population and other key facts in Riverside. Figure 2.2 shows the distribution of the population in Riverside using block groups.

Figure 2.3 shows the gender comparison of females and males by age in 5-year increments, and shows that a larger portion of the population's age is between the 55-69 years old.

The diversity index is a measure of racial and ethnic diversity in a community. The diversity index of Riverside is lower at 31.9 due to its large white population at 86.6% (Figure 2.4). The other percentages in the area consist of 4.6% African American, 0.7% American Indian, and 1.4% Asian. The Hispanic Origin in the area is at 5.0% and is projected to increase to 6.7% in 2026.

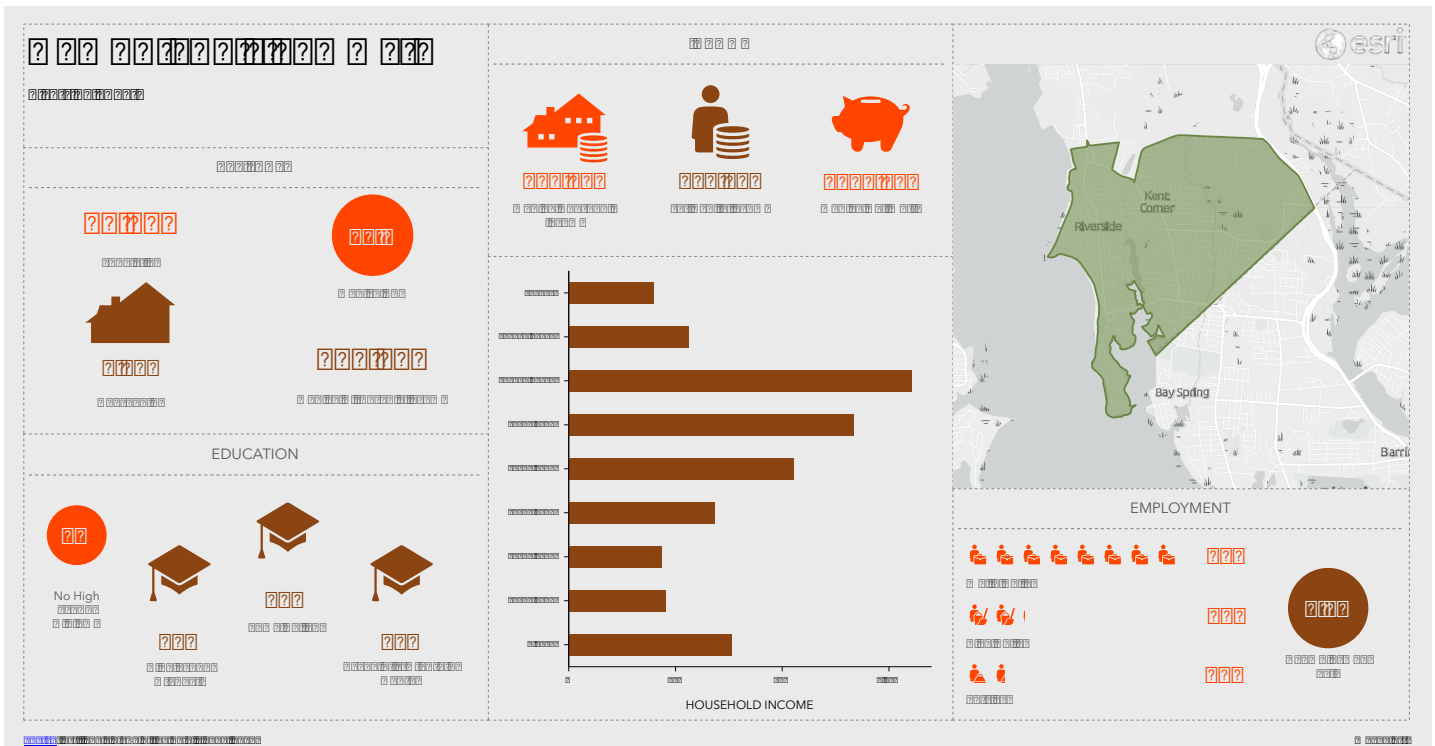


Figure 2.1 Demographic Summary for Riverside, RI.



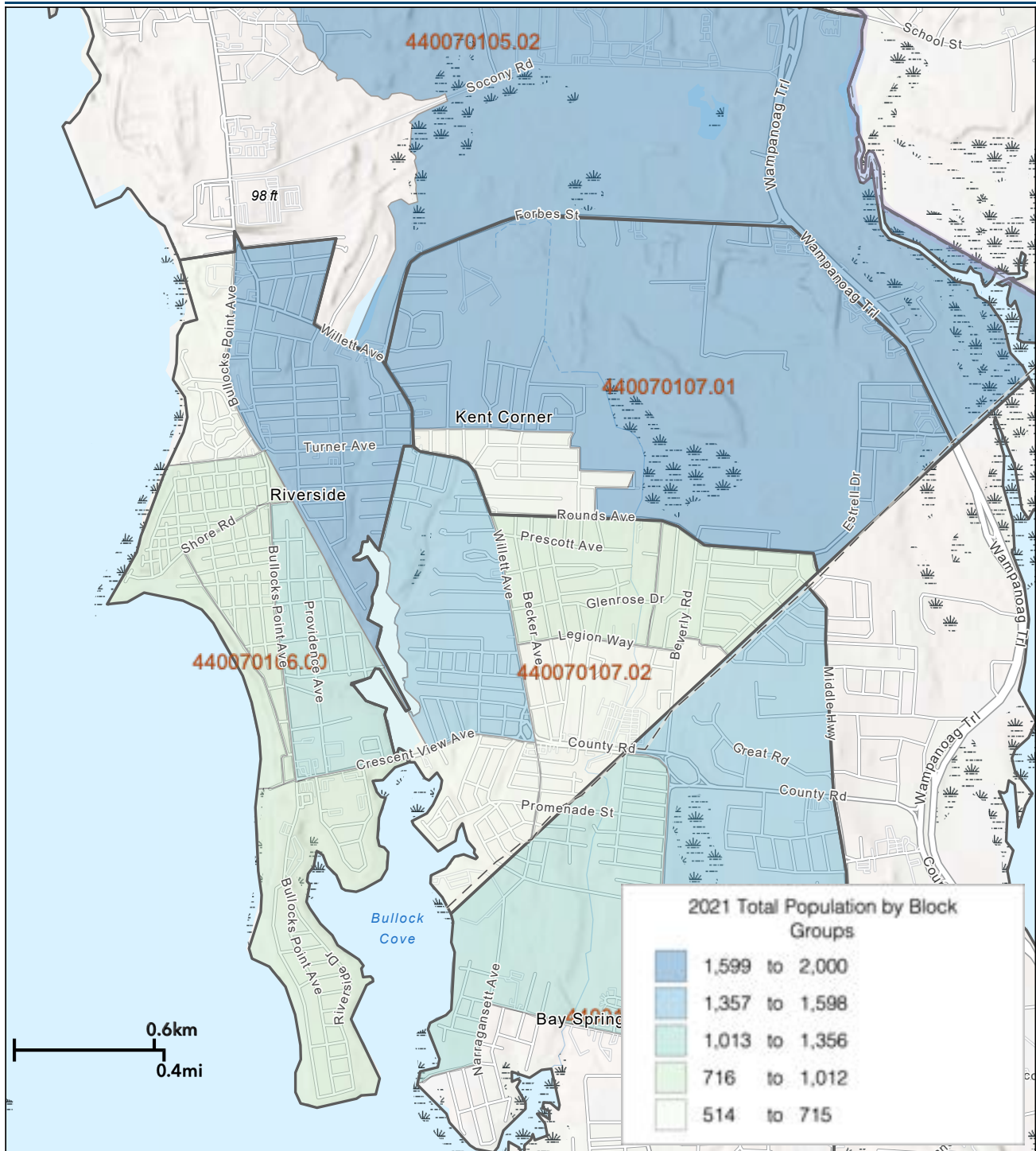


Figure 2.2 Population Map of Riverside, RI.

September 15, 2021

Income

The median household income for Riverside is \$78,564, however, the incomes vary. Figure 2.1 shows the median household income along with per capita income and median net worth of the people of Riverside. Over 1,200 households have an income between \$100,000 to \$150,000. Most ranges of income consists of 10-15% of the population, suggesting that the household income varies throughout the town.

Approximately 600 households in Riverside make an annual income of no more than \$15,000 at the lowest amount of household income and just under 400 families in Riverside make an annual income of \$200,000 or more; the highest annual incomes recorded.

Crime Index

There were 36,813 crimes reported in 2021 with a third of it being property crime and the rest being personal crimes. Figure 2.5 shows an overall crime index of 30, property crime index of 31, and a personal crime index of 24.

2.2 Housing

This section focuses on the housing in the community, with the emphasis on the Riverside Square and the different types of units in the community.

According to the ESRI Community Profile of Riverside, there are 5,667 housing units in Riverside in which 66.5% are owner occupied, 27.2% are renter occupied, and 6.3% are vacant. The median home value in 2021 is \$246,290 and in 2026 it is estimated to be \$278,326. Around 35.3% of the housing units that are occupied by owners have a value of \$200,000-\$249,999.

In 2010, 67.5% out of the 5,667 units in Riverside were households with 2+ people, 24.9% were households with children, and 3.3% were multi-generational households. According to the ACS Key Population & Household Facts, there are 1,444

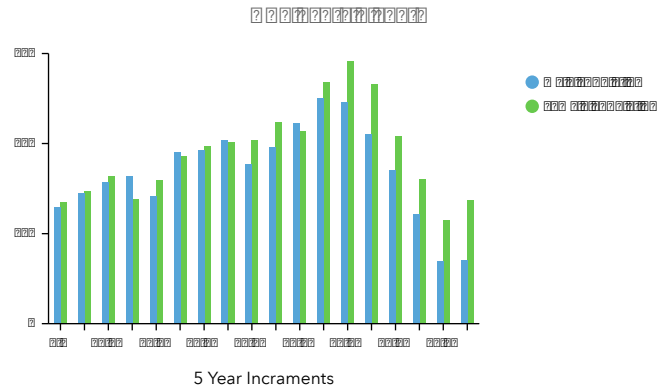


Figure 2.3. Sex by Age for Riverside, RI.

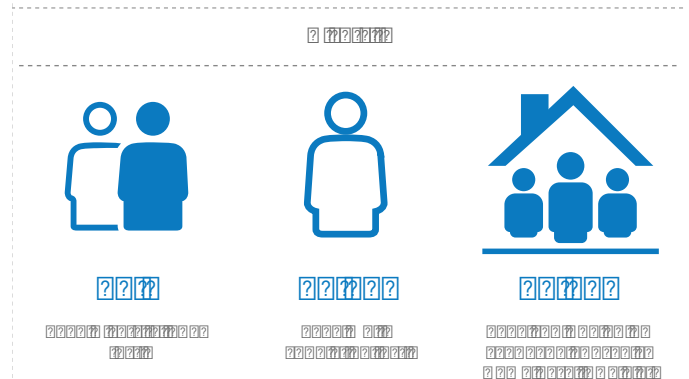


Figure 2.4 Diversity of Riverside, RI.

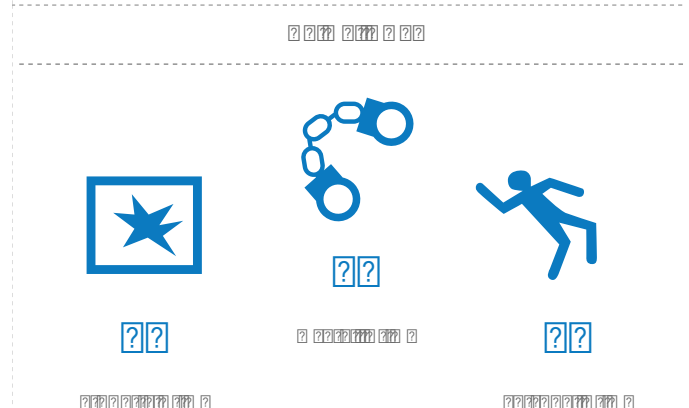


Figure 2.5 Crime in Riverside, RI.

households with householders 25-44 years old, 2,275 households with householders 45-64 years old, and 1,733 households with householders 65+ years old. Most of the housing units were built around 1939 or earlier.

2.3 Stakeholder Analysis

The following section identifies the active stakeholders in the community and their relationship with other stakeholders.



Riverside Renaissance Movement

The group focuses on advocacy, activities, education, and promotion in different areas: beautification, economic development, waterfront and environmental resources, and cultural awareness. Their mission is to promote and enhance the sense of community in Riverside through collaboration.

The Riverside Renaissance Movement is a collaboration of residents, businesses, organizations, and public officials to promote and enhance Riverside. The RRM serves as a forum where community stakeholders can come together to collaborate and align their efforts to better the neighborhood.

Contact Information:
Riverside Renaissance Movement
Jason Rafferty, MD

Young Families of Riverside

Young Families of Riverside is a group that interacts with young families in the community, talking and connecting with families about events, meet-ups, and other engagement opportunities. The group is committed to stepping in and standing up for young moms and dads in the community. Founded in early 2020 on Facebook, the organization focuses on bettering the community for families.

The organization reaches out to other organizations and partners with Friends of Grassy Plains, East Providence Arts Council, the Riverside Library, Elderwood at Riverside, and Cub Scouts, among others.

Contact Information:
Young Families of Riverside
Sarah Smalley- Founder

Friends of Grassy Plains

Friends of Grassy Plains is a non-profit charitable corporation that is committed to the sensitive

restoration of Grassy Plains Park in Riverside. The group works with the City of East Providence to restore the park and generate awareness of what the park has to offer.

The organization has partnered with local and national nonprofits and civic organizations to help improve the park. Other major groups they have engaged with are the City of East Providence and the Young Families of Riverside.

Contact Information:
Friends of Grassy Plains Park
Alan D’Aiello and PJ Dopke
<https://fogpp.org/>

Riverside Action Committee

Riverside Action Committee focuses on working to improve the green spaces in the community, promote and preserve Riverside’s historic character and in doing so, improves the quality of life for residents of Riverside. The central idea of the organization is to improve the environmental health and accessibility of residents while bringing a sense of an affordable and safe community to light. Riverside Action Committee engages with multiple organizations, but their focus is working with the Planning Committee, City Council, and East Providence Beautification Commission.

City of East Providence

The City of East Providence focuses on improving the public assets of the community. The City Council, serves as the legislative branch in governing the city. It helps approve certain contracts, traffic legislation, and the annual budget for the city.

Since it serves the overall City of East Providence, it works with other departments and boards, such as housing, school, and planning.

Contact Information:
City of East Providence
East Providence City Hall
145 Taunton Ave, East Providence, RI 02194
<https://eastprovidenceri.gov/>



City of East Providence Planning Department

The Planning Department oversees planning, review of development projects, economic development, community development activities, and other related activities.

The Planning Department works with community development programs such as the Boys and Girls Club, Foster Grandparent, Day One, Family Services of Rhode Island, East Providence Public Library, Childhood Lead Action Project, and East Bay Community Action Program.

Contact Information:

Planning Director William Fazioli
wfazioli@eastprovidenceri.gov

Other Stakeholders

The List of Stakeholders below are some of the additional organizations that actively contribute to the development of Riverside Square.

East Providence Arts Council
Boys and Girls Club
East Bay Community Action Project
East Providence Urban Forest
East Providence School Committee
Riverside Congregational Church
Riverside Public Library

2.4 Capturing the Voices of Riverside

We conducted interviews with different community groups to understand the roles of their organizations within the community. Questions allowed us to gather information that would capture the voices of Riverside. Each interview consisted of the same questions and focused on the connection and interactions between other organizations within the community and their overall impression of the Riverside community. Below are the 5 questions we asked the interviewees.

Questions:



1. Thinking about the next three years, how would you say your community is likely to change?
2. Is there anything your organization would change or add that would make the neighborhood better?
3. Please tell us what other types of community groups your organization has been engaged with in this community.
4. Now, we'd like to know about how you think the community has changed in the past three years. Can you compare your community now to how it was three years ago?
5. Overall, how satisfied are you living here? Scale of 1-10, 10 being extremely satisfied.

The focus of the interviews were to share thoughts about how to improve the community. Many organizations work with one another on certain projects within the community that address safety or recreation.

When asking about how the community has changed over the past three years, multiple stakeholders focused on the different physical aspects of the community. One community organization representative talked about the growth of young families in the community. Many people have been buying houses who have children while older residents are downsizing. Many older homes are over 100 years old and have become more affordable for young families. The incentives that bring people into the community are the affordability and a short commute to work nearby. One community resident explained that Riverside was family-friendly and a great location near Providence.

Another stakeholder focused on the improvements to green spaces in Riverside. They mentioned more people are working on their landscaping and planting trees. They are seeing an overall sense of care for Riverside. They also stated that the work on community open spaces is essential to community engagement.

A concern from some of the stakeholders was the need for more safe pedestrian and bike connections to Riverside Square. Fast cars through Riverside Square make it unsafe to access the bike path. Making intersections safer for families and children was mentioned. Reducing the speed of cars would also allow for a more walkable community. More crosswalks, lighted pathways, and a bigger focus on the safety for persons with disabilities were mentioned by interviewees.

Almost all the stakeholders wanted to bring more businesses and public amenities to Riverside Square. Many of the residents are younger families who need safe spaces and activities. These residents want places to get together and have events that allow the community to come together. They also want to stay in Riverside for all their needs and not have to go to another town. Adding more businesses and walkability to Riverside Square would allow for residents to stay as well as attract more people to the community.

2.5 Open House Feedback

At the Open House the feedback, conversations, and engagement activities allowed our team to better understand the community of Riverside from residents. The engagement activity gave attendees questions to answer regarding their involvement in the community, their sense of what they wanted and needed, and their overall rating of Riverside as a whole. Throughout this process, we discovered different trends and interesting ideas of what people take away from living and being a part of the community.

We first asked the attendees what they would do to strengthen community engagement. The most common answer given was more community events such as block parties. Another commonly suggested event was live music and entertainment. Other attendees mentioned wanting to see better utilization of spaces within the community that

already exist. Another attendee suggested more local restaurants and businesses partnering with community events.

Residents also highlighted that they would like more residents to volunteer. Residents talked about helping neighbors, volunteering at the food banks, and volunteering for the foster grandparents program at Waddington Elementary School. Another response focused on fixing up Riverside, whether that be improving Riverside Square, fixing the carousel, or cleaning up storefronts. They also mentioned bringing in businesses or pop-up stores. A few other singular responses given were, “more young families”, “be outside more often”, and “meetings like this” referring to the fact that the open house can strengthen community engagement. These comments suggest adding more diversity to the community through a younger generation, development of green areas, and hosting community events to bring people together. The residents then were asked how often they interact with their neighbors to know how active the community is with one another and the relative amount of social capital in the community. Figure 2.6 shows that out of the 48 answers collected, 36 people answered that they interact daily with their neighbors and people around the neighborhood, 10 people said that they interact with other residents multiple times a week instead of daily, and only two answered that they like to stay by themselves and preferred not to interact with anyone. This analysis shows Riverside residents generally maintain a close relationship with their neighbors and stay connected within their community in their daily lives.

We also asked the attendees what community engagement means to them. Our goal was to understand how people engage within Riverside and what makes the community unique. Multiple answers suggested helping each other and being kind to others. Kindness can bring people together in different ways. The fact that helping others was mentioned so many times shows there’s a sense of kindness already within Riverside.



Many people felt that community engagement was about improving the conditions of the community and making a positive impact. One resident quote in particular highlights this point, “not just saying, but doing.” The consensus in the community is to focus on creating a better community through positive change.

Other community engagement answers included creating a sense of family, caring what goes on in the community, building trust and friendship in a community, and knowing your neighbors. This

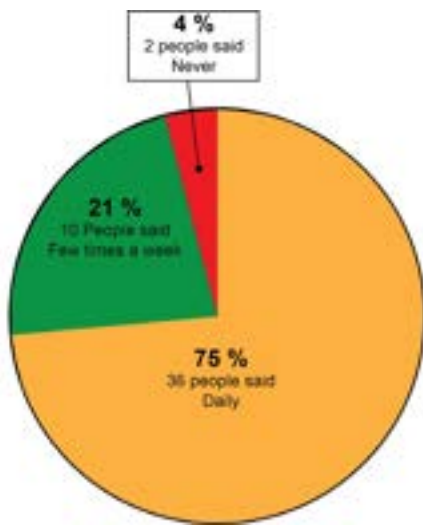


Figure 2.6 Responding to the question: How often do people interact with their neighbors?

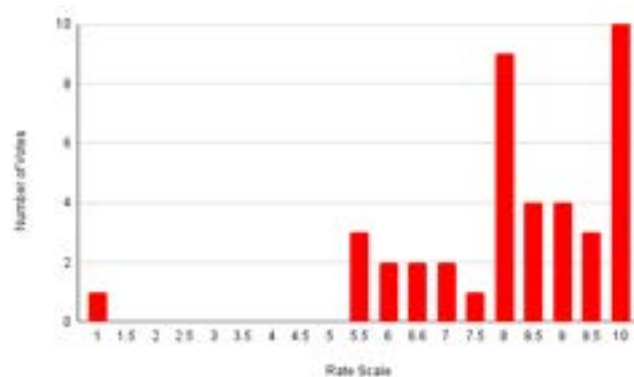


Figure 2.7 Attendee rating of Riverside.

shows there is a healthy amount of social capital in the community and residents are capable of making Riverside the community they want and need.

To capture the overall sense of resident sentiment about the community, we asked attendees to rate their overall experience on a scale of one to ten. Most residents gave Riverside a 9-10 rating, ten being the best. This high rating was due to how long they had been in the community, giving it a higher scale because they had lived there their whole lives or left and came back, emphasizing their love for the community. Figure 2.7 shows that 41 attendees participated in the rating of Riverside. Most attendees rated higher than a 5, which suggests that people like the community, but it can use some improvements. One person voted a 1 for Riverside, explaining that there could be many improvements to Riverside that could enhance the community and make it a better place for all. In conclusion, many residents enjoy living in Riverside, but want more for the community and look to enhance its value and character.

2.6 Recommendations

The following recommendations focus on building the social capital within Riverside. They also focus on the needs of the community and what they value.

1. Create a schedule of reoccurring community events that will enhance communication among residents and create a sense of togetherness.

Having monthly or reoccurring community events such as holiday festivals, movie nights, farmers markets, and block parties, can enable a more connected community (Figure 2.8). More events can also encourage community members to volunteer. Different types of volunteer work may include stewardship of park spaces, educational and teaching opportunities in schools, giving trees, and food drives.

2. Add more recreational and green space to allow for gathering spots for community activities.

Green space can be developed with interactive elements. A playground area with a dog park can serve dog owners and young families. A community garden can be maintained through different organizations and community members and promote a sense of collective ownership of a community asset. Adding a diversity of green spaces, social events, festivals, markets, and other seasonal events can create more opportunities for the community. The small pocket park, located at the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Monroe Avenue (Figure 2.9), is an opportunity space. Historically, this space had a library, so including a library box would reflect the history of the site and allow for the community share used books.



Figure 2.8 Community event examples.



Figure 2.9 Community pocket park with a shared library box.

3. Support the development of locally owned, family oriented businesses that respond to the community's needs.

Businesses that are operated by community members of Riverside give residents a sense of trust in new businesses. Local businesses also keep economic revenue within the community. Attracting locally owned family oriented businesses that sponsor local events and community charities with other organizations, enhance volunteering, support important causes, and host events that support other businesses.

4. Expand medium and high density housing with diverse housing types.

Medium to high density housing can reduce overall housing costs by providing more housing options for residents. Higher density housing can attract more businesses and people which can boost the local economy and create jobs.

5. Improve the conditions of Riverside through a maintenance program.

Improving the quality and maintenance of different spaces will keep the community clean and usable for residents and visitors. By creating a cleaner and more appealing environment, it can attract more people to Riverside, build the diversity of the community, and add value to the town.



Chapter 3: Historic Preservation

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3.1 Riverside Historical Narrative

The City of East Providence was officially founded in 1862 after the state of Rhode Island annexed the land from Massachusetts. Prior to becoming part of Rhode Island, parts of the land belonged to Seekonk and Rehoboth at various times, with European settlement dating back to the early 17th century. The character of East Providence was decidedly rural at the time of its founding although a few commercial centers were beginning to develop. The early period of East Providence's history saw four distinct villages coalesce: Watchemoket, located across the river from Providence proper; Rumford, located near the historic Rehoboth green; Phillipsdale, located in the far northwest of the town; and Riverside, located in the town's southernmost portion.

Riverside as it exists today first began to develop with the establishment of the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad Company in the early 1850s and the construction of a station in Riverside, allowing city-dwellers easy transportation to the picturesque waterfront retreat. Although some had sought recreation in Riverside prior to the railroad, either camping or staying in modest summer cottages, the mid-19th century saw the burgeoning of a veritable industry of resorts, hotels, and shore dinner halls. The first of the Riverside resorts was Vue de l'Eau in 1860, but the decades that followed saw the construction of Silver Spring, What Cheer House, Riverside Hotel, Ponham House, East Providence Hotel, and half a dozen others. Due to stiff competition, many of these recreational retreats failed as others prospered; for instance, the What Cheer House changed owners and names several times and the Riverside Hotel was dismantled and shipped to Nantucket. Many shore hall dinners also emerged alongside these resorts, the most prestigious of them being the Squantum Club. The Club was established on the shoreline north of Riverside in 1871 and quickly became one of the most prestigious eating establishments in East Providence. Alongside the development of Riverside's shore dinner halls arose an opportunity

for the locals to harvest clams to sell either as a profession or to supplement their income.

The popularity of Riverside as a vacation destination began to spur land developers to invest in planned residential plats rather than the resorts and ad hoc cottages of previous decades. In 1871 General Lysander Flagg and a group of businessmen from Pawtucket formed the Riverside Land Company, buying several farms located in the area around the train station. The Company's first platted community in Riverside was Cedar Grove, after the many trees that graced the landscape. Cedar Grove laid upon a unique curved streetscape that earned the neighborhood the moniker of "the maze." Flagg's company completed the platting of all its land, in a more regular pattern by 1873, and the entire village soon became known as Riverside, after the neighborhood adjacent to Cedar Grove dubbed Riverside Villa. The next three decades saw the area develop into a bustling resort town, accompanied by many growing pains of a small fishing community now accommodating thousands of excursionists each summer and a growing number of rear-round residents.

The most extravagant recreation areas in Riverside were Crescent Park, Boyden Heights, and Vanity Fair amusement parks, leading Riverside to be promoted as the "Coney Island of New England." The longest-lived and most noteworthy of these was Crescent Park, first founded in 1886 by George Boyden. After a successful start, Boyden sold the park and it was eventually leased to Charles I. D. Loeff, who brought the park into its own. Loeff was a German immigrant who came to the US in 1870. A furniture maker by trade, Loeff began constructing a carousel for Coney Island in the late 1870s. Loeff began making carousels full time by 1880 and opened up a small factory. Loeff manufactured several carousels for East Providence parks, including one at Crescent Park in the 1890's, and moved his business there in 1894. The Crescent Park Carousel became his showpiece, with many figures being of unique design as examples of what patrons could request

for their own carousels. In addition to the carousel, Loeff added an impressive dance hall, dinner halls, bathing facilities, and concert venues, making Crescent Park the crown jewel of Riverside.

Riverside as a resort district reached its highwater mark around the turn of the twentieth century, with the closure of both the massive but short lived Vanity Fair and Boyden Heights in 1910 signaling the end of an era. The new mode of automobile transportation allowed vacationers to seek out other resorts further south, cutting into the once considerable visitorship of Riverside. Without the mainstay of summer economic activity the village entered into an era of relative decline. The numerous resorts and hotels, now aging and falling into disrepair, were either abandoned or became dens of ill repute. The everpresent anti-liquor sentiment, culminating in the outright banning of liquor sales with prohibition in the 1920s, meant that the hotels began to operate as

illegal “speakeasies.” The purchase of the Vanity Fair grounds by Standard Oil for a refinery and storage tanks, as well as growing pollution in the waters of Narragansett Bay, changed the character of Riverside’s once attractive shoreline. The Great Depression in the 1930s worsened the economic downturn for Riverside’s resorts, and the hurricane of 1938 destroyed most of what remained.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, Riverside shifted from a vacation district into a year-round residential neighborhood, culminating with the closure of the resort era. This began with the conversion of some of the more solidly-built vacation cottages into permanent stock and the in-fill of houses into Flagg’s neighborhood plats. Local businessmen formed the Riverside Improvement Society in 1878 and started working to bring infrastructure improvements and civil institutions to the village to keep up with the ballooning population and hordes of summer visitors. The

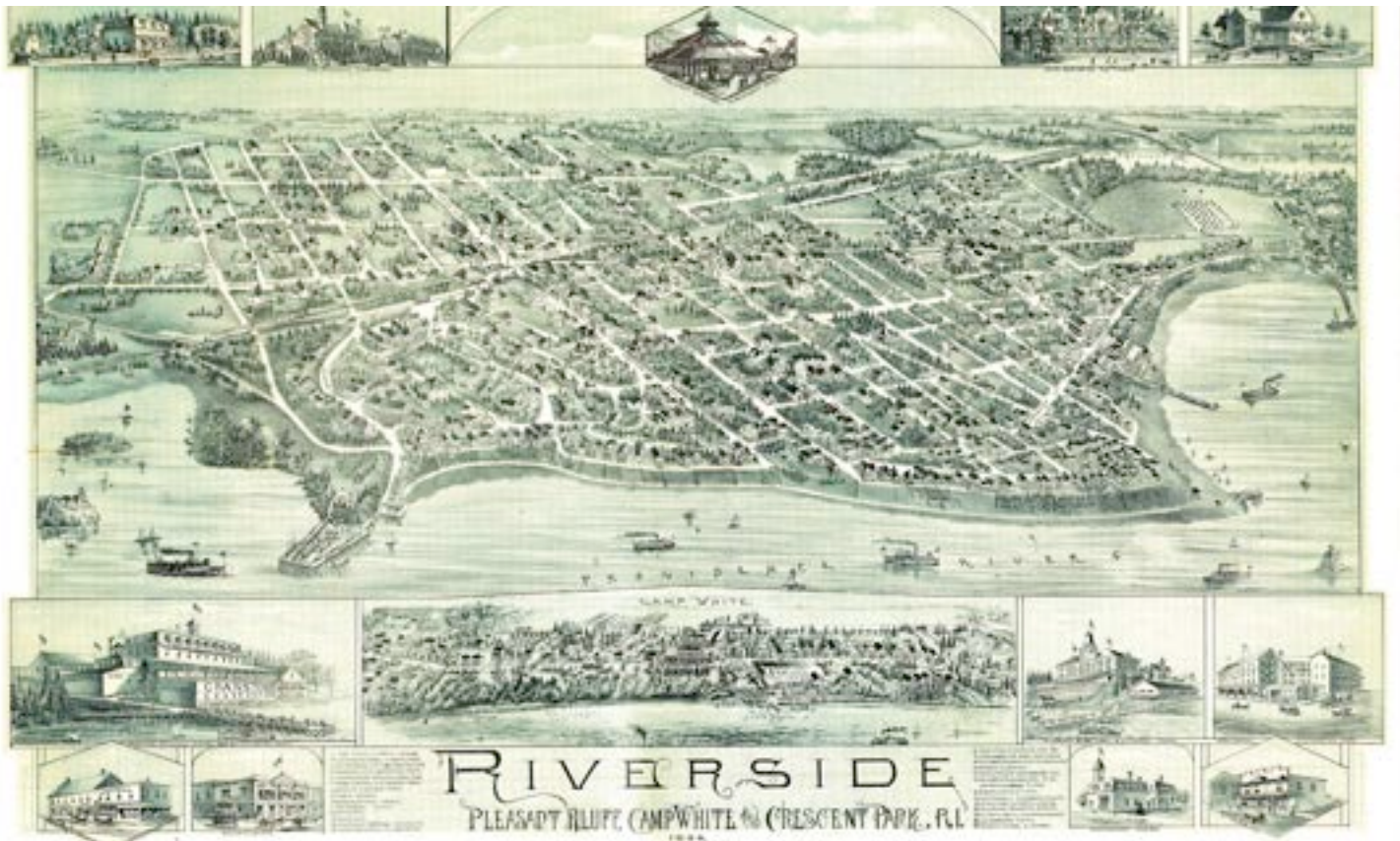


Figure 3.1 Panoramic of Riverside in 1894.



Figure 3.2 Postcard of the Looff Carousel at Crescent Park.



Figure 3.3 Swimmers at Crescent Park's Shoreline.



Figure 3.4 First Riverside Fire Station built c. 1880.



Figure 3.7 Loeff Family in Front of the Carousel c. 1905.



Figure 3.5 Riverside Passenger Depot c. 1900.



Figure 3.8 East Providence shoreline after the 1938 hurricane.



Figure 3.6 Passenger Trolley running through Riverside Square c. 1930.



1880s and 90s brought the first school, church, library, fire department, and police station to Riverside, and thriving businesses built up around the train depot. The advent of automobiles, while putting an end to Riverside's resorts, also allowed a new class of suburban commuters to relocate to Riverside by the 1920s. Like most places in the US, Riverside was deeply affected by the Great Depression, and the destruction caused by the 1938 hurricane worsened the economic condition, rendering the neighborhood largely stagnant until the post-war years.

The second half of the 20th century was prosperous for East Providence, but gave mixed blessings to Riverside. Into the 1960s, Riverside experienced a housing boom, including many new apartment complexes in addition to the dominant single-family home. Riverside's coastline now became primarily oriented towards industrial use because of its central location to ports, rail lines, and the emerging interstate highway system. The construction of Interstate-95 in 1960 proved a boon for northern East Providence, but increasingly made the core commercial area of historic Riverside Square obsolete in favor of shopping centers on the outskirts of the city and in Seekonk in the later part of the century. The Providence, Warren and Bristol Railway, which had discontinued commuter services after the 1938 hurricane, went bankrupt and was sold, and the rail line through Riverside was completely abandoned by the 1970s. In 1979 Crescent Park, the only remaining vestige of Riverside's glittering resort history, closed its doors for the last time.

In the late 20th century, two developments helped to bring visitors back to Riverside, the rehabilitation of the Loeff Carousel and the establishment of the East Bay Bike Path. In 1983 Gail Durfee established "Save our Carousel" in response to a development project looking to dismantle the Loeff Carousel. Mrs. Durfee became one of the fierce local leaders in a grassroots preservation effort to save the carousel. Eventually the City of East Providence

created the Carousel Park Commission that oversaw the rehabilitation of the carousel; Mrs. Durfee served as its chairwoman. In 1985 the Rhode Island general assembly declared the carousel as the State Jewel of American Folk Art, and the Loeff Carousel was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1987 for its national significance, the highest level of designation in the US. Between 1987 and 1992, the state converted the old rail bed of the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad into the East Bay Bike Path. The bike path is recognized nationally and once again serves to bring those seeking recreation through Riverside Square.

Riverside has a unique and dynamic history as a center of recreation that spurred its development during the 19th century. Since the close of the resort era, the character of Riverside has shifted into a solidly residential dynamic, and changes in transportation modes throughout the 20th century meant that the core of historic Riverside, Riverside Square, has languished economically. By not suffering the destruction of major infrastructure projects during the 20th century, however, Riverside has managed to retain a number of its historic resources, most notably the Loeff Carousel. While many of Riverside's historic resources are covered in non-historic materials that hide their historic character, they may yet reveal themselves. Leveraging the East Bay Bike Path as a way to bring in visitors, just as the railway on which it lies once did, represents an opportunity for Riverside to recapture some of its former glory.

See Appendix for bibliographic references.

3.2 Cultural Resource Survey Results and Recommendations

This section presents the findings of a limited-scope cultural resource survey of commercial, civic, and institutional buildings in and around Riverside Square conducted by students in Building and Site Documentation and Research Methods under the supervision of Dr. Elaine Stiles. The purpose of the



survey was to identify and evaluate properties in Riverside Square that may be eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The survey also considered the potential for a historic district in the square.

Scope of Work and Methods

The survey included completion of Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission Property Data Forms for properties in and around Riverside Square. Tasks included photography; collecting basic building information; archival research utilizing historic maps and photographs, census records, city directories, and title research; and secondary sources. The survey also collected information on potential historic properties from community members at the Open House event organized by PLAN 511 students and Professor Wessel on November 8 at the Riverside Congregational Church.

The class evaluated surveyed properties and the potential for a historic district according to the criteria for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. To be considered historically significant, a property must be at least fifty years old and must meet at least one of the following basic criteria: (A) the property must be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, (B) or the property must be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, (C) or the property must embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, (D) or the property must show, or may be likely to yield, information important to history or prehistory.

The property must also possess sufficient integrity to convey its significance. Integrity is described through seven aspects, which include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.



Figure 3.9 Map of Riverside Square, East Providence, RI showing properties surveyed shaded in blue.

Significant Historic Contexts

There are several historic contexts that significantly shaped the development and built environment of the Riverside neighborhood and Riverside Square. The earliest of these contexts is the development of Riverside as a recreation and resort district from 1860 to 1930. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Riverside transitioned into a residential and commuter suburb, which had a profound effect on the physical development of the community. The third significant context is the overall development of Riverside's civic and religious institutions and commercial architecture from 1880 to 1970. Riverside's growth throughout the historic period is also closely connected to the development and eventual abandonment of the Providence, Warren and Bristol Railroad from circa 1850 to 1970.

Resources Appearing Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places

Based on our research and evaluation, we identified eight properties that appear individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

240 Bullocks Point Avenue, the Dari-Bee (1960) appears to be eligible under Criterion A for its association to the growth and development of Riverside's transition from a declining population in the 1930s to the booming economic growth between 1945 to 1970. The building also appears to be eligible under Criterion C as an increasingly rare example of small-scale Googie-style commercial buildings in East Providence.

250 Bullocks Point Avenue, the Riverside Station of the Providence, Warren & Bristol Railroad (ca. 1860), appears eligible under Criterion A for its significant association with the commercial and residential development of the Riverside neighborhood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The railroad increased accessibility for seasonal and recreational visitors and made Riverside more accessible as a commuter suburb to Providence. The depot is the only building remaining extant in Riverside associated with the railroad context from this period.

273-279 Bullocks Point Avenue, the Winchester Block (ca. 1880), appears eligible under Criterion A for its significant association with commercial development in Riverside between the late nineteenth century and the 1950s. It was one of four large commercial blocks built in the square on Bullock's Point Avenue and is one of only two blocks still remaining.

332 Bullocks Point Avenue, known as the Burke Block (ca. 1910), appears eligible under Criterion A for its association with commercial development in Riverside between 1880 and 1940. It was one of four large commercial blocks built in the square on Bullock's Point Avenue and is one of only two blocks still remaining.

10 Lincoln Avenue, known as the old Post Office (1920), appears to be eligible under Criterion A for its association with the transition of Riverside from an entertainment district to a residential, streetcar suburb in the first decades of the twentieth century.

10 Turner Avenue, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, appears to be eligible under Criterion C as a distinctive example of Modern architectural style in religious architecture in East Providence. The property is also associated with the development of religious institutions in Riverside in the late nineteenth century, but the present building, constructed in 1965, is not associated with that context. The building meets the standards for Criteria Consideration A for religious properties as the significance of the building is architectural.

18 Turner Avenue, the St. Andrews Masonic Lodge (1909), appears eligible under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of a Classical Revival Masonic lodge building. The lodge is one of only two Masonic lodges in East Providence.

49, 55, 60, and 70 Turner Avenue, the Saint Brendan Parish Complex, appears eligible as a historic district under Criterion A for its association with the growth and development of the Catholic religious institutions in Riverside from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. The complex is an example of a four-part parish complex composed of church (1970), rectory (1965), school (1956), and convent (1957) developed in different stages. The church also appears individually eligible under Criterion C for its Modern architectural styling. The complex meets the standards for Criteria Consideration A for religious properties as the significance of the building is related to community development and architectural design.

Resources Appearing Ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places

The following buildings do not appear eligible for the National Register of Historic places. Properties annotated with an asterisk (*) are not individually eligible, but may have the potential to contribute to a historic district.

The Riverside World War II Memorial (1950) at the corner of Bullocks Point Avenue, Turner Avenue, and Pawtucket Avenue does not appear eligible for the National Register. The memorial does not meet the significance standards under Criterion Consideration F for commemorative properties as the memorial has not accrued significance for its design, age, tradition or symbolic value.

Jerry's Auto Repair/Jerry and Son at 255 Bullocks Point Avenue does not appear eligible for the National Register. Constructed in 1963, the building is not associated with any significant events or persons in the history of Riverside. The building is typical of a mid-twentieth-century automobile service and gas station, but is not a distinguished example of the type.

*241 Bullocks Point Avenue, a commercial building built circa 1943, does not appear eligible for the National Register. It is associated with mid-twentieth-century commercial development in Riverside Square, but is not individually significant with that context. It embodies the characteristics of a small-scale commercial building from the period, but has lost some integrity due to replacement materials. Although individually undistinguished, the building could contribute to a potential historic district.

The Bullocks Point Laundromat at 257 Bullocks Point Avenue was built circa 1994 and does not meet the fifty-year age criteria for evaluation for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.

285-289 Bullocks Point Avenue, a commercial building built in the mid to late nineteenth century,

has undergone many additions and does not appear eligible for the National Register due to a loss of integrity.

290-292 Bullocks Point Avenue, a single-story commercial building built between 1921 and 1939, is not associated with any significant events or persons, and does not appear to have architectural significance. It does not appear eligible for the National Register under any criteria.

329 Bullocks Point Avenue, East Providence Fire Station No. 2, does not appear eligible for the National Register because it was built in 1974 and does not meet the fifty-year age criterion and is not exceptionally significant. However, when the building reaches fifty years of age in 2025, it may be eligible for the National Register as a well-preserved example of a fire station rendered in the Modern style. It is the only fire station in East Providence from this period and in this style.

The Riverside World War I Memorial (ca. 1920) located at 329 Bullocks Point Ave does not appear eligible for the National Register, as the memorial does not meet the standards set out in Criterion Consideration F for commemorative properties. The memorial has not accrued significance through design, age, tradition, or symbolic value.

376 Bullocks Point Avenue, or Lee's Restaurant and Lounge, was built circa 1950 and has been in use as a restaurant since its construction. The building is architecturally unremarkable and is not associated with any significant events or persons in the history of the development of Riverside. The building has also lost integrity of design, workmanship, and materials through numerous renovations.

27 Burnside Avenue was built around the turn of the twentieth century. Originally a private residence, St. Mark's Episcopal Church purchased the property in 1965 as a residence for the parish priest. The property does not appear eligible for the National Register under any criteria as it is not associated



with any significant events or persons in the history of Riverside and has lost integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

19 Maple Avenue, the Odeon/Lyric/Gilbert Stuart Theater, was built in 1921 and is associated with the commercial and recreational development of Riverside Square in the period as it became a streetcar suburb. Now in use as a light industrial site, the theater has lost integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and in its current state, has lost too much integrity to be eligible for the National Register under any criterion.

24 Monroe Avenue, built circa 1949 and historically known as the Lincoln Bar, does not appear to be eligible for the National Register. The building has retained integrity of the historic period, however it is not associated with any significant events or persons in the history of Riverside and is not architecturally significant.

*15 Oak Avenue, the Riverside Congregational Church, does not appear eligible for the National Register. The Riverside Congregational Church was the earliest organized congregation in Riverside, being established in 1881. However, the current building, constructed in 1960, is not significantly associated with that context. The church is rendered in a modest Modern style, but is not a distinctive example of Modern architecture. Though individually undistinguished, the church could contribute to a potential historic district.

*The Post Office building at 3708 Pawtucket Avenue, built in 1946 as the second branch of the Riverside Post Office, does not appear to be individually eligible for the National Register. Its construction is associated with the expansion of the neighborhood over the early twentieth century as a streetcar suburb, but the building is not significantly associated with these developments. The building retains integrity, but does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period,

or method of construction. The property could contribute to a historic district.

*The Riverside Square building at 3734 Pawtucket Avenue, built circa 1955, does not appear to be eligible for the National Register. The building is associated with a period of commercial growth in the Riverside area after World War II, but the building is not significantly associated with this context. The building has some modest Modern styling, but is not a distinctive example of the style. The property retains integrity, however it could contribute to a historic district.

3736 Pawtucket Avenue, now Rhodes Pizza, is a long-standing business fixture of Riverside Square. The wood frame portion dates to the 1890s and the concrete and brick portion was added in the 1950s. The property does not appear to be eligible for the National Register under any criteria. Although it is associated with the history of commercial development in the square and is the oldest surviving commercial building, it has suffered a considerable loss of integrity and no longer conveys that significance.

9 Turner Avenue, Narragansett Engine Co. 2, was built in 1880 by the City of East Providence. The building served as the first fire station in Riverside and was in service until 1908. Since then, the building has been in commercial use. The building is associated with the early civic development of Riverside, but has suffered a loss of physical integrity and can no longer convey that association.

Riverside Square Historic District Eligibility

Survey efforts included evaluating the potential for a historic district in Riverside Square. The National Register program defines a historic district as “a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.” The Riverside Square area appears potentially eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its association with broad trends



that influenced the development of the square area. These include development of the railroad and light rail system in East Providence, the development of seaside resorts, entertainment, and seasonal use; the development of a commercial district to serve the growing residential streetcar suburban neighborhoods adjacent to the square, and the growth of religious and civic neighborhood institutions. The period of significance for the district would be from ca. 1860 when the Riverside Depot was constructed to the 1970 when the most recent religious buildings were constructed for long-standing congregations in the area. The primary period of development reflected by the resources in and around the square date from the first half of the twentieth century.

Figure 3.10 shows proposed boundaries for the potential historic district, which includes sixteen contributing buildings. This grouping arranged around the transportation “spine” of the streetcar commuter suburb reflects the historic development patterns that created a commercial center in Riverside Square. Despite some loss in density through demolitions in the late twentieth century, extant commercial, civic, and religious buildings remain to constitute a unified entity.

Other Recommendations

There are several aspects of the historic built environment in Riverside that warrant further study: (1) This survey did not address residential properties. Future survey efforts should examine residential development and assess if areas around Riverside Square warrant consideration as historic districts or should be included in a larger potential Riverside Square historic district. (2) The social and business history of Riverside as a recreation and resort area and a residential suburb deserves greater attention than we were able to give it in this project. (3) The relationship of civic and religious institutional development and residential growth between 1880-1970 deserves greater attention, as does the impact of these institutions on the neighborhood. (4) Future surveys should

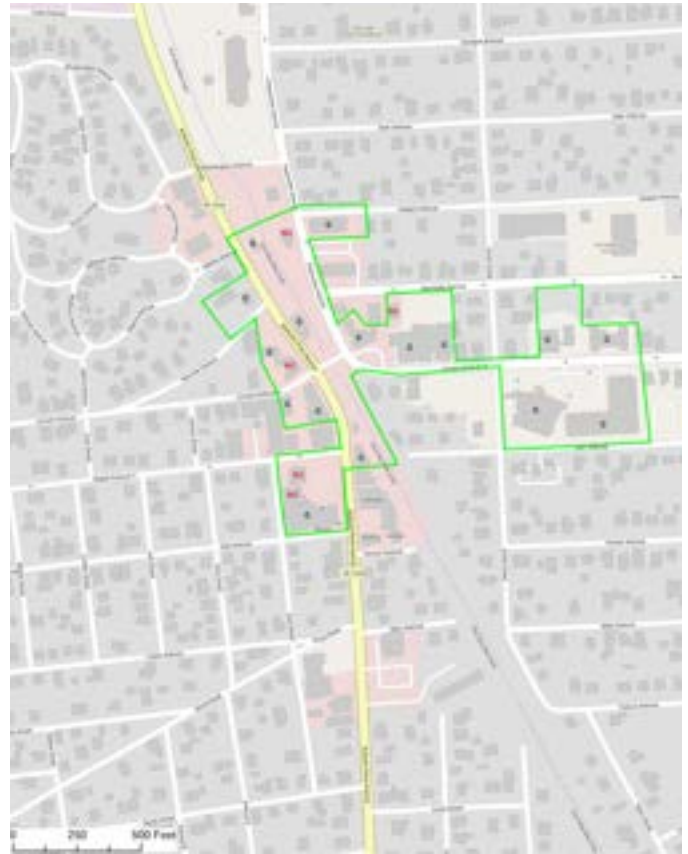


Figure 3.10 Proposed boundaries of potential Riverside Square Historic District showing contributing and non-contributing properties .

examine how events such as the development and dismantling of Rhode Island’s rail system and the 1938 Hurricane affected Riverside’s commercial and residential fabric. (5) There should be further investigating of the impacts of immigration on the growth and development of Riverside.

3.3 Survey of Relevant Statutes and Related Funding Programs

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

The National Historic Preservation Act created the National Register of Historic Places, a list of historically significant properties that can assist with planning decisions, The State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO), who administer the nomination of properties to the National Register, oversee each state’s historic preservation program, and coordinate federal funding via grants and tax incentives. The act also created the Advisory

Address	Property Name/ Description	Parcel ID	Map/Block/Lot	Year Built (Corrected)	National Register Recommendation
240 Bullocks Pt Ave	Dari-Bee	6839	312-09-001.00	1960	Eligible – Individual
241 Bullocks Pt Ave		6826	312-07-008.00	1890	Eligible – District (Riverside Square)
250 Bullocks Pt Ave	Riverside Depot	6841	312-09-002.00	Ca. 1860	Eligible – Individual
255 Bullocks Pt Ave	Jerry's Auto Repair/Jerry & Son	6837	312-08-005.00	1963	Not Eligible
257 Bullocks Pt Ave	Bullocks Point Laundromat	6836	312-08-004.00	Ca. 1994	Not Eligible
273-279 Bullocks Pt Ave	Winchester Block	7062	312-13-001.00	1880	Eligible – Individual
285-289 Bullocks Pt Ave		7226	312-13-013.00	1850	Not Eligible
290-292 Bullocks Pt Ave		7039	312-12-019.00	Ca. 1930	Not Eligible
295 Bullocks Pt Ave/15 Oak Ave	Riverside Congregational Church	7438	312-23-001.00	1960	Eligible – District (Riverside Square)
329 Bullocks Pt Ave	Riverside World War I Memorial	8220	312-52-007.00	Ca. 1920	Not Eligible
329 Bullocks Pt Ave	East Providence Fire Station No. 2	8220	312-52-007.00	1974	Not Eligible- Age
332 Bullocks Pt Ave	Burke Block	7038	312-12-018.00	Ca. 1910	Eligible – Individual
376 Bullocks Pt Ave	Lee's Restaurant and Lounge	7051	312-12-029.20	Ca. 1950	Not Eligible
27 Burnside Ave	St. Mark's Episcopal Church Rectory	15761	312-11-002.00-2	1900	Not Eligible
10 Lincoln Ave	Old Post Office	7063	312-13-002.00	1920	Eligible – Individual
19 Maple Ave	Lyric/Odeon/Gilbert Stuart Theater	7073	312-13-011.00	1940	Not Eligible
24 Monroe Ave	Lincoln Bar	6838	312-08-006.00	1940	Not Eligible
3708 Pawtucket Ave	US Post Office	6845	312-10-001.00	1946	Eligible – District (Riverside Square)
3734 Pawtucket Ave	Riverside Square Building			Ca. 1955	Eligible – District (Riverside Square)
3736 Pawtucket Ave	Rhodes Pizza	6858	312-11-001.00	Ca. 1890	Not Eligible
9 Turner Ave	Narragansett Engine Co. 2	7033	312-12-014.00	1880	Not Eligible
10 Turner Ave	St. Mark's Episcopal Church	6859	312-11-002.00	1965	Eligible – Individual
18 Turner Ave	St. Andrews Masonic Lodge	6864	312-11-007.00	1909	Eligible – Individual
49 Turner Ave	St. Brendan's Church	10968	412-04-005.00	1970	Eligible – Individual; Eligible – District (St. Brendan's Parish Complex, Riverside Square)
55 Turner Ave	St. Brendan's School	10968	412-04-005.00	1956	Eligible – District (St. Brendan's Parish Complex, Riverside Square)
60 Turner Ave	St. Brendan's Rectory	10776	412-01-002.00	1965	Eligible – District (St. Brendan's Parish Complex, Riverside Square)
70 Turner Ave	St. Brendan's Convent	10777	412-01-003.00	1957	Eligible – District (St. Brendan's Parish Complex, Riverside Square)
0 Zz Railroad Site	Riverside World War II Memorial	7037	312-12-017.00-2	1950	Not Eligible

Figure 3.11 List of Surveyed Properties and Recommendations for National Register Eligibility



Council on Historic Preservation who administers the regulatory review of federal projects that may have the potential to affect historic resources. The National Historic Preservation Act created certified local governments (“CLG”) that are eligible for grants through the National Parks Service and through the state SHPO’s office. CLG’s have specific requirements that must be met to qualify. East Providence is a CLG as of 2011.

The Federal Historic Tax Credit is an incentive based program that encourages private project investment into historic properties. The tax credit is given to income producing properties only, private homes do not qualify. The credit is 20% of eligible improvement expenses.

Housing and Community Development Act of 1974

The primary purpose of this program is to provide states with funding to expand the quantity and quality of community services, conserve and expand the nation’s housing stock, improve the health and safety of communities, and preserve and restore historic resources for their cultural and architectural value. This act also consolidates various forms of funding and aid to the states to standardize and simplify various procedures. This statute is primarily concerned with low to moderate income individuals, who those earn at or below 80% of the local median income.

According to the federal regulations, the State of Rhode Island manages the community development program and its community development block grants for those municipalities that do not directly receive funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Some cities, including East Providence, operate the program independently of state efforts. The program, aimed at housing, economic development, and neighborhood revitalization, must still meet the national objective to benefit low and moderate income individuals. This is usually accomplished by either the state distributing funds to local governments or the communities who operate independently may

distribute funds to non-profits and other entities that undertake eligible activities.

Historic Residence Tax Relief Act

This act empowers cities and towns to establish their own historic preservation tax credits that reduce the property tax by 20% for five years after the completion of a historic rehabilitation is certified by the RI Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission. In order to qualify for the tax credit, the historic property is either listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places or subject to regulation by a local historic district commission.

Cities are required to establish a minimum dollar amount spent on rehabilitation to make an applicant qualify for their respective credit. Additionally, the property owner must also grant a restrictive covenant to the Rhode Island Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission, agreeing that the property shall be maintained to preserve the use and historic character of the property for the period of the tax abatement.

Property Tax Relief Act

This act was created to provide tax credits and refunds to elderly and/or disabled persons who own or rent their homes. Only one person from a household who is over 65 years of age or is receiving social security benefits, or both, may be eligible to receive a small credit on their Rhode Island income taxes for the year they lived in their Rhode Island residence, or based on the previous year they rented the property to tenants. These tax credits are apportioned from the general state treasury. While this credit does not necessarily involve historic preservation, this credit may be of importance to the Riverside community and its residents.

Historic Homeownership Assistance Act

This statute intends to provide income tax credits for the maintenance or rehabilitation of historic residences. This tax credit is eligible to any individual who lives in a historic residence, makes certain



maintenance or rehabilitation to their residence, and complies with the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission’s standards and guidance.

“Historic residence” is any property not already benefiting from tax credits because of their status as an income producing property, and is either listed individually on the State Register of Historic Places (SRHP), located in a district listed on the SRHP or designated by the city and certified by the Rhode Island State Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission as contributing to that district’s character, or designated by a city or town as an individual structure subject to regulation by a historic district commission.

Any taxpayer who files a state income tax return and owns a historic residence may claim an income tax credit of up to 20% of the certified maintenance or rehabilitation costs. Before the property owner begins any work on the property, the property owner applies to the RIHPHC, who will then regularly inspect the residence to ensure that the owner complies with guidelines established by the RIHPHC. These tax credits are apportioned from the general state treasury.

Historic Preservation Tax Credits Act 2013

This statute creates an economic incentive for restoring, redeveloping, or reusing historic buildings for some income producing use. The building must be listed on, or placed in a district listed in the National or State Register of Historic Places. If the building owner makes certain improvements compliant with the Secretary of Interior’s Standards and meets certain reporting requirements, they are eligible to receive at least a 20% tax credit on certain expenditures related to the rehabilitation of the building. The credits can be used towards the taxes owed by the building owner on the year they made the renovations, and can be applied to future taxes owed if there are any credits remaining after application.

3.4 Survey of Codes and Regulations

State Rehabilitation Building and Fire Code for Existing Structures

This statewide code is intended to encourage the extended use and reuse of existing buildings by streamlining permitting processes. It attempts to accomplish this by not requiring buildings go through the full and individualized Building Code, Mechanical Code, Plumbing Code, Rhode Island Fire Safety Code, Rhode Island Fire Prevention Code, Electric Code, Boiler Safety Code, Energy Code, Elevator Code, or Accessibility Code compliance schemes. It should be noted that one, two, and three family dwellings are not covered by the rehabilitation code.

This code mandates that if a complex rehabilitation project is underway and requires multiple permitting processes and code compliance schemes, representatives from agencies dealing with the Building, Mechanical, Plumbing, Electrical, Rhode Island Fire Safety, Rhode Island Fire Prevention, Boiler Safety, Energy, Elevator, Accessibility, and State and Local Historic Preservation Codes, respectively, must meet with the permit applicant at the applicant’s request. If the total cost of the project exceeds \$500,000, the officials shall meet onsite if so requested by the property owner. The purpose of this meeting is for the permit applicant to present the intentions of the planned work to the responsible code officials so they may together determine the scope and specific requirements to be applied to the project. If the project is for the repair, renovation, or rehabilitation of a building and a construction permit application has not been submitted, this preliminary hearing may be granted at the discretion of the certified building official and the certified fire marshal.

When the building to be renovated is a historical building included on the National or State Registers of Historic Places, the building owner is required to contact the Rhode Island Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission to verify that the building is indeed historic, and required to comply with guidelines set by the commission.



Housing and Community Development Act of 1974

The Community Development Block Grant is administered by the Community Development Division, part of the city's Planning and Economic Development Department. The block grant is annually awarded to the City of East Providence by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Among various things, the grants are used to help low and moderate income families rehabilitate their homes for the safety and health of the residents and environment.

Mixed Use Overlay Districts

Mixed use overlay districts intend to lessen restrictions by allowing the mixed use of single- and multi-family residential, commercial, and limited manufacturing buildings instead of strictly mandating a single use for an area. The amendment explains that the mixed use of single- and multi-family residential and commercial buildings, along with dedicated improvements to pedestrian walkways, are hallmarks of a vibrant main street. Additionally, the overlay districts are intended to incentivize growth, and expand commerce and residential density. See Appendix for a map of Riverside's Mixed Use Overlay District.

3.5 Example Design Guidelines

The Kettle Point Design District architectural and building guidelines apply to the most northern part of Riverside. These design guidelines articulate specific features required for different buildings and streetscape features, rather than suggesting a single or multiple styles of architecture.



Figure 3.12 Kettle Point Masterplan.

All buildings and their design elements must be “well proportioned and unified” to the other surrounding buildings to maintain “an overall architectural continuity” of the area. Large unarticulated boxes are prohibited and all building elevations must be articulated with window openings; the primary facade of a building must have a 10% minimum window ratio.

The guidelines also prohibit certain features from the building's primary elevation, including trash dumpsters, utility meters, bulkheads, ventilation louvers, animated and/or LED signage, drive-up ATMs, and garage doors or loading docks.

Building exteriors are required to be made with “durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close.” Vinyl, aluminum, and EIFS siding are prohibited. Wooden shingles, clapboards, cement siding, stucco, brick, stone, rubble, standing-seam metal, and synthetic materials for trim and cornices are permitted but should be considered within the context of abutting structures and character.

Commercial buildings may extend to the front property line, with setbacks for entries and café terraces permitted. Residential buildings are required to have windows and doors that face the street, and are prohibited from having garage doors from their primary building elevation.

3.6 Historic Properties on the National Register of Historic Places

There are several historic properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the area around Riverside or related to its history as a resort community.

Bicknell-Armington Lightning Splitter House

Located at 3591 Pawtucket Avenue the house is architecturally significant as a well preserved example of an idiosyncratic dwelling type. Only half a dozen narrow houses were built with unusually

steep gabled roofs in Providence and surrounding towns during the mid-nineteenth century. These dwellings are important relics of a defunct building practice with strong ties to local folk-culture. The house was built between 1827 and 1850.

Rose Land Park Plat Historic District

Located west of Willet Avenue to the northeast of Little Neck Cemetery, this historic district is locally significant for representing a period of rapid development of Riverside as a commuter suburb during the early to mid twentieth century, as well as for having fine examples of English Cottage, Cape Cod, and Colonial Revival architectural styles popular during this period. The plat was originally recorded in 1928 and most houses within the district were constructed in the ensuing decade.

Elm Tree Plat Historic District

Located south of Willett Avenue to the northeast of Little Neck Cemetery, this historic district is locally significant for representing a period of rapid development of Riverside as a commuter suburb during the early to mid 20th century, as well as for having examples of the bungalow architectural type. The plat was originally recorded in 1924 and most houses within the district were constructed in the ensuing decade.

Whitcomb Farm

Located at 36 Willett Avenue, the farm was built between 1780 and 1805 and is locally significant as a long-standing architectural landmark with a unique, clapboard-sheathed brick construction that has been associated with various important individuals including a co-owner of Providence Hotel, the leader of the Providence Band and Orchestra, and a prominent East Providence realtor and developer.

District 6 Schoolhouse

Located at 347 Willett Avenue, the District 6 Schoolhouse is architecturally and historically significant as the earliest school building in East Providence to survive in recognizable form, and is

the only extant local example of a once common structural type: the double-entry one-room schoolhouse. The school was built between 1864 and 1874.

Crescent Park Carousel

Located along southern Bullocks Point Avenue, the Crescent Park Carousel was built by Charles I.D. Loeff, a German immigrant and furniture-maker by trade, circa 1895, and became a showpiece for his carousel manufacturing business located at Crescent Park. The carousel has a wide variety of figures that Loeff's patrons could purchase and is a veritable museum of his work. The carousel is listed as a National Historic Landmark for its national significance in the history of recreation, and recognized by the state of Rhode Island as a jewel of American folk art.

Little Neck Cemetery

Located off of Read Street, Little Neck Cemetery is historically and culturally significant because it is the final resting place of many individuals who have played prominent roles in the history of East Providence. Among those buried at Little Neck Cemetery are John Brown Jr. (d. 1662), son of the man who purchased Wampanoisset from the Wampanoag Indians, and Elizabeth Tilley Howland (d. 1687), an original Mayflower passenger. The cemetery is also aesthetically significant as it exhibits numerous well preserved gravestones representing practically every aspect of American funerary art from the 7th century to the present.

Pomham Rocks Light Station

Located approximately 200 yards off mainland East Providence, the Light Station is one of the oldest lighthouses situated on Narragansett Bay and has served functionally and as a picturesque landmark for the East Providence community. The light and the keeper's quarters are combined in a single masonry structure of handsome proportions and High Victorian design. The light station was built in 1871.





Figure 3.13 Lamppost by Looff Carousel.



Figure 3.15 Looff Carousel Present Day.



Figure 3.16 Little Neck Cemetery.



Figure 3.14 Riverside Businessman's Association Clock c. 1950.



Figure 3.17 Pomham Rocks Light Station.



Figure 3.18 Quantum Association Bakehouse.





Figure 3.19 Riverside Passenger Depot, Early 1900's.



Figure 3.22 Riverside Passenger Depot, now Borealis Coffee Company.



Figure 3.20 Riverside Post Office. c.1970.



Figure 3.23 Old Riverside Post Office, Present Day.



Figure 3.21 Saint Brendan's Church, 1906.



Figure 3.24 Saint Brendan's Church, Present Day.

Squantum Association

Located at 947 Veterans Memorial Parkway, this collection of six buildings, most prominently the clubhouse, served as the most prestigious of East Providence's shore dinner halls during Riverside's

resort era in addition to a social club for the elite. The Squantum Association has statewide significance as a monument to the social life and customs of Providence in the late 19th and 20th centuries, as a progenitor of the Rhode Island clam bake, and for the aesthetic value of its architecture



and cultural landscape. The club was founded in 1870 and the various structures were erected in the following years.

3.7 Neighborhood Preservation Model

In talking to residents of Riverside, it was clear that they valued historic preservation and appreciated rehabilitation work that was visible in their neighborhood, namely at the Riverside passenger depot, now Borealis Coffee. Many of these same residents, however, considered the cost and effort of undertaking rehabilitation on their own properties to be prohibitive. With much of the Riverside community being residential houses, the ability for the neighborhood to recapture its historic character is substantially diminished without non-commercial preservation activity. However, some residents have already taken it upon themselves to rehabilitate their homes to fit Riverside’s historic character and could provide neighbors with a template for future success. One of these residents, Melissa Linhares Spurr, shared her experiences with us.

Mrs. Spurr and her husband Jeremy bought a bungalow in the Elm Tree Plat Historic District east of Riverside Square, and listed it on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016. The historic materials of the bungalow were obscured by vinyl siding and the porch, an important feature of bungalow architecture, had been enclosed. The new owners quickly went to work on the house, both inside and out, to reveal the house’s historic character. On the exterior, removal of the vinyl began to reveal still intact cedar shingles although painted in a lime-green color. The cladding presented an important aspect of the house’s historic materials. On the porch, the Spurrs found much of the millwork intact. These relatively modest changes, along with thoughtful landscaping, transformed the house into one that truly conveyed the character of its historic neighborhood.



Figure 3.25 Elinora House Rehabilitation Project, Before.



Figure 3.26 Elinora House Rehabilitation Project, Vinyl Removal.



Figure 3.27 Elinora House Rehabilitation Project, After.



The impact on the neighborhood of this single rehabilitation project was evident. According to Mrs. Spurr, “[t]hat summer, three of our neighbors decided to also open their porches. . . . This is proof that this kind of investment is noticed, encourages others, and perpetuates.” Riverside, like Ms. Spurr’s bungalow, has a unique and vibrant history that is waiting to be uncovered. With some inspiration from neighbors and financial assistance, the residents and homeowners of Riverside can also help recapture the character of this historic community.

3.8 Recommendations

Riverside has a fascinating and unique history that is currently not being recognized or utilized fully. While many historic buildings remain in and around Riverside, the historic character of the village is not evident due to the use of non-historic materials that cover these resources. Unfortunately, there is a gap between the current condition of the built environment and the level of historic “integrity” that is necessary for the formal recognition of historically significant resources on the State or National Registers of Historic Places. Most funding streams and incentives related to historic preservation require a prerequisite of recognition.

East Providence has taken major steps in their policies related to historic preservation, including enacting a historic preservation ordinance, being recognized as a Certified Local Government by the National Park Service, and working to establish national register and local historic districts. The following recommendations support these historic preservation policies and further private efforts for historic preservation in Riverside.

1. Investigate and nominate properties potentially eligible for the national register.

The City of East Providence has been working since the 1970’s to identify historic properties that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Most of these efforts have been

concentrated in other areas of East Providence and have not focused on Riverside. Additionally, since the last comprehensive survey fifty years ago, many properties may have “aged in” past the fifty-year window required to be considered historic.

2. Nominate the Riverside Passenger Depot to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Riverside Passenger Depot is the most likely candidate for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places for local significance. The depot has a key place in the historical development of Riverside through allowing cheap and convenient transportation for the village’s use as a recreation area, setting the stage for the growth of Riverside’s hotels and resorts. It also represents an era in the development of Rhode Island’s rail system. Both of these considerations may qualify the depot for listing under Criterion A for association with significant events. The depot also represents a type of building, the small rail depot, that was once widespread but is now relatively rare, potentially making it eligible under Criterion C for embodying the distinct characteristics of this type of construction. The restoration already undertaken has helped restore the historical integrity of the structure despite it being overlooked in past survey efforts.

3. Fully operationalize the East Providence Historic Preservation Ordinance.

East Providence passed their local historic preservation ordinance in 2009, using it to create a local historic district in Rumford and a historic district commission to address issues in historic preservation. Most local historic districts carry substantive powers to review the design of buildings within the district including alterations, demolition, and new construction. Currently, the historic district commission serves only as an advisory body. The city council can vote to fully enact the design review of the Rumford Historic District, which could in turn revitalize the commission and lead to the creation of additional local historic districts.



4. Fully staff the existing Historic District Commission, Crescent Park Commission, and Ancient Little Neck Cemetery Commission.

The historic district commission has one member out of seven positions currently filled and cannot conduct business without the nomination of at least two more members. The Ancient Little Neck Cemetery Commission currently has no members. The Crescent Park Carousel Commission has four active members out of 20. Filling these vacant positions can be done by nominating credentialed community members to these commissions.

5. Investigate the feasibility of city ordinances and policies to provide funding to restore the historic integrity of houses and set the stage for further preservation activities.

Many of the residents in Riverside value historic preservation and understand its potential benefits. There is a gap, however, in resident’s ability to fund rehabilitation projects to remove non-historic materials like vinyl siding and restore the historic character of their neighborhood. To meet this gap, the City of East Providence could create incentive programs to fund private historic preservation activities. The city may work within current funding programs such as the Certified Local Government program and Community Development Block Grants or enact city ordinances to take advantage of state enabling laws for the Historic Residence Tax Relief, Property Tax Relief Act, or the Historic Homeownership Assistance Act.

6. Restore the Crescent Park Carousel to operational status.

The Crescent Park Carousel is currently out of operation. While there are ongoing efforts to get the carousel up and running, once completed, the city should plan events to reintroduce the carousel as an active attraction in Riverside.

7. Create design guidelines focused on historic character in the community.

Investigating development of design guidelines for new and existing commercial properties to guide

rehabilitation and improve the historic appearance of the commercial district. Guidelines should inform scale, form, arrangement and finished materials. Eligible and contributing buildings could be used as bases for design guidelines for new construction and development.

8. Develop a historic interpretive marker program.

Markers may include historic photographs, to identify and educate the public about Riverside’s historic buildings and monuments.



Chapter 4: Economic Development

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The following chapter documents the progress of economic development in Riverside. The chapter describes the research and data collection alongside key findings. The contents include a statistical analysis of economic activity, a survey of existing retail types, a survey of vacant lots and buildings, a land use investigation, and a survey of finance tools available to businesses in Riverside, along with recommendations for economic development in Riverside.

4.1 Statistical Analysis

The following data is sourced from Esri's Community Analyst software which produces data reports and infographics to demonstrate data trends. Esri's data is sourced from: American Community Survey (ACS), Current Population Survey, Esri, GfK MRI, Data Axle, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, and Current Employment Statistics programs. The vintage of the data is 2015-2019, 2021, 2022, and 2026. US Census Tracts



Figure 4.1 Map of Businesses in the Square.

in this study include 106, 107.01, 107.02. These census tracts include 12 block groups.

Population trends are useful for analyzing and predicting cause and effect of population change. In the sense of population decline, it is important for a city to keep a focus on the responsive decline of investment and an incline in abandonment. An area that is expected to experience a population incline would benefit from analyzing the labor force and housing availability.

An increase or decline in population indicates the housing demands of the community. In general, providing more housing opportunities for a younger population of residents, can offset the rising costs which are often associated with an older population of residents. Furthermore, a growth of residents means more people to share the costs of government services and capital investments, rather than leaving these costs shared among a smaller number of residents over time.

The Marketing Profile (Figure 4.2) breaks down annual household spending by a number of categories such as travel or transportation, and further breaks down these categories by specific items such as apparel, bicycles, books, etc. It also shows spending in relation to eating out and measures the family restaurants market potential. Over 1,200 adults spend \$50 to \$100 a month at family style restaurants. Gasoline, travel, house upkeep, pet care, and alcohol are the largest categories of annual household spending in Riverside, whereas computers and electronics is the smallest amount.

The Transportation to Work infographic (Figure 4.3) shows that 64% of Riverside residents work in the same county in which they live, compared to 22% of Riverside residents who travel out of the county but still work in Rhode Island, and 15% of Riverside residents who travel outside of Rhode Island to work. The more people working within

the county, the more likely they are to support the local businesses and limit their carbon footprint. These statistics also show traveling far distances for work is less of a trend for Riverside residents with the majority of residents commuting less than 34 minutes for work.

Additionally, the most frequent form of commuting includes 84% of people driving alone to work while the least frequent form includes no people bicycling to work and only 0.5% walking to work. Keeping in mind that the bike path is an asset to the local community, and the lack of people commuting to work via bike or walking does not reflect the accessibility the bike path provides. Additionally, only 2.4% of employed residents take public transit, while 9.2% carpool and 4% work from home. Although the Covid pandemic may have altered data, these statistics still suggest that

alternative modes of transportation such as public transportation, walking or biking the bike path, or even carpooling are not as convenient as driving alone to work.

The Employment Overview infographic (Figure 4.4) shows Riverside has 254 total businesses that employ 2,183 total people. This information gives a sense of the low employment in Riverside. Regarding the educational attainment of Riverside residents, 32% have a college degree, 29% have attended some college, and 27% have a high school diploma. The remaining 7% of Riverside residents have no high school diploma. The employment type in Riverside consists of 68.7% white collar employees (business, financial, legal, education, etc.), 18.3% blue collar employees (farming, construction, production, and transportation, etc.), and 13% services employees (healthcare, food

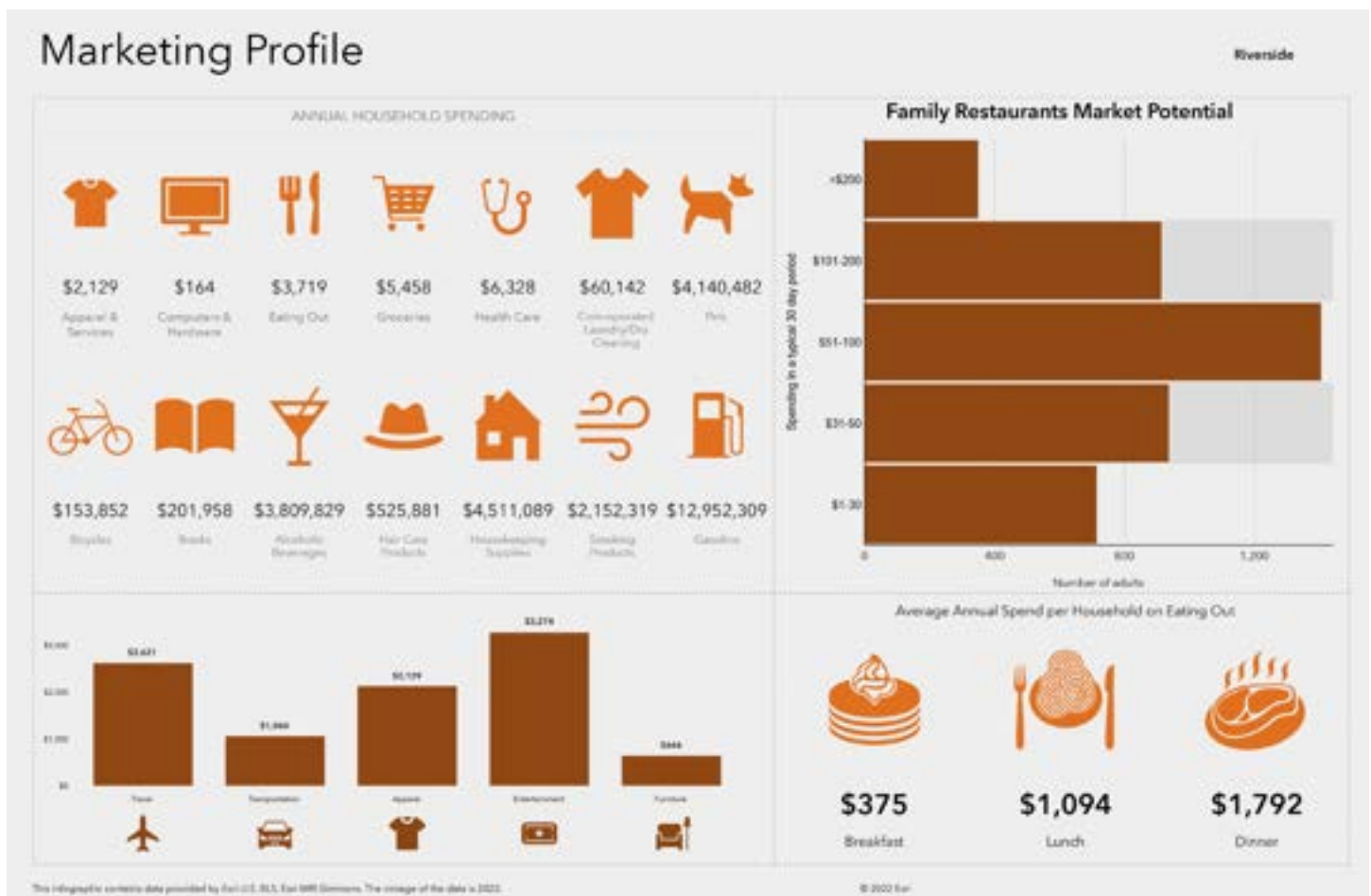


Figure 4.2 Esri Marketing Profile.



preparation, personal care, etc). Of the commuter population, 14% spend more than seven hours commuting to and from work per week.

The Community Profile infographic (Figure 4.5) shows details of Riverside's population, home ownership, and age of homes in Riverside. Riverside's population has been on a decline since 2020 and is currently predicted to decline to under 12,500 residents by 2027. The majority of residents at 60% are between ages 18- 64 with the median age of residents being 47.5. By generation, Baby Boomers (ages 58- 76) are the largest percentage of resident at 27%.

In regards to exercise, 41% of adults exercise at home while 15.9% exercise at a club. This indicates that exercising at home for Riverside residents is more convenient than traveling outside of the home to exercise.

The majority of residents own their homes rather than rent at 75.4%. In studying the housing trends of Riverside, the most typical home value in the square is between \$200,000 and \$249,999, as represented in Figure 4.6. The data also shows the majority of Riverside has a higher home owner occupancy rate compared to the entire Providence County.

4.2 Existing Retail Types

Data collection for existing retail types in Riverside Square started with the 2017 Riverside Square Market Analysis which provided a list of businesses. To provide an accurate updated list of businesses, direct observation was used to identify new or closed businesses.

A complete list of businesses in Riverside Square (Figure 4.7 & 4.8) were organized by religious,

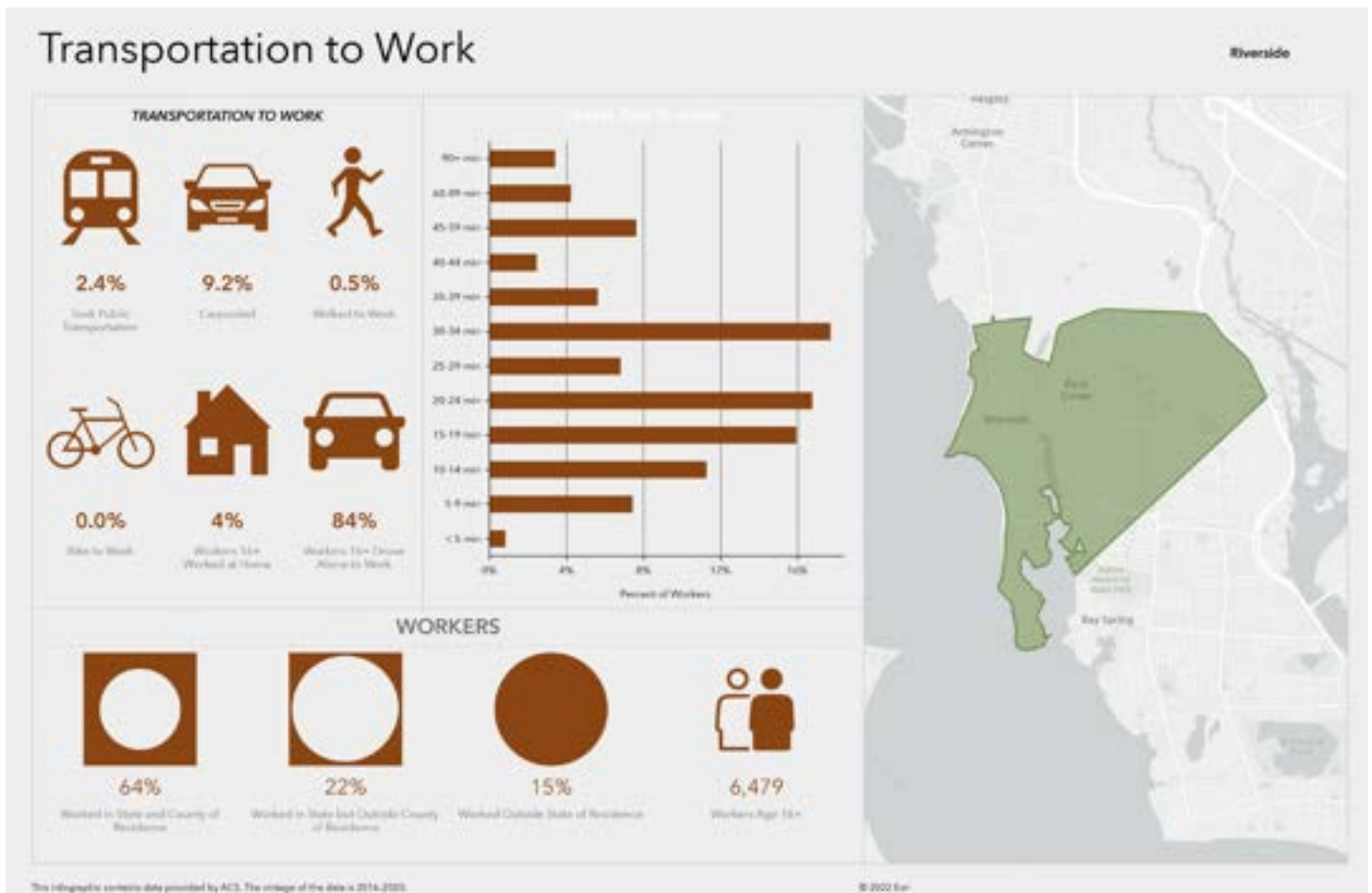


Figure 4.3 Transportation to Work.



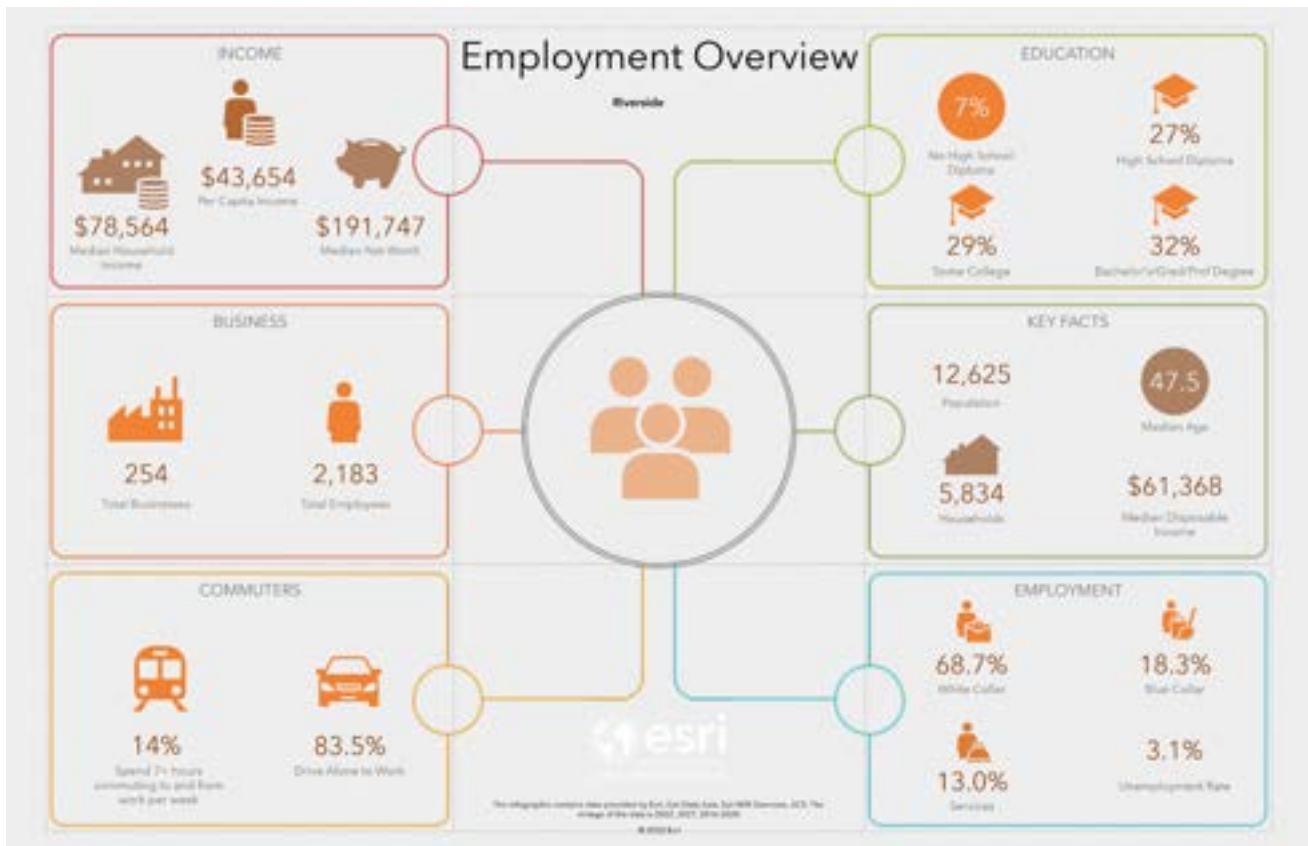


Figure 4.4 Employment Overview.

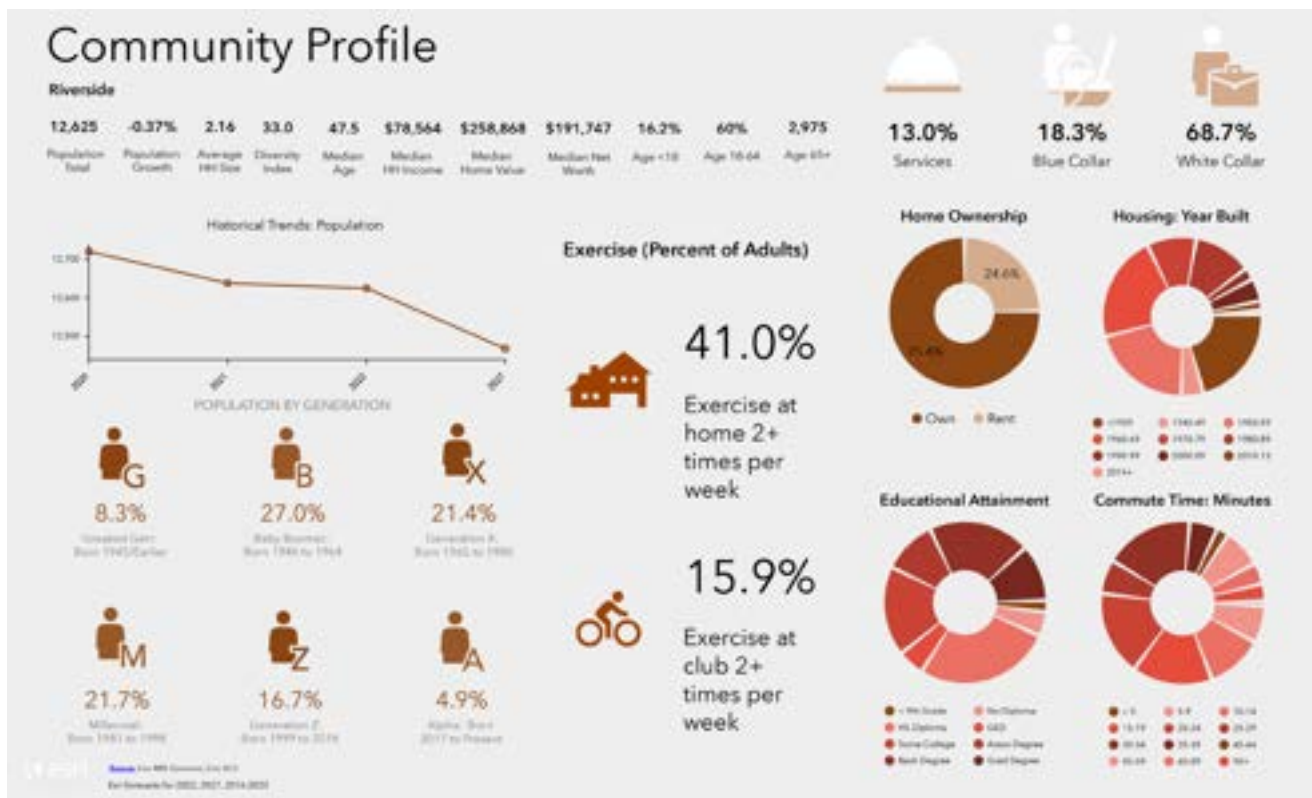


Figure 4.5 Community Profile.



food and beverage, retail, personal service, human service, and wholesale. Under religious, any churches or religious organizations were grouped. Although community centers are not a business type precisely, they are places that congregate people in great numbers and represent a large amount of the activity in the area. Retail is a crucial part of the economic health of Riverside Square. Any business that sells items directly to consumers, ranging from consumables, entertainment, or clothing is considered retail. Personal service businesses include personal health, beauty, or other services that directly affect the human body. This includes beautician shops and medicinal services. Human service businesses could be personal service, but the category is intended to include business types that are not as easily grouped. These include daycare services and alternative therapy stores in the region. The service sector ranges from auto body shops to laundromat. Finally, wholesale refers to manufacturers, discount distributors, and non-retail sales businesses. The majority of businesses in the square consist of food and beverage establishments, personal service, and human service.

Business	Sector	Type	Street #	Address
Ali Lomazzo Beauty	Personal Service	Beauty Salon	289	Bullocks Point Ave.
Archie's Bait & Tackle	Retail	Bait Shop	292	Bullocks Point Ave.
Borealis Coffee Company	Food & Beverage	Coffee Shop	250	Bullocks Point Ave.
Bullocks Point Laundry	Service	Laundromat	257	Bullocks Point Ave.
Christ Reformed Presbyterian Church	Religious	Church	10	Turner Ave.
Dari-Bee	Food & Beverage	Ice Cream Shop	240	Bullocks Point Ave.
Fred's Service Center	Service	Oil Change Service	3730	Pawtucket Ave.
Instantron Co	Wholesale	Medical Supply Store	3712	Pawtucket Ave.
Jerry's Auto Repair	Service	Auto Repair Shop	255	Bullocks Point Ave.
Johnson Insulation Co	Wholesale	Insulation Contractor	3705	Pawtucket Ave.
May's Playstation	Human Service	Daycare	312	Bullocks Point Ave.
Mike's Auto Repair	Service	Auto Repair Shop	50R	Turner Ave.
Peaceful Purpose Healing	Personal Service	Alternative Therapy	237	Bullocks Point Ave.
Rhodes Pizza & Restaurant	Food & Beverage	Family Restaurant	3736	Pawtucket Ave.
Riverside Congregational Church	Religious	Church	15	Oak Ave.
Riverside Liquors Inc	Retail	Liquor Store	225	Bullocks Point Ave.
Riverside Market	Retail	Convenience Store	269	Bullocks Point Ave.
Riverside Optical Shop	Personal Service	Optician	205	Bullocks Point Ave.
Roman Tile & Terrazzo Co	Wholesale	Tile Contractor	3708	Pawtucket Ave.
Salty Dog Daycare	Personal Service	Dog Day Care Center	290	Bullocks Point Ave.
Santo Cristo Beauty Salon	Personal Service	Cosmetics/makeup service	320	Bullocks Point Ave.
Silvia's Hair Stylings	Personal Service	Hair Salon	241	Bullocks Point Ave.
Stevie D's Riverside Tavern	Food & Beverage	American Restaurant	24	Monroe Ave.
Tall Tumbleweed Modern + Vintage	Retail	Women's Clothing Store	279	Bullocks Point Ave.
Union Bar + Burrito	Food & Beverage	Mexican Restaurant & Bar	326	Bullocks Point Ave.

Figure 4.7 List of Riverside Square business types December 1, 2022

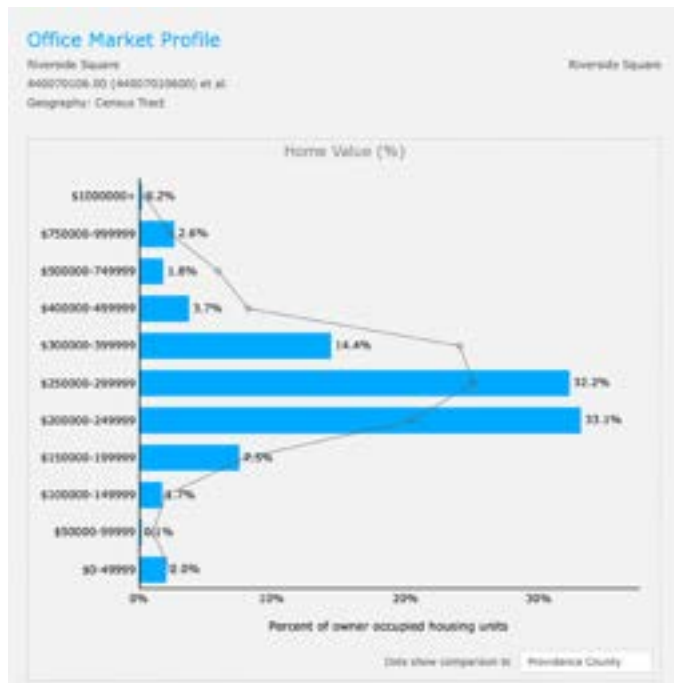


Figure 4.6 Home Value by percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Riverside, RI.

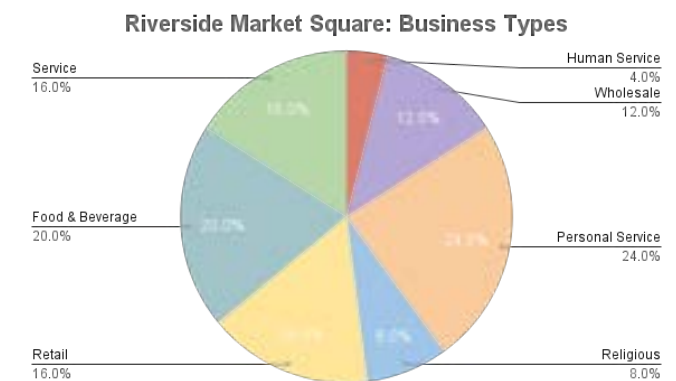


Figure 4.8 Survey of businesses conducted on December 1, 2022.



Business Types in Riverside Square



RELIGIOUS

- ① CHRIST REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
- ② RIVERSIDE CONGREG.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- ① DARI-BEE ICE CREAM
- ② BOREALIS COFFEE
- ③ LEE'S CHINESE
- ④ STEVIE D'S TAVERN
- ⑤ RHODES PIZZA
- ⑥ UNION BAR + BURRITO

RETAIL

- ① ARCHIE'S BAIT & TACKLE
- ② RIVERSIDE MARKET
- ③ RIVERSIDE LIQUOR
- ④ TALL TUMBLEWEED MODERN + VINTAGE

PERSONAL SERVICE

- ① ALI LOMAZZO'S BEAUTY
- ② MARY'S MAIDS
- ③ RIVERSIDE OPTICAL
- ④ SALTY DOG DAYCARE
- ⑤ SANTO CRISTO BEAUTY
- ⑥ SILVIA'S HAIR STYLINGS

HUMAN SERVICE

- ① MAY'S PLAYSTATION
- ② PEACEFUL PURPOSE HEALING

SERVICE

- ① BULLOCKS PT LAUNDRY
- ② FRED'S SERVICE CENTER
- ③ JERRY'S AUTO REPAIR

WHOLESALE

- ① INSTANTRON CO
- ② JOHNSON INSULATION
- ③ ROMAN TILE, TERRAZ. CO.

Figure 4.9 Map of business types in Riverside Square, December 1, 2022

Vacant Lot and Building Opportunities



Building Opportunities

a - Triangle Lot Building



b - Apiary Development



Lot Opportunities

1 - Triangle Park



2 - Concrete Lot



3 - Church Parking



Figure 4.10 Vacant lot and building opportunities within Riverside Square.



Many of the staple businesses in Riverside Square have remained open, but there has been turnover of some businesses in the last couple of years. Although some locations have had a face lift or changed hands, few businesses regularly update their locations.

Few retail services are available in Riverside Square. These include a liquor store, a bait and tackle store, a convenience store, and a recently opened women's clothing store (Figure 4.9). Riverside Liquors distributes alcoholic beverages that can be independently purchased by consumers. Archie's Bait and Tackle, described as a stable store on Riverside, sells live bait, fishing gear and similar products. Due to the square's location near the water and the popularity that brings, their products are still commonly sold. Riverside Market sells typical convenience items including lottery tickets, cigarettes, household goods, and perishables. The newly revised facade of the mixed use building at 275 to 279 Bullocks Point Avenue, and its sister building at 328 Bullocks Point Avenue are currently under development. The development company, the Apiary, is making new storefronts that could be adapted into new restaurants and retail stores. Occupying these storefront locations could result in an uptick in economic activity.

4.3 Vacant Lot Survey

The following section examines vacant properties found within and surrounding Riverside Square. These sites are opportunities for development that are being underutilized. The team conducted a survey using the ArcGIS Online software, Survey123. Two surveys were developed, vacant lot opportunities and vacant buildings. Information collected with these surveys included location, photographs, overall condition, and unique features. The goal of the survey was to document opportunities for future revitalization and facilitate increased economic activity for the community.

Observations showed there was an overall lack of vacant land and high amount of surface lots within Riverside Square and the surrounding area. The locations identified as vacant can be found in Figure 4.10, two vacant buildings and three vacant lots. The buildings available that are ready for new economic activity are 275 Bullocks Point Ave (Figure 4.10, b) and the small building on Lincoln Ave which would need renovation, but may be purposeful (a). Lot opportunities include a small grass triangular lot at the intersection of Monroe Ave and Lincoln Ave (Figure 4.10, 1), a paved lot on Monroe Ave (Figure 4.10, 2), and land used as an overflow parking lot for St. Brendan Church (Figure 4.10, 3).



Figure 4.11 Commercial Land Use in Riverside and Vicinity.



Figure 4.12 Core Commercial Area.



A local developer in Riverside and the Community Development Coordinator at the City of East Providence were also contacted to provide insight to financial tools that support business activity.

As shown in Figure 4.14, local credit unions provide a number of financial tools to support local entrepreneurs in small business training, lending, and assistance. A number of loan programs are available such as the Small Business Administration (SBA loan) that is provided by local banks to start a business; SBA connects business owners with lending partners to provide loans. Using banks as a financial tool is not always ideal as banks typically finance stabilized properties and bank notes for twenty years. It is also necessary to refinance with banks every five years, allowing banks the opportunity to opt-out if the business is not successful.

The City of East Providence offers specific programs to commercial and industrial businesses located in East Providence. Businesses in the area are eligible to apply for the City’s Commercial Loan Program and Commercial Microloan Program. These programs provide loans to business owners ranging from under \$10,000 to as much as \$99,000. This option is beneficial to businesses due to their lower risk opposed to obtaining a loan from a bank (Figure 4.15).

Local and state organizations provide a variety of services to businesses in Riverside, and offer a wide range of loan options. These are great options for businesses that want to partner with organizations with similar missions and philosophies. For instance, the Center for Women & Enterprise in Providence works with women who are interested in starting a business. These local and state organizations provide training, resources, and in some instances, extensive loans to new and existing businesses (Figure 4.16).

A few organizations based out of Rhode Island and Massachusetts were identified as having financial

Local Credit Unions	Contact Info
Banks typically finance stabilized properties; bank notes are usually 20 years, but it is typically necessary to refinance with the bank every five years	
Bank of America Corporation	3490 Pawtucket Ave, Riverside, RI 02915 http://www.bankofamerica.com/
Navigant Credit Union	Phone: 1-401-233-4788 3 Crescent View Ave, Riverside, RI 02915 https://www.navigantcu.org/
Webster Bank	Phone: 1-401-433-3433 741 Willet Ave, Riverside, RI 02915 https://public.websteronline.com/location/741-willet-ave-ri-riverside-ri?utm_source=google&utm_medium=Text
The above "Entrepreneurial Assistance and Business Support" recommendations were extracted from the Riverside Square Market Analysis	
Harbor One Bank	Phone: (401) 330-1900 2830 Pawtucket Ave, East Providence, RI 02915 https://www.harborone.com/home
Banks could be a resource in supporting local entrepreneurs in Riverside Square, providing small business training, lending, and assistance	

Figure 4.14 Table of Local Credit Unions.

East Providence Financing Programs	Contact Info	Description
East Providence Commercial Loan Program	Phone: (401) 435-7531 ext. 11153 11153 City Hall - 2nd Floor 145 Taunton Avenue East Providence, RI 02914 https://www.eastprovidencebusiness.com/commercial-loan-program	Loans range from \$10,000 to \$99,000 to qualified firms to allow them to locate, expand and/or develop business operations in the city; loans specified for manufacturing, processing, research and development and other commercial development activities
City of East Providence Commercial Microloan Program	Phone: (401) 435-7531 ext. 11153 11153 City Hall - 2nd Floor 145 Taunton Avenue East Providence, RI 02914 https://www.eastprovidencebusiness.com/commercial-microloan-program	Provides loans of \$10,000 or less for small businesses in East Providence with ten or fewer employees with the intent to start or expand a business
Storefront Improvement Program	mspur@eastprovidenceri.gov East Providence City Hall Office of Planning 145 Taunton Avenue East Providence, Rhode Island 02914	Funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Eligible commercial property owners and tenants can receive a grant up to \$40,000 for eligible storefront improvements.

Figure 4.15 East Providence Financing Programs.

Local/State Organizations	Contact Info	Description
Commerce Rhode Island Small Business Loan Fund	Phone: (401) 278-9100 315 Iron Horse Way Suite 101 Providence, RI 02908 https://commerce-ri.com/financing/	SBLF provides up to \$500,000 for working capital to existing manufacturing, processing, and selected service businesses
Rhode Island Community Foundation/The Champlin Foundation (in accordance with the City of East Providence)	Rhode Island Foundation Phone: (401) 274-6564 1 Union Station, Providence, RI 02903 https://rifoundation.org The Champlin Foundation Phone: (401) 544-9200 2000 Chapel View Blvd, Cranston, RI 02920 https://thechamplinfoundation.org	Provides grants to nonprofit projects with the intent to build stronger communities through social and educational benefit
Center for Women & Enterprise in Providence	Phone: 401 277-8800 Fax: 401 277-1122 132 George M. Cohan Blvd., 2nd floor Providence, RI 02903 www.cwefri.org	"The Center for Women and Enterprise provides training and assistance to women who are thinking about starting a business"
Rhode Island Small Business Development Center	University of Rhode Island Phone: (401) 874-7232 https://srll.uri.edu/sbdc/	"The Rhode Island Small Business Development Centers is affiliated with the University of Rhode Island, and provides training and assistance to existing small businesses and aspiring business people through the state"
Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island	Phone: 401-655-1050 Fax: 401 655-1064 1300 Highland Corporate Drive Cumberland, Rhode Island 02864 www.edf-ri.com	"The Economic Development Foundation of Rhode Island can be a valuable resource and partner when undertaking a physical new or redevelopment project for commercial or mixed-use purposes"

Figure 4.16 Table of Local/State Organizations.



tools available to provide loans and educational assistance for entrepreneurs starting a business, in addition to new or redevelopment projects for commercial or mixed-use purposes. The Social Enterprise Greenhouse works with businesses that have a mission of social advancement, such as supporting education of community youth. ACCION

USA New England and the Southeastern Economic Development Corporation both provide small micro-loans along with larger loans allowing for a range of options to small businesses (Figure 4.17).

There are also a variety of National Associations for Independent Businesses that exist (Figure 4.18). These independent associations each specialize in types of products from books to specialty toys. These are ideal options for business owners looking for a more personalized program with specific knowledge in their field of expertise.

At the federal level, a few options exist to provide business owners with support in existing businesses and start ups. Interise is a non-profit organization available to provide educational support to existing business owners, such as participating in an MBA program. These financial tools at the federal level may have a wider range of resources available and more funds to provide than a financial tool at the local level, but at the same time may not provide as personal of an experience (Figure 4.19).

Regional Organization	Contact Info	Description
ACCION USA New England	Phone: (617) 616-1549 56 Roland St. Suite 305 Boston, MA 02129 www.acionusa.org	"Accion USA is the pioneer in micro-lending providing loans from \$200 up to \$50,000 to all types of small businesses"
Southeastern Economic Development Corporation	Phone: 508-822-1020 Fax: 508-880-7885 Email: info@seedcorp.com 80 Dean Street Taunton, MA 02786 www.seedcorp.com	"The Southeastern Economic Development Corporation, or SEED Corp., based in Taunton provides SBA 504 lending in Rhode Island, as well as small business assistance, often partnering with local lenders. In addition, SEED provides micro-loans for entrepreneurs and small business training to their borrowers"
The above "Entrepreneurial Assistance and Business Support" recommendations were extracted from the Riverside Square Market Analysis		
Social Enterprise Greenhouse	Phone: (401)-272-2558 10 David Square Providence, RI 02903 http://thegreenhouse.org/	"The Social Enterprise Greenhouse, based in Providence, is a network and center supporting social innovation, entrepreneurs and enterprises to thrive. The Social Enterprise Greenhouse helps people and businesses move from idea to execution to scale including incubation, acceleration, later stage strategy and financial services, and below market rate loan funding"

Figure 4.17 Regional Organizations.

National Associations for Independent Businesses	Contact Info	Description
American Booksellers Association	Phone: 800-637-0037 Headquarters: White Plains, NY https://www.bookweb.org/about-aba	"ABA provides education, information dissemination, business products, and services; creates relevant programs; and engages in public policy, industry, and local first advocacy"
American Independent Business Alliance	Phone: 513-291-2494 Headquarters: Montana https://amiba.net	"Non-profit organization that represents the interests of local independent businesses, helps communities develop strong local economies through nurturing local entrepreneurs, and promotes citizen engagement in local economic development"
American Specialty Toy Retailers' Association	Phone: (312) 222-0984 1 E Erie Street, Suite 525, PMB 4624, Chicago, IL 60611 https://www.astratoy.org	Non-profit association that provides education, networking, product sourcing and discounts, and consumer public relations to grow the specialty toy industry"
The Business Alliance for Local Living Economies	55 Harrison Street, Suite 300 Oakland, CA 94607 United States https://community-wealth.org/content/business-alliance-local-living-economies	"BALLE business networks in large cities, small towns, rural areas, and regions of high unemployment have increased their communities' health and economic vitality through a focus on green jobs, sustainable industries, investing locally, and buying local first"
Council of Independent Restaurants of America	Email: info@saverestaurants.com https://www.saverestaurants.com/mission/	"The IRC's purpose is to build a sustainable future for independent restaurateurs, their employees, and the communities they support"
Independent Community Banks of America	Phone: 202-659-8111 Toll Free: 866-843-4222 1615 L Street, NW Suite 900 Washington, DC 20036 https://www.icba.org	"The Independent Community Bankers of America is the primary trade group for small U.S. banks. It represents approximately 5,000 small and mid-sized financial institutions that are commonly known as "community banks."
National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO)	Phone: +1 202 962 0054 Email: nato@natodc.com Headquarters: 1705 N Street, NW Washington, DC 20036 https://www.natonline.org	"NATO helps exhibition influence federal policy-making and work with movie distributors on all areas of mutual concern, from new technologies to legislation, marketing, and First Amendment issues"
National Community Pharmacists' Association	Phone: 703-683-8200 Fax: 703-683-3619 100 Darnfield Road Alexandria, VA 22314 https://ncpa.org	"The National Community Pharmacists Association is the voice for independent pharmacy, representing 21,000 pharmacies and employing more than 250,000 individuals nationwide"
National Cooperative Business Association	Phone: 240-608-6167 1775 I Street NW, 8th Floor Washington, DC 20006 https://ncbausa.coop/about-us/mission-and-values/	"Mission is to develop, advance and protect cooperative enterprise"
National Grocers' Association	Phone: (202) 938-2570 601 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, DC 20004 https://www.nationalgrocers.org	"NGA works to ensure ongoing economic advancement and prosperity for America's independent community and remains the only trade association exclusively focused on representing the independent sector of the food industry"
The National Business Incubator Association	Phone: 215-593-3333 Email: rbendis@bendisig.com 3131 Walnut St. Apt 601 Philadelphia, PA 19104 http://www.innovationamerica.us/contact	"The mission of NBIA is to be a clearinghouse for information on incubator management and development issues and on tools for assisting start-up and fledging firms"

Figure 4.18 National Associations for Independent Businesses.

Federal Organization	Contact Info	Description
Interise	Phone: 617-260-6300 Fax: 617-208-2982 197 Portland St., 2nd Floor Boston, MA 02114 www.interise.org	Interise, a nonprofit training, and support program for existing businesses, offers a free MBA program that helps strengthen existing business enterprises. Interise, founded in New England, is now a nationally acclaimed program helping existing businesses grow.
The above "Entrepreneurial Assistance and Business Support" recommendations were extracted from the Riverside Square Market Analysis		
Economic Development Association (EDA)	https://eda.sba.gov/programs/eda-er/	"The programs aim to assist communities in their efforts to build back better by accelerating the economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and building local economies that will be resilient to future economic shocks"
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	East Providence Community Development Division: Phone: 401-435-7936 148 Taunton Ave. East Providence, RI 02914 https://economydevelopment.gov/ri/ri-eda-community-development-block-grants-cdbg/ https://hud.gov/cdbg/	"Funding categories include economic development, public facilities, affordable housing, and public services"
Small Business Administration (SBA Loan)	https://www.sba.gov/	The SBA offers several programs that provide financial and educational resources to small businesses. Programs include Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), certification programs, women's business centers, and loans.

Figure 4.19 Federal Organizations.

attendees were middle aged individuals who agreed on the potential benefit of diversifying Riverside Square. Many spoke about their hopes and concerns about future development in their neighborhood. In moments where attendees recalled their memories of Riverside Square, several suggested downtown revitalization efforts that support new grocery stores, businesses for personal care, apparel shops, and entertainment.

Regarding economic development, attendees were interested in discussing retail opportunities and the potential threat of raising property taxes with new development. Though residents do hope to see Riverside Square become more vibrant and utilized, they do not want to see big name chain stores. The following summarizes general comments attendees had during the Open House.

Some attendees spoke about their concern of increasing taxes. One attendee explained that she began going door to door to talk to neighbors about their thoughts on the issue. One attendee explained that the increase of taxes is leaving many residents concerned that they will not be able to afford their homes, especially those who are already retired and had not planned for an increase.

In discussing hopes for Riverside, an older woman shared her knowledge of a previous movie theater on Maple Avenue, west of Riverside Square. This resident, along with others, offered retail suggestions based on their history of enjoying local businesses in the past. One attendee spoke about her hopes to make the area a place filled with people on the weekend, with families out and about eating, shopping, and walking around the square. Another attendee spoke about her distaste in large developments and hopes that this does not occur in Riverside. Several attendees felt strongly about keeping businesses locally owned so that revenues stay local. Several attendees compared their view of what they would like to see for the square to Warren as they noted appreciating Warren comfortable, small town feel.

Hopes for the success of Bullocks Point Ave was discussed with one attendee who was a new commercial renter opening her own clothing store on Bullocks Point Ave. The attendee was pleased to see expenditure on apparel by Riverside residents, as was shown in the Marketing Profile (Figure 4.2).

Attendees mentioned that Riverside is a heavily traveled path for employed individuals who are traveling into and through Riverside Square daily. This suggests there is opportunity to support new businesses in Riverside Square due to the number of residents traveling back and forth and the number of workers who travel in and out of the area for work, all who may stop at the square at the end of a workday. A middle-aged male mentioned how he has biked to work for over a year. We discussed the biking commute data because the data count was zero from ACS 2021. This may be due to the small population size collected by ACS opposed to the more complete Decennial Census. Several individuals agreed with our standing that the bike path is an asset of the community regardless of its usage in transportation to work.

In conclusion, the vacant opportunities and existing retail data display the economic opportunities available across Riverside Square. A vibrant community can be supported through the revitalization of the existing spaces for local businesses which will in turn, increase foot traffic, use of public transit, and stabilize the community. Residents of Riverside are open to new ideas and are eager to develop a community they are proud to call home.

4.7 Recommendations

1. Increase outreach efforts to help business owner's understand available financial tools.

Entrepreneurs may have better success in establishing businesses in Riverside with more awareness of financial tools available to them (Figure 4.14-4.19). For example, the city has low interest loans available to businesses in East Providence, up to \$100,000, in addition to tax

incentives such as a Commercial Tax Stabilization Program. The flyers provided at the Open House (see Appendix) are one way to share financial tools available to Riverside business owners.

2. Develop promotional materials and communication tools for local businesses to share information with residents.

By keeping residents engaged and up to date with the development of businesses in Riverside, businesses have a better chance of success. The creation of a town website highlighting each business in Riverside along with updates from business owners is a simple and efficient way to keep residents engaged. Additionally, more physical bulletins could be created in communal spaces around town to allow business owners the chance to post job opportunities and community events.

3. Incubate new businesses and sustain existing ones through the co-location of mutually supportive businesses.

Allowing businesses to “buddy up” can help businesses grow incrementally by providing business owners a way to mitigate the high overhead costs associated with opening a new venture. Opportunities to mix businesses in a single space can come in a number of forms, such as small food establishments or coffee shops with bookstores or bike repair shops.

4. Encourage street markets, vending, and pop-up retail to activate marginal spaces.

By creating commercial events that encourage economic growth and bring community members together, residents can participate in selling their own goods and services which in turn keeps money local. Commercial activity like flea markets, craft fairs, food trucks, or farmers markets could occur weekly or monthly.

5. Revitalize and repurpose vacant and underutilized buildings and spaces within and around Riverside Square to align with the Mixed Use Overlay Map, and provide opportunities for

a more diverse retail landscape, and/or housing options.

To achieve these development goals, emphasis should be placed on building partnerships with business owners, current and prospective developers, money lenders, and the city to generate start-up business types that can take advantage of available financial resources and vacant properties.

6. Expand mixed-use development along the East Bay Bike Path.

Riverside businesses may see more success if they actively engage with the Bike Path, in addition to Bullocks Point Ave. Similar to Union Burrito Restaurant, having business entries along the bike path with places to leave your bike, sit, or walk around, visitors passing through may feel more inclined to stop in the square.



Figure 4.20 Lee's Restaurant parking lot current (circa 2021).



Figure 4.21 Lee's Restaurant parking lot proposed usage.



4.8 Site Specific Recommendations

328, 330 Bullocks Point Ave; Increase retail opportunities with proximity to the bike path. Retail opportunities may include a bar/tavern, boutique/specialty shops, health & fitness experiences, and small grocery/butchers.

271, 275, 277, 279 Bullocks Point Ave, The Buckets Building; Given its central location in Riverside Square it is critical that this location is occupied. The Apiary construction and real estate company is currently developing the Buckets Building. Retail opportunities may include a bar/tavern, boutique/specialty shops, health & fitness experiences, and small grocery/butchers.



Figure 4.22 Hope Artiste Village Precedent.



Figure 4.23 Hope & Main, Warren RI Precedent.

Lee's Restaurant and parking lot; Repurpose the parking lot for outdoor markets or events can bring in activity. Lee's Restaurant is currently up for sale and its redevelopment could bring unique opportunities to Riverside. (Figure 4.20 and 4.21). Community Gathering/Flexible Retail Space may include farmers markets, flea markets, fairs & events, food trucks, and pop-up stores. Seasonal opportunities may include Christmas tree sales, car shows, and cultural celebrations.

Open space & small building at the intersection of Lincoln Ave and Monroe Ave; Improve the visual cohesion and appearance of the open space while also providing seating for residents and a shared library box (Figure 2.9).

640 Bullocks Point Ave, Former Oldham Elementary School; Restore and rehabilitate the building to host events that will generate local economic activity. In the meantime, utilize outdoor parking lot space as a flexible community event location (Figures 4.22, 4.23). Community Gathering/Flexible Retail Space may include farmers markets, flea markets, fairs & events, food trucks, and pop-up stores. Seasonal opportunities may include Christmas tree sales, car shows, and cultural celebrations.

Chapter 5: Transportation and Circulation

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5.1 Community Assets

There are a variety of community assets in Riverside that are attractive destinations for residents and visitors. The East Bay Bike Path is a central feature in Riverside creating a vegetated strip through the middle of the town. There are larger parks along the coast of Riverside, Sabin Point and Crescent Park, that are a short distance from the square (Figure 5.1). Other assets farther from the square include Willett Pond, Crescent Park, Grassy Plains Park, and the Carousel. The Carousel is located in Crescent Park and it a key feature of the community (Figure 5.1).

5.2 Street Hierarchy

There are several streets and roads that are more heavily used in Riverside. Bullocks Point Ave is the primary street that runs through Riverside Square. Willett Ave is another major street that branches off Bullocks Point Ave and caters to the majority of the population north of the square. The square is accessed via Pawtucket Ave or Bullocks Point Ave. Here, streets are wide and have excess pavement that could be reimaged for improvements (Figure 5.2).

Bullocks Point Ave is approximately 50 feet wide where it passes through the square. In the heart of the square, Lincoln Ave intersects with Bullocks Point Ave expanding to 54 feet wide. Sidewalks around the square are typically 6 feet wide. Crescent View and Burnside Ave are main roads running east to west conjoining with Bullocks Point Ave and Willett Ave. The one-way streets of Maple Ave, Burnside Ave, Turner Ave, and Pawtucket Ave connect main roads to each other (Figure 5.2).

5.3 Traffic

In general the area in and around Riverside Square does not experience significant amounts of traffic or congestion. The vast majority of traffic can be found along Pawtucket Ave that connects Riverside with the rest of East Providence. Pawtucket Ave provides access to schools, institutions, residential,

and commercial areas. In Riverside Square, higher levels of traffic are found where Bullocks Point Ave intersects with the East Bay Bike Path with an average of 12,200 cars passing through every 24 hours (Figure 5.3). Resident insight reveals that vehicles traveling along Bullocks Point and Pawtucket Ave frequently speed. These conditions have made it both unsafe and unattractive for pedestrians and has added significant noise pollution.

5.4 Bus Routes

There are 20 RIPTA bus stops along Bullocks Point Ave serving bus route 33 (Figure 5.5). Bus route 60 and 61x service Wampanoag Trail. There are no bus routes on secondary roads, limiting bus access throughout the eastern parts of the community. Within Riverside Square there is a northbound stop along Bullocks Point Ave that has a well-maintained bus shelter.

The area to the west of the bike path has a median age between 37 and 45 years old (Figure 5.5). Areas to the east of the bike path that have a median age of 45+ and have less access to public transit.

5.5 Bike Path and Foot Trails

The East Bay Bike Path connects to Providence to the north and Barrington, Warren, and Bristol to the south. The path connects many Riverside residents to Riverside Square and is an economic driver for the community. Built upon an old railway corridor, the path has numerous connections both east and west into many of Riverside's residential areas. Many of these connections are informal (Figure 5.7). Other paths are more formal including some with paved connectors and signage indicating the street name. However, from the street, connections are often elusive, lack proper wayfinding, are obscured by overgrown vegetation, and are often hidden behind guard rails or trash cans. These paths more or less cater to local traffic, however they present opportunities to expand connections throughout the community.

Neighborhood Assets

Riverside, RI

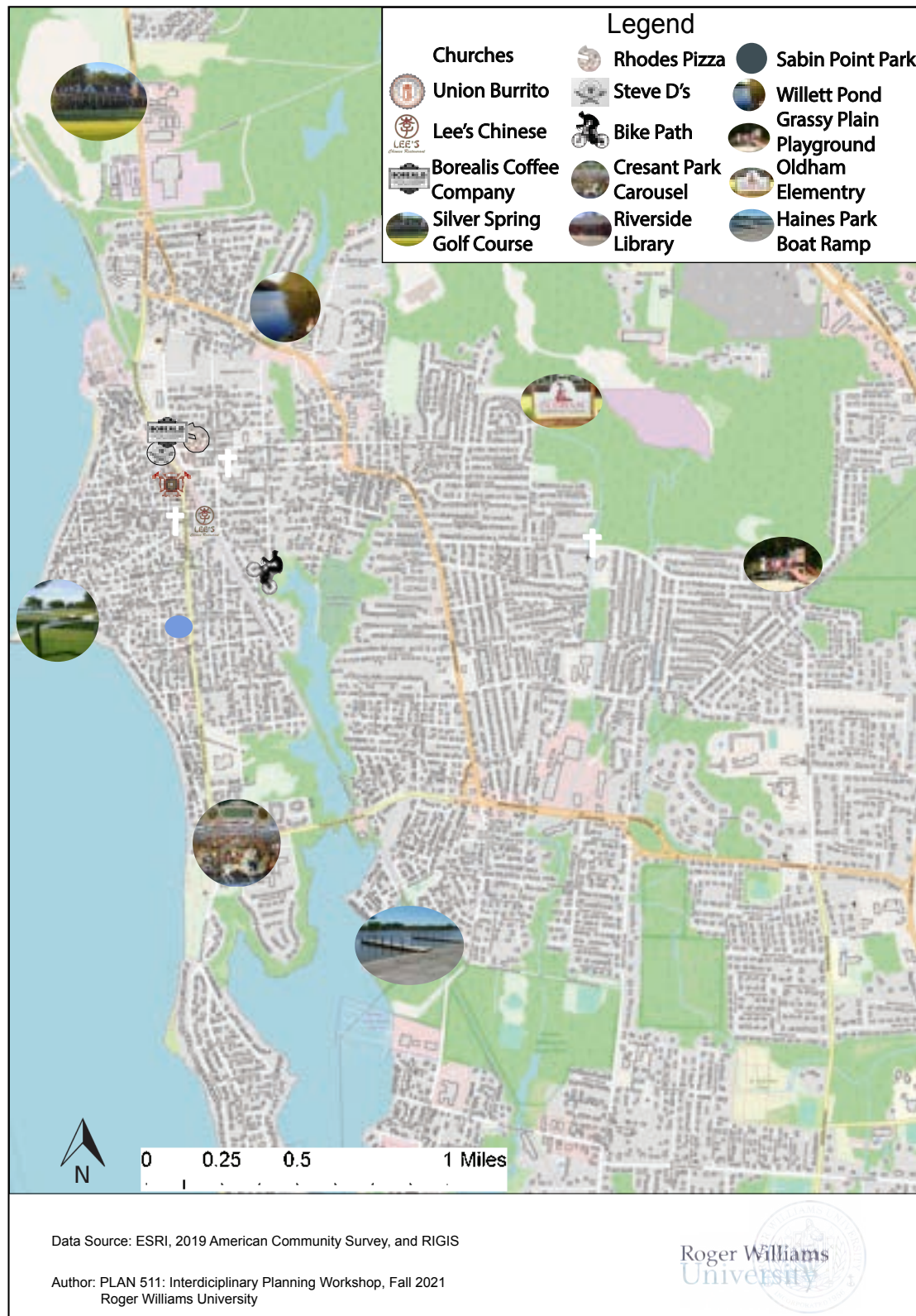


Figure 5.1 Community Asset Map.



Figure 5.2 Street Hierarchy.



Figure 5.3 Average traffic counts in 24 hours.



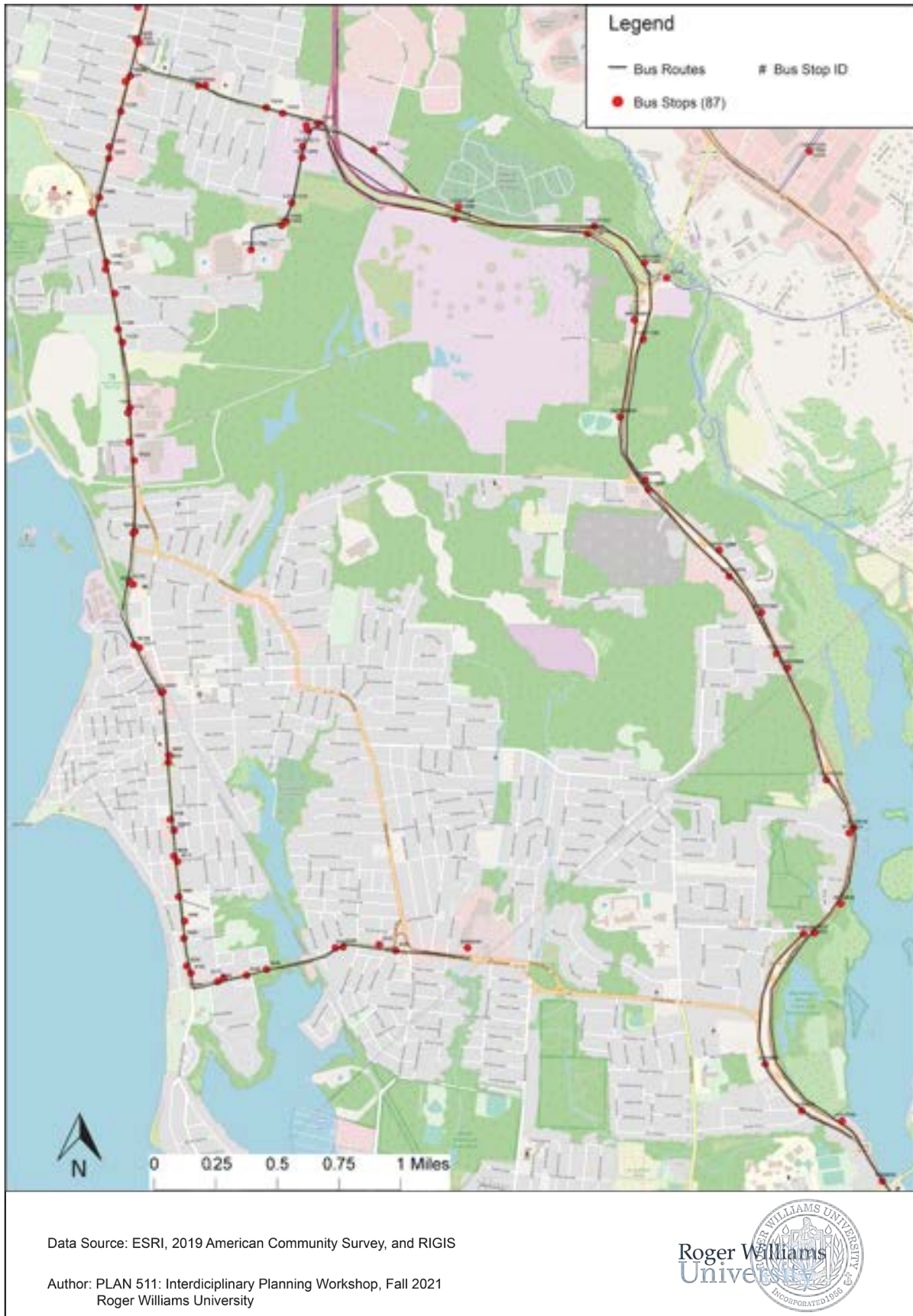


Figure 5.4 RIPTA Bus Routes

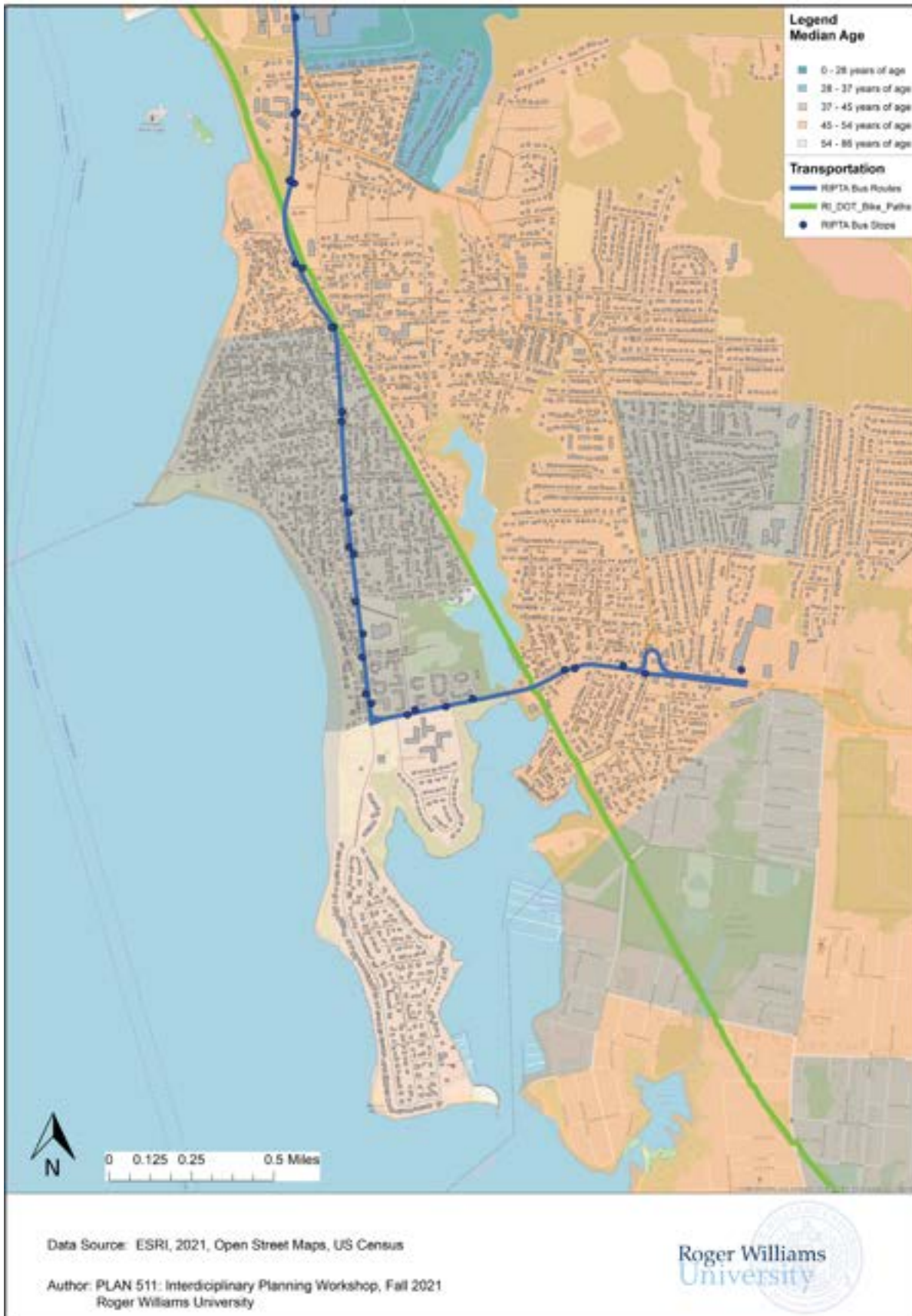


Figure 5.5 Median Age and Transportation.



Figure 5.6 Riverside Bike and Foot Paths.



A dedicated bike lane along Crescent Ave connects the East Bay Bike Path with Crescent Park. Wayfinding signage and traffic signals direct pedestrians crossing the road, as well as bicyclists traveling to and from Crescent Park. Another bike lane found along Socony Road connects Bullocks Point Ave to Wampanoag Trail.

Many residents report driving to the East Bay Bike Path to then bike along it which suggests improving access along the bike path as well as connections with residential areas will make the path more accessible.

5.6 Walkability

The compact urban form in and around Riverside Square makes the community highly walkable. The square is accessible to most residents within a one mile or 20 minute walk (Figure 5.7). 50% of East Providence residents reported walking to their destination at least once a week while 25% report riding a bike.

5.7 Wayfinding

Wayfinding in and around Riverside Square is limited. Many residents expressed this sentiment suggesting that better signage of community assets like Sabin Point would better connect parts of the community.

Traveling north on the bike path, the first sign locates the town line between the City of East Providence (Riverside) and Barrington. Approaching Crescent View Ave, for both north and south bound traffic, two small signs orient pedestrians and cyclists towards Crescent View Park (Figure 5.8). This intersection has added safety infrastructure including a crosswalk, caution signal, and a bike lane.

Several street signs mark specific access points along the bike path. These signs are visible and clear to understand while on the path, however there is currently no wayfinding when approaching the path from the street. Moving into the square, a East Bay Bike Path sign locates where the bike path

crosses the square at Borealis Coffee. Aside from this sign, there is no signage orienting bike path users towards community assets in the immediate area. One sign locates Sabin Point for southbound vehicular traffic along Bullocks Point Ave (Figure 5.8).

5.8 Open House Feedback

At the Riverside Open House attendees provided feedback about what they would like to see improved or changed. Positive feedback focused on the creation of more connections to the bike path and the surrounding community. Residents were also interested in improving traffic and road safety around the square, more specifically along Bullocks Point and Pawtucket Avenues. Providing more wayfinding was another interest of attendees to more easily locate themselves in relation to other community assets, specifically around the square and the East Bay Bike Path.

The connection between assets and the bike path was a priority for attendees. Many found the transportation maps helpful to express what they value. Attendees were nostalgic for the variety of parks spread throughout the community. Improving transportation connections between the community's assets and parks (Sabin Point Park, Willett Pond, and Crescent Park) emerged as a priority. Many bike and walk to the square, so increasing these connections promotes safety and accessibility. Bullocks Point Ave and Shore Rd were frequently mentioned for bike improvements.

Traffic in and around Riverside was a problem frequently stated by the residents. Specifically, Willett Ave and Pawtucket Ave demonstrate heavy traffic and in turn, lead to unsafe streets. People that live close to these areas have noted that the traffic makes it hard for them to reach the center of town by foot. There were suggestions to develop alternative roads that could redirect traffic away from the congested areas. We discovered that some traffic is caused by the coming and going of buses from the Bayside Private School, north of the square.



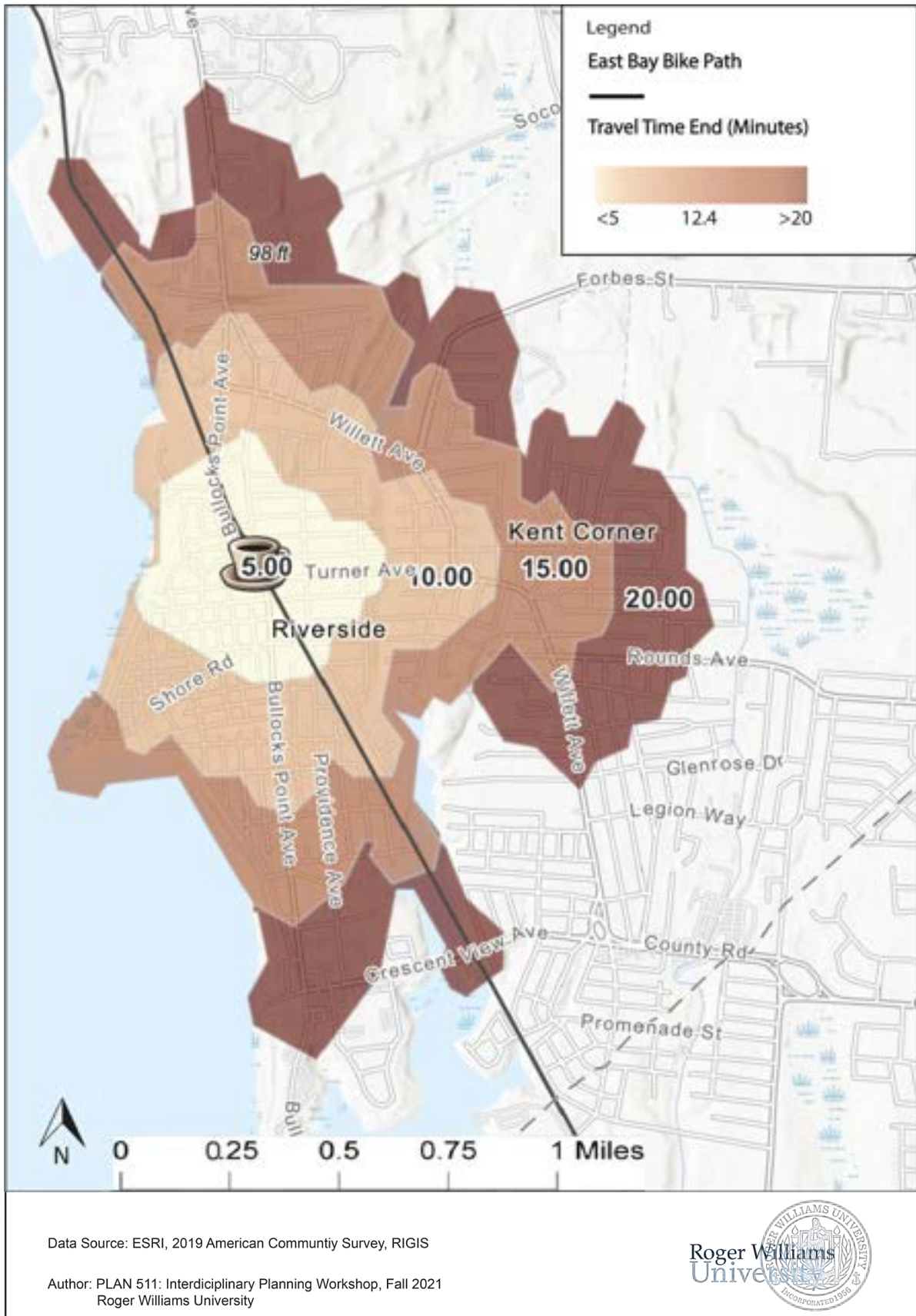


Figure 5.7 Walkability Map.



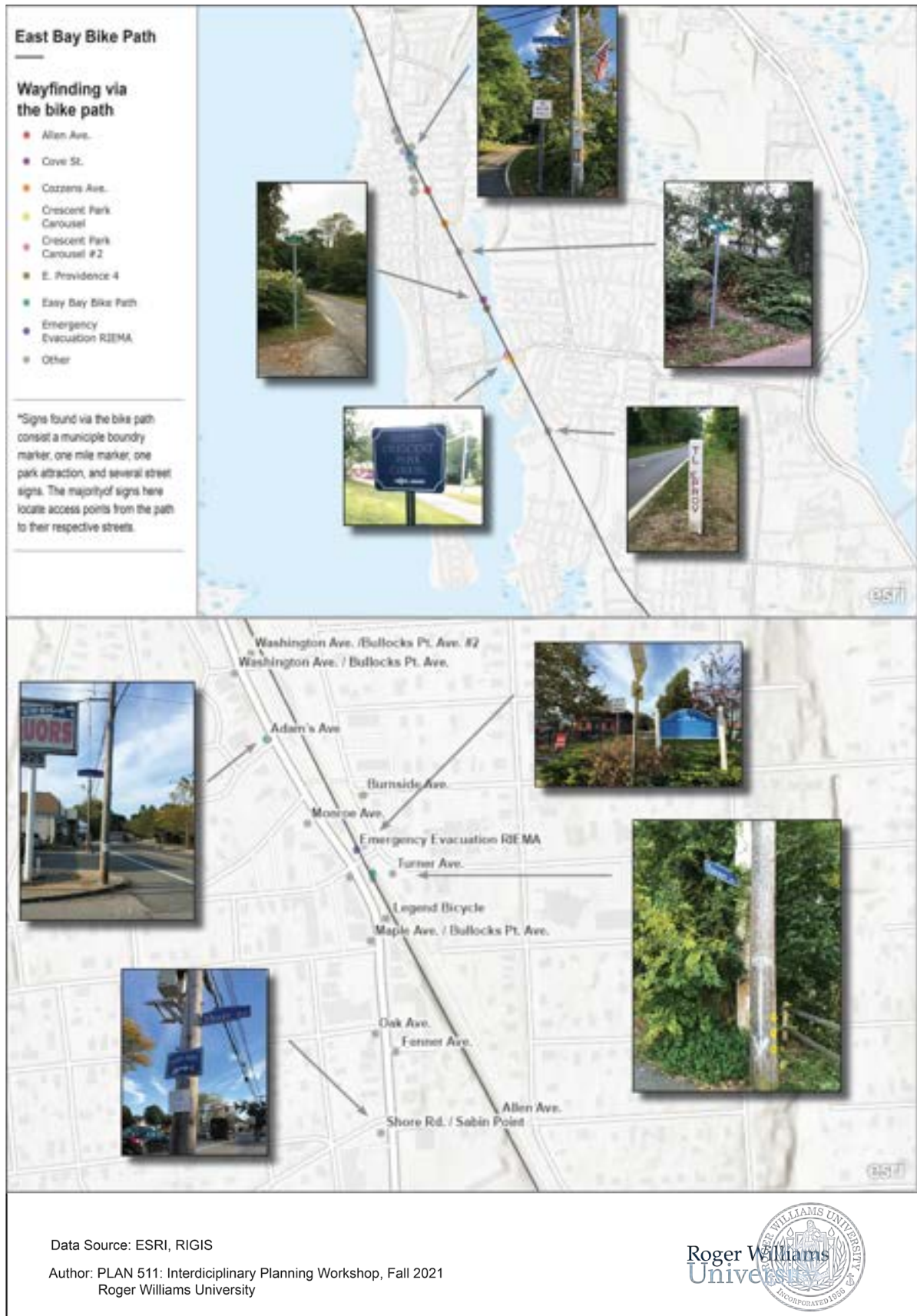


Figure 5.8 Riverside Wayfinding Survey.

The addition of a bike lane connecting the East Bay Bike Path and Sabin Point Park was raised by the community. Since Shore Road is a busy, narrow street that does not contain sufficient space to put in a protected bike lane, the street could be marked with bike sharrows.

To reduce traffic speed concerns in the square, curb extensions can be added to the main intersection where there is excess pavement. Talking with the community, any excess pavement could be transformed into pocket parks and pedestrian amenities.

Attendees did not seem to rely on the use of the bus, but some community members expressed that they have used it before and cited the bus takes too long and is not reliable. Many expressed that it takes less time to walk than to take the bus to their destinations. Residents agreed with the idea of an additional bus route on Willett Ave to help service a greater number of people in Riverside.

Almost all attendees commented on the lack of signage around Riverside Square and described feeling disoriented occasionally. Residents expressed interest incorporating signs that point to each of the parks coming from the square. Cyclists on the bike path do not know that they are going through Riverside until they get to the square. This could be improved by adding signage along the path to point out different businesses and assets that people would want to visit. Another attendee recommended developing walkability maps to help residents understand their location to the square. If they knew their walking distance to the square, they may be more willing to participate in the ongoing activities.

The feedback that we received supports our recommendations and strategies to improve accessibility and circulation in Riverside. These begin with improved connectivity of Riverside's assets in relation to transportation such as the bike path, improved safety of busy streets, and



Figure 5.9 Open House Asset Interactive Map.



Figure 5.10 Open House overall image.

enhancing the signage and informational tools around Riverside.



5.9 Recommendations

These recommendations focus on mobility and transportation within Riverside with the goal to better accommodate all residents. Recommendations promote the diversity of transportation types to strengthen Riverside's economic potential. Creating pedestrian friendly streets that promote walkability as well as safety and accessibility to Riverside's assets is a priority.

1. Improve intersection safety at Bullocks Point Ave and Lincoln Ave.

Visibility between motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians should be improved in order to ensure the safety of the intersection. This can be accomplished by creating sidewalk extensions and bulb-outs or additional pedestrian spaces around its edges. Diverse paving materials such as brick or cobblestone can more clearly designate pedestrian, bike, and vehicle lanes (Figure 5.11).

2. Expand public transportation options and bus routes.

Public transportation should promote accessibility to all residents. Encouraging additional route options along other major roads such as Willett Ave can promote local ridership and better service local traffic. A connection between Pawtucket Ave and the Wampanoag Trail can also be utilized for additional routes. The addition of a shuttle to service Riverside Square would also offer more accessibility for the community (Figure 5.11).

3. Create a bike path extension to Sabin Point Park and Sabin Point Park to Rose Larisa Park.

Access from the East Bay Bike Path, down Shore Road, and to Sabin Point Park will help bicyclists access the shoreline (Figure 5.12). Formalizing the connection between the bike path and Allen Avenue with proper signage can indicate the direction of the park and vice versa. Shared lane markings or sharrows could indicate the direction of the route. At the intersection of Bullock's Point Ave and Shore Rd, crosswalk signals would help cyclists and pedestrians cross the road safely. A similar

treatment is also plausible along Knowlton Street, connecting the path with the park. These new connections between the bike path and Sabin Point Park could also continue south along Narragansett Ave and White Ave to Crescent Park and connect to the existing bike lane. This connection from Sabin Point Park and Rose Larisa Park would expand bike accessibility and create an additional route that cyclists could use (Figure 5.12).

4. Utilize abundant pavement along South Pawtucket Ave.

At the intersection of Pawtucket Ave, Bullocks Point Ave, and Turner Ave the street widens to help accommodate turning traffic. There is an abundant amount of pavement that can be used to promote both traffic and pedestrian safety. Existing businesses, such as Rhodes Pizza, could reclaim portions of the street for outdoor dining. This would effectively narrow the street helping to reduce traffic speeds while simultaneously promoting local business. Inviting food trucks along the western edge of the Pawtucket Ave would reduce traffic speeds and help promote a more complete street where pedestrians have priority.

5. Provide more street trees along Bullocks Point Ave.

Besides their environmental benefits, street trees offer a variety of advantages such as helping reduce traffic speeds while simultaneously creating a more pleasurable walking experience. Street trees create a visual edge between the road and sidewalk distinguishing the space as one shared by people and bikes not just automobiles. By shielding pedestrians from cars, but also from the rain or heat, residents would be more inclined to explore the square on foot and thus help boost the local economy. Given the amount of pavement located along Bullocks Point Ave, more trees would help reduce temperatures in the summer months.

6. Improve wayfinding around Riverside Square and the East Bay Bike Path.

Signage is limited to street signs indicating the

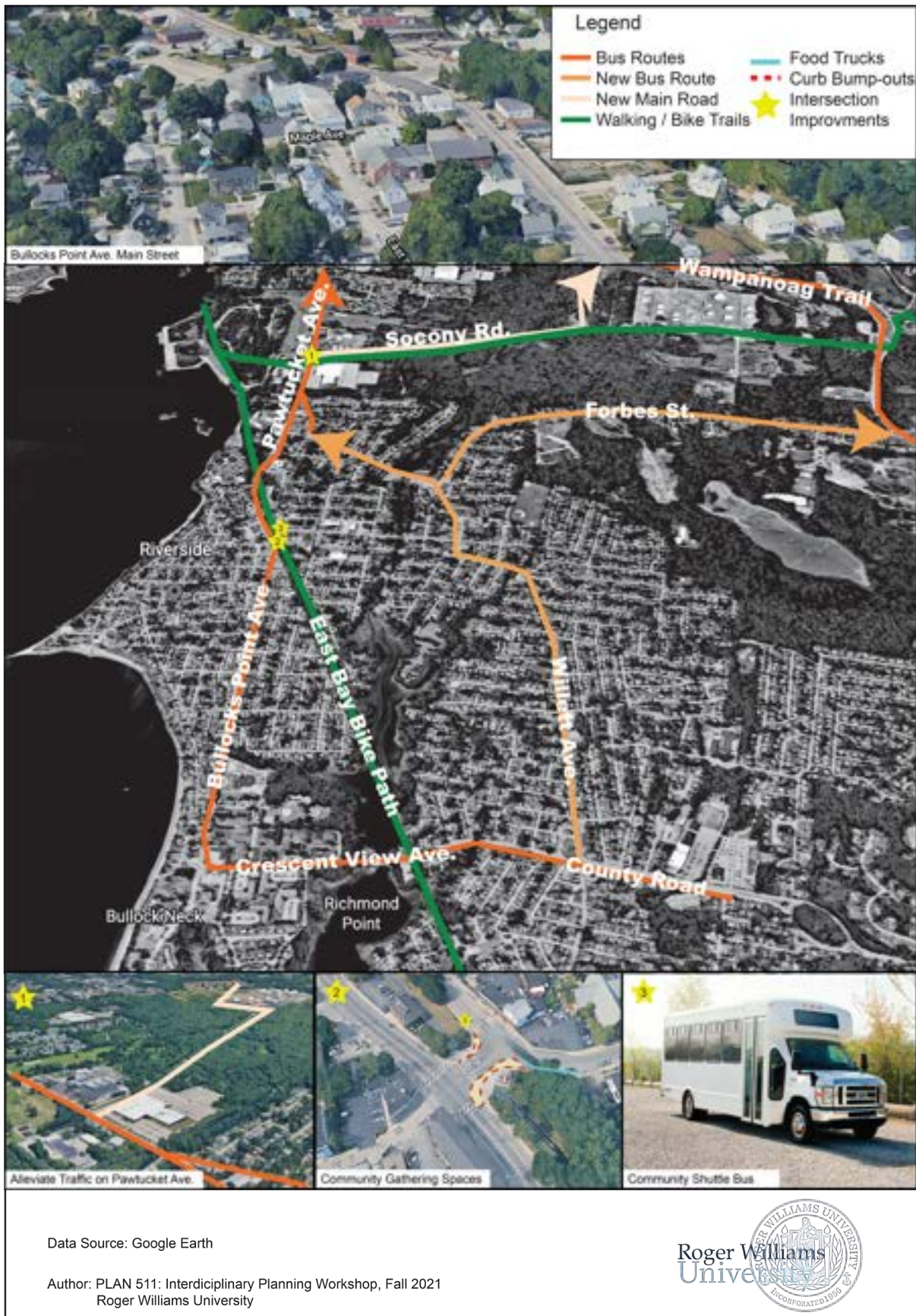


Figure 5.11 Transportation and Circulation Recommendation.



Figure 5.12 Bike Path Extensions.

boundaries of the square with similar styled signs found at certain points along the bike path. While these signs are helpful, they do not indicate access to the shoreline or other community assets east of the bike path. Additionally, there is no indication of access points to the path from residential streets which remains local knowledge. Often, access points are largely concealed by vegetation, guardrails, or around waste bins. Improving wayfinding here would better establish and formalize these points. We recommend placing signage along the bike path that points to community assets. Outside of Riverside Square, signage in the neighborhood can be used to graphically display the walking distance and direction to the center of the square (Figure 5.13 and 5.14).

7. Provide more bicycle parking.

Adding more bicycle parking is a flexible, low-cost way to encourage bike ridership to promote the community as being bicycle friendly. Bike racks also ensure bicycles are safely out of the way of other riders or pedestrians. While bicycle parking is available at some businesses, there could be more located at parks and businesses further away from the bike path to generate activity. Bike racks can be manufactured locally and may also be sculptural.

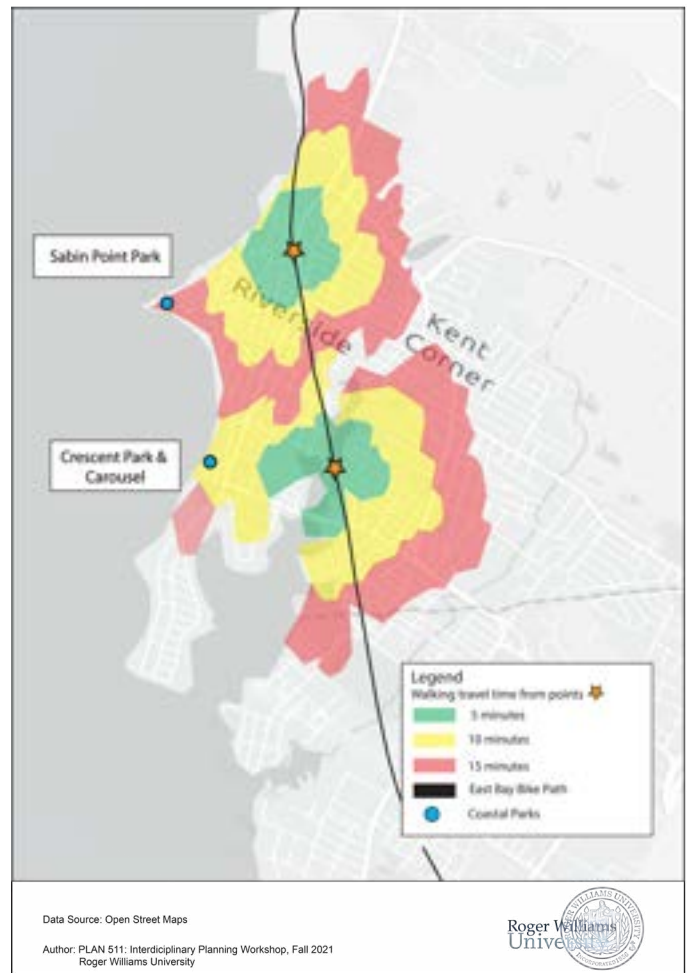


Figure.5.13 Walking Time Recommendation.

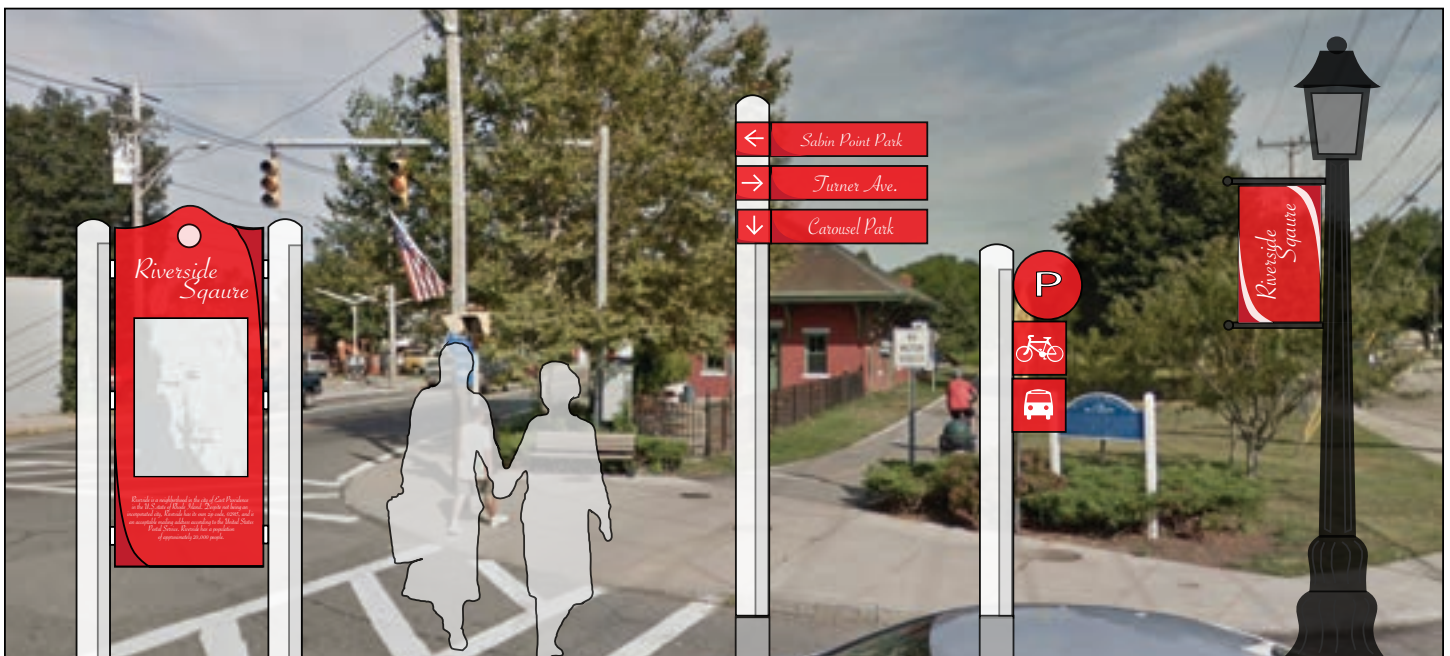


Figure 5.14 Typical Signage for Wayfinding.



Chapter 6: Streetscapes

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6.1 Complete Street Survey

The 2010-2015 East Providence Comprehensive Plan Update explains road diets as a method to achieve systemic circulation improvements. The plan states road dieting methods were used in the Pawtucket Avenue and Bullocks Point Avenue areas in the past to improve traffic circulation. Figure 6.1 depicts the concept of a road diet by showing how a four-lane road can be redesigned to integrate other lanes. By reducing the number of car lanes to two, there is enough room to make a middle 12-foot turn lane and two 5-foot-wide bike lanes. Today, planners are reconsidering the effects of a century’s worth of car-centric design. The shared relationship between the road, pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles can create rights of way for all modes of transportation.

Connectivity for pedestrians or cyclists from the East Bay Bike Path in the center of Riverside Square to other parts of the town is inadequate. Access to landmarks off Bullocks Point Ave such as the waterfront at Sabin Point Park and Crescent Park are car oriented. Additionally, building storefronts on Bullocks Point Ave and Pawtucket Ave could benefit from pedestrian seating, lights, bike racks, and parklets. The streets chosen for analysis have a relationship with the East Bay Bike Path, Bullocks Point Ave, and other local landmarks. These streets include:

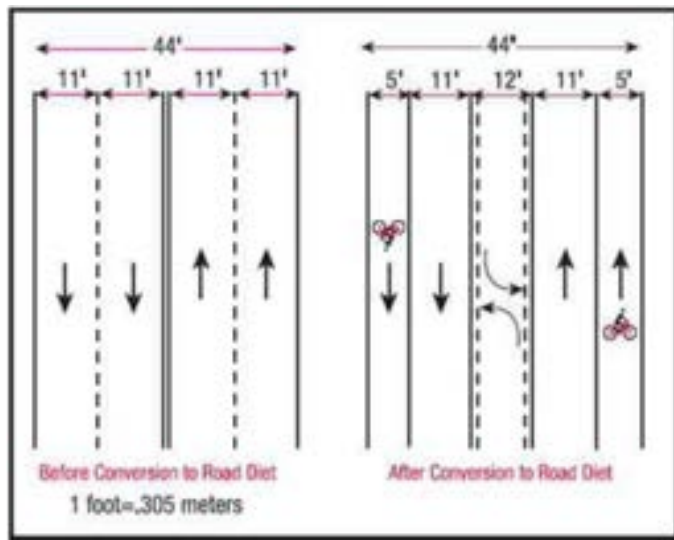


Figure 6.1 East Providence 2010-2015 Comprehensive Plan Update.

- Pawtucket Ave
- Monroe Ave
- Bullocks Point Ave
- Lincoln Ave
- Shore Rd

Pawtucket Avenue

Pawtucket Ave, between Rhodes Pizza and Borealis Coffee Company, has a street width of 41 feet and the sidewalks measure at 7 feet 6 inches. Redesigning the street with two 12-foot vehicle lanes, will allow 17 feet of usable space for pedestrians or cyclists.

Monroe Avenue

The current width of Monroe Ave is 27 feet 11 inches with no formal sidewalks. Redesigning the street with two 10-foot vehicle lanes leaves space for two 4-foot sidewalks on either side.



Figure 6.2 Pawtucket Ave existing conditions.



Figure 6.3 Pawtucket Ave space available after road diet.



Bullocks Point Avenue

Bullocks Point Ave is the widest street analyzed with a total width of 40 feet 2 inches excluding sidewalks. This includes two 11-foot 3-inch vehicle lanes, and two 8-foot 10-inch parking lanes. Reducing the vehicle lanes to two 11-feet, eliminating one side of parking, and reducing that parking to 8 feet, allows for the incorporation of a bike lane and seasonal outdoor seating or parklets.



Figure 6.6 Bullocks Point Ave existing conditions.

Lincoln Avenue

Lincoln Ave is a width of 26 feet excluding the sidewalks, which are 7-foot 5-inches and 7-foot 10-inches, respectively. By reducing the vehicle lanes to 11 feet, 4 feet are left to integrate a bike lane. A bike lane could connect the nearby pocket park at the intersection of Lincoln Ave and Monroe Ave to the square and the East Bay Bike Path.



Figure 6.7 Bullock's Point Ave space available after road diet.



Figure 6.4 Monroe Ave existing conditions.



Figure 6.8 Lincoln Ave existing conditions.

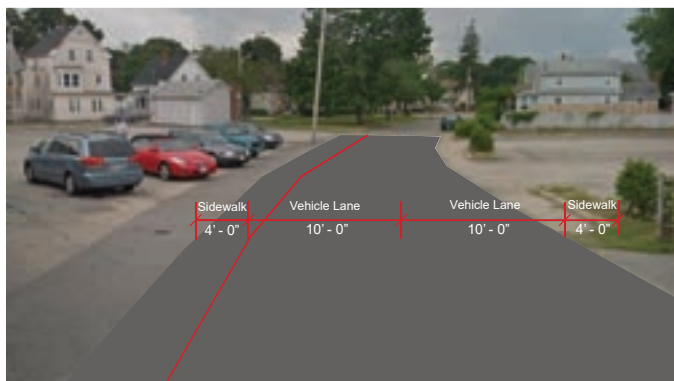


Figure 6.5 Monroe Ave space available after road diet.



Figure 6.9 Lincoln Ave space available after road diet.



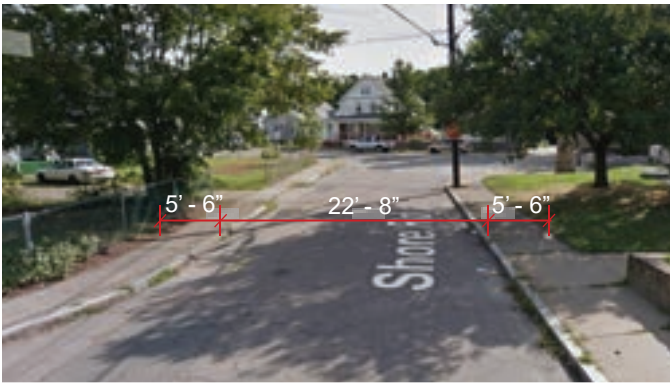


Figure 6.10 Shore Rd existing conditions.



Figure 6.11 Shore Rd space available after road diet.

Shore Road

Shore Road is 22 feet 8 inches wide at this study section. The sidewalks are an additional 5 feet 6 inches on either side. Reducing to a 10-foot vehicle lane and a 4 foot sidewalk with bike sharrows leaves 5 feet 6 inches available for a cycling space that connects Bullocks Point with a direct route to Sabin Point Park.

6.2 Lighting

Lighting in Riverside Square was categorized into three types for analysis; street pole lighting, storefront lighting, and anomalous lighting. Anomalous lighting consisted of neon signage in windows. Our analysis of existing street and sidewalk lighting conditions reveals the degree to which Riverside Square is walkable during the evening. The data was mapped to show the existing lighting density and provides an understanding of where to improve lighting for safety and to enhance evening activity.

Detailed surveys were developed using ArcGIS Survey 123. Each survey categorized each fixture by type, GPS location, height, condition of the fixture, bulb presence, and bulb brightness from the street level in foot-candles. An image of the light fixture was captured and tagged with its geolocation. The light coordinates were presented in the three maps, one for each lighting type that depict the density of light in Riverside Square.

Initial observations showed street pole lights service car traffic, while pedestrian scale light fixtures were absent. Storefront lighting was present, but unfortunately many were turned off or burned out.

The Pole Light Map (Figure 6.14) shows dark areas in Riverside Square that could benefit from increased lighting at night. For example, the bike path areas near the main intersection have no lighting despite this area being active with people past sundown. Pole lights with bright LED bulbs are used along Bullocks Point Ave, a wide main road.



Figure 6.12 Shops with exterior lights turned on and off.



The roads branching out from Bullocks Point Ave use less intense bulbs which is most likely due to city or state regulation on their allowable intensity in residential zones.

The Storefront Lighting Map (Figure 6.15) depicts the lighting conditions on businesses. Storefronts provided colorful ambient pedestrian lighting in the areas along Bullocks Point Ave, between Maple Ave and Oak Ave, and on Pawtucket Ave near the intersection with Lincoln Ave. Large storefront windows and signage lighting found in these areas help illuminate the otherwise dark sidewalk. Storefront light bulbs in need of replacement were found on Borealis Coffee Company and Archie’s Bait and Tackle.

The Anomalous Light Map (Figure 6.16) shows the area behind the laundromat and the World War II Monument at the intersection of Pawtucket Ave and Lincoln Ave is particularly bright. The monument has multiple bright lights installed in the ground that aided in lighting up the space. In contrast, the WWI

Monument at the intersection of Shore Road and Bullocks Point Avenue had no lighting at all.

6.3 Storefronts

Exterior storefront facade upgrades and improvements can help to attract new customers, business, and revenue. According to the City of

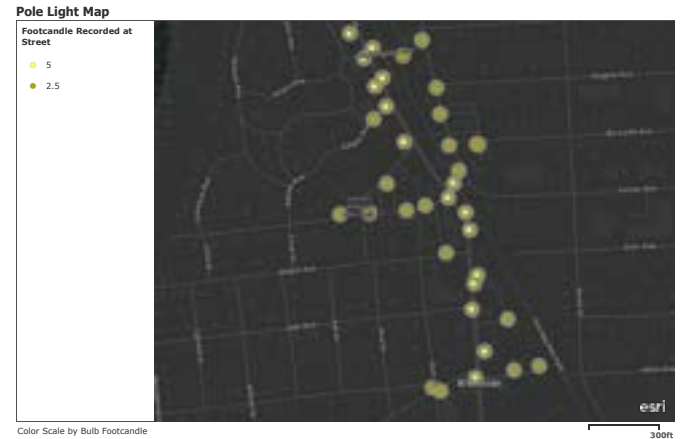


Figure 6.14 Pole Light Map.

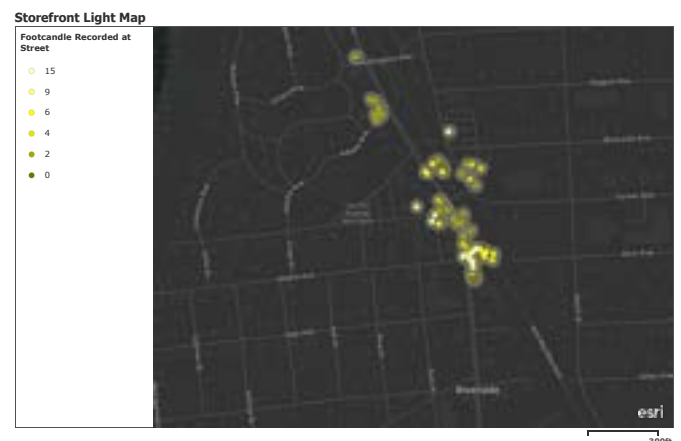


Figure 6.15 Storefront Light Map.

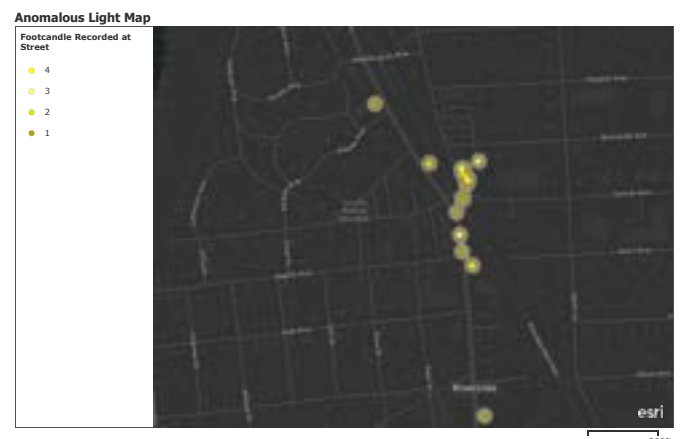


Figure 6.16 Anomalous Light Map.



Figure 6.13 Neon signage on Union Burrito categorized as anomalous lighting.



East Providence Storefront Improvement Program, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is supporting business owners disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by providing funding to renovate and update their storefronts. The U.S. Treasury lists the following business sectors as being eligible.

- Food Services
- Personal Care Services
- Entertainment
- Arts
- Recreation
- Accommodation

The Storefront Improvement Program will prioritize small businesses within City of East Providence Census Tracts 103, 104, 106, 102, and 105.01. The funding is provided in grants of \$10,000. Grant requests over this amount can be made



Figure 6.17 Storefront Improvement Program overview and application.

with a \$40,000 cap, but must have a 25% match contribution from the business owner. The program can provide businesses with free design support in the form of signage, logos, and paint selections. The application lists the following storefront improvements as eligible to receive support

- Signs and Awnings
- Exterior Lighting
- Painting / Re-siding
- Window Replacement
- Restoration/Replacement of Historical Details
- Removal of Elements Obscuring Historical Details
- New Storefront Construction
- Window Display Interiors
- ADA-Compliant Entryways
- Murals
- Planters / Window Boxes
- Landscaping
- Removal of Excess Hardscape

The City of East Providence created the Storefront Improvement Program Design Guidelines to provide examples of local design approaches and ways to maintain a cohesive and charming historic character throughout the city. The Design Guidelines familiarize applicants with architectural elements of historical storefronts that are frequently found



Figure 6.18 Storefront Improvement Program Design Guidelines.



in the business districts and economic corridors around East Providence.

6.4 Streetscape Conditions Survey

A survey was created to assess the quality of the environment; that focused on the conditions of the streets and public amenities. A coding system was established to collect data for 60 street segments (Figure 6.19). The street segment numbers were used to organize the surveys and data collection in Survey123 software.

To synthesize the data, a variety of maps were developed. Each block was color coded using three or four criteria: well maintained (green), adequately maintained (yellow), poorly maintained (red), or not present (blue). Each map is a visual guide to determine areas of most and least concern. (Figures 6.20- 6.27).

In addition to the maps, we captured photographs of existing conditions. This ensures consistency across the data criteria. For the block conditions survey, photos include documentation of the sidewalks, curbs, bus stops, vegetation, debris, and street lighting.

The survey provides an overall picture of physical conditions in Riverside: the overall block assessment, sidewalk conditions, street surfaces, and curbs.

Block Conditions

The overall block conditions show that the majority of blocks are adequately or poorly maintained. This means the majority of blocks need work in order to meet a higher standard. As shown in Figure 6.20, all portions of Bullocks Point Ave within Riverside Square are in adequate condition. Improving the block conditions of Bullocks Point Ave may include the street surface, sidewalks, and street lights. The quality of experience should be considered both during the day and at night.

Street Surfaces Conditions

The pie chart for street surfaces confirms that 42% of streets are adequately maintained, 16% are poorly maintained, and 42% are well maintained (Figure 6.23). Open House attendees reiterated our findings and related the data to their own personal experiences.

Sidewalk Surface Conditions

17% of sidewalks are well maintained, 25% are adequately maintained, 29% are poor, 29% are not present (Figure 6.25). This suggests that nearly 60% of the square and surrounding blocks may need surface improvements.

Curb Surface Conditions

Curbs affect the quality of the sidewalk conditions (Figure 6.27). Within the square approximately half of the curbs are in less than ideal condition.



Figure 6.19 Map of street segment and references codes used in data collection.

Overall Block Conditions

Riverside Square, East Providence, RI

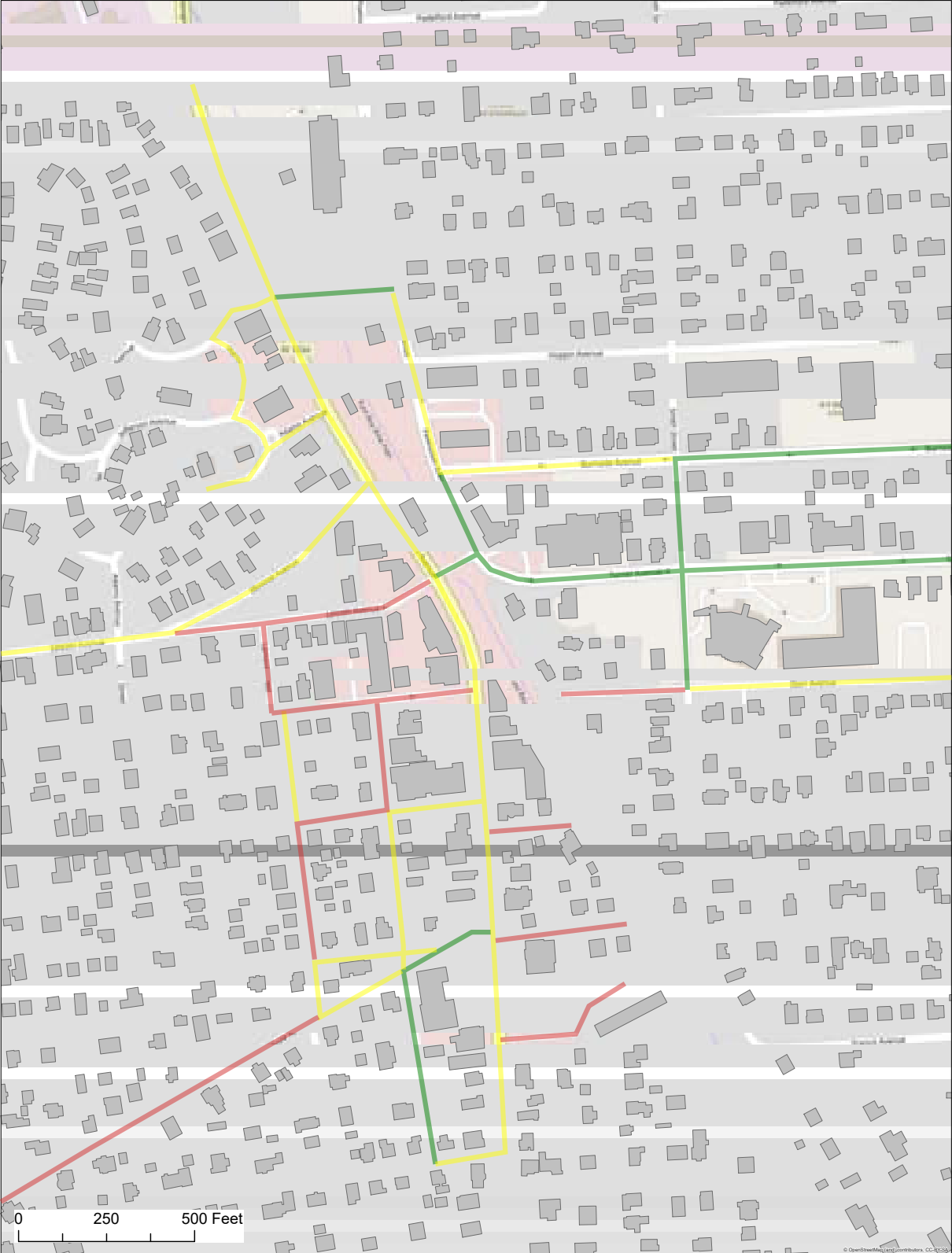


Figure 6.20 Map of Overall Block Conditions, map created by author.





**Well
Maintained**

It appears as if the block
requires little to no work in order
to improve conditions



**Adequately
Maintained**

The block requires some
but not extensive work in
order to improve
conditions



**Poorly
Maintained**

The block requires extensive
work in order to improve
conditions

Overall Block Conditions

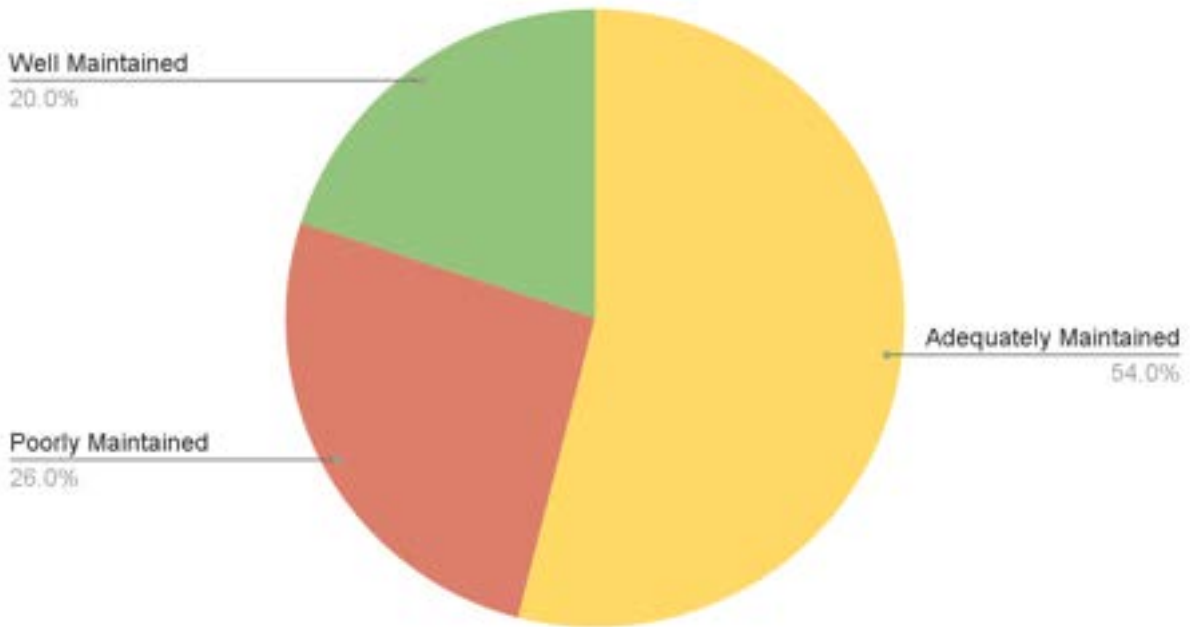


Figure 6.21 Key and Chart for Overall Block Conditions, created by author.



Street Surface Conditions

Riverside Square, East Providence, RI

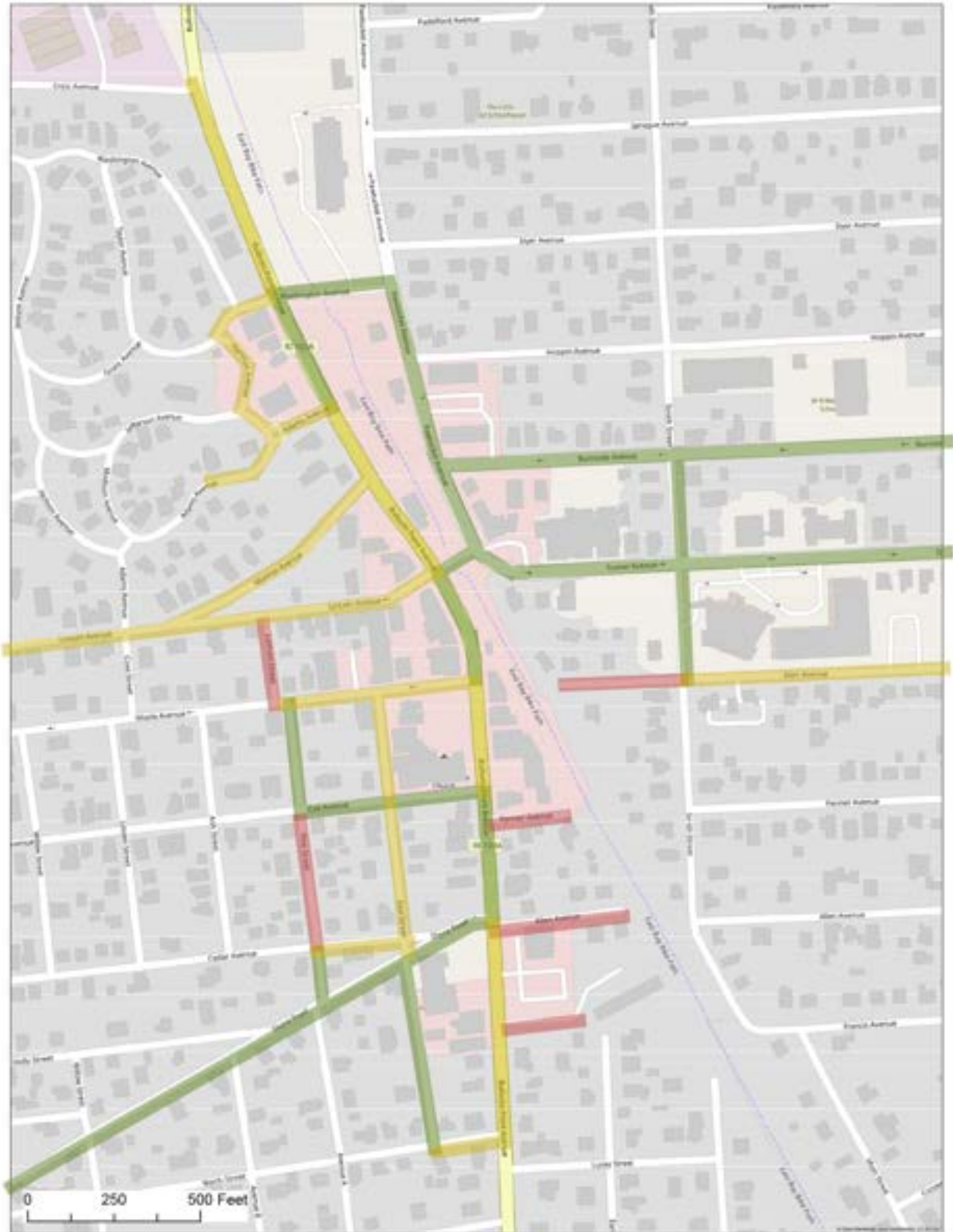


Figure 6.22 Map of Street Surface Conditions, map created by author.





**Well
Maintained**

No patching, even surface with no potholes



**Adequately
Maintained**

Some patching, mostly even surface with no potholes



**Poorly
Maintained**

Majority of road is patched, uneven surface with some potholes

Street Surface Conditions

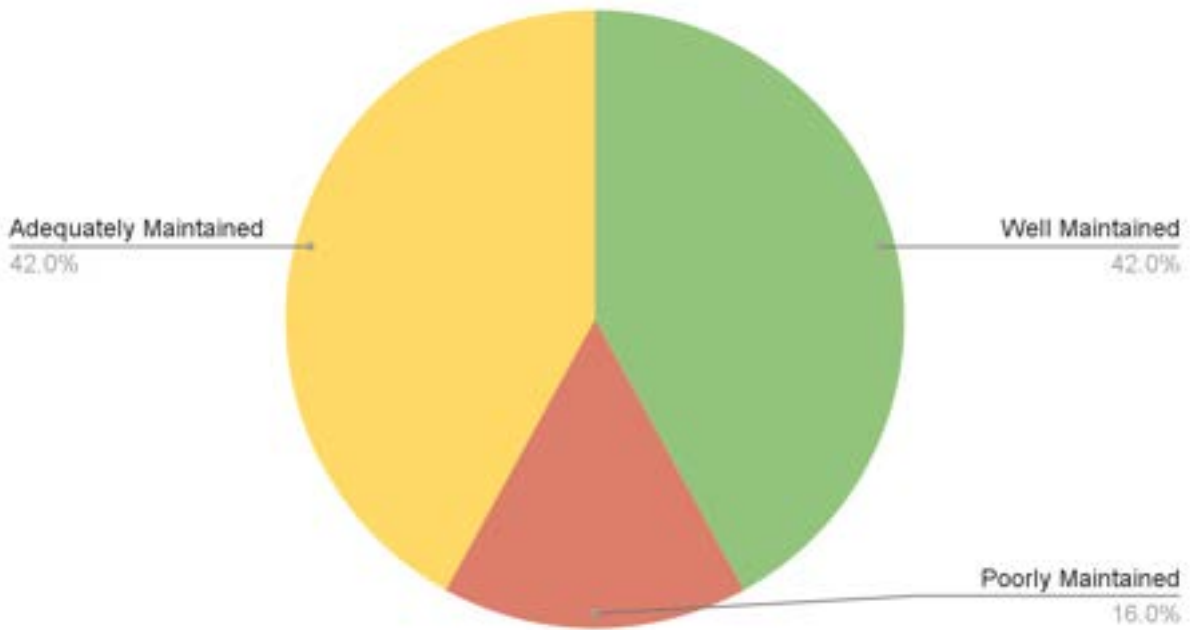


Figure 6.23 Key and Chart for Street Surface Conditions, created by author.



Sidewalk Conditions

Riverside Square, East Providence, RI

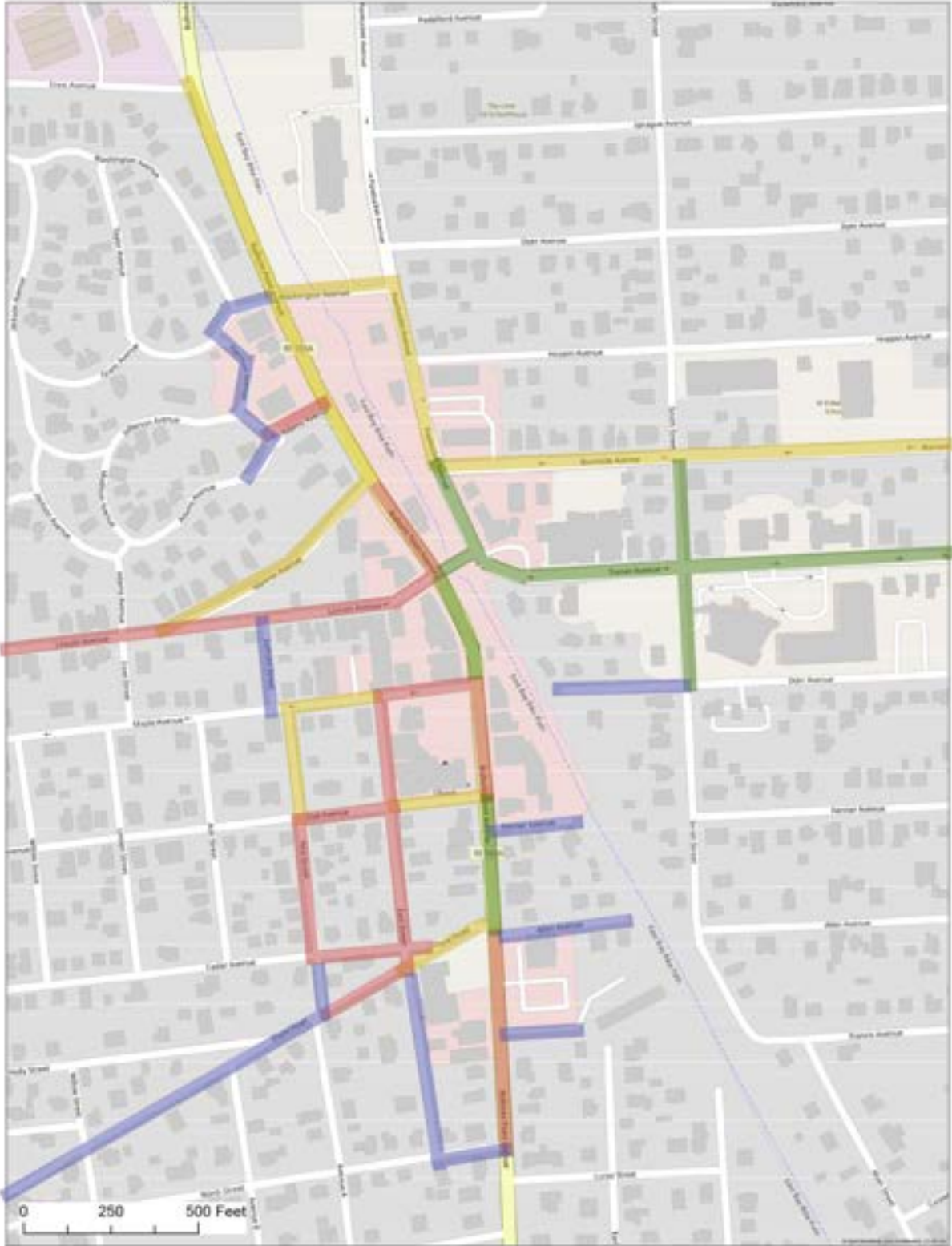


Figure 6.24 Map of Sidewalk Conditions, map created by author.





Well Maintained

Little to no surface cracking, overgrowth, or crumbling



Adequately Maintained

Some surface cracking, overgrowth, and/or crumbling. Still useable



Poorly Maintained

Overgrowth, cracking and/or crumbling is present. Ability to use is hindered



Not Present

No sidewalks present on the block

Sidewalk Conditions



Figure 6.25 Key and Chart for Sidewalk Conditions, created by author.



Curb Conditions

Riverside Square, East Providence, RI

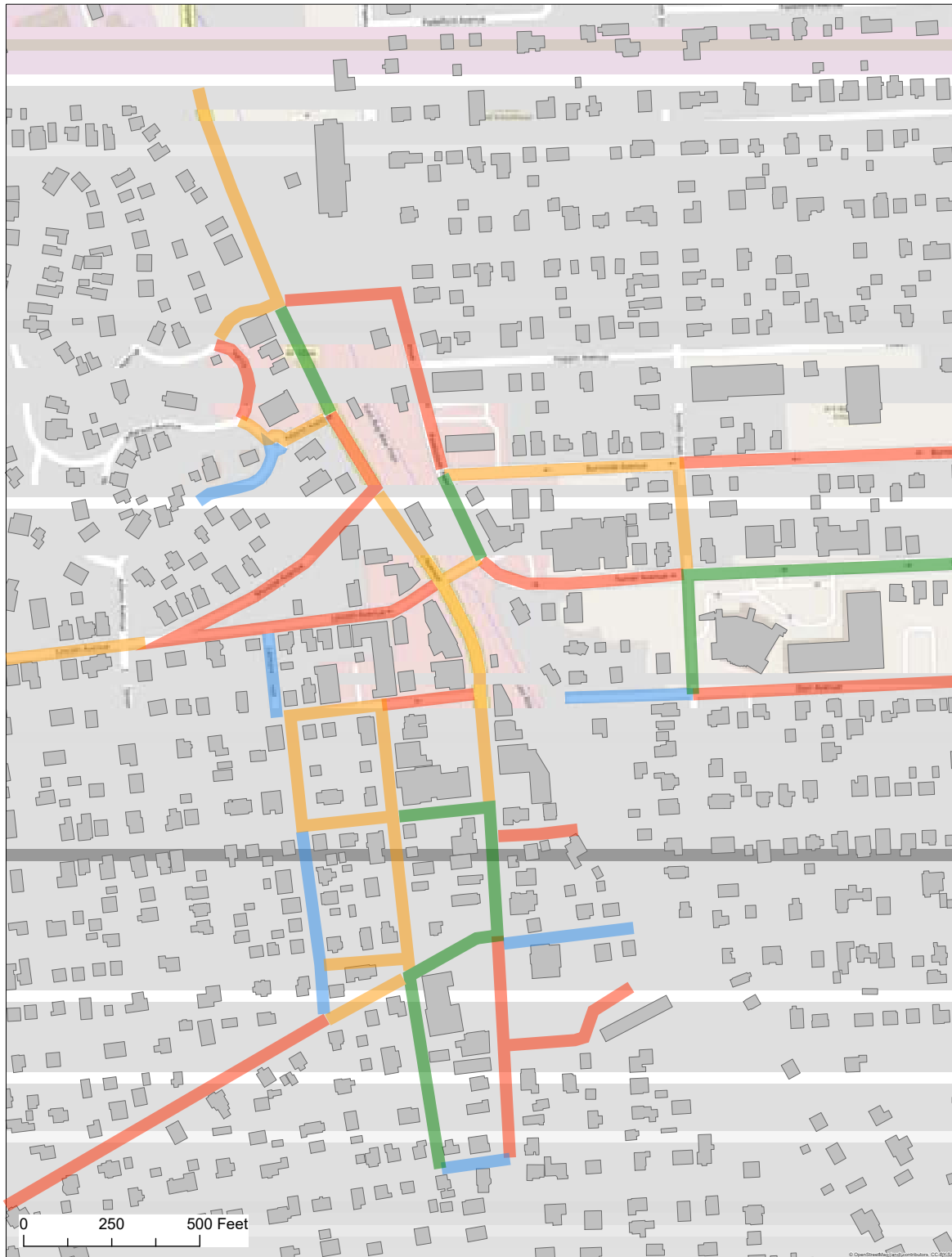


Figure 6.26 Map of Curb Conditions, map created by author.





Well Maintained

Curbs are consistent heights. They are not cracked. They are a consistent material. There is little to no plant growth coming through them.



Adequately Maintained

Curbs vary in height. They are potentially cracked. Not a consistent material. Might be some plant growth coming through



Poorly Maintained

Curbs vary greatly in height. Are in extreme disrepair. Sometimes just don't exist. Are broken by or infested by plant growth



Not Present

No Curbs present on the block

Curb Conditions

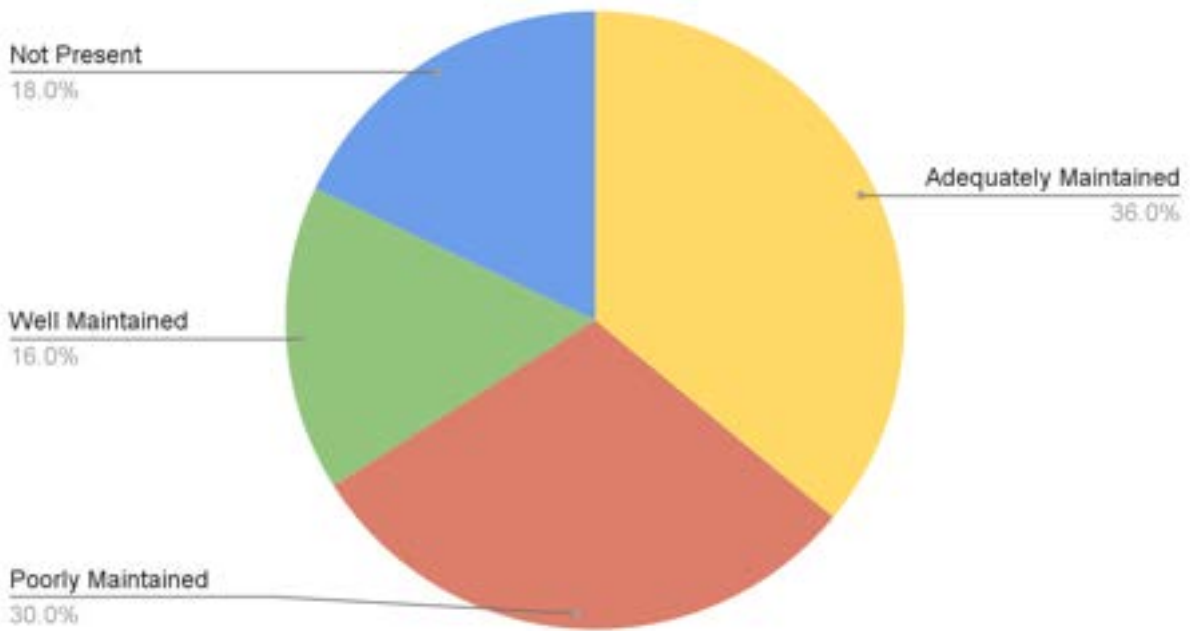


Figure 6.27 Key and Chart for Curb Conditions, created by author.



When comparing overall blocks, street surface surfaces, sidewalks, and curbs, we conclude the blocks within the square don't need much work in terms of street surfaces and that sidewalks and curbs need most attention.

6.5 Open House Feedback

Open House attendees were gracious with their insights. There was a sense of respect and pride for their neighborhood. Some of the attendees' commentary was personal and directly about their own neighborhood. Our team realized the importance of letting the residents know that our objective of this research was to find the strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities for growth and improvement.

One woman talked with our team about her personal struggles to walk throughout Riverside with her walker given the physical conditions of the town. For example, poorly timed streetlights and crosswalk signs do not allow for adequate time for people with disabilities to cross the street. Another concern of attendees was the fragmented sidewalks that make certain blocks impassable.

Attendees also noted accessibility to the bike path from the west side of Bullocks Point Ave is difficult due to heavy traffic. They identified areas where sidewalks are fully present, poorly maintained, or are too steep to be usable. These issues lead many residents to walk on the narrow streets.

In regard to lighting in Riverside Square, many attendees described areas as being dark, particularly the bike paths, their entrances, and several side streets. Other attendees stated they felt store owners and residents should not have to leave lights on. Individuals were happy to know that the team took into consideration lighting especially on the bike path, explaining that the various lighting maps gave them a better sense of how to improve safety with more lighting.

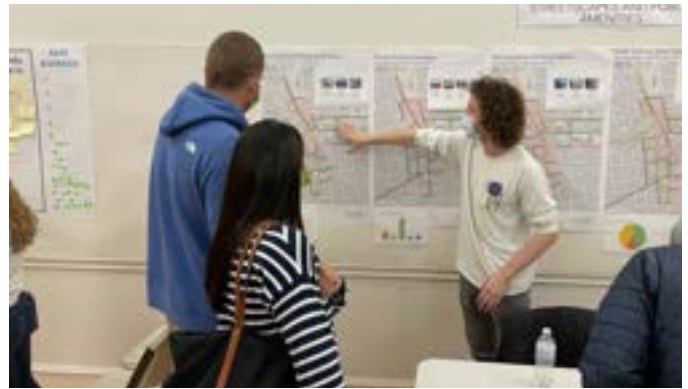


Figure 6.28 Open House Photo 1, photos taken by author.






Figure 6.29 Open House Photo 2, photos taken by author.

Much of the lighting along the sidewalks in the square itself comes from shops. One of the brightest areas is the World War II monument and several people commented that level of brightness felt good and wished it extended to the bike path. However, we also heard that a lack of lighting on the bike path was deliberate to keep people from utilizing it after dark.

In regard to complete streets, documentation of existing street conditions alongside road diet strategies from across the US created visual aids for the attendees. An attendee mentioned the lack of sidewalks on Monroe St, while others liked the pedestrian friendly layouts without sacrificing parking. Some attendees were concerned about



Color Palette Vote				
Colors	Greens 	Creems 	Reds 	Other (Post-Its)
Votes	6	1	7	2(Grey/Blue)

Signage Vote			
Sign Type	Rectangular affixed to building 	Circular affixed to building 	Period Signage with wrought iron details hung from building 
Votes	3	6	10


Awning Votes			
Awning Type	Stripped classic 	Large solid red modern 	Black with trim 
Votes	9	1	2

Figure 6.30 Storefront voting summary.

their front yards and driveways being compromised for new sidewalks.

Various storefront details were chosen that were influenced by 1890's-1920's architectural characteristics (Figure 6.30). The details in craftsmanship of this era recalls Riverside's carpentry history. Other elements such as awnings and signage can vary from showcasing contemporary business graphics to hand-painted decals to give historic charm. The Storefront Improvement Design Guidelines suggest a reintegration of historic characteristics for aspects spanning signage, awnings, exterior facade material, murals, and paint selection.

Three types of storefront improvements were presented for colors, store signs, and awnings. Attendee preferences were submitted with dots

and in some cases, they submitted their choice of style on sticky notes. Some concerns that individuals spoke of were the following:

Awnings are not properly maintained, so not needed.

Want more shades of blues.

Afraid it's going to make the buildings that aren't refurbished look worse in comparison.

Are all the buildings in Riverside getting a makeover?

6.6 Recommendations

These improvements are meant to increase the overall appeal and safety of Riverside Square and the surrounding blocks. Our recommendations focus largely on the quality of the physical blocks. The data and feedback have largely indicated that the physical block conditions need improvement in order to improve the overall quality and safety of the community. While this study focused on Riverside Square, these recommendations are important to consider in other areas of Riverside that receive less attention.

1. The safety and conditions of sidewalks need improvement.

Currently some sidewalks are inaccessible and limit mobility within the community. The sidewalks that need the most attention are those along Bullocks Point Ave. Other areas of interest include the sidewalks along North Street and Shore Rd.

Poor condition curbs or non-existent curbs are a problem when establishing a safe area for pedestrian access and use. A primary role of curbs is to separate vehicular space and pedestrian space. This is a safety tool in areas with high volumes of automobile traffic. Along Bullocks Point Ave many of the curbs are cracked and deteriorating into a state of disrepair. Other portions of the surrounding blocks also need work as well. Similar to sidewalks, curb repairs could focus on Bullocks Point Ave and later encompass other parts of the community.

2. Improve the street conditions with a complete street model and or a road diet.

These options would work best where streets are currently wider than needed, such as Bullocks Point Ave, Shore Rd, and Pawtucket Ave. In order to promote pedestrian activity in the square, the speed and dominant presence of vehicles should be reduced. A road diet would narrow the street lanes and give more space to pedestrians. Including a bike lane in the street would provide a buffer between the shops along the street and the high speed vehicle traffic. Complete Street elements that residents would like to see include bike lanes, more street lighting on side streets, street benches,

vegetation, and more continuous sidewalks. Some of these suggestions would be more successful applied to the primary mixed-use streets while others are more crucial on the side streets branching off of Bullocks Point Ave (Figure 6.31).

3. Develop pocket parks to provide more opportunity for streetscape amenities and seating.

Pedestrian spaces are a vital necessity for a healthy and functioning downtown. Pocket parks would expand the benefits of the existing parks and public spaces. They would further encourage a more active streetscape and could be located in between or around existing structures to draw further attention to shops along the streets.

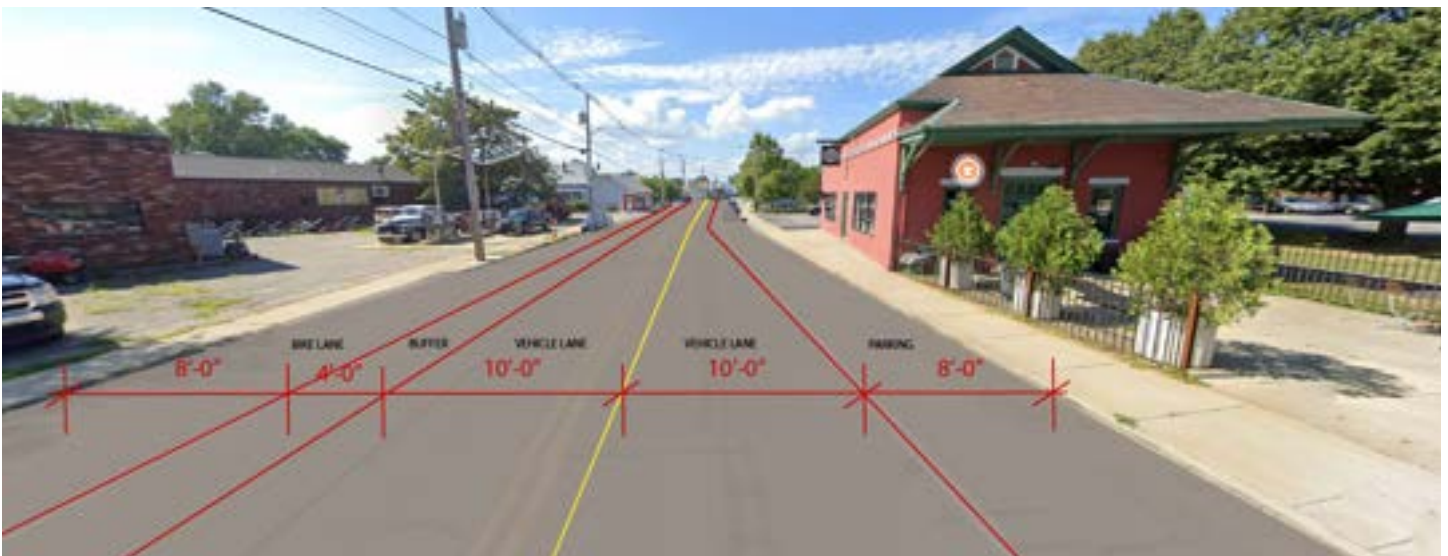
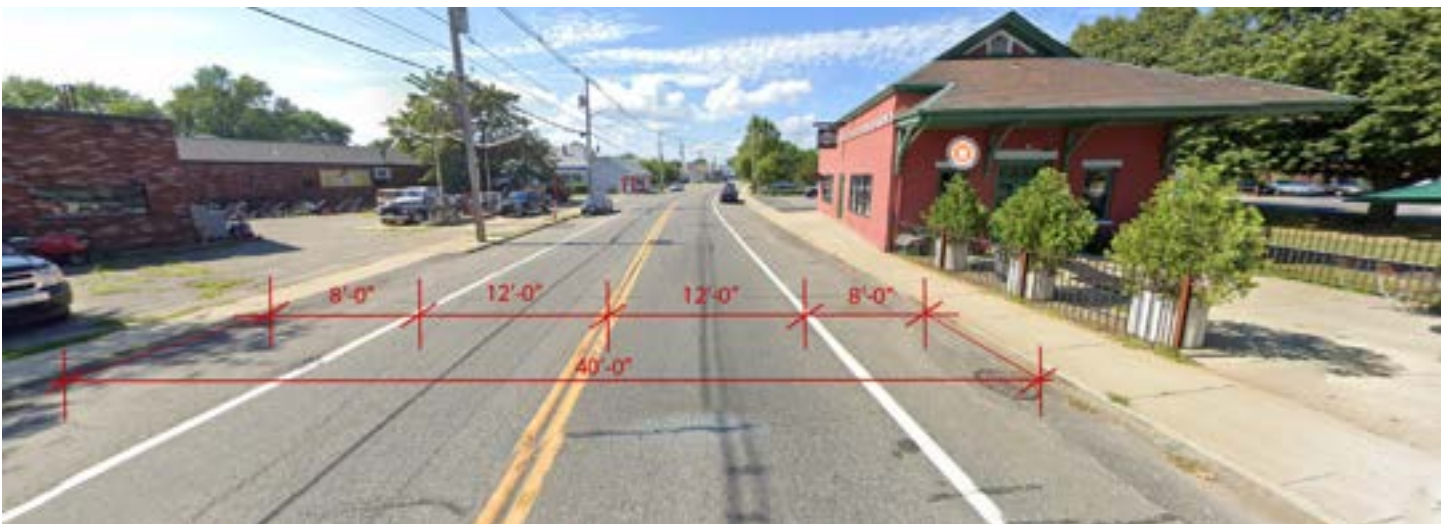


Figure 6.31 Existing conditions and road diet recommendation, graphic created by author.

Parklets would activate local businesses. Street amenities would allow for more activity to occur specifically in the square and other areas where businesses are located. Not only would this be a safety feature, as a separation from the vehicle and the pedestrian, but it would also have a positive impact on the economy of Riverside (Figure 6.32).

4. Plant more trees and other vegetation along Bullocks Point Ave, Shore Rd, and Pawtucket Ave.

Increased planting along these streets will provide environmental and experiential benefits for pedestrians. Planting could be implemented with proposed pocket parks.

5. Add more street lighting to promote street activity in the square and surrounding areas.

While this is not an issue on Bullocks Point Ave, there is an absence of lighting on secondary streets. It is important to implement these strategies for safer connections to the square.

6. Incorporate public art murals to beautify blank walls, activate marginal spaces, and promote street activity.



Figure 6.32 Parklet and public street amenities recommendation, graphic created by author.

Blank walls throughout the neighborhood are a good way to engage the public through art. Murals are also seen as a great way to expand upon the overall physical appearance of the neighborhood (Figure 6.33).

7. Develop Wifi and charging amenities in and around the square to assist in pedestrian and cyclist interaction.

By implementing these digital amenities it will entice pedestrians and cyclists to spend more time within Riverside. This may increase interaction with the surrounding neighborhood and other public amenities.

8. Promote visual merchandising in the storefront windows along Bullocks Point Ave.

This will lead to increased visual engagement with pedestrians and vehicles.

9. Upgrade storefronts to enhance businesses and street character.

Stevie D's

- Create spaces for seasonal outdoor seating to expand restaurant capacity and engagement with the street.
- Enhance existing signage and exterior lighting to bring attention to the business's facade from Bullocks Point Ave.
- Add pedestrian level lighting to the seating area to bring cohesiveness with other areas of the square.
- Enhance sidewalk quality, such as implementing stone curbs and formal walkways to promote pedestrian safety.
- Enhance hardscapes such as removal of overgrown vegetation and improving rain permeability.

Rhodes Pizza

- Maintain and improve iconic signage for its historic value.
- Incorporate outside seating at Rhodes Pizza to provide more appeal to families and pet owners.
- Outdoor eating spaces help the business to

expand its customer demographic. Having sidewalk café barriers can provide comfortable and safe outdoor dining.

Laundro-Mat

- Create a mural to memorialize the Riverside 5, who were a group of five families that made major contributions in saving the carousel that is a National Historic Landmark. A mural on the wall of the laundromat would establish this building as a pillar of the community (Figure 6.35).

Archie’s Bait and Tackle

- Add new doors as part of an overall design strategy to make the building’s purpose as a business more clear. The doors are residential and do not indicate the building is a commercial



Figure 6.35 Public art mural on blank walls, graphic created by author.



Figure 3.33 Stevie D’s Tavern.



Figure 3.34 Rhode’s Pizza.



space.

- Incorporate signage indicating business hours. Existing hand written signs in the window makes it unclear what the store contains.
- Add storefront lighting. Without lighting on the building, the street is dark and unapproachable.
- Bring the shop entrance up to current ADA code. Currently the shop is only accessible via a narrow set of steps.

10. Create well lit areas on the bike path to improve safety at night.

Areas denoted in the lighting maps as being “dark” from both pedestrian input and survey data should be considered as locations where pedestrian lighting can be implemented. Feedback from the Open House attendees stated that the lights should be off at night to discourage use of the bike path, however attendees did point out that in the winter it’s dark as early as 4pm. Timing the lighting to turn off at 9pm allows lighting for evening walks and their desire to keep it dark at night.

11. Implement pedestrian lights that do not require management from residents and business owners.

Providing string lights across Bullocks Point Ave starting at the newly defined entry boundary to the fire station. By implementing string lights businesses that do not have exterior lighting or that do not have their lights on can be illuminated.

12. Create a permanent location for the Christmas Tree lighting using a rotary.

We propose creating a permanent location for a Christmas tree for the community to use in this annual tradition. It could be part of a phased implementation strategy which includes a new rotary at the intersection in front of Borealis Coffee and the World War II Memorial. This is already an area where the public is prone to gather. The intersection is also dangerous because it is where people gather naturally around the bike trail, amid fast moving vehicular traffic. A rotary would force traffic to slow down and make this natural gathering space safer and amplify the Riverside heritage simultaneously.



Figure 3.36 Archie's Bait Shop.



Figure 3.37 Decorative light recommendation.

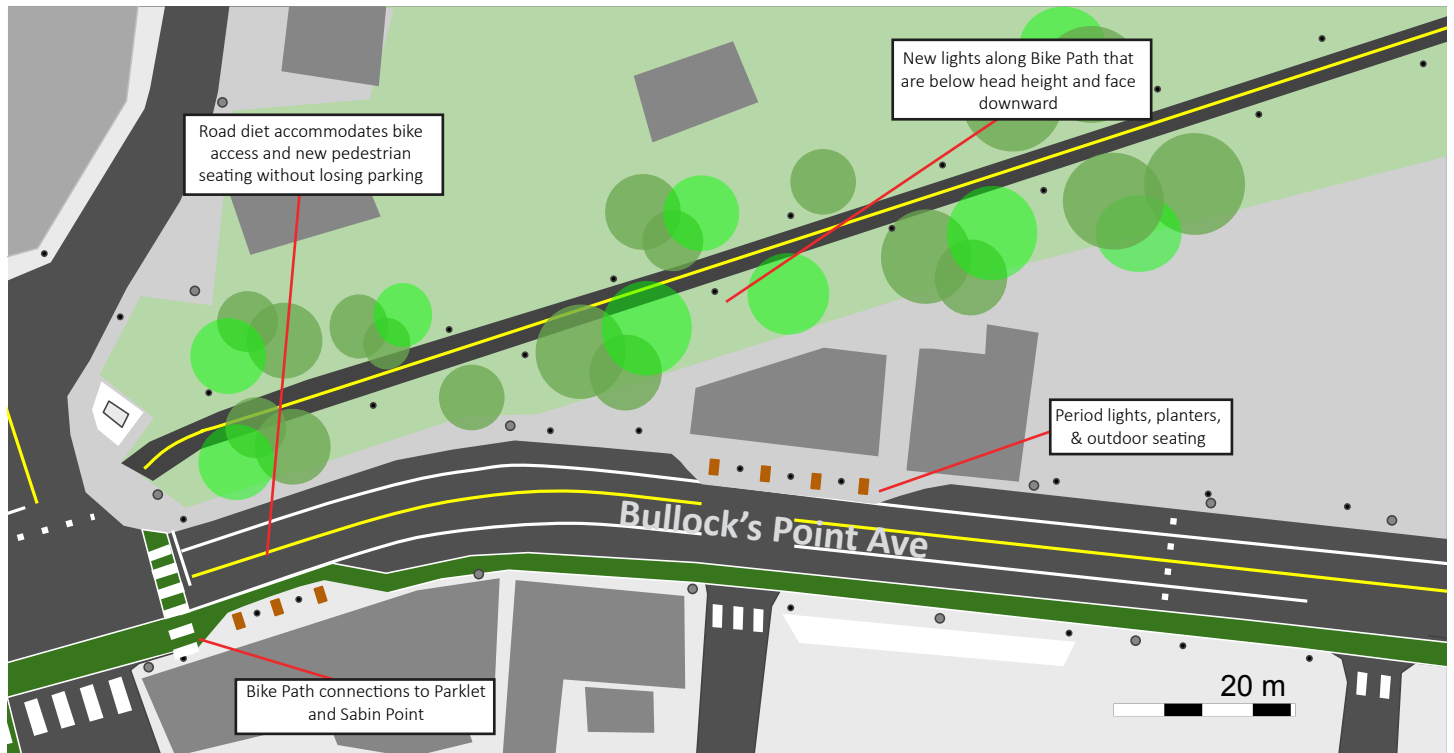


Figure 3.39 Recommended Bullock's Point Ave street improvements.



Chapter 7: Open Space, Parking Occupancy, and Bike Path Access

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7.1 Open Space at the Corner of Monroe & Lincoln Avenues

Located at the intersection of Lincoln and Monroe Avenues, this “pocket park”, consists of approximately 0.14 acres of green space with four mature trees providing nice shade. Despite having potential, this space presently has no seating, programming, or positive activity.

According to the East Providence Public Library, the Riverside Library began as a small reading library between a few shops in the square. Eventually, the library became more established within the community locating at the Congregational Church on Bullocks Point Avenue in 1881. According to the East Providence Public Library, “In 1894, the library moved into a new building constructed at the corner of Monroe and Lincoln Ave. The library stayed at this location for over 75 years before the building was deemed in too poor condition to continue serving as a library. In September of 1972, the library collection was moved into the basement of the old Riverside Junior High School and the old building was torn down. Initially, the move was intended to be temporary, but it took until 2005 to finalize and build the current building at 475 Bullocks Point Ave” (East Providence Public Library).

A public library serves many groups of people, particularly the youth. Libraries can allow young people to be curious, challenged, and engage with others at no cost to their families. It is one of the only places left in our society today that is a free resource, functioning as a safe space, a second home, a place for education, a place for extracurricular activities, and provides tools such as free Internet and wifi. The loss of this public resource centrally located in Riverside Square for members of the community can not be understated. Restoring this location as a place for residents to enjoy and use is critical.

This pocket park was surveyed by walking the area and photographing any changes seen over multiple

site visits in the fall of 2022. During these visits, we did not encounter any persons using the park space. There is evidence of trash and consistent littering in the space as well as no trash receptacles. Alternatively, the green space between the Dairy-Bee and the East Bay Bike Path has a comparably small but beautiful green space with mature trees



Figure 7.1 Historic image of the site, n.d.



Figure 7.2 Current image of the site, 2022.

that is actively used. The difference between the two spaces is the inclusion of benches and bike racks. These amenities could make the pocket park a similarly successful space. Our recommendations for the pocket park will include seating, a free little library, paying tribute to the original structure on the land, as well as a community garden.

7.2 Parking Occupancy Analysis

Figure 7.6 shows Bullocks Point Ave divided into multiple sections to analyze parking capacity. The assessment area starts at the Washington Ave intersection and runs south to the North Street intersection. This is a 2000-foot (0.4 mile) portion of Bullocks Point Ave. Additionally, we surveyed a 575-foot (0.1 miles) section of Lincoln Ave and Monroe Ave, until they intersect one another. The last street in the study is a 875-foot (0.16 mile) section of Turner and Pawtucket, from Hoppin Ave intersection to the Smith Street intersection.

The off-street parking lots are located at the Pomham Rocks Lighthouse (Lighthouse lot), Dari-Bee, Borealis Coffee Company, Stevie D’s Riverside Tavern, Riverside Congressional Church (Church lot), and Lee’s Chinese Restaurant (Lee’s lot). These

were chosen based on their proximity to Riverside Square.

To first identify the parking capacity in Riverside Square, multiple site visits were required. For off-street parking capacity, a manual count of marked parking spots was surveyed in the field. For on-street parking capacity, the typical North American measurement of 18 feet was used to measure the number of parking spaces. Curb cuts into driveways



Figure 7.4 East Providence Scout House, Free Library.

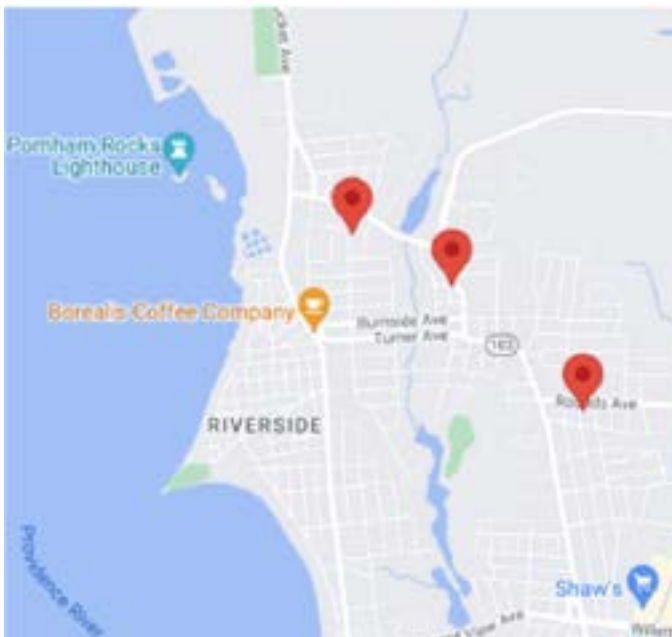


Figure 7.3 Locations of local Free Little Libraries.



Figure 7.5 Tee Bee’s Books, Free Library.

and parking lots, fire hydrant locations, and bus stops were taken into account in the assessment. Measurements in the field were then reinforced with aerial imagery.

Pomham Rocks Lighthouse lot includes 12 parking spaces that are 9 feet by 18 feet. These are painted spaces that are clearly marked. The Dari-Bee's lot does not have marked spaces, but can fit five cars, based on the measurements. Borealis Coffee Company lot is similar to Dari-Bee's in that the parking spaces are not marked, but have the capacity to fit six cars. Stevie D's lot has a total of 35 parking spaces, three of which are owned by the apartment building that shares the lot. The business itself owns 32 parking spaces. The Congregational Church parking lot also does not have marked parking spaces but has the capacity to fit 17 cars. Two to three of the spaces are used to park the large truck they own, so the capacity is lower. The Lee's Chinese Restaurant Parking lot has 35 painted

parking spaces. Therefore, the total capacity of off-street parking along Bullocks Point Ave is 107 parking spaces.

Figure 7.6 shows Bullocks Point Ave divided into seven sections to analyze parking capacity. Starting with the northern section, BP1, Washington Ave to Adams Ave, has a capacity of 18 parking spaces. BP2, from Adams Ave to Monroe Ave, has a capacity of 12 parking spaces. BP3, from Monroe Ave to Lincoln Ave, has 8 parking spaces. BP4, from Lincoln Ave to Maple Ave, can hold 15 vehicles. BP5, from Maple Ave to Oak Ave, has a capacity of 18 spaces. BP6, from Oak Ave to Shore Rd, has a capacity of 19 parking spaces. Last, BP7, from Shore Rd. to North St, can accommodate 26 parking spaces. In total, along Bullocks Point Ave, there are 116 on-street parking spaces.

Monroe Ave has 22 available parking spaces and the observed section of Lincoln Ave has a capacity of



Figure 7.6 Map of areas in the parking assessment.



Figure 7.7 Map of total number of spaces of the assessment area.



18 spaces. Finally, the section of Pawtucket Ave and Turner Ave has 17 available spaces. These additional streets provide an overall total on-street capacity of 156 parking spaces.

Parking Occupancy

The parking occupancy assessment reveals how much of the available parking is utilized. The on-street and off-street areas previously mentioned were observed four different days of the week, over the course of a 3-hour period from 10:30am to 1:30pm. At 11:00am, 12:00pm, and 1:00pm, the number of parked vehicles were recorded manually on a map. The surveys were conducted on Thursday, October 9th, Sunday, October 19th, Friday, October 24th, and Saturday, October 29th, 2022.

The weekend and weekday data were analyzed separately to observe the differences.

Lighthouse Lot

The Pomham Rocks Lighthouse parking lot reached full occupancy on the weekend, but peaked at about 58% occupancy during the week. During the weekend, many vehicles with bike racks were observed parked in the lot.

Off-Street Parking Occupancy

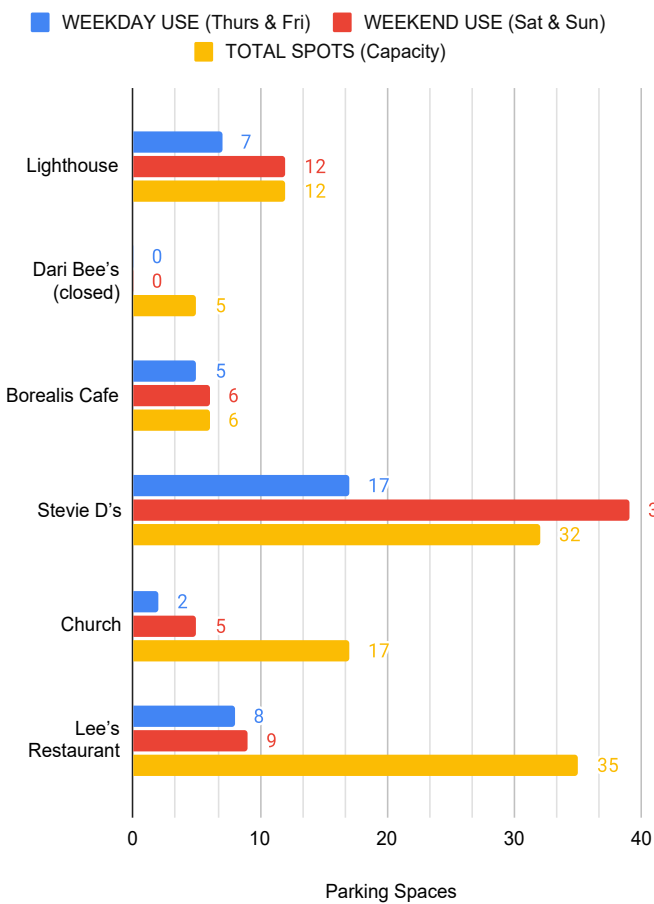


Figure 7.8 Graph of Off-Street parking occupancy.

On-Street Parking Occupancy

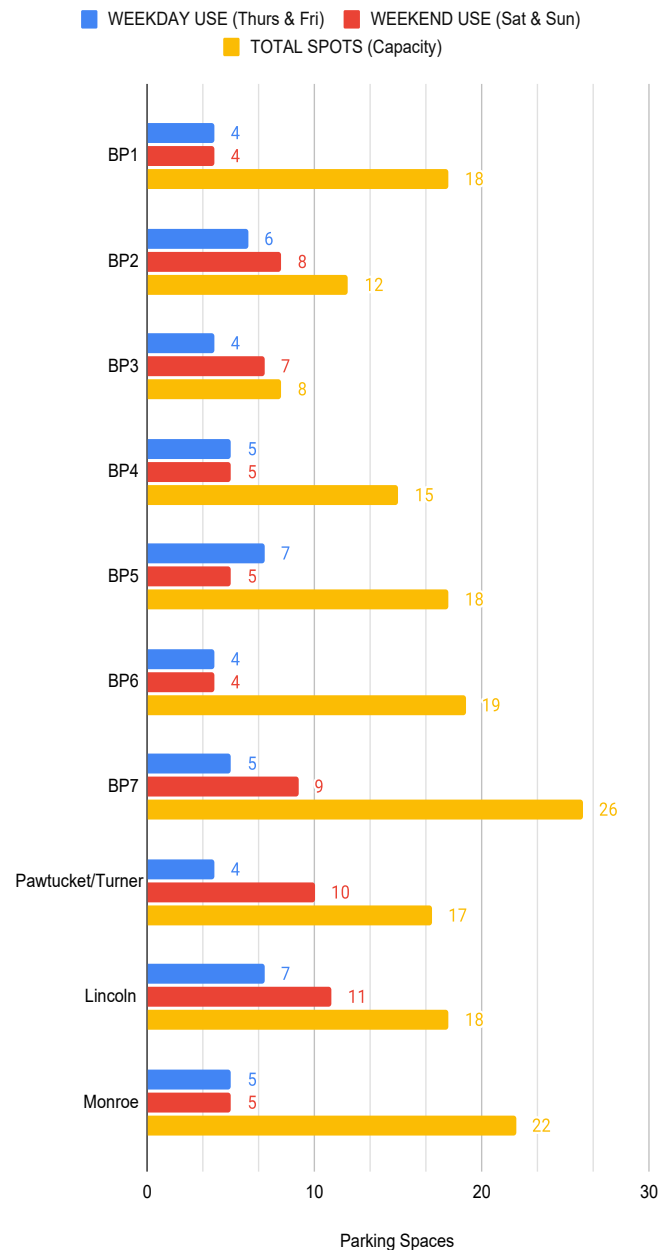


Figure 7.9 Graph of On-Street Parking Occupancy.



Dari-Bee Lot

During the Thursday, October 9th visit, Dari Bee's was closed. The parking lot was empty and no one attempted to park there. On Sunday, October 19th, the lot was chained off, preventing any vehicles from parking there during the off-season. Therefore, Dari Bee's lot is unused and unable to be used for a large majority of the year. The lot was at 0% occupancy for all surveys conducted.

Borealis Coffee Company Lot

During the weekday surveys, the Borealis lot never reached full occupancy but was heavily used at 83%. On the weekends, the lot was at 100% occupancy with 6 out of 6 spaces being used. The busiest times were before noon on all observation days.

Stevie D's Riverside Tavern Lot

This lot is one of the largest in the vicinity of the square with 32 parking spaces. During the weekday, the occupancy reached 53% with 17 vehicles in the lot. This occurred at 1:00pm on Thursday, October 9th. During the weekend, Stevie D's was over capacity at 121%. Vehicles were parked in the painted no parking areas during a Sunday football game.

Congressional Church Lot

Observation of this parking lot took place after the church service that is held at this location. Data shows that the weekend use is less than the weekday use, at only 29% occupancy. The Thursday observation revealed 58% occupancy due to the church thrift store being open. On Saturday, October 29th, the lot was gated off, with only the Church's truck parked within.

Lee's Chinese Restaurant Lot

This parking lot is the largest off-street parking lot in this assessment. Based on the data, it is the most underutilized lot in the survey area. The weekday and weekend data were similar. There was 22% occupancy during the week, and 25% occupancy during the weekend. Similar to Stevie D's Riverside Tavern, there is an influx of cars in the afternoon.

The following analysis summarizes the on-street parking occupancy on the primary streets in Riverside Square.

Bullocks Point Ave

The most underutilized sections of Bullocks Point Ave are BP1 with a maximum of 22% occupancy, BP6 at 21% occupancy, and BP7 at 34% on the weekend. These areas are further away from the center of the square. The sections that are the most utilized are BP2 and BP3. These are directly adjacent to Borealis Coffee Company, Stevie D's Riverside Tavern, and the Riverside Laundromat. BP2 reaches up to 75% occupancy on the weekend while BP3 reaches 87% on the weekend. It was observed that BP4 reaches only 33% occupancy on both the weekdays and weekends and BP5 reaches a maximum of 38% occupancy on the weekends. BP4 and BP5, which are adjacent to the Buckets building (269 Bullocks Point Ave) and Union Bar + Burrito, have the capacity to double or triple their current usage. BP7 is used mainly by residents who live along that section of Bullocks Point Ave whose vehicles remain for extended periods of time.

Lincoln Ave

Lincoln Ave was at 61% occupancy on the weekends due to residents being home from work, while only at 38% occupancy during the week. There is one space right off Bullocks Point Ave used by customers of the corner store. There was also a quick turnaround to whoever parked in that space.

Monroe Ave

Monroe Ave was underutilized at 22% occupancy on both the weekdays and weekends. However, parking activity was observed to be overflowing from Stevie D's parking lot on one site visit.

Pawtucket Ave/Turner Ave

This area of the survey showed the most difference between weekday and weekend use. During the weekday, parking reached 23% occupancy, while on the weekend, it reached 58% occupancy. This is over double the usage on the weekday. The vehicles

furthest east on Turner Ave, where it becomes more residential, were parked for longer periods of time.

7.3 East Bay Bike Path Access

The team observed the East Bay Bike Path on two-weekday visits and two weekend visits between Washington Avenue and Cove Street. The map shows seven formal access points in the residential area. There are eight informal access points to the bike path which are typically dirt and gravel. Vegetation along the bike path is lush and almost blocks the informal access points. Most informal access points connect to a residential area and are easily eroded by water, which brings dirt, gravel, and sand onto the bike path.

Additionally, during observations we noticed pedestrians and cyclists usually share two lanes casually. Reasons for this potential safety problem include first, the lanes switch at different parts of the path; second, road markings and small white signs along the path are not obvious; third, road markings lack maintenance and are in poor condition.

Trash cans are concentrated by Borealis Coffee Shop and are few and far between further along the path where beverage bottles are being thrown. Second,

the trash cans are not fixed to the ground, causing trash cans to show up randomly and sometimes far from the path.

Borealis Coffee Company offers convenience facilities including restrooms, free water, and simple bicycle repair tools. Also, the fencing along the outdoor patio is used as an informal bike rack where visitors can view their bike from their seat.

7.4 Open House Feedback

The Pocket Park

The pocket park located at the corner of Lincoln and Monroe Ave is an ideal location for a gathering space, and given its previous use as a public library, we found that the community responded very well to the idea of transforming it into a park that the surrounding residents can use.

At the open house, we suggested four ideas to improve the existing green space including but not limited to a community garden, park seating, a gazebo, and a free lending library. The most popular idea was the community garden. Attendees were confident that there would be strong support among residents to maintain raised garden beds. Attendees also mentioned that there are many



Figure 7.10 Informal access point.



Figure 7.11 Informal access point

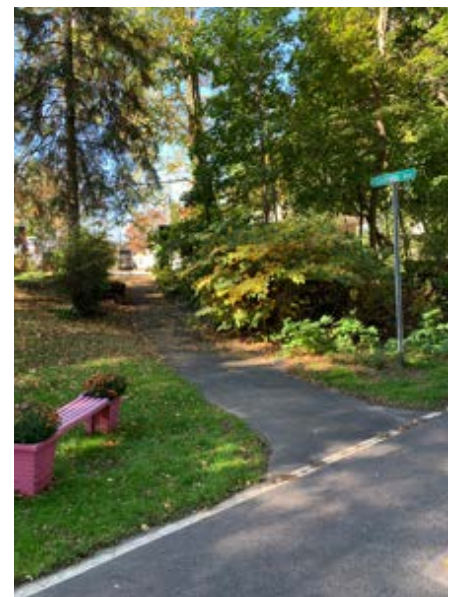


Figure 7.12 Formal access point.



Figure 7.13 Map showing East Bay Bike Path access points in Riverside.



individuals and families who live in apartments with no backyard. Therefore, a public space to enjoy would be an invaluable asset to the community. Attendees also mentioned that the raised garden beds could be used for vegetables and further inspire farmer's markets which would encourage the presence of local businesses in Riverside.

One attendee suggested that the open space be used as a gathering and event area for the public either seasonally or year round. They suggested the pocket park may encourage more community spaces to pop up around Riverside.

The former Riverside Library building on the site was a point of conversation and consideration for many residents. There was a mixed amount of people who remembered the original library. One attendee said she would go there as a child and fondly remembered how the children's section was upstairs where volunteers would play songs and read to the kids. She thought the use of the library photograph provided context and history of the library site and helped residents consider the future of the park space. The photo also facilitated conversations about honoring the now lost building in a memorial that would also provide educational awareness of its significance.

Parking

Feedback about parking occupancy surveys were collected from attendees. One attendee revealed the bold idea of removing street parking to make Bullocks Point Ave a more walkable street. While pedestrian streets are emerging in many towns, it may be more applicable at a smaller scale on Bullocks Point Ave. Another attendee stated that they didn't believe parking is or will be an issue. They also mentioned that Riverside customers don't see parking as insufficient and that parking is able to service future growth. This attendee also mentioned that opening an electric scooter station and shop would provide a new means of transportation around Riverside. Scooters take up significantly less parking space and could also bring new people



Figure 7.14 Current signage.



Figure 7.15 Bike repair station on fence at Borealis Coffee Company.



to the community. Finally, another attendee mentioned removing parking minimums for property development. They said that data shows that parking is not as much of an actual problem as a perceived problem.

There were two themes that attendees brought up repeatedly. The first theme is the parking situation at Stevie D’s Riverside Tavern. People supported the data by saying that the parking lot is often overflowing on the weekends. Some residents expressed concern with the overflow of vehicles on the adjacent streets and in front of residences.

Conversely, another attendee believed that parking is an issue and “there’s not enough [of it]”. They proposed that a site could be looked at further from the square that has the potential to be turned into a parking lot to service the bike path and the surrounding community.

Bike Access

Feedback showed the safety issues of the East Bay Bike Path were the highest priority. The second priority for the community was improving users’ experience of the bike path. Attendees suggested making the path more accessible and convenient for different groups such as existing residents and visitors.

Four ways to improve the bike path were presented to illicit community preferences. These include:

- Signage Improvements, 8 votes
- Adding more access points, 4 votes
- Trash maintenance, 3 votes
- Adding bike racks, 2 votes

Additional comments from attendees focus on visual appeal, safety, and amenities. The visual concerns focused on the lack of maintenance of the path, its integrity, cracks, and imperfections. Regarding safety, the signs indicating pedestrians on the left and cyclists on the right cause confusion. Additionally, there are potentially dangerous interactions between pedestrians, cyclists, and



Figure 7.17 Student collecting feedback from community members

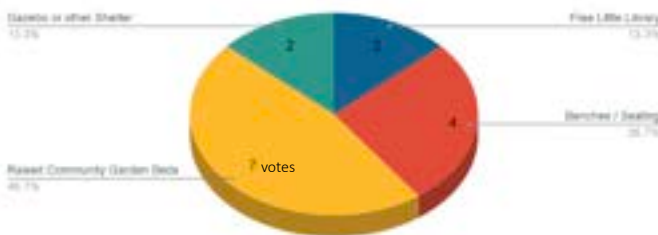


Figure 7.16 Chart of the voting distribution for the park space.

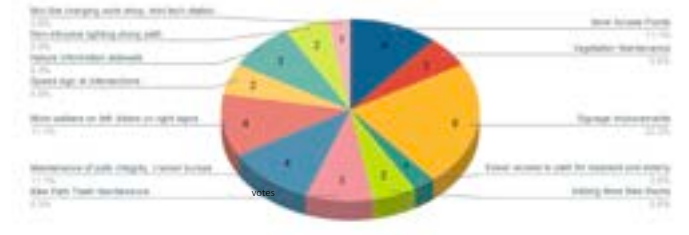


Figure 7.18 Chart showing voting distribution for the bike path improvements.



vehicles at intersections. Other commentary from attendees focused on the need for signage about the surrounding amenities, maintaining vegetation, and including lighting along the path. Addressing these concerns have the potential to increase the use of the path, its safety and appeal.

7.5 Recommendations

1. Add raised community garden beds to the park.

Phase 1: Minimal Impact

Gardening beds provide an opportunity for community engagement and they further beautify the park space. Residents and civic groups would have the opportunity to maintain and grow a garden within their community. Additionally, garden beds can provide the community with food-related resources and foster gardening knowledge. Community groups such as a garden club or girl/boy scouts could be designated as secondary guardians to monitor and maintain beds.

2. Incorporate benches at the park.

Phase 1: Minimal Impact

Incorporating benches into the park space provides much-needed rest spots, a more welcoming and enjoyable space, the opportunity to encourage social interaction, and a place to recognize notable citizens. Additionally, community groups and citizens could sponsor memorial markers on benches.

3. Install a free little library at the park.

Phase 1: Minimal Impact

A free little library can provide free community resources such as donated reading materials. This could also make the park a destination activity for visitors and residents. Resources and donations to build the library could be provided by a civic group such as boy/girl scouts, the Riverside Library, or the vocational program at Riverside High School. Once built, the library could be registered on the Free Little Library website.

4. Install an educational plaque.

Phase 2: Higher Impact

Installing an educational plaque within the pocket park allows local residents and visitors to reconnect with a part of the town's past. The historic use of the land and library that once sat on it is only visible through photos, hence the plaque would inform visitors of that information. The process of designing, gathering information, and executing the installation of the plaque will be coordinated with the community.

5. Build a gazebo or other sheltered structure in the park.

Phase 2: Higher Impact

Creating a structure that provides shelter within the pocket park allows residents and visitors to feel as if they have a safe and comfortable place to enjoy the neighborhood no matter the weather or season. A new structure could restore this site's history of service to the community. The structure itself could honor the historical use of the land as a library.

6. Improve the informal access points connecting residential streets to the bike path.

Phase 2: Higher Impact

Improving informal access points can improve the safety of the bike path. A safer path can improve the experience for all users, increase the frequency of use, as well as, meet the demand of disadvantaged groups such as the elderly and the disabled. Formalizing the access points would support safety for all potential users. The bike path improvements could be done in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT).

7. Add more bike repair stations and information stations along the bike path.

Phase 2: Higher Impact

These additions would enhance pedestrian and cyclists' experiences and increase the use of the path. The bike repair and path information stations with instructional guides and maps could be funded, designed, and located in collaboration with local bike businesses and RIDOT.



8. Add non-intrusive lighting along the bike path.

Phase 2: Higher Impact

Additional lighting would improve safety during the evening and early morning hours, especially during the winter when there is less daylight. It also extends the daily use of the path because of its improved safety. Solar-powered lights could minimize energy use, installation labor with wiring, and impact on the site.

9. Install new trash receptacles.

Phase 1: Minimal Impact

Installing receptacles would improve the appeal and condition of the path by reducing litter, making it more inviting. Trash receptacles could be designed to make it easier for cyclists to dispose of their trash on the go. Implementing routine maintenance and trash receptacle improvements could be completed by working with RIDOT.

10. Repair and repaint existing signage on the bike path.

Phase 1: Minimal Impact

Improving wayfinding clarifies where bikers and walkers should locate. Using vertical signage in addition to the painted signage on the path would enhance the safety of all users as well. This can be realized by working with RIDOT to identify locations and execute the implementation of new signage and repainting.





Figure 7.19 Rendering of park design recommendations.



Figure 7.20 Rendering of East Bay Bike Path improvements.



Chapter 8: Adaptive Reuse and Mixed-Use Development

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Our team concentrated on two sites on Bullocks Point Avenue: the Lee’s Chinese Restaurant surface lot at 376 Bullocks Point Avenue, and the former James Oldham Elementary School at 640 Bullocks Point Avenue. The team focused on design issues, taxation potential, the East Providence Mixed-Use Zoning Ordinance, and recent new development projects in East Providence, Warren, and Newport that serve as “success stories” for our proposals. We also spoke with local officials and neighborhood stakeholders and visited the project location multiple times.

During the study period, the team met with community stakeholders and project partners both in person and on Zoom. These meetings included David Bachrach, William Fazioli, Sarah Frew, Dominic Leonardo, James Moran, Melissa Linhares Spurr, and Patrick Hanner, all employees of the City of East Providence; a representative from the East Providence School Department; Luca Carnevale, from Hope and Main; Jillian Finkle from GrowSmartRI; Mia Brum from the Community Partnerships Center at Roger Williams University; Ruarri Miller, local developer and business owner at The Apiary; and Eric Crook, from the Riverside Renaissance Movement. We are grateful for the time and input our partners generously shared with us.

8.1 Zoning for Mixed-Use

The zoning, land use, and development in the City of East Providence, including Riverside, is regulated by the East Providence Code of Ordinances, which was codified in 1987 and amended in 1998. These regulations are pursuant to the authority contained in Title 45, Chapter 23 of the Rhode Island General Laws, known as the “Rhode Island Land Development and Subdivision Review Enabling Act of 1992”, and Division 2 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of East Providence.

While we are proposing housing and mixed-use spaces, we remain mindful of the existing zoning ordinances and the East Providence Comprehensive

Plan. The 2010-15 East Providence Comprehensive Plan states: “The purpose of the rezoning is to revitalize these blighted properties through a redevelopment with a new mixed commercial and residential structure that makes the most of its location, i.e., easy walking distance to shopping, services and on a public transportation route, and which incorporates a mix of commercial and residential use that is decent, safe and affordable. The expansion of this for mixed use development in other areas of the City is being assessed and drafted as appropriate.”

The City of East Providence Code of Ordinances incorporates the mixed use development and main street revitalization into the Riverside Mixed-Use Overlay District in Section 19-322(b)(1), stating the purpose is to: “...encourage new opportunities for mixed land use(s), in “Main Street” and/or neighborhood center configurations, that promote a mixture of land use(s), including multi-unit residential and a variety of neighborhood oriented commercial land uses and to realize commercial and/or mixed use development with a storefront character using a typical Main Street build-to-line configuration with buildings at the sidewalk and front property line, whenever feasible. Main Street uses primarily provide convenience retail sales and services to the surrounding residential neighborhood and gives priority to the access and convenience of pedestrians. Non-residential uses typically occupy the street front, although residential uses are conditionally permitted by special use permit. These uses may include, but are not limited to, a combination of commercial use(s), offices, retail, residential, personal convenience service businesses, cultural activity and public and civic uses. Land uses may be mixed by floor (vertically within a building) or horizontally on a parcel of land. Pedestrian linkages from mixed commercial/residential, retail, personal service and recreational land uses to existing areas of neighborhood residential land use shall be encouraged.”

Riverside Square is specifically addressed within the mixed use overlay district, which requires: “All those parcels directly fronting on the easterly and westerly sides of Bullocks Point Avenue from parcel 13 of map 311, block 1 and commencing southerly to the intersection of Beach Road on the westerly side and Crescent View Avenue on the easterly side, and inclusive of parcel 6 of map 312 block 8, and with the exception of parcel 20 of map 312, block 12 (former Vamco site, as regulated under Division 19 of Zoning entitled Riverside Square Mixed Use/Downtown Overlay) and all parcels fronting on the easterly and westerly sides of Pawtucket Avenue from the intersection of Hoppin Avenue and commencing southerly to the intersection of Turner Avenue and as defined in G.L. § 45-24-31 (Overlay Districts). All properties located within the Riverside Square Overlay District may choose either to develop or redevelop, subject to the provisions of Division 15, section 19-322 or may choose to develop or redevelop under the provisions of the current underlying zoning of the property (C-1, C-2, C-3)(Sec. 19-322(a)(4) of the East Providence Code of Ordinances).”

The Urban Land Institute’s Mixed-Use Development Handbook characterizes mixed-use development as one that 1) provides three or more significant revenue-producing uses (such as retail/entertainment, office, residential, hotel, and/or civic/cultural/recreation), 2) fosters integration, density, and compatibility of land uses, and 3) creates a walkable community with uninterrupted pedestrian connections. Therefore, the success of a mixed use district space depends on the sustainability, walkability, convenience, flexibility, and inclusion of the space to meet the needs of community members and visitors. To create a mixed use space vertically within a building means to assign multiple uses within a single building, with uses and purposes designated by floor. Alternatively, a horizontal mixed-use is when there are multiple uses in separate structures on a single property. Within a mixed use district, the buildings are typically a combination of retail or commercial

space as well as residential units, which may require additional permitting or variances, including the varying need for additional parking where a non-residential use inhabits an existing building. Mixed-use zoning allows to maximize the space available in a given area to create room for commercial, residential, or light industries together to help create economically sustainable environments for residents.

The City of East Providence has already taken steps supporting the expansion of mixed use development. The City recently acquired and rezoned a parcel of property, known as the Vamco site, which is located at 336 Bullocks Point Avenue, within the Riverside Square study area. The City demolished underutilized and dilapidated structures and mitigated industrial contaminants from the site to make it feasible to develop. The Riverside Square Mixed Use/Downtown Overlay further increases the economic desirability of the site because the ordinance supports a high-density mixed-use redevelopment. The Vamco site, which is under contract for development into commercial and residential units called the ‘Riverside Residences,’ has served as a model for our proposals that support the revitalization of Riverside Square.

8.2 Square Footage Assessment

This section addresses local and national square footage for retail and multi-family housing development.

Year Built	All	Studio	1 Bed	2 Bed
2008	993	573	790	1132
2009	992	600	796	1133
2010	984	614	787	1147
2011	979	571	762	1109
2012	956	493	752	1092
2013	957	525	757	1108
2014	944	536	751	1113
2015	947	515	752	1122
2016	936	503	752	1121
2017	941	497	752	1136
2018	943	514	757	1138
2018 vs. 2008	-5.2%	-10.3%	-4.2%	0.5%

Figure 8.1: Average apartment sizes across United States.



Regardless of the year of completion, data from 2018 shows the overall national average for a studio apartment is 472 square feet, while a one-bedroom apartment is 714 square feet, and a two-bedroom apartment is 1,006 square feet (Balint, 2018). RentCafe data shows the average unit in East Providence is approximately 910 square feet. Additionally, the East Shore Apartment Homes, an apartment development located on Boyd Avenue in East Providence, has one-bedroom, one-bathroom units of 675 square feet. Larger units consist of the one-bedroom, one-bathroom and a den which is a total of 1,000 square feet. The two-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment is 1,050 square feet, and the two-bedroom, two-bathroom unit has 1,200 square feet. The housing units proposed in this study maintain these approximate sizes.

When researching typical retail square footage, we found that “Main Street” stores in the US are 1,000 square feet or smaller (Borne, 2022). The Bucketts Building, located at 273-279 Bullocks Point Avenue, is a local precedent with four businesses on the ground level and apartments on the second floor. The businesses each operate with 1,226 square feet, which is higher than the national average. The company that did the project, Apiary LLC, focuses on contracting and development services for residential and lite commercial projects. The company remodeled the first floor for four businesses and created rentable one-bedroom and studio apartments on the second floor, creating a viable mixed-use property.

8.3 Property Tax Revenue Methods

Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized parcels can benefit a community by providing needed or enhanced services and amenities and raising the property tax base. There are various methods to estimate increased, post-development tax revenues. This section will detail the City of East Providence’s post-development assessment method to estimate the additional tax revenue generated from partial redevelopment of the Lee’s Chinese Restaurant surface lot at 376 Bullocks Point Avenue.

While our team has considered an adaptive reuse scenario at the former James Oldham Elementary School at 640 Bullocks Point Avenue, the building will remain in municipal ownership and its taxation will not change. Potential business activity at the site could generate sales and employment taxes for the State of Rhode Island, although estimating these taxes was outside the scope of this project.

The City of East Providence tax assessor provided the steps involved in reevaluating a site after redevelopment. They detailed two scenarios for residential and retail development. In any assessment, a building’s assessed value is different from an estimated asking price, and that a building might sell for much more than its assessed value.

To calculate residential property taxes, one uses the assessed value, divides by 1,000, then multiplies the result by the tax rate for the applicable land use. A table of taxation rates by property type is shown

2022 TAX RATES AND EXEMPTIONS		
RESIDENTIAL RATE:		\$21.86
COMMERCIAL RATE (2020 FIRST TIME):		\$56.89
10% HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION (OWNER OCCUPIED 1-3 FAMILY HOME)		
REAL AND TANGIBLE BILLS 10% DISCOUNT (IF BILL IS PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO JULY 1ST)		
REAL ESTATE		
EXEMPTION:	AMOUNT	TAX REDUCTION:
1. VETERANS:	\$5,250	\$113.35
2. UNMARRIED WIDOW OF VETERAN:	\$5,250	\$113.35
3. GOLD STAR PARENT (ONLY ONE):	\$12,500	\$273.25
4. CERTIFIED 100% BLIND RESIDENTS:	\$29,000	\$627.06
5. TOTAL SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS:	\$16,400	\$357.82
7. VETERAN'S MODIFIED HOUSING:	\$16,400	\$357.82
8. SENIOR CITIZEN (OVER 65, ONE ONLY):	\$27,900	\$601.89
9. VARIABLE / HARDSHIP:	Variable	Variable
R & R VETERANS AND OVER 65:	\$36,150	\$780.24
MOTOR VEHICLE		
MOTOR VEHICLE BILLS 1.5% DISCOUNT (IF BILL IS PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO AUGUST 1ST)		
EXEMPTION:	AMOUNT	TAX REDUCTION:
1. VETERANS:	\$5,250	\$105.00
2. UNMARRIED WIDOW OF VETERAN:	\$5,250	\$105.00
3. GOLD STAR PARENT (ONLY ONE):	\$7,875	\$157.50
4. CERTIFIED 100% BLIND RESIDENTS:	\$35,500	\$765.00
5. TOTAL SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABLED VETERAN:	\$19,500	\$412.50
44-34-13 SPECIALLY ADAPTED VEHICLES:	9% OF VALUE	
44-34-11 EXEMPTED IN MOTOR VEHICLES:	\$6,000	\$20.00
TANGIBLE TAX RATE: (EXEMPTION ON FIRST \$999)		\$56.31
MOTOR VEHICLE TAX RATE:		\$20.00
PHONE CHG ON MOTOR VEHICLE'S:		\$6,000

Figure 8.2: East Providence taxation rates and exemptions for property 2022.



in Figure 8.2. For example, if an East Providence residential property is valued at \$100,000, with an additional \$40,000 in land value, to calculate the property taxes owed to the city, one divides the total value by 1,000 (which results in \$140) and multiplies that by the city's residential tax rate (in 2022 the residential rate is \$21.86) which equals \$3,060 in property taxes owed for the year.

If the space developed is residential, then an average assessed value is determined based on comparable units throughout East Providence. For example, the average assessed value for a single residential unit in East Providence is \$110,000. This amount includes \$20,000 in land value per unit.

New retail spaces use an estimated assessed value of \$83 per square foot. In an example where a property contained 800 square feet of retail space, the East Providence property tax owed would be \$1,785.50 a year (800 multiplied by \$83 is \$66,400, divided by 1,000 is \$66.40, and then multiplied by the 2022 East Providence commercial tax rate of \$26.89/1,000 is \$1,785.50).

Residential parking spaces are evaluated as part of the land value for tax-assessment purposes. This assumes an area of 160 square feet per parking space and a per-square foot valuation of \$2.50. Using this methodology, the annual property tax earned for the average residential off-street parking space in East Providence is \$8.74 (160 square feet, multiplied by \$2.50 is \$400. This amount divided by 1,000 is 0.4. When multiplied by the residential rate of \$21.86, this results in \$8.75 owed.)

8.4 Regional Mixed-Use Developments

Former Vamco Site

Once the location of a jewelry manufacturer, the former site of Vamco Industries at 336 Bullocks Point Avenue is approximately .43 acre. Vamco Industries ceased operations in 1997, and the City of East Providence acquired the land ten years later

in 2007. In 2013, the city completed a \$500,000 site remediation using a series of federal and state grant funds.

In 2020, the City of East Providence issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for site redevelopment. One Neighborhood Builders, a Providence-based affordable housing developer, submitted the successful proposal including 16 units of affordable housing consisting of six one-bedroom units, four two-bedroom units, four town homes, one ADA-accessible two-bedroom apartment, and one A/V accessible two-bedroom apartment all contained within a 5,400 square foot building footprint. The resulting structure will vary between two and three stories and includes 16 off-street parking spaces located behind the building.

Three of the units will be reserved for youth aging out of foster care, in partnership with Foster Forward, an East Providence-based non-profit supporting adolescents and adults who are currently or formerly in the foster care system.

The remaining units will be rented to residents with an income of between 30 and 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), which is an annual income of approximately \$20,000 to \$70,000, depending upon household size.

When completed and fully occupied, the site will transition from a city-owned parcel with no tax liability to a residential site that will eventually generate approximately \$38,400 in property taxes annually.

This estimate was calculated using 16 apartments valued at \$1.43 million total, 16 parking spaces valued at \$6,400, and the existing land valued at \$326,400. Based on the 2022 East Providence residential tax rate, the site will generate \$38,474 in property taxes within six years of the project's completion.



A Tax Stabilization Agreement will phase the increased building assessment value by 20 percent each year for five years. Assuming a 2022 rate, in Year 1 the property tax assessed by the City of East Providence will be \$6,995, increasing by 20 percent annually until the full amount is billed in Year 6. Figure 8.3 details this phasing and the development program.

Innovate Newport

Innovate Newport is a \$7.1 million redevelopment collaboration between the City of Newport, the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, and the Economic Development Fund of Rhode Island (EDFRI), and is a key component in Newport’s overall economic development strategy to build economic resiliency within the city (Rhode Island Commerce, 2022). The city donated funds as well as assisted in the streamlining of permitting and regulatory processes. Innovate Newport also received incentives from Rebuild Rhode Island Tax Credits totaling \$3,378,123 that will be distributed to the site over a 5-year period (Rhode Island Commerce, 2022).

Innovate Newport is located in a three-story former school with a total space of 27,700 square feet.

The building has been adapted into four sections including 12,000 square feet of permanent office space; 8,000 square feet of common area space and event space; 5,000 square feet of co-working space; and 2,700 square feet of maker space (Kate Bramson, 2017). The spaces allow for a variety of work to be completed depending on client needs and availability. These spaces are further divided into a 2,350 square foot conference hall, a café accommodating up to 35 people, hot desks, a dedicated desk room, huddle rooms for gatherings of six or fewer, a small boardroom for meetings of four to nine individuals, a large board room for groups of 12 to 18 people, and a streetside courtyard that can hold 35 people (Innovate Newport, 2022).

In addition to dedicated workspaces The Innovate Newport created an innovative entrepreneur space that works alongside RIHub and Social Enterprise Greenhouse to reach startups and hopeful entrepreneurs within the region (Dunning, 2022). Innovate Newport has also worked with Newport County to bring new support networks and mentorship programs to the area for residents. This allows the community to have greater involvement with the entrepreneurial opportunities.

Vamco Site: 336 Bullocks Point Avenue	Units	Estimated Value Per Unit	Value
Apartment Units Proposed:	16	\$90,000	\$1,440,000
Land Value (incl. 16 parking spaces)	16	\$20,000	\$320,000

Estimated Total New Value: \$1,760,000
New Property Taxes Paid: \$ 38,474

Schedule of 5-year Tax Stabilization Phasing (Assumes 2022 rate/values remain in place)	Building Value	Land Value	Tax Paid
Year 1	\$0	\$320,000	\$ 6,995
Year 2	\$288,000	\$320,000	\$ 13,291
Year 3	\$576,000	\$320,000	\$ 19,587
Year 4	\$864,000	\$320,000	\$ 25,882
Year 5	\$1,152,000	\$320,000	\$ 32,178
Year 6	\$1,440,000	\$320,000	\$ 38,474

Figure 8.3: Table of Vamco taxation and TSA phasing.



Along with bringing programs to residents, the Innovate Newport model allows the residents to utilize a variety of shared spaces which can be beneficial for residents and groups who need Internet access and a reliable workspace.

Hope and Main

Hope and Main, located in Warren, launched in 2009 and provides access to affordable commercial kitchens in a shared-use model, technical and business assistance for food-based businesses, access to retail locations and marketing assistance, and small-business financing sources. Hope and Main estimates that the organization has helped over 400 food-based businesses launch over the past 13 years, and there is currently a waiting list for potential tenants.

Hope and Main is a three-floor facility with an approximate 6,000 square-foot footprint. In total, it consists of 18,000 square feet with about a third, or 6,400 square feet, dedicated to production (i.e., kitchen) facilities. The remaining spaces contain classroom, conference, and event spaces, a demonstration kitchen, and administrative offices. The building has WiFi throughout, a dedicated gluten-free food preparation zone, and shared walk in refrigeration (each unit is approximately 12-by-14 feet), a shared dishwasher, sink, and dry-ingredients storage space. Each kitchen has separate HVAC, and there is one specialized baking room with high capacity ovens.

According to Executive Director of Operations, Hope and Main has 95% of the equipment a food business would need, although member tenants can also bring their own equipment. In a typical month the organization has 60 to 70 members renting space hourly in the building. This reduces start-up costs for members, but does not allow tenants to build collateral required by potential lenders.

In addition to the former school building at 691 Main Street, the organization has about 1,000 square feet of additional off-site ingredient storage.



Figure 8.4: Interior photo of Innovate Newport.



Figure 8.5: Interior photo of Hope and Main.

Hope and Main’s goal is to “meet people where they are” in their food-production and business undertakings. While most of the members use the shared-kitchen production facilities, there are some members who take advantage of the educational programs, ingredients sourcing, merchandise packaging, marketing and licensing consultation, contract manufacturing, and mailing services. The organization hosts regular markets on site throughout the year where 15 to 25 vendors sell their products to the public, as shown in Figure 8.5.

8.5 Adaptive Reuse Development: James Oldham Elementary School

The former James Oldham Elementary School at 640 Bullocks Point Avenue is a one-story, red-brick, colonial revival-style school. Completed in 1952, the building has a one-story rear addition from the 1980s. The building is approximately 33,900 square feet and is sited on a 3.9 acre lot.

The property is owned by the City of East Providence School Department and has remained vacant for the past decade. A site visit on September 26, 2022, confirmed the building is in overall good condition; however, vandalism remains an ongoing issue. Reactivating this building as a community asset is an important component of this proposal.

Proposed Scenario

Our proposal for the reuse of the former James Oldham Elementary School includes reactivating a portion of the school building as a culinary incubator, modeled on the successful Hope and



Figure 8.6: Proposed commercial kitchen spaces.



Figure 8.7: Proposed education spaces.

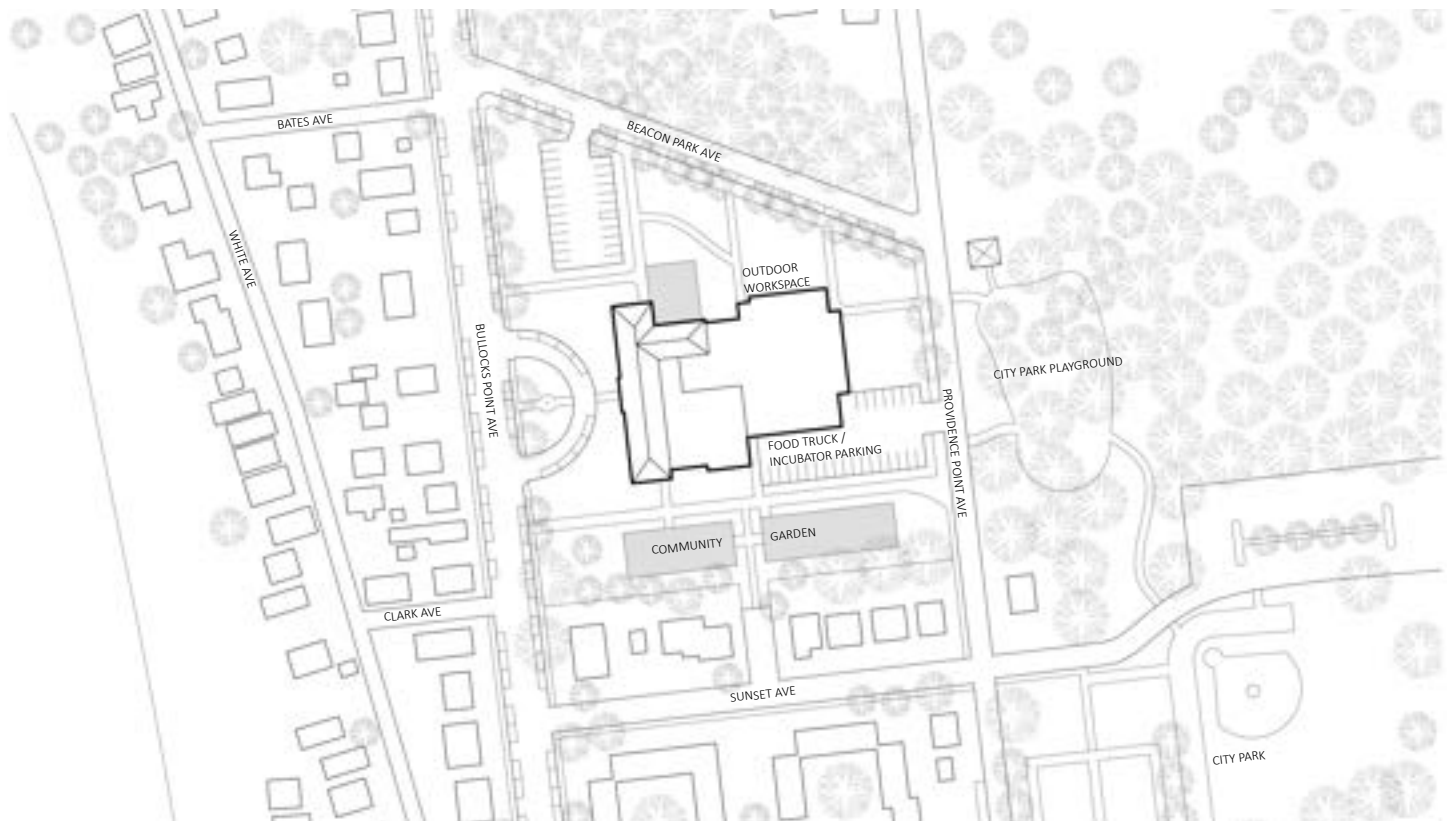


Figure 8.8: Proposed site plan.

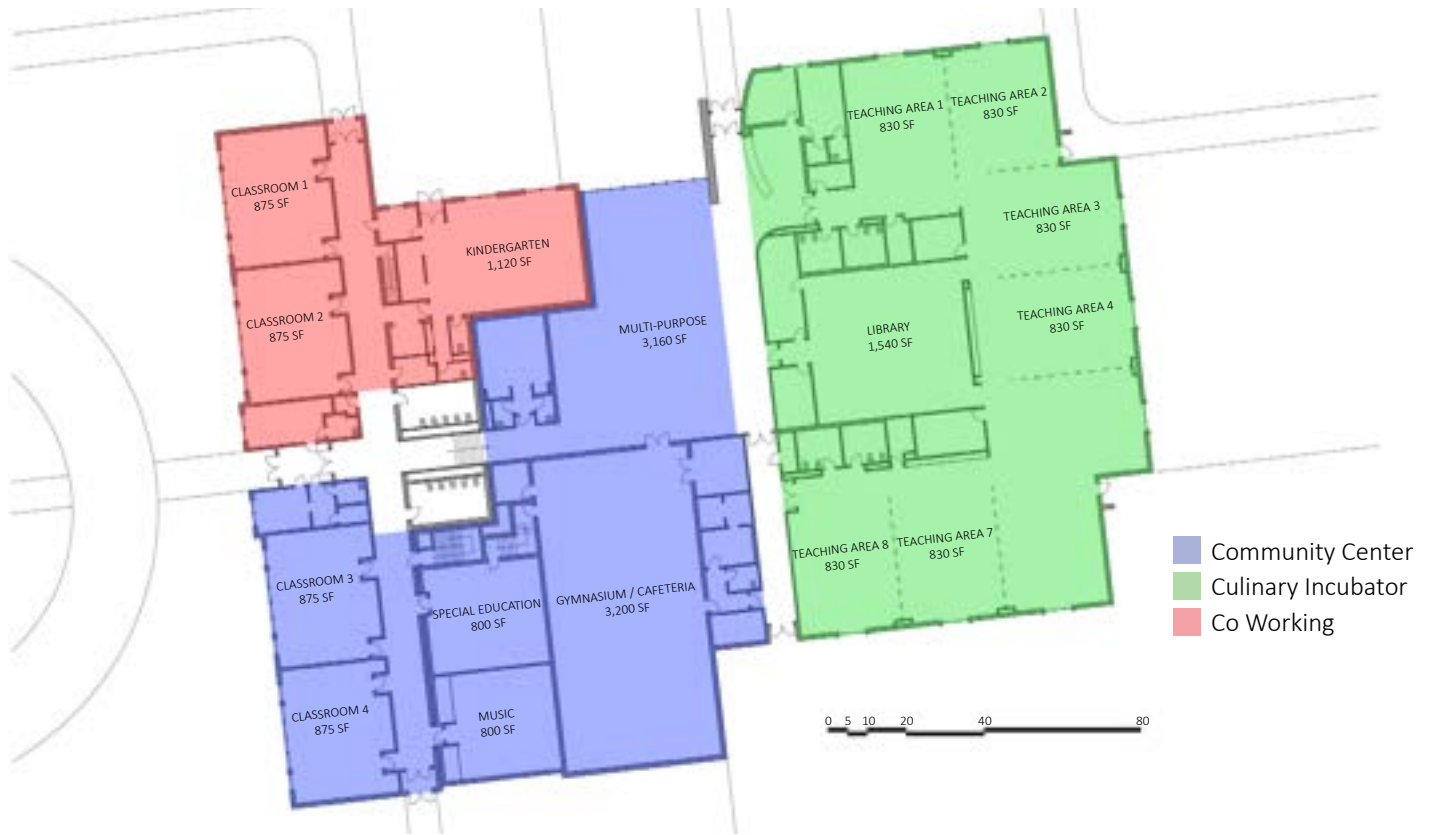


Figure 8.9: Proposed program zones using the existing floor plan.



Figure 8.10: Proposed floor plan.



Main organization in Warren. Hope and Main, which launched in 2009, provides access to affordable commercial kitchens in a shared-use model, technical and business assistance for food-based businesses, access to retail locations and marketing assistance, and small-business financing sources. Hope and Main estimates that the organization has helped over 400 food-based businesses launch over the past 13 years, and there is currently a waiting list for potential tenants. Another portion of the building would become a community center and co-working space modeled off Innovate Newport. Our recommendations section detail the programmatic organization of all these reuse options.

8.6 Mixed-Use Development: Lee's Chinese Restaurant Surface Lot

Lee's Chinese Restaurant is an important, long standing business in Riverside Square. Located at 376 Bullocks Point Avenue, the restaurant is a utilitarian, one-and-a-half story, 3,900 square-foot, gable-roof, wood-frame building completed about 1940. The half acre site is mostly paved, with parking spaces surrounding the building.

This site is currently listed for sale with an asking price of \$1.49 million. In 2022, the assessed value of this parcel, including the land and the building, was \$388,000 and it generated \$10,436 in property taxes.

Proposed Scenarios

Our team proposes two scenarios to redevelop a portion of the Lee's Restaurant surface parking lot with a mixed-use development of 20 units: 10 one bedroom units and 10 two-bedroom units; and 24 parking spaces. Scenario 1 contains an additional 2,689 square feet of commercial space, and scenario 2 contains 2,950 square feet of commercial space. The restaurant building will remain on the site. These program scenarios are detailed in Figures 8.19 and 8.20. Site and floor plans for the two development proposals are included as Figures 8.11 through 8.18.



Figure 8.11: Mixed-use Development Scenario 1.



Figure 8.12: Mixed-use Development Scenario 2.

Future Tax Revenue

Using the East Providence assessment methodology, this will result in a new total tax valuation of \$2.9 million. The valuations include the existing 3,984 square foot restaurant building, valued at \$204,400 in 2022; 20 units of housing valued at \$1.8 million; total land value of \$571,850 (this includes the value of the sub-divided restaurant parcel, the new residential parcel, and the 24 parking spaces); and the commercial space value, which is either \$222,440 or \$244,850, depending on the scenario. Using the 2022 residential and commercial tax rates for the relevant square footages, the new property tax for the site will be either \$74,333 or \$74,891, depending on the scenario (Figure 8.21).

8.7 Open House Feedback

Our team's goal for the open house was to solicit community feedback and preferences for revitalizing the James Oldham Elementary School site. Attendees were asked to share in a few words or phrases on a sticky note and attach it to a 24"x36"

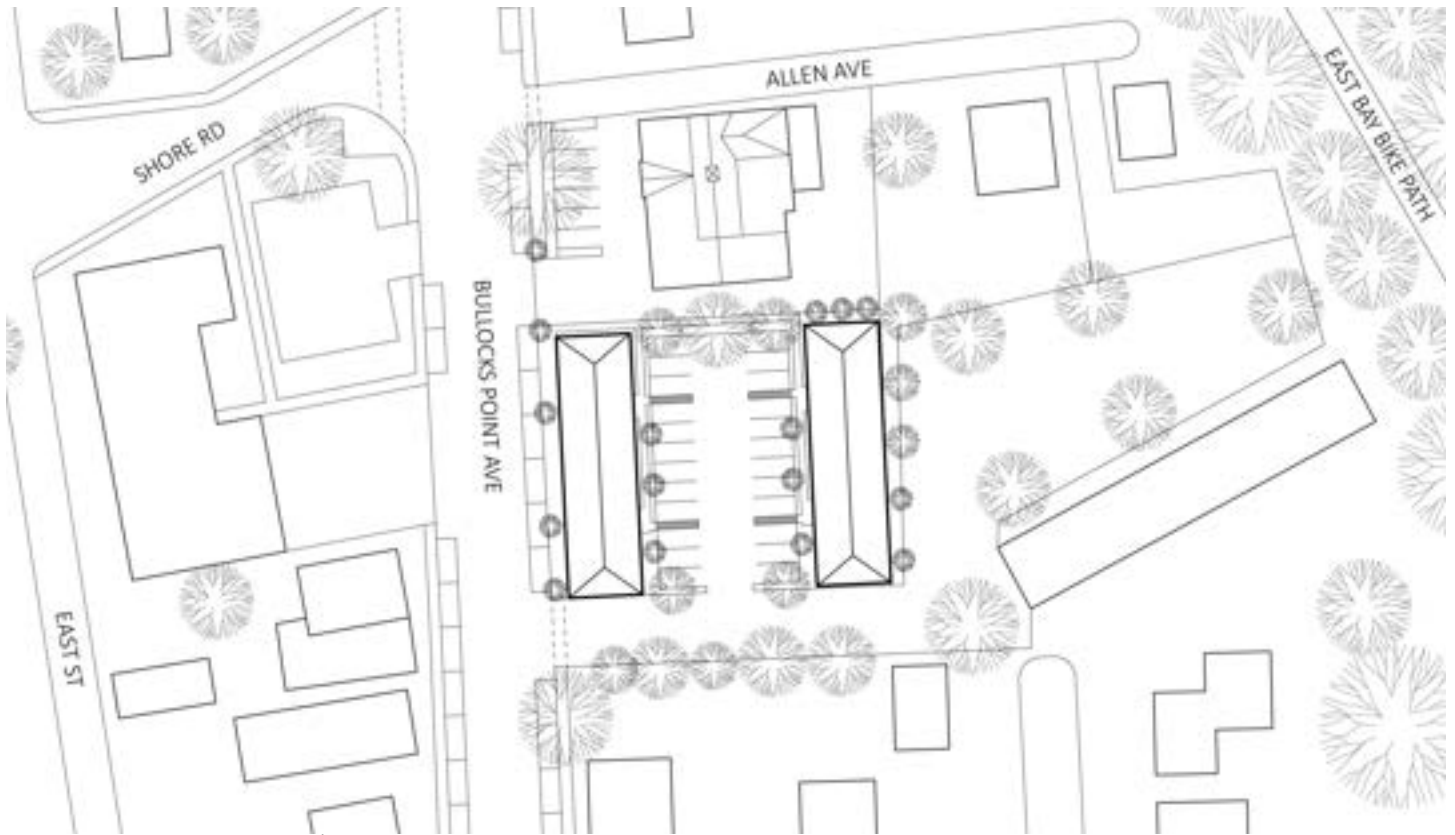


Figure 8.13: Scenario 1 site plan.

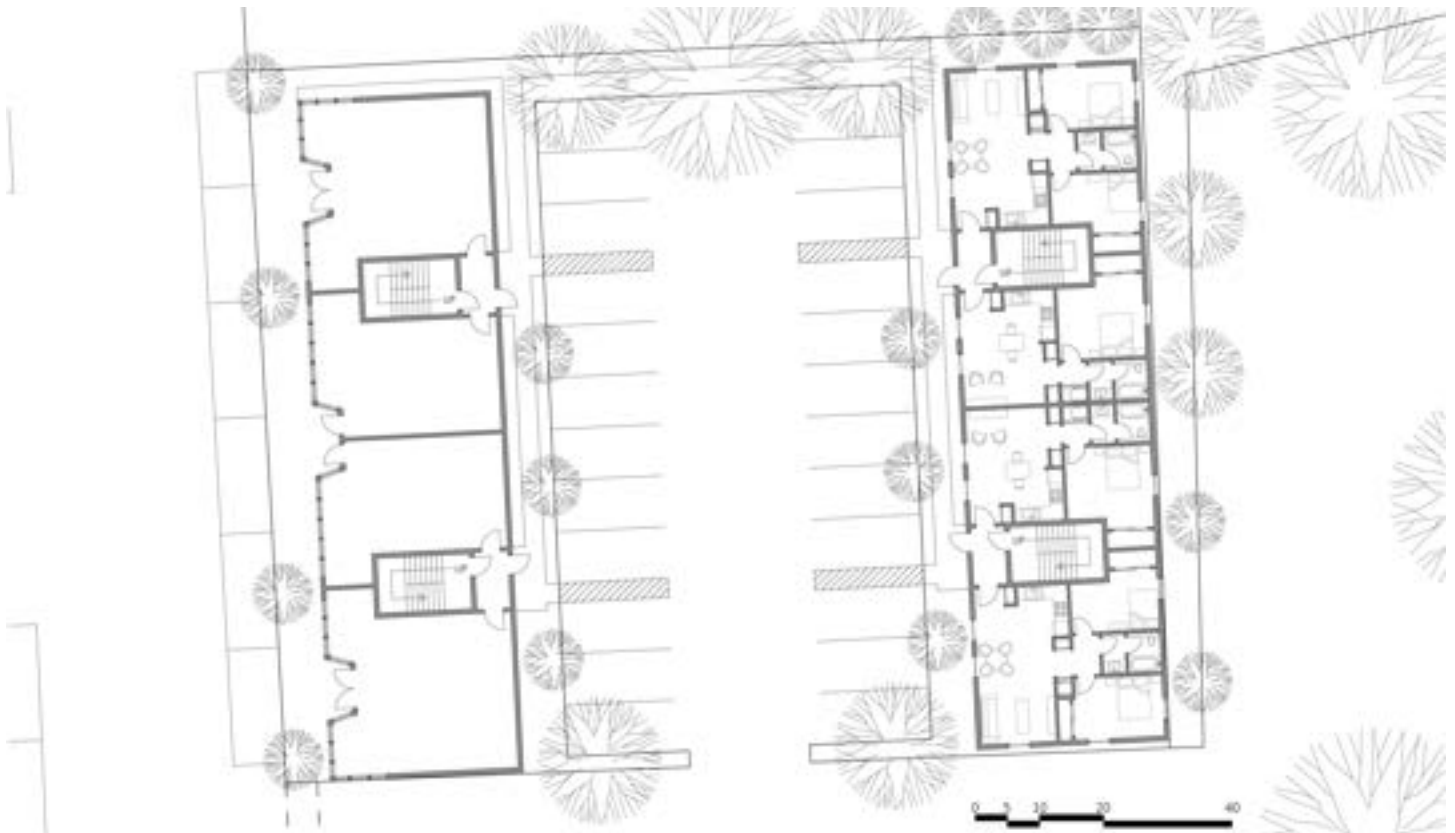


Figure 8.14: Scenario 1 first floor plan.



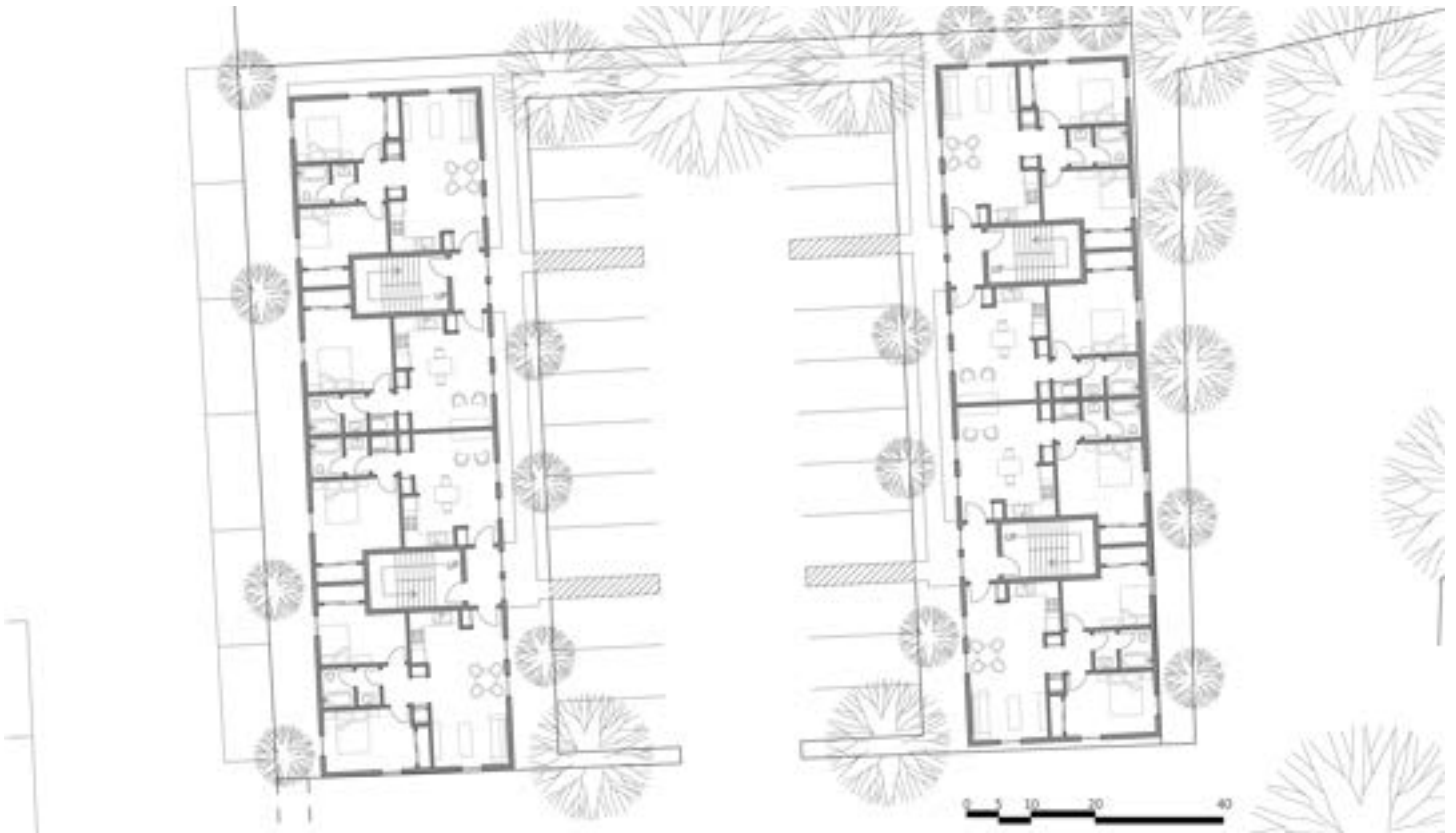


Figure 8.15: Scenario 1 second and third floor plan.

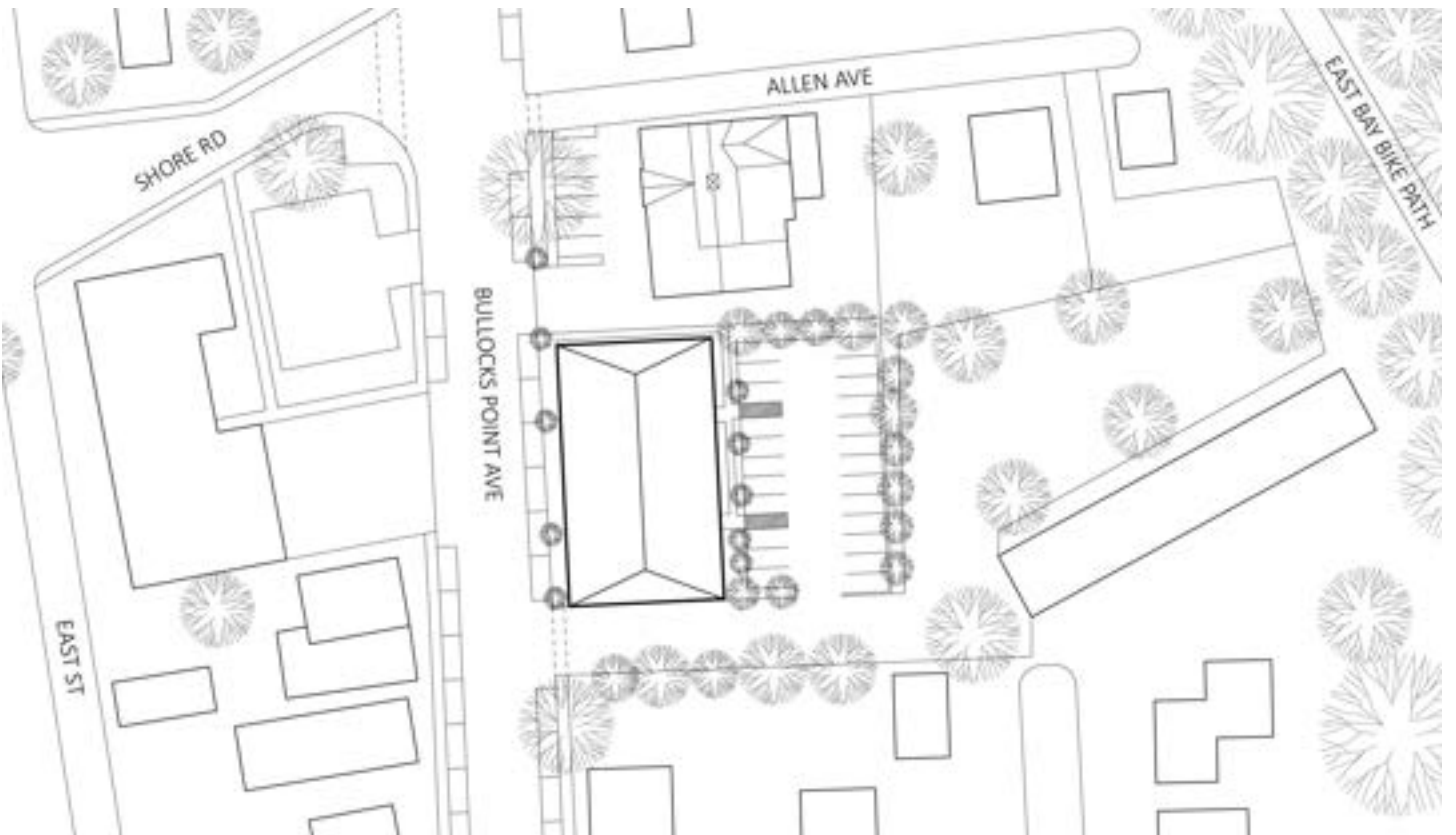


Figure 8.16: Scenario 2 site plan.



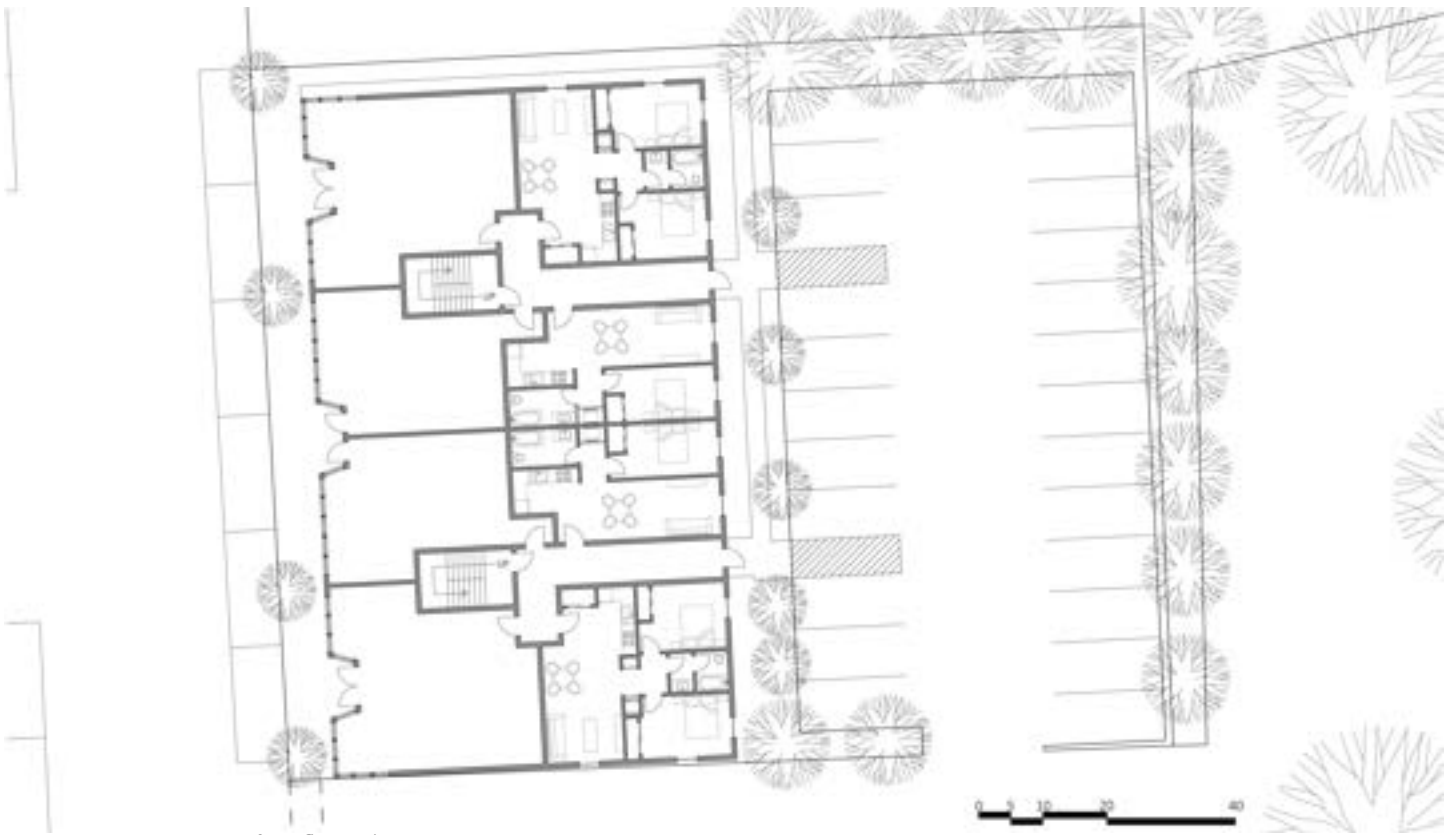


Figure 8.17: Scenario 2 first floor plan.

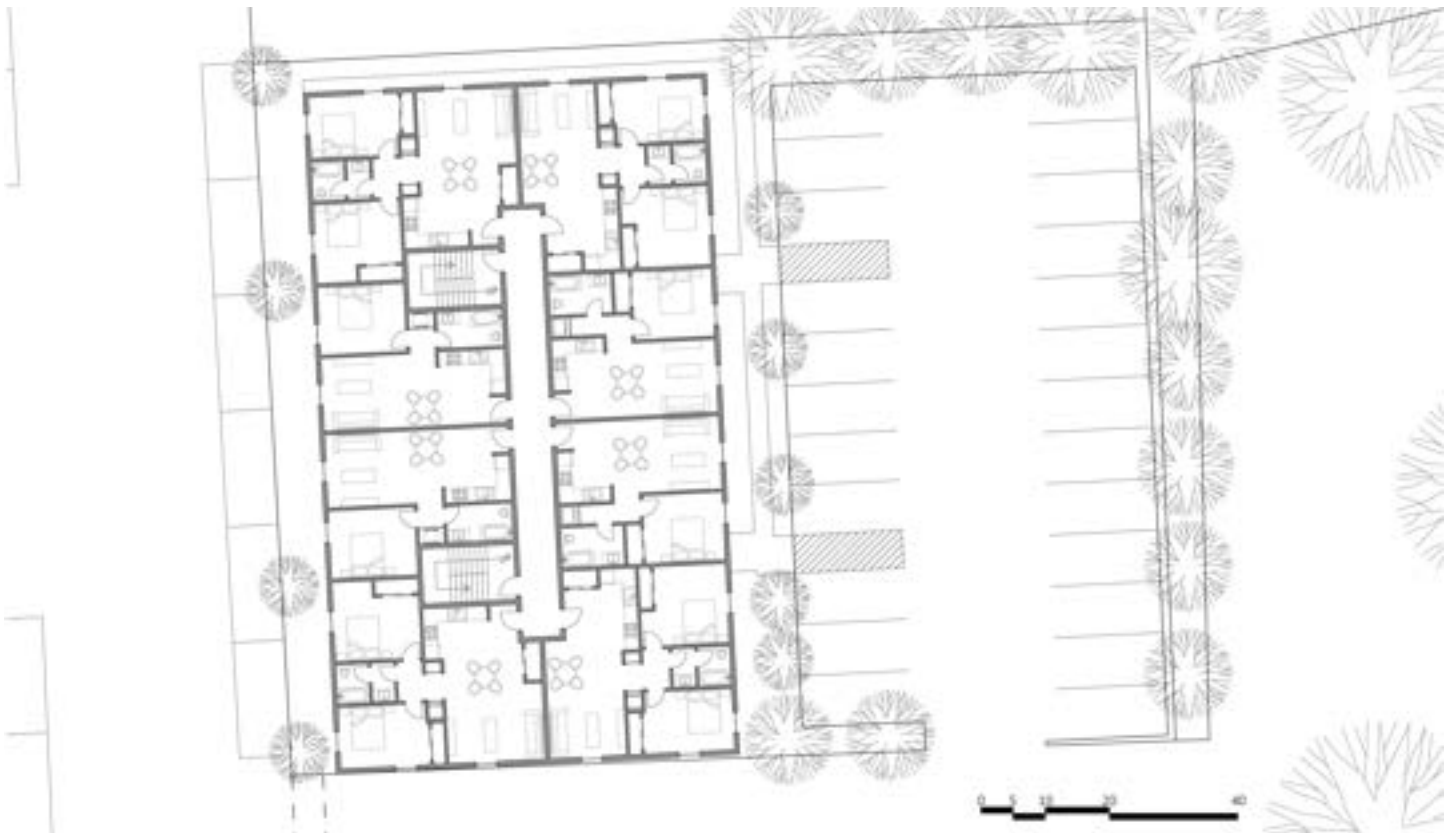


Figure 8.18: Scenario 2 second and third floor plan.

Scenario 1						
Floor	Location	Type	Quant.	Total Beds	Unit Area (SF)	Total Area (SF)
Residential						
Ground Floor	Building 2	Two Bedroom	2	4	800	1,600
		Single Bedroom	2	2	600	1,200
Second Floor	Building 1	Two Bedroom	2	4	800	1,600
		Single Bedroom	2	2	600	1,200
	Building 2	Two Bedroom	2	4	800	1,600
		Single Bedroom	2	2	600	1,200
Third Floor	Building 1	Two Bedroom	2	4	800	1,600
		Single Bedroom	2	2	600	1,200
	Building 2	Two Bedroom	2	4	800	1,600
		Single Bedroom	2	2	600	1,200

Totals			20	30		14,000
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Floor	Location	Type	Quant.	Total Beds	Unit Area (SF)	Total Area (SF)
Commercial						
Ground Floor	Building 1	Type 1	2		775	1,550
		Type 2	2		575	1,150

Totals			4			2,700
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Site	Area				
Parking	Off-Street	24		5,845	
	On-Street w/in 200'	28			
Footprint	Structure	Building 1	3	3,180	9,540
		Building 2	3	3,180	9,540

6,360

Scenario 2						
Floor	Location	Type	Quant.	Total Beds	Unit Area (SF)	Total Area (SF)
Residential						
Ground Floor	Building 1	Two Bedroom A	2	4	800	1,600
		Single Bedroom A	2	2	575	1,150
Second Floor	Building 1	Two Bedroom B	2	4	800	1,720
		Two Bedroom C	2	4	885	1,770
		Single Bedroom B	2	2	600	1,200
		Single Bedroom C	2	2	600	1,200
Third Floor	Building 1	Two Bedroom B	2	4	800	1,720
		Two Bedroom C	2	4	885	1,770
		Single Bedroom B	2	2	610	1,220
		Single Bedroom C	2	2	610	1,220

Totals			20	30		14,570
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Floor	Location	Type	Quant.	Total Beds	Unit Area (SF)	Total Area (SF)
Commercial						
Ground Floor	Building 1	Type 1	2		850	1,700
		Type 2	2		625	1,250

Totals			4			2,950
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Parking						
Parking	Structure	Building	Quant.	Total Beds	Unit Area (SF)	Total Area (SF)
Parking	Parking	Off-Street	24			5,845
		On-Street w/in 200'	28			
Footprint	Structure	Building 1	3		6,660	19,980

	(SF)
Lee's Exist. Prop.	25,033
Scenario 1	12,205
Remain. Lee's Prop	12,828
Scenario 2	12,505
Remain. Lee's Prop	12,528

Figure 8.19: Mixed-use Development Scenario 1.

Figure 8.20: Mixed-use Development Scenario 2.

Lee's Chinese Restaurant Property Tax				
	Current Value	Current (2022) tax rate/\$1,000 of value	Current (2022) Property Taxes	
Current (2022)				
3,894 SF restaurant building	\$204,400	26.89	\$5,496	
25,033.932 SF (.57 acre) parcel	\$183,700	26.89	\$4,940	
TOTAL VALUE:	\$388,100			
Current Property Tax Paid:				\$10,436

	Units/Size	Proposed Value	Proposed tax rate (using 2022 tax rates)	Proposed Property Taxes
Proposed (using 2022 tax rates)				
20 housing units	20	\$1,800,000	26.89	\$48,402
2,700 SF commercial (retail) space Prop. 1	2700	\$224,100	26.89	\$6,026
2,950 SF commercial (retail) space Prop. 2	2950	\$244,850	26.89	\$6,584
3,894 SF restaurant building	3894	\$323,202	26.89	\$8,691
restaurant parcel approx. 1/2 of existing site size)		\$91,850	26.89	\$2,470
Land Value (sub-divided residential parcel, incl. new parking)	24	\$480,000	26.89	\$8,744
TOTAL NEW VALUE (Prop. 1:-)		\$2,919,152		
TOTAL NEW VALUE (Prop. 2:-)		\$2,939,902		

Proposed Property Tax Paid (Prop 1)	\$74,333
Proposed Property Tax Paid (Prop 2)	\$74,891

Figure 8.21: Property tax revenue for Scenario 1 and 2.



Use Idea	Votes
Hope & Main Food Business Incubator	6
Arts Collaboration Space	5
Open Markets	4
Café/Eatery in Part of School	3
Playground Refresh	3
Shared Workspace with WiFi	1
Community Garden	1
Food Trucks in Parking Lot	1

Figure 8.22: Attendee preferences of site redevelopment.

color satellite photo of the site. We referenced the feedback we received at the Open House to compose the recommendations. Figure 8.22 is a table of the attendee votes.

8.8 Recommendations

We analyzed adaptive reuse and mixed-use development at two sites within Riverside: the former James Oldham Elementary School, located at 640 Bullocks Point Avenue, and Lee’s Chinese Restaurant surface lot located at 376 Bullocks Point Avenue. The goal of our study was to determine multiple proposals for adapting existing spaces for mixed use development. We referenced the site plan for the Residences at Riverside Square at 336 Bullocks Point Avenue as a model for two scenarios of redevelopment on the Lee’s Chinese Restaurant surface lot. Additionally, a site visit to the former James Oldham Elementary School helped inform schematic planning for a potential food-business incubator concept modeled on Hope and Main, located in the former South Main Street School in Warren, and a co-working space modeled on Innovate Newport co-working center. The following summarizes our recommendations of adaptive reuse and mixed use projects in the Riverside.

1. Adapt Oldham School as a sports facility and recreational center for the riverside community.

Support the health and vitality of the community by providing opportunities for indoor and outdoor organized recreational sports. Providing safe spaces

for community members to exercise together fosters strong connections and fosters continuous communal engagement. Facilities can include pickleball (Figure 8.23), bocce ball, basketball, yoga and dance studios with both scheduled or pick up games, leagues, and classes. Notably, community participants at the Open House repeatedly discussed the lack of recreational facilities within the study area.

2. Adapt Oldham School as an arts, trades, and makers resource center.

In the tradition of the building’s educational history, a portion of the space could be converted into a teaching center for trade skills. Supporting trades and skills in the community will support developing industries and financial opportunities for residents. Facilities can include a wood shop, metal shop, and additional adult vocational education. Arts facilities could include a ceramics studio with a kiln, painting space, and shared studio space for photography. Class participants and resource center members can receive training on operating equipment for work on private projects as well as classes or training programs. The space could also have a studio and showcase for users to present their work and collections. An example of a makers space at Roger Williams University is shown in Figure 8.24.

3. Develop Oldham School as a food incubator space modeled after Hope and Main.

Developing a portion of the Oldham School as a food incubator program can provide small scale and start-up food vendors an opportunity to establish their business without the significant cost and liability in equipping, managing and maintaining a private commercial kitchen. An example of a shared commercial kitchen is shown in Figure 8.25. On November 14th, our team met with Luca Carnevale, Executive Director of Operations at Hope and Main, for a tour to develop a thorough recommendation for how the concept could be applied in the existing floor plan. In the building, the former classrooms could serve as shared kitchens that can accommodate allergens, space for classes and

demonstrations, cold and dry ingredient storage, shipping and receiving, and a market space to host events for vendors to sell products. With Hope and Main an overwhelming success, an additional food incubator location in East Bay would help reduce the wait list for emerging businesses.

4. Open Oldham School as a shared work space (modeled after Innovate Newport)

A shared work space provides companies and individuals accessibility to pooled resources to maximize business opportunities. Shared coworking spaces allow companies and individuals flexibility to explore strategies and develop infrastructure to establish themselves in the local market space with a physical and/or online presence. A resource center for business operations will benefit the Riverside community by encouraging local businesses to take hold locally, which promotes financial stability.

5. Oldham School as a shared communal space for educational opportunities.

Portions of the school interior can be converted into a variety of community uses, with a small café, gym space, studio spaces, and a computer lab. This could include after school activities for youth, such as music or art lessons, and gaming clubs. After school programs provide learning settings; support social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development; reduce risky behaviors; promote physical health;

and provide a safe and supportive environment for children and youth. Space could be converted into a computer lab with free wifi access and may host computer lessons, coding, or program specific skills. Additionally, the space could be used for adult oriented clubs and groups, such as a headquarters for the Association of Rhode Island Authors.

6. Improving green and open space for outdoor activities at the Oldham School site.

The baseball diamonds and playground to the east of the former James Oldham Elementary School are an underutilized asset in the neighborhood. Creating a stronger visual connections between the

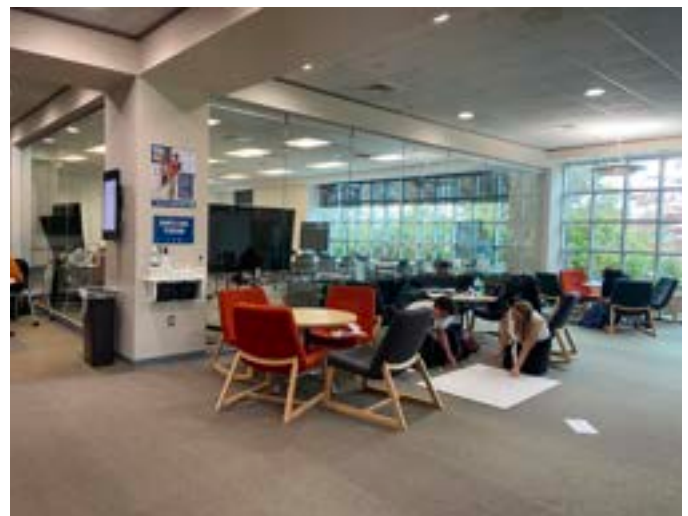


Figure 8.24: Example of makers resource centers.



Figure 8.23: Pickle Ball court.



Figure 8.25: Kitchen incubator space.

school grounds and the park will allow for more outdoor gathering spots. Interactive green spaces, such as a refreshed playground, community garden or a dog park can attract community members. Improving green spaces throughout a community creates opportunities for a variety of social events, such as festivals, markets, and other seasonal events. The green space at Oldham School can be used to improve visibility and use of the existing nearby playground and sports fields in connection to the rest of the communal green space, including the carousel.

7. Lee's Restaurant Surface Lot proposal

Although we did not present the Lee's Restaurant surface lot during the Open House, the team compiled our own recommendations for two scenarios of mixed commercial and residential units based on the site plans for the nearby Riverside Residences complex at the former Vamco site. Expanding multiple variations of housing, size and cost, in close proximity to Riverside Square, supports the goals of the mixed use overlay district and promotes the financial stability and well being of the community. Repurposing the space, which remains for sale, will continue to revitalize Riverside Square with opportunities for residential and commercial tenants to become established in the community, as it is in walking distance to key amenities within Riverside.

