

WOOR AS QUA TUCK ET

Vision
Plan

2018

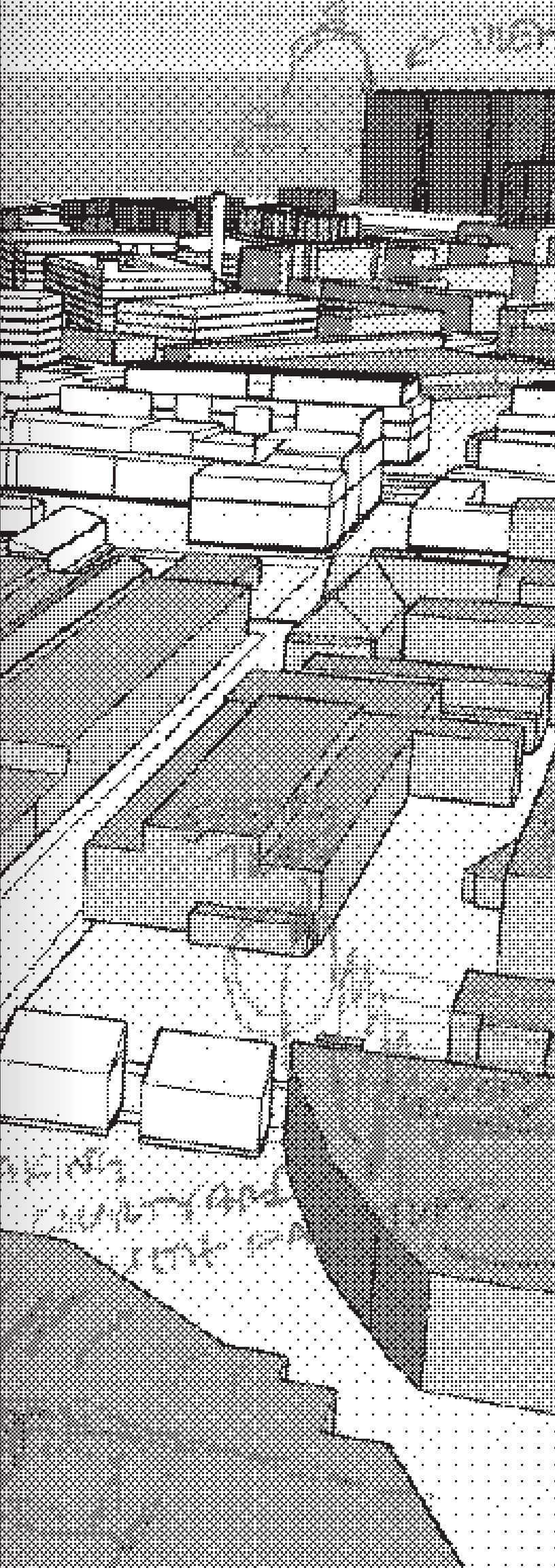


PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Jorge O. Elorza | City of Providence

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There are many passionate people living, working, and thinking about how to enhance the Woonasquatucket Corridor; this Plan would not be as informed and sincere as it is without their involvement and the gracious volunteering of their time and talents.

People create great places, not reports, and this important fact has informed the planning process as well as the writing and design of this document.



Artwork by Quinn Corey

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR AND DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

After a year of engaging hundreds of residents and stakeholders throughout the City's Olneyville, Valley, and Smith Hill neighborhoods, we are truly excited to present the Woonasquatucket Vision Plan—a plan for the future of the Woonasquatucket River Corridor. Stretching from Olneyville to Downtown along the length of the Woonasquatucket River, this corridor presents an unprecedented opportunity for economic growth. Guiding that growth in a thoughtful and environmentally- and socially-responsible way is essential to ensuring that our neighborhoods and the diverse community of people who live and work in Providence continue to thrive.

What we heard from the community over the course of the past year—during our community picnic at a local church in Olneyville, our week-long public workshop at WaterFire Arts Center on Valley Street, dozens of community events like the Olneyville Fall Festival and Valley Arts District Open Studio, and our unveiling of the draft plan during a public meeting at the Wurks—created the framework of this Plan. The community priorities that we heard from you are clear: improve sustainability and resiliency; support and grow the existing economic cluster around arts, food, and makers; preserve and create affordable space; improve access and connectivity; and enhance and maintain public spaces and the Woonasquatucket River.

Together, with partners including the Environmental Protection Agency, State of Rhode Island, and Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council, we have already begun to advance many of the impressive ideas generated by the community during this planning process. This coming summer, engineering will begin on a six-million dollar enhancement of the Woonasquatucket Greenway between Eagle Street and Downtown. Engineering has also begun on improvements to make Dean Street safer for people walking and riding bicycles, and in 2019, construction will be underway to make San Souci Drive behind Olneyville Square into a welcoming gateway to the Woonasquatucket Greenway. Over the next three years, thanks to a Brownfields Assessment Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, the City will spend \$300,000 to assess environmental liabilities and existing infrastructure issues on contaminated industrial sites to eliminate cost uncertainty and promote development. Public and private investments in projects like Gotham Greens, Farm Fresh RI's Food Hub, and an expansion at the Steel Yard are actively moving forward in the Corridor while the City works to establish a tax increment financing district to fund additional improvements called for in the Vision Plan.

We're thinking big about the role of the Woonasquatucket River; as it is converted from a forgotten relic to a source of energy that connects Fox Point to Olneyville and drives our Urban Innovation Strategy. We look forward to continuing to think big with you, the community, as we advance these projects and advocate and secure resources to fulfill our collective vision for this important area of our City.



Mayor Jorge O. Elorza



Bonnie Nickerson, AICP
Director of Planning and Development

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thank you to local artists David Allyn, Quinn Corey, Maggie J Siegel, Amanda Soule, and Sam White for creating and contributing such fine original art to this plan that reflects the spirit of the Woonasquatucket River neighborhoods and people.

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CHAPTER 1

PROJECT BACK- GROUND

Artwork by Sam White

ABOUT THE WOONASQUATUCKET CORRIDOR: WHY PLAN NOW?

With over 560 acres of land area, the Woonasquatucket Corridor spans three Providence neighborhoods — Olneyville, Valley, and Smith Hill — from Paragon Mills in Olneyville Square along the Woonasquatucket River to Providence Place Mall in Downtown. With funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Providence worked closely with community partners to plan for the future of this important area over the course of one year. The Vision Plan will be used to guide and prioritize cleanup of former industrial sites and the many investments planned and underway in the Woonasquatucket Corridor, determine other public needed investments, and advocate and secure resources for implementation.

Providence’s Woonasquatucket Corridor has a rich history as a center of industry, dating back to the 19th century. Following World War II, advancements in industrial technology and transportation reduced industrial reliance on the power and transportation that the River once provided. As a result, many sites once occupied by industrial giants were left vacant and abandoned. This history also managed to leave something else behind that did not become strongly apparent until the end of the 20th century: environmental contamination. Over a century of continuous heavy manufacturing use contaminated soil and the Woonasquatucket River with semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs), free-phase hydrolic/lubricating oil, fuel oil, and dozens of other chemicals. The financial liability of contamination, which is expensive to remediate and return to other uses, became painfully clear by the 1970s when the EPA created the Superfund program to deal with severely polluted sites all over the country. Vacant sites that are expected to have contamination but did not rise to the severe levels of Superfund sites — what we now refer to as “brownfield” properties — were hampered from redevelopment and locked in a state of underuse or abandonment.

The high cost of cleanup and redevelopment combined with an immense industrial downturn in the northeast after World War II created large concentrated swathes of brownfields in many cities, and Providence’s Woonasquatucket Corridor was not spared. Encouraging brownfield clean-up and redevelopment was the primary motivator of EPA’s Area-Wide Planning program and is central to the economic and environmental health of the Woonasquatucket Corridor.



A view looking down Harris Avenue toward the intersection with Atwells and the corner of the GE Baseworks Site

Accordingly, remediation and reuse of brownfields within the Woonasquatucket Corridor is one of the top implementation goals of this plan. This plan also identifies a number of related community goals and actions that will be prioritized and executed by the City and its partners.

THE EPA AREA-WIDE PLANNING GRANT

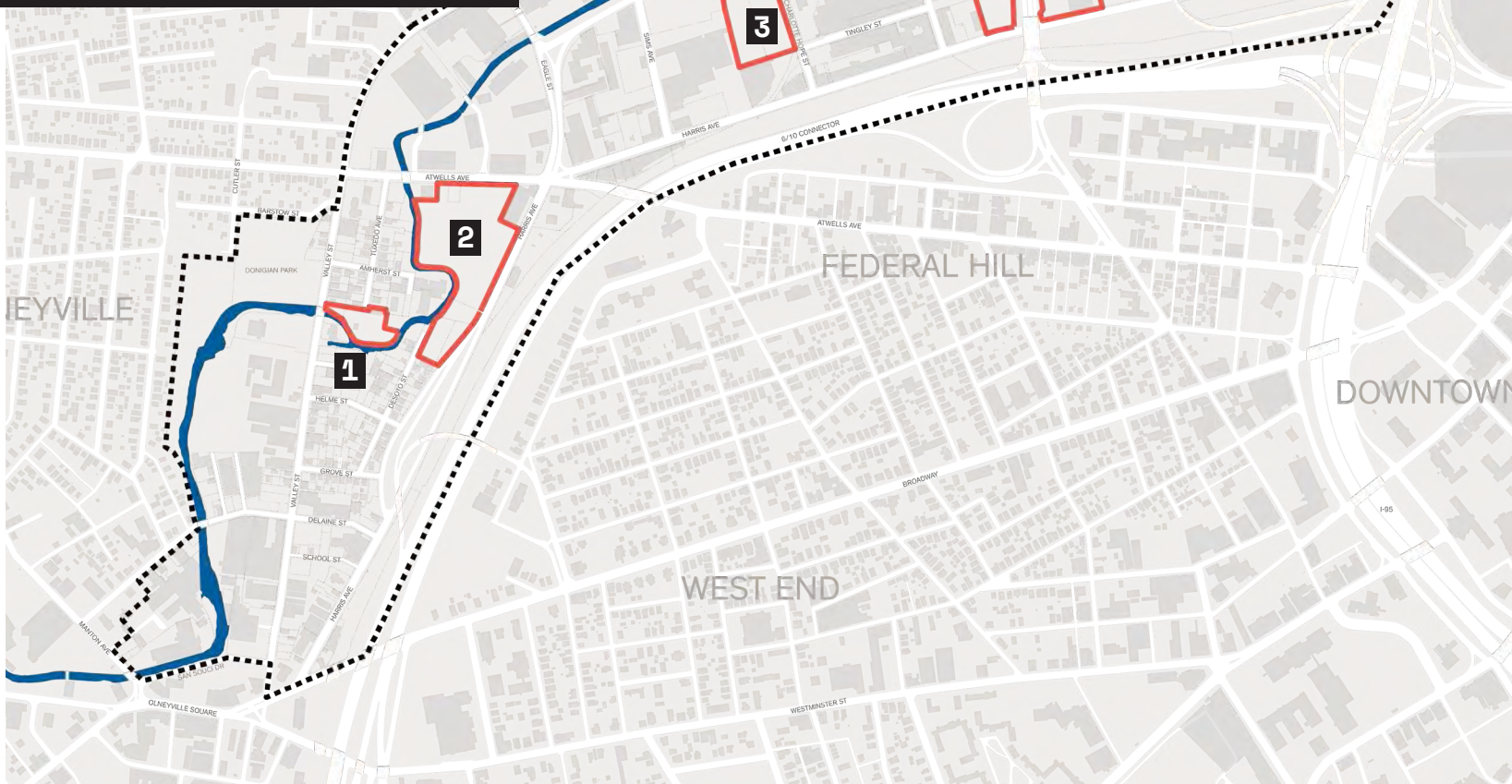
The Vision Plan is funded by an FY17 Brownfields Area-Wide Planning (AWP) Grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Under the AWP program, the EPA funds activities culminate in an area-wide plan for brownfields assessment, cleanup, and subsequent reuse. Grant-funded activities must be directed to one or more catalyst, high priority brownfield sites located within a specific project area, such as a neighborhood, downtown, business or arts district, or local commercial or industrial corridor. Each recipient that receives a grant under this funding opportunity must develop an area-wide plan for brownfields within the selected project area and include in that plan specific implementation strategies for assessing, cleaning up, and reusing brownfields and related project area revitalization strategies.



Nicholson File Parking lot looking north

CATALYTIC SITES

- 1 Natareno Salvage Site
- 2 General Electric Baseworks
- 3 PRA / Umicore Site
- 4 Narragansett Bay Commission Site
- 5 Providence Journal West Site
- 6 Providence Journal East Site



The properties shown on this plan are the catalytic sites included in the City of Providence's Brownfields Area-Wide Planning (AWP) Grant, selected because of their potential for redevelopment or enhancement, presence of contaminated soils, and potential for catalyzing positive improvements within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

1.1.1 A GUIDING DOCUMENT

Long term community planning is akin to outlining a very complex cross-country road trip; the destination may be very clear from the start but without a good roadmap to guide you, it is easy to become lost. This Vision Plan is a guiding document that identifies long term goals, opportunities, and constraints for the Woonasquatucket Corridor and effectively functions as the roadmap for this metaphorical journey.

This plan dovetails with other plans, including the 6-10 Connector Reconstruction Plan, the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Extension Plan, and the Carbon Neutrality Plan to be released in late 2018.

1.1.2 A UNIFIED COMMUNITY VISION

At the outset of the vision planning process in 2017, major changes were already on the horizon for the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Several catalytic brownfield sites began to attract serious interest from the private sector, while numerous large public investments that will transform the landscape of the Woonasquatucket Corridor— including the 6-10 Connector reconstruction and Woonasquatucket River Greenway Extension— were announced. In the midst of these changes, those who live and work in and around the Woonasquatucket Corridor struggle with ongoing concerns about displacement of vulnerable populations, including low-income residents and artists. These factors resulted in the need for significant community input, which this Plan transfers directly toward implementation strategies that will drive cleanup and reuse of brownfield sites in the Corridor. Bringing together people who have a stake in the future of the Corridor was, and will continue to be, critical to establishing a common idea of the future and a path forward for the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

How do we enhance, promote, and grow the Corridor without essentially changing the character that is here today? How do we make the River the focal point and celebrate it as the unifying asset that it is throughout the entire Woonasquatucket River Corridor? How do we improve access throughout this district as well as to the surrounding neighborhoods? As the community searched for answers to these questions over the course of creating this plan, there were a number of insights that came from these discussions that challenged the planning team to look for innovative solutions. We must thank the community again for putting in the time, effort, and creativity that helped to bring these ideas into reality.

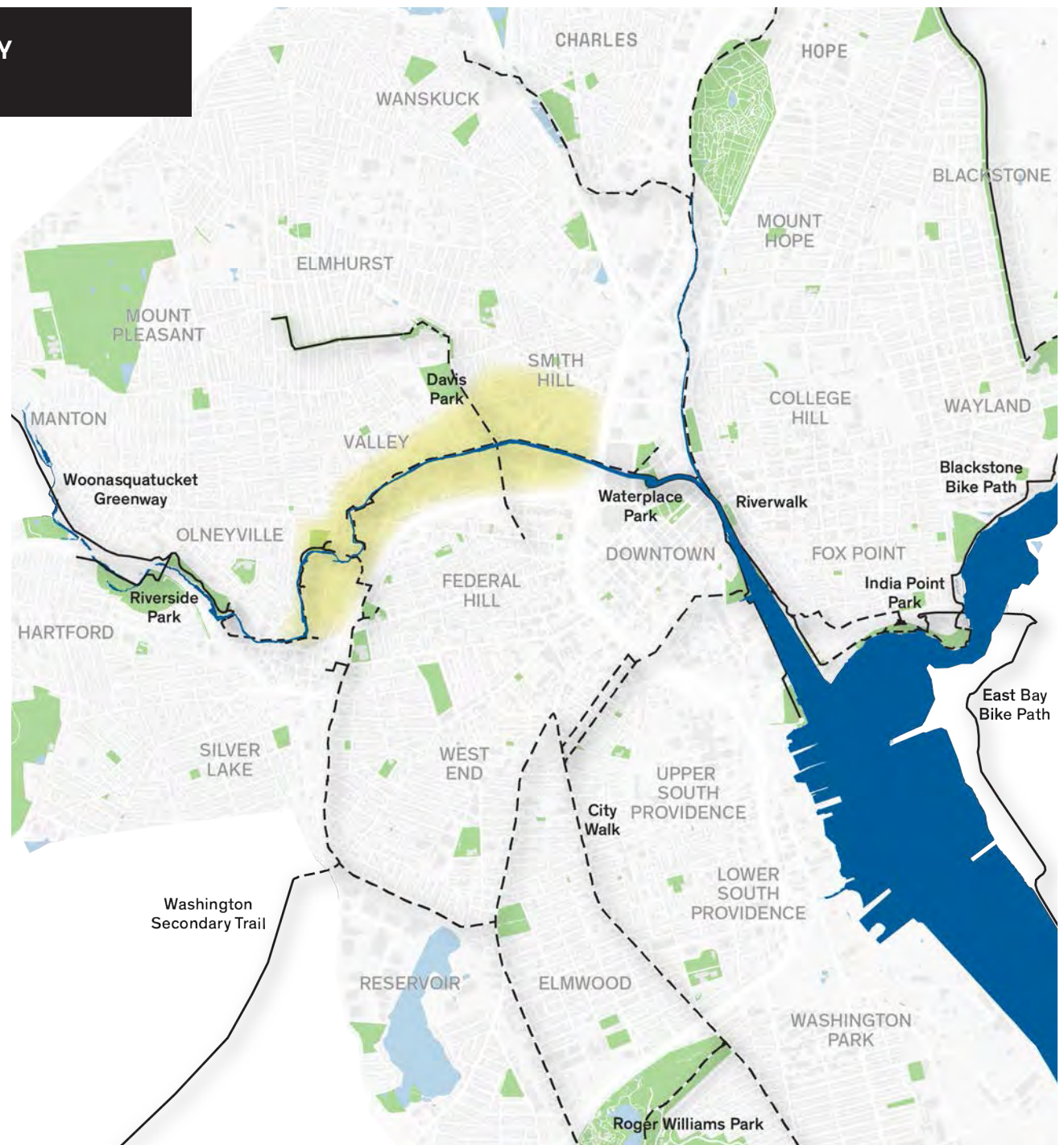
1.1.3 HOW THE PLAN WILL BE USED

This Vision Plan proposes clear action items for each community priority identified during the public process. These action items will serve as a road map for future investments and policies relating to the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

The Plan also includes sample pro-formas and building toolkits developed during the planning workshop. These are included as a resource that can be used by the City, developers, and the public to make the right kind of development easier and less risky to complete. Economic studies performed on each of the catalyst sites (sites that have been determined to be high priorities for redevelopment in line with the goals of this Plan) will help provide developers with additional assurances that the kinds of project's desired by the community are feasible in local market conditions. Referencing the Vision Plan will help the City guide projects to adhere to community priorities and move through the development process more quickly. It will also help developers by articulating clearly what types of projects are supported by the community and the City.

The State of Rhode Island and City of Providence both have economic development initiatives aiming to bring jobs to the Woonasquatucket Corridor. This Vision Plan will complement both efforts by illustrating a comprehensive vision and establishing multiple paths forward for investment in the area.

For the City of Providence, having a widely-supported, strategic plan to point to will also strengthen future grant applications to implement this Plan.



One of the most exciting concepts to emerge from this visioning process is the idea of highlighting the Woonasquatucket and Providence rivers as a unifying feature that ties together multiple points throughout Providence — from India Point Park and Waterplace Park to Riverside Park in Olneyville — and integrating a trail along the rivers into a citywide “Providence Urban Trail Network” that connects into City Walk and other initiatives, ultimately connecting all Providence neighborhoods into a unified trail system. This unified urban trail will enhance, promote, and grow the Corridor while building upon what already exists, make the River the focal point and celebrate it as the unifying asset that it is throughout the entire Woonasquatucket River Corridor, and improve access throughout the Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

ABOUT THE CO-PLANNING PROCESS

1.2.1 MEETING THE COMMUNITY WHERE IT IS

Throughout the course of this planning process, the City maximized opportunities for community engagement and input that leveraged the wisdom of people who live and work in the community. Including voices of those most impacted by decisions was a critical part of this planning process and will help ensure that this Vision Plan is an effective tool in the end. The foundation of this approach involved meeting the community where it is, which involved attending many standing meetings and community events. The Planning Team brought a mobile engagement kit to each of these events and conducted outreach in the field in both English and Spanish. Attending events like these was a critical method for reaching people in the comfort of their own cultural spaces and reaching people who face barriers to attending traditional public meetings.

When it was necessary to call a meeting, careful attention was paid to choose venues and times of day and week that were accessible to the community. A church, an artist collaborative, and an arts center were among the venues chosen for the Vision Plan's public events. All were located in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. When food and entertainment were provided, they were sourced within the Corridor as well. For example, a local artist who participated in planning process DJ'ed the Open House and a local restaurant supplied food for the Visioning Picnic. During the Planning Workshop, the Planning Team set up a field office in the Corridor for five days and invited the public to drop-in anytime between 10AM and 8PM to see work in progress, offer feedback, or simply meet Planning Team members.

The Woonasquatucket Vision Plan was created using this intensive approach to community led planning, ultimately drawing in hundreds of participants. By approaching the community at the outset, a genuine working relationship developed between city leadership and local stakeholders. This sincere community input resulted in an overall vision and set of community priorities that are rooted in the dynamic community that helped create this Plan.

1.2.2 COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

To facilitate the outreach process for the Woonasquatucket Vision Plan, a group of local community leaders was assembled, beginning in July 2017, to help design the process and communicate information to the public. These "Community Connectors" were each selected based on their connections to various local groups or populations.

Artists and makers, residents, landowners and developers, local and state officials, and other stakeholders from the Olneyville, Valley, and Smith Hill neighborhoods participated as Community Connectors. As credible community leaders, they were instrumental in building the community's trust in the process and getting folks to turn out to events. They also provided invaluable input and feedback to the work products generated under the Vision Plan.

Interviews were also held with stakeholders to understand the unique perspectives of those with strong economic ties to the neighborhood.

1.2.3 VISIONING PICNIC

As an introductory event, a visioning picnic was held to kick off the project with a strong public presence and set a welcoming tone with the community. Complementary picnic style food was provided by a local restaurant. Participants were shown a brief presentation outlining the project, which was followed by interactive visioning exercises that were structured to extract ideas from the community and form the basis of the Vision Plan.

Attendees were asked to identify areas where they would like to see change and areas they would like to remain unchanged in the future. People indicated these preferences with red and green stickers placed on an oversized map of the Woonasquatucket Corridor, clearly showing collective preferences and targeting certain areas for greater planning attention. This crowdsourcing map helped the planning team focus on high priority issues and ensure that later design work corresponded to the resulting heat map of the neighborhood. The activity also helped push participants to talk to one another, breaking the ice, and making the next activities, which required collaboration, easier.

The next round of activities required everyone to break up into groups and complete two more collaborative exercises. The first of these, the "visioning map", asked each table to draw their ideas for the future of the neighborhood on a neighborhood map and then present them back to everyone. The second activity, the "visioning worksheet", asked each group to come up with at least three "big ideas" that they would like to see identified in the Vision Plan, and then asked them to brainstorm incremental steps needed to achieve those goals. Each table was asked to present their work back to the full room of attendees.

Each activity was designed to help inform the flagship event: the intensive, multi-day Planning Workshop.



(above) City staff attend the Olneyville Fall Festival to gather ideas for the future of the Woonasquatucket Corridor.
(left) The Community Connectors meeting brought together key stakeholders within the Woonasquatucket Corridor to begin setting the tone and engagement plan for the project.



(below) The Visioning Picnic launched the public engagement effort and provided a centrally located forum to gather community input.



1.2.5 PLANNING WORKSHOP

The Planning Workshop was the centerpiece of the public planning process. Spanning five days in November, the Workshop was where many planning and design decisions were made with the help of the public.

This multi-tiered, intensive event included a temporary design office, or studio, set up in the WaterFire Arts Center conveniently located within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. This space served as the location for all activities surrounding the Workshop, including focus groups, full public presentations, and informal conversations. The studio included both meeting space and design workstations for the full planning team. This co-location allowed the planning team to benefit from overhearing conversations with community members, presentations, and focus group meetings, without having them stop work to participate. Similarly, anyone could strike up a conversation and ask questions of the designers, providing real time feedback and making the planning process as transparent and approachable as possible.

The Workshop agenda was designed in response to information generated at the Visioning Picnic and stakeholder interviews over the previous several months.

The first day was comprised of an evening public meeting, which included a presentation and mapping exercise focused on six catalyst brownfield sites located within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Attendees moved in randomly assigned groups from station to station and rapidly assembled a large bank of big design ideas for each site. A visual preference exercise, which included a printed collection of curated images, was provided to participants. People put red and green dots to indicate general like or dislike, as well as specific comments, to further explain local design preference, desired building uses, and other aspirations for the neighborhood. The visual preference images remained up throughout the rest of the workshop to gather additional input from anyone who walked into the studio.

Beginning on the second day of the Workshop, an intensive series of focus group meetings were held in the studio, while the consulting team began to work. Focus group meetings were held on a variety of topics including mobility, open space and sustainability, neighborhood and family life, artists and makers, the food economy, and brownfields. Each session was open to the public and included city and state officials as well as at least one expert on each topic. The studio remained open for the next two nights, allowing the public to come and go according to their own schedule, facilitating additional one-on-one opportunities for interaction with the design team.

Thursday's major event was a mid-workshop review. This evening public meeting presented an opportunity for the public to view draft work completed up until that point and provide feedback on what they were seeing. All work was presented gallery style on large boards; participants were invited to comment using provided sticky notes as well as through direct discussions with the design team.

The closing event for the Workshop, a public meeting held on a Saturday afternoon, featured an address by Mayor Jorge Elorza, a summary presentation of the work completed so far, and a pop-up gallery presenting all of the process plans, drawings, and analysis completed during the workshop. After a long, productive week of work and public input, a framework for the Vision Plan was largely in place.



The opening evening of the Planning Workshop generated a significant volume of ideas that launched the planning work.



A mid-week pin-up and review provided an opportunity for the community to help refine plans and big ideas.

1.2.6 PLAN OPEN HOUSE

The Plan Open House, held on February 28, 2018, was the public's first opportunity to interact with a full draft report and provide feedback on design and policy ideas and action steps. A gallery style event was organized, featuring live music, to create a festive, community-oriented event to encourage the public to attend. The meeting provided a forum to revisit the work from November and once again give feedback on the work in progress. The Plan Open House itself and the month-long public comment period that followed were the last steps in the community engagement process.

At the Plan Open House the community was able to see and comment on draft plans and big ideas that were incorporated into the Plan.



THE WOONASQUATUCKET HISTORY AND FUTURE

1.3.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER

In the pre-Colonial period, the Algonquin Nation controlled the 15.8 mile long Woonasquatucket River. As a convenient route to the coast, the Woonasquatucket became a trading route of importance to the Algonquin Nation’s coastal tribes including the Narragansett, Wampanoag, and Massachuset.

“Woonasquatucket” is an Narragansett word, whose meaning is debated. The City of Providence consulted the Narragansett Tribal Council, which interpreted the word to mean “the place before the bend in the river.” This interpretation was based on the following translations:

Woonki = crook or bend
Asqua = before
Tuck = river
Et = the place of/where

Another interpretation that the writers frequently encountered was “where the salt water ends” or “where the river meets the sea,” most likely referring to the Woonasquatucket’s pre-industrial condition as a tidal estuary. The ocean’s influence on the River can been seen throughout the Woonasquatucket Corridor with a pronounced change in water level as tides rise and fall in Narragansett Bay.

After Roger Williams settled Rhode Island in 1636, small rural villages took advantage of the River’s swift current and narrow width to make the construction of small grist and shingle mills convenient. It was this quality as a fast and narrow river that would cement the Woonasquatucket forever in Rhode Island’s industrial history.

After the construction of Slater Mill in Pawtucket in 1790, the nation’s first successful water-driven textile mill, Rhode Island found itself at the forefront of American industrial technology. Within a decade, water-driven mills developed at a rapid pace along the Woonasquatucket, replacing the small mills from the prior century, but built along the River for the very same reasons. Even as the significance of water-power access began to wane, the industrial densities within the area only continued to increase. Throughout the 19th century, new steam driven mill buildings, deploying the next wave of Rhode Island industrial hardware, the Corliss Engine, were being built across Providence and along the Woonasquatucket.

By the beginning of the 20th century, Providence boasted an impressive array of some of the nation’s largest manufacturers, including Brown and Sharpe, US Rubber, and the American Locomotive Works who produced an immense number of different products, including jewelry, flatware, rubber, textiles, steam engines, and locomotives. It is the legacy of this industrial activity that remains central to the Woonasquatucket River of today.

Historic images of the Woonasquatucket Corridor capture the spirit of this critical jobs center within the region.



1.3.2 THE CORRIDOR TODAY

Walking along the Woonasquatucket River today, one is confronted immediately by the 19th century industrial building fabric, with long stretches of brick buildings still intact. Despite the strong presence of the area's heritage, many changes over the past decades have altered the face of the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

In 2001, the redevelopment of Eagle Square, what was then known as Fort Thunder, began. This project was a contention flash point in the modern evolution of the neighborhood. The loss of Fort Thunder, the construction of the shopping center, and redevelopment of the associated mill buildings that now define Eagle Square did help to organize many artists and activities in the neighborhood, which resulted in the redevelopment of Monohasset Mill, the Steel Yard, the Plant, and others. Several of these projects that took a more caring and authentic approach to their program, design, and execution are now award winning examples of brownfield redevelopment.

On the eastern edge of the study area, the neighborhood has historically met the State House area and downtown with a series of complex transportation infrastructure systems. Whether the Cove Basin from the mid-1800s or the elevated railroad tracks that traversed the area up until 1986, this portion of the Woonasquatucket Corridor has always had a poor connection with the State House and destinations Downtown. This situation was not substantially improved when the

“What do you love about the District? The sound of machines and the quiet.”



View of pop-up gardens and trellis in Eagle Square.



(above) Nicholson File studios
(left) Industrial and maker space within the PRA / Umicore site
(right) View down Valley Street looking south

Providence Place Mall was developed and opened in 1999. In 2013, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation began construction on the replacement of 1,290 feet of the Interstate 95 Viaduct that was originally constructed in 1964. The replacement of this critical piece of regional transportation infrastructure will be completed in 2018 at a total cost of approximately \$208,000,000. Even with this RIDOT project nearing completion, efforts are still needed to improve the pedestrian and bike connection under the Viaduct and through the Mall to Downtown.

Along the south-eastern edge of the Woonasquatucket Corridor, plans for the replacement of the 6/10 interchange were finalized in 2016. This \$400 million project will address critical upgrades to this aging highway infrastructure while including several important enhancements for surrounding neighborhoods, including more than one mile of new bike paths/multi-use trails, two new bicycle/ pedestrian connections from the Woonasquatucket Corridor to the West End and Federal Hill, a Route 10 North to Route 6 West connection (which will alleviate traffic through Olneyville Square), and the creation of several new acres of former highway land for redevelopment.

The River itself, the most unifying feature across an incredibly varied area, continues to move between lofty factory buildings and nature. While the River has been modified, straightened, and embanked over time, disrupting the natural distribution of water throughout the historical floodplain, recent efforts have been made to restore the River. Over the past decade, the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council has begun to reestablish some segments of re-naturalized greenway, with more work needed to prepare the Woonasquatucket Corridor for future climate realities.



Photo by Brown Sharpe



6-10 CONNECTOR RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

In January 2018, RIDOT announced the beginning of a \$410M reconstruction of the 6-10 Connector, a state highway that separates the Woonasquatucket Corridor from the adjacent Federal Hill neighborhood. In addition to reconstructing nine bridge structures, five of which are structurally deficient, the project also includes: construction of the “missing move” to allow Route 10 North traffic to access Route 6 West without traveling through Olneyville Square; a one-mile extension of the Washington Secondary Bike Path between Union Avenue and Tobey Street; two new pedestrian and bicycle bridges over the highway and railroad tracks at Dike Street and Tobey Street; a complete redesign of the Tobey Street bridge to allow two-way neighborhood-to-neighborhood vehicular travel; a complete redesign of Broadway and Westminster Streets as they cross over the highway to make them pedestrian-friendly gateways between Federal Hill and Olneyville; and the creation of more than four acres of former highway right-of-way for development.

WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER GREENWAY EXTENSION PROJECT

In Spring 2018, the City of Providence and Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council will begin design and engineering work on a \$6M project to enhance a one-mile section of the Greenway between Downtown and Eagle Street by creating a separated off-road bicycle and pedestrian path, a series of pocket parks and kayak launches, and green infrastructure along the Woonasquatucket River between Eagle and Park Streets. Construction on the project is expected to be completed by 2022.

1.3.3
CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE
WOONASQUATUCKET OF TOMORROW

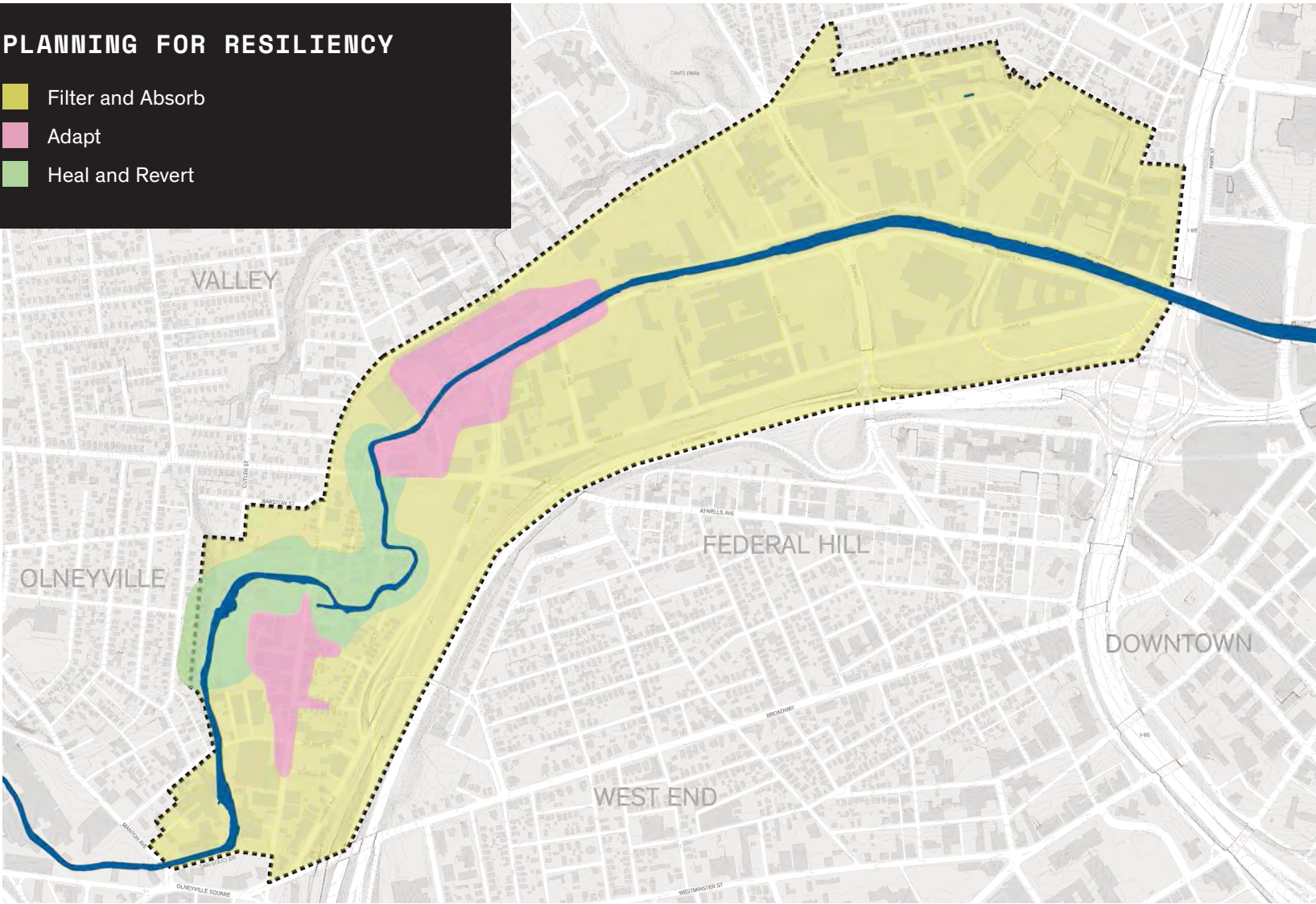
What does the future of the area look like and how does this affect the neighborhoods that surround it? That question is the central motivating question at the heart of all planning processes; but for the Woonasquatucket River, the question is a bit more complicated. Climate change presents a set of converging realities that complicate our vision of the future as we know it. Issues related to changes in sea level over the next 50 or 100 years are magnified along a tidal river system. Providence is unique in its ability to close and open the hurricane barrier located at the the entrance to the bay. Although this infrastructure may mitigate fluctuations in the short term by closing the gates at high tide, if warming continues at current rates it is possible that barrier system might need to be permanently closed to prevent flooding even at low tide.

Climate change is also anticipated to affect the amount of water handled by the entire Woonasquatucket River Watershed, should there be an increase in the frequency and volume of precipitation-related flooding events in vulnerable parts of the Watershed. The flood of 2010 provided a preview of what may come. As the world warms, large flooding events will likely occur more often. Floods that were considered likely once every 100 years may be as likely every 50 years by the time we get to 2100. Complicating this situation further is the reality that the lowest lying and most flood prone parts of the Woonasquatucket also happen to be some of the most contaminated brownfield sites in the area. Any situation that brings floodwaters into contact with uncapped contaminants can exacerbate cleanup efforts by spreading industrial pollution over a wide area and cause a public health crisis as waters recede.

This plan articulates a strategy for managing stormwater in the face of climate change. In the areas shown in green, on-site and street-level strategies for managing storm-water locally can help minimize impacts on the river. Areas shown in blue flood occasionally and need to adapt through changes in the elevation of buildings and roadways as opportunities arise for rebuilding. The orange area is prone to increased flooding and should be the focus of stormwater infrastructure improvements.

PLANNING FOR RESILIENCY

- Filter and Absorb
- Adapt
- Heal and Revert



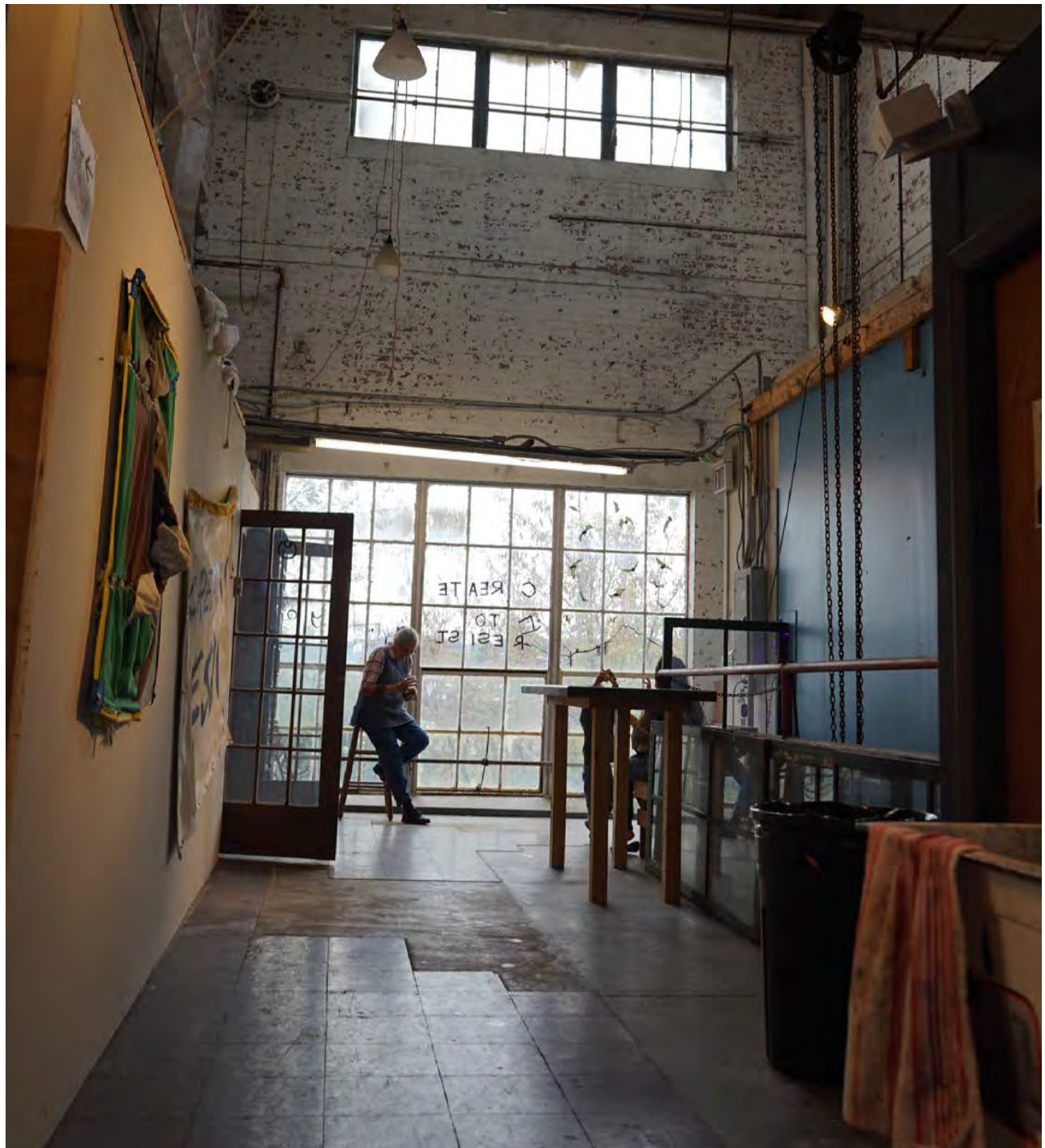


*Photo by Birchwood
Design Group*

THE FABRICATION AND FOOD ECONOMY

1.4.1 A SHARED HERITAGE

One of the most surprising experiences when exploring the Woonasquatucket Corridor is the creative world hidden behind the large industrial facades of the district. A unique mix of creative activities and businesses still thrive on the availability of affordable, raw, and programmable space present in large supply in the Corridor. Communities of artists, small light industrial businesses, and the food service sector depend on the existence of these spaces. The fragile economies that sustain the continued existence of these inhabitants are continuously threatened by shifts in the market and, in some cases, lack of tenant control over the future of the buildings they inhabit.



*Nicholson File artist studios
attract artists and
lovers of art.*

1.4.2 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The current coexistence of artists and light industrial fabricators within the Woonasquatucket Corridor can be attributed to a crisis of industrial vacancy. Starting in the 1970s, a large inventory of unoccupied space and modest rents began incubating new businesses and artistic endeavors that were price-sensitive, experimental, and loud. Unhindered by neighbors and able to produce noise any time of day or night, these large, inexpensive spaces allowed a number of now famous art collectives to form. By the 1990s Providence, and the Woonasquatucket Corridor in particular, was host to one of the most dynamic underground art and music communities on the East Coast.

Interestingly, it was a shared traumatic experience that also showed both groups how vulnerable their situation could be in the face of larger economic forces outside of their control. Fort Thunder -- one of the most successful and famous Providence art and music collectives of this time period -- formed in 1995 and was comprised of industrial space on the second floor of the former Valley Worsted Mill complex, also known as Eagle Square. Confronted with an improving real estate market through much of the 1990s the owner of this iconic site, FELDCO, decided to evict all tenants and demolish the building starting in December of 2001. Ironically, the redevelopment of the site as a suburban style shopping plaza did not perform as anticipated. Both of Eagle Square's anchor businesses had to be re-tenanted soon after completion.

This planning effort, in many ways, is an opportunity to make more intentional decisions about how to manage the real estate market and minimize effects of speculative investments that fail to protect the long-term value of the community and city as a whole.

The food service industry also has a long history within the Woonasquatucket Corridor, having been well established by the late 1920s. Food-oriented space of that time period centered on warehousing and distribution of produce brought in by rail, and stored in a number of refrigerated warehouse buildings in the northeast portion of the Corridor. It was however, the very same disruptive market conditions post World War II that transformed the food service sector into what we see in the Corridor today. When a majority of food distribution moved to trucking, Providence's extensive rail-based warehousing system was unable to effectively compete. The resulting relocation of most large distributors to the suburbs left warehouse sites vacant, but some companies found their clientele and business better suited to serving a more niche market within this central location. The companies that remain in the Corridor today have focused largely on providing services required by many of the small restaurants and corner stores throughout Providence. Being centrally located within the city, these companies were able to provide services more tailored to the needs of Providence's extensive Hispanic, Portuguese, and East Asian immigrant communities. Renewed interest in local food production and a desire by the public to directly access and interact with the producers of their food have bolstered this business, with increasing interest in the food sector as a priority for the Corridor.

The Woonasquatucket Corridor is defined by industrial buildings that provide affordable space for creatives and industrial users.



1.4.3 RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

There has been a sea change in the way people look at their food, with a marked increase in the public's desire to be closer to the production and preparation of the food they eat. This change has led to two exciting new projects within the Woonasquatucket Corridor that both demonstrate the resilience of the foodservice industry in Providence: Farm Fresh RI's new campus and Gotham Greens hydroponic greenhouse.

Farm Fresh Rhode Island plans to build a new combination distribution facility/ farmers market on Kinsley Avenue near the center of the study area. The 79,000-square foot building will provide centralized food processing space and distribution services to local farmers and prepared food vendors who sell products at Farm Fresh Rhode Island's network of local farmers' markets. On weekends, the facility will open to the public as a large farmers market in its own right, drawing thousands of visitors a week to the center of the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

The second facility, a 94,000-square foot hydroponic greenhouse by Gotham Greens, is planned for land formerly occupied by the General Electric Baseworks factory near the corner of Atwells and Harris avenues. Gotham Greens has successfully implemented the concept of large-scale industrial hydroponics, providing market greens, at its facility in the center of Brooklyn. The Providence location will bring year-round urban agriculture, at a scale never before seen in Rhode Island, to a highly visible location within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

View east at fruit warehousing buildings on the Narraganset Bay Commission site.



A VISION FOR TOMORROW

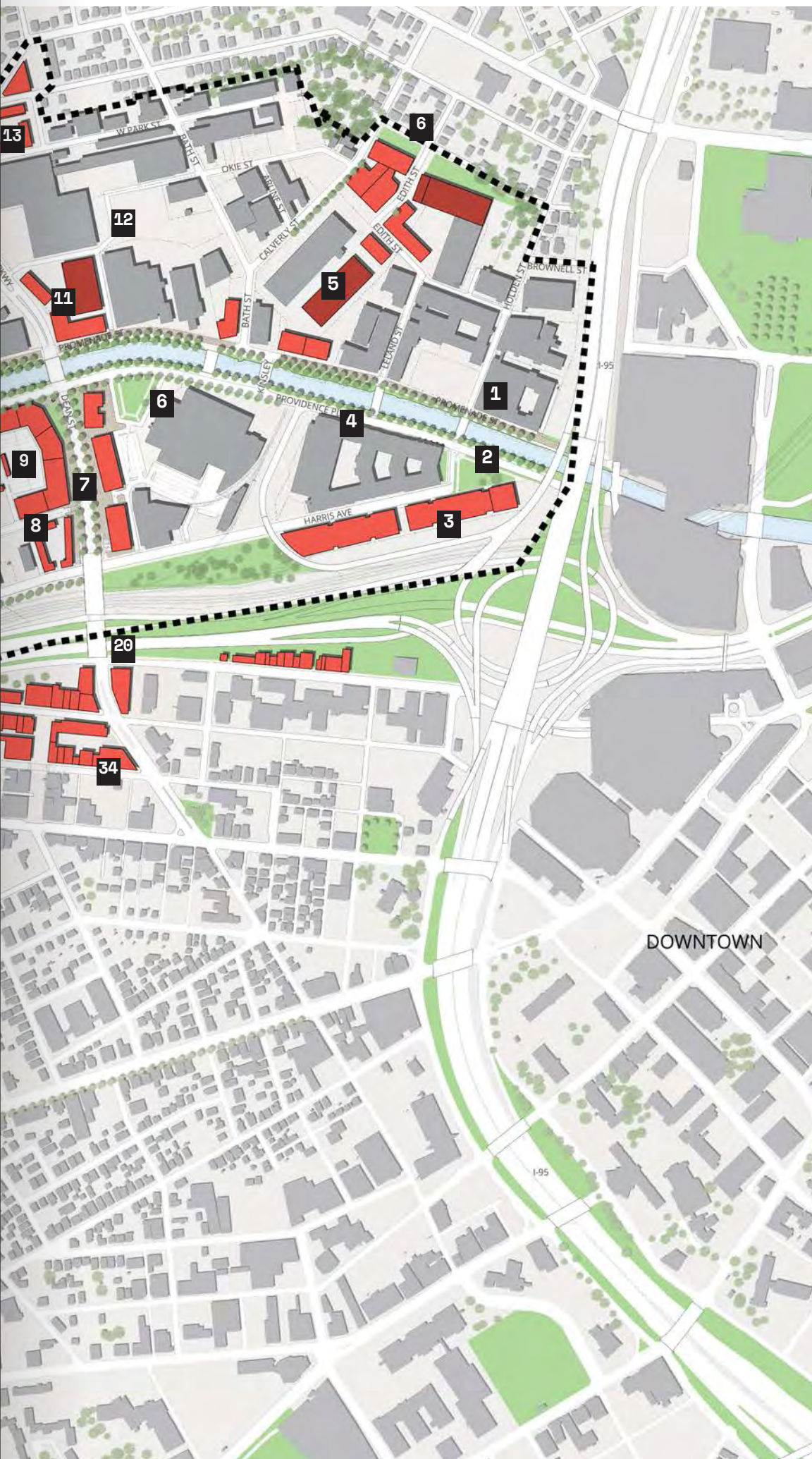
The Vision Plan for the Woonasquatucket Corridor is articulated in the pages of this plan and also within the illustrative plan shown on the following pages. This graphic summary of many of the physical elements of the plan helps to show how the hopes of the neighborhood can take shape. It also provides policy and regulatory direction for the City. This plan is not a guaranteed outcome, but rather a graphic illustration that shows one possible scenario and visually articulates a set of goals.

More detailed information on elements of this plan can be found in Chapter 2, Community Priorities and Implementation and more detailed plans for critical opportunity sites can be found in Chapter 3, Redevelopment of Catalytic Sites.



*View east up Atwells Avenue
at the intersection with Harris
Avenue and Eagle Street.*





- 1 New Holden Street Bridge
- 2 Harris Ave / Providence Place Intersection Redesign and New Park
- 3 Infill Development
- 4 New Leland Street Bridge
- 5 Infill Development & Structured Parking
- 6 New Park
- 7 Dean Street Redesign
- 8 Extension of Tingley Street
- 9 Industrial / Maker Development & Shared Parking
- 10 Woonasquatucket Greenway Promenade
- 11 Mixed-use Redevelopment
- 12 New Street
- 13 Fabrication Building Redevelopment
- 14 Extension of Davis Park as "Green Street" on Rathbone
- 15 Expansion of Market Buildings
- 16 Improve Existing Bridge for Pedestrians and Bicyclists
- 17 Extension of Charlotte Hope Street & New Pocket Park
- 18 Flexible Yard for Parking, Work Activities, Events, and Markets
- 19 New Pedestrian & Bicycle Bridge to Federal Hill
- 20 Relocated 6/10 Off Ramp
- 21 New Sims Avenue Bridge to Access Shared Parking
- 22 New Pocket Park and redesign of Eagle Street and Eagle / Kinsley Intersection
- 23 Redesign of Eagle / Atwells / Harris Intersection
- 24 Repair street wall along Valley Street with new infill
- 25 Gotham Greens with Liner Building on Atwells
- 26 New Spur of Woonasquatucket Greenway Path
- 27 New Flood Plain Park
- 28 New Bridge Connecting DeSoto Street and Addison Place
- 29 New Flood Plain Park and Spur of Greenway
- 30 Repair Street Wall along Valley with New Infill Development
- 31 Extension of Amherst Street & New Homes
- 32 New Development as part of Phase II of 6/10 Connector Redesign
- 33 Extension of West Exchange Street
- 34 Improvement of Spruce Street
- 35 New Bridge from San Souci Drive to Paragon Mills

The Woonasquatucket Vision Plan involved a unique process that ensured strong participation from a diverse range of residents, artists, makers, business owners, developers, and city leaders to ensure the priorities, strategies, and actions included in this Plan are in line with the interests of the community.





CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES & IMPLEMEN- TATION STRATEGIES

Artwork by David Allyn

A successful planning initiative hinges on the ability to translate the hopes and dreams of a community into real-world, actionable items that can be taken as individual steps to reaching a common neighborhood vision. This requires an iterative process to continuously evaluate and re-evaluate priorities to ensure they support a unified vision for the neighborhood. The community priorities identified here have been distilled down from the immense volume of individual comments, questions, and feedback collected throughout the planning process.

The following community priorities, or overarching goals of this plan, have been created based on input from hundreds of residents, business and property owners, community leaders, and stakeholders. Each community priority consists of several strategies and associated action items. Together, this collection creates a clear picture of what the vision for the future of the Woonasquatucket Corridor is and how that vision can begin to be implemented.

Improve Sustainability and Resiliency

Support and Grow the Existing Economic Cluster
around Arts, Food, and Makers

Preserve and Create Affordable Space

Improve Access and Connectivity

Enhance and Maintain Public Spaces and the
Woonasquatucket River

In order to maintain flexibility throughout the life of this plan, it is important to take each goal on its own merits when pursuing projects and opportunities for implementation and make informed judgements about meeting the intent of a given idea. By its very nature, the aspirational qualities the Vision Plan require it to be greater than the sum of its parts, in much the same way that a neighborhood itself is more than just a collection of individual buildings.



IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY



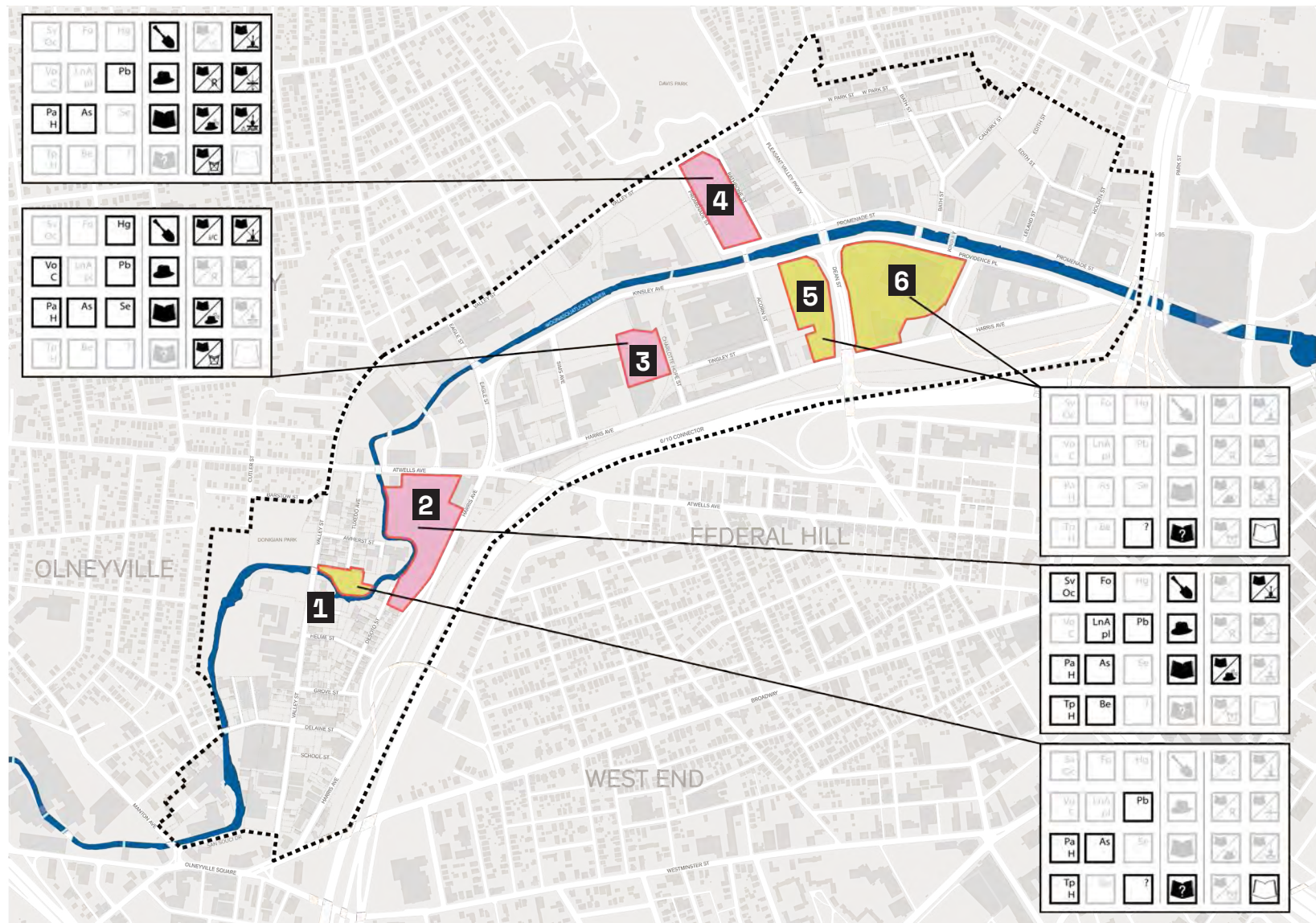
Remediate Catalytic Brownfield Sites

Establishing remediation and redevelopment strategies for six catalyst brownfield sites emerged as a central priority during this planning process. The six catalyst sites were selected for their importance in shaping the future of the Woonasquatucket Corridor and their potential to be transformative if redeveloped in line with both the Corridor-wide community priorities and more specific development principles for each site outlined in Chapter 3.

The accompanying diagram shows the type of contamination found on each site and the recommended action steps required to proceed with development on each site.

Several financial resources are currently available to fund assessment and remediation of brownfields sites in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. In 2014, Rhode Island voters approved a \$5 million bond to fund RIDEM’s Brownfields Remediation and Economic Development Fund. In 2016, two awards were secured specifically for the Project Area: the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank secured an \$820,000 award from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Revolving Fund and RIDEM secured a \$400,000 award from the EPA Targeted Brownfield Assessment Program. These three programs provide readily-available resources to assess and remediate contaminated soils in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. The City should partner with property owners to take advantage of these financial resources.

Action <i>Pursue additional brownfields assessment and remediation grant opportunities to replenish and sustain current funding levels available to properties within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.</i>	Action <i>Conduct direct outreach to property owners to raise awareness about owner liability and available cleanup resources, and invite owners to participate in the implementation of the Vision Plan. Where appropriate, inform property owners about Limited Design Investigations (LDI) as a means to reduce the cost burden of conducting brownfield assessments.</i>
Timeframe <i>Near term</i>	Timeframe <i>Near term</i>



CATALYTIC SITES

- Stable Condition
- Unknown Condition
- Poor Condition

CATALYST SITES

- 1** NATERENO SALVAGE LOT
Owner: Caesar Natereno
- 2** GE BASEWORKS
Owner: General Electric Company
- 3** PRA PARCEL
Owner: Providence Redevelopment Agency
- 4** NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION
Owner: Narragansett Bay Commission
- 5** PROVIDENCE JOURNAL WEST
Owner: The Providence Journal Company
- 6** PROVIDENCE JOURNAL EAST
Owner: LMG Rhode Island Holdings Inc.

ICON DESCRIPTIONS

CONTAMINANT FINDINGS

Sv Oc Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds	Fo Fuel Oil	Hg Mercury
Vo C Volatile Organic Compounds	LnA pl Light non-aqueous phase liquid	Pb Lead
Pa H Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons	As Arsenic	Se Selenium
Tp H Total petroleum hydrocarbons	Be Beryllium	? Contaminants Unknown (No Records)

REMEDATION STATUS

Soil excavated
Soil capped and/or engineered controls put in place
Environmental Land Use Restrictions created
Remediation Status Unknown (No Records)

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS

Industrial or commercial use only	Soil disturbance prohibited
Residential use prohibited	Infiltration through contaminated soils prohibited
Maintenance of cap or engineered controls	Subsurface construction above contaminated groundwater prohibited
Drinking of groundwater prohibited	Environmental Land Use Restrictions not applied (No Records)

Plan for Sea Level Rise and Inland Flooding

The Woonasquatucket River corridor faces increasing threats from nature, both from the daily stresses of tidal influences and the more infrequent shocks of storm events and flooding – both anticipated to worsen over time due to the predicted impacts of climate change and sea level rise. Like many streams and rivers in similar post-industrial areas, much of the Woonasquatucket River was reshaped around the turn of the last century to facilitate industrial uses, constraining and channelizing the river’s formerly natural alignment and cross-section. Rivers that constrain flows within a uniform cross-section cannot realize the natural benefits of flows able to access a floodplain during larger storms. When larger flows are confined to a uniform section, excessive velocities, and associated shear stresses also translate into sometimes damaging conditions to the river’s bottom and lower banks. In addition to manipulation of the cross-section over time, the hardening of vegetated surfaces within the highly sensitive Woonasquatucket riverfront buffer has dramatically altered hydrology, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

The vision for a resilient Woonasquatucket River Corridor is a framework for growth consistent with the community’s vision for its future while minimizing risk from external environmental forces. Strategies to improve the health and resiliency of the Woonasquatucket Corridor were developed by the engineering team during the design workshop, including a range of interventions that could be encouraged at strategic locations along the River.

“Fix the
flooding,
please.”

Low Impact Development, LID
Low Impact Development includes a variety of practices that mimic or preserve natural drainage processes to manage stormwater. LID practices typically retain rain water and encourage it to soak into the ground rather than allowing it to run off into ditches and storm drains where it would otherwise contribute to flooding and pollution problems. - EPA

WOONASQUATUCKET RESILIENCY
RECOMMENDATIONS

Watershed / District:
Where should investment
be prioritized?

Where possible, direct development and redevelopment investment to higher, safer ground.

Encourage development and redevelopment within the current and predicted future floodplain to utilize adaptive building approaches to prepare for and embrace water, such as raising first floor elevations and critical infrastructure, edge fortification, and floodproofing.

Make in-stream channel improvements to return the Woonasquatucket River to a more meandering pattern, return floodplain areas, and create wetlands.

Identify opportunities for district-scale stormwater management to help manage inland flooding. “Floodplain parks” can provide significant environmental benefit while also providing high value and visibility as usable public open space.

Protect, restore, and reconnect natural resources to revegetate/ reforest riverbank buffers and improve wildlife habitat.

Block, Street, & Building:
How should the
corridor grow?

Encourage Low Impact Development (LID) as a preferred site design strategy, minimize impervious surfaces where possible, and utilize green infrastructure (GI) practices such as permeable pavement and bioretention to filter and absorb stormwater.

Integrate depaving, tree planting, and other GI practices into upcoming public infrastructure investments such as the Woonasquatucket River Greenway and other streetscape and park projects.

Coordinate LID design strategies with soil remediation requirements. Typically a “clean cap” of a specified depth of clean fill material is required where soil and/or water contamination from previous land uses is present above specified thresholds. Typically, GI stormwater management practices can function effectively as filters when part of an engineered clean cap—sometimes requiring an impermeable liner with an underdrain to limit infiltration.

Prioritize maintenance of stormwater infrastructure, including more regular inspections and cleaning of catch basins and culverts.



The Woonasquatucket has areas naturally suited for improvements to handle stormwater events, including this area at the bend in the River behind the GE Baseworks Site.

Action

Develop a stormwater master plan for the Woonasquatucket Corridor that analyzes existing conditions and provides recommendations for proposed policy updates, regulatory changes, and physical improvements, including conceptual engineering and cost estimates for specific capital projects.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Incorporate green infrastructure (GI) into extensions of the Woonasquatucket Greenway. Three segments of the Greenway are currently in the planning stage: San Souci Drive, Gotham Greens, and Kinsley/Promenade. These three capital projects are imminent and provide a key opportunity to implement LID strategies on a neighborhood scale.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Investigate updates to the City's stormwater management requirements, standard details, and Zoning Ordinance to encourage Low-Impact Development and GI practices.

Timeframe

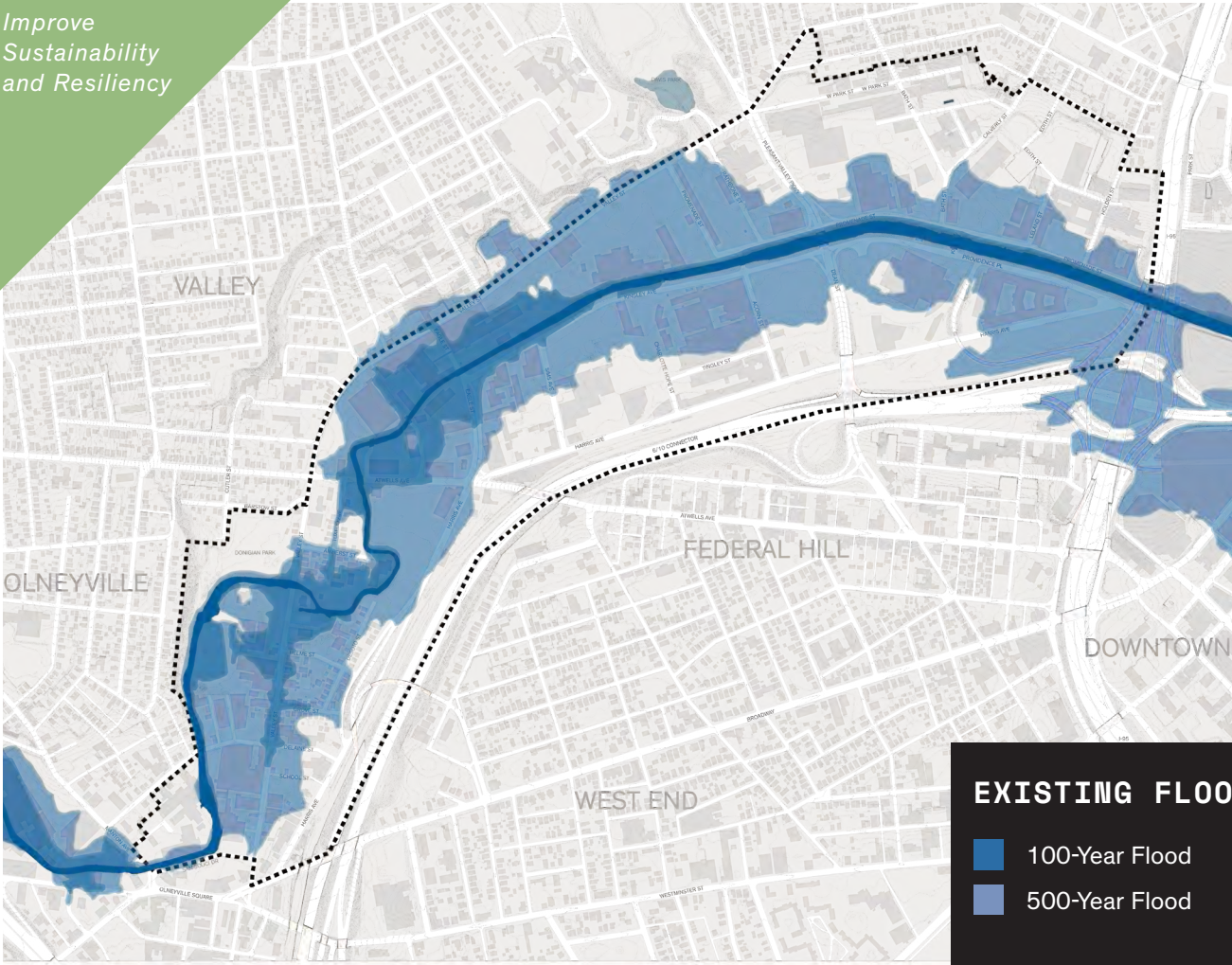
Near-term

Action

Develop a stormwater maintenance agreement to clarify responsibilities across City departments and identify additional resources necessary to ensure timely maintenance of drainage infrastructure.

Timeframe

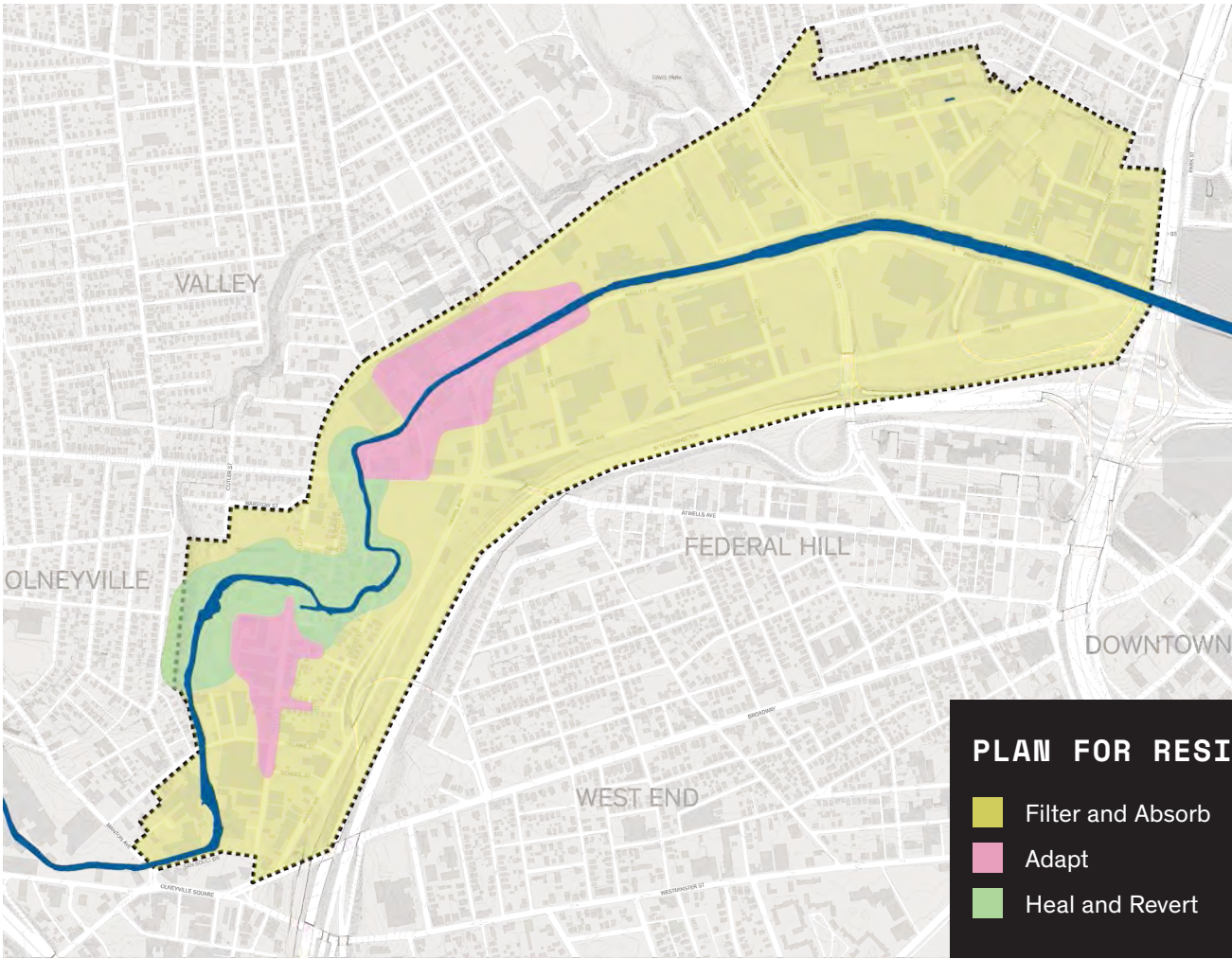
Near-term



The incidents and severity of flooding have increased, requiring a more focused response to stormwater management.

EXISTING FLOOD MAP

- 100-Year Flood
- 500-Year Flood







This plan for resiliency is based on topography and the locations where storm events have the greatest impact, identifying an approach that responds to these conditions.

PLAN FOR RESILIENCY

- Filter and Absorb
- Adapt
- Heal and Revert

RETREAT PLAN

-  Existing Buildings with Adaptive Strategies
-  Existing Buildings to Revert to Floodplain / Civic Space
-  Proposed Building
-  Expanded Floodplain

2.1.3

Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled

Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is a measurable target, but one that involves fundamentally improving the availability and quality of transportation choices. Not only does reduction in VMT reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality, but it also means people are choosing more sustainable and healthy methods of moving through a city, including trips that involve walking or biking, even when transit is involved. Making these alternate modes attractive is a big hurdle, often times expensive, and requires both private-sector and public sector investment in streets that feel safe, comfortable, and convenient for everyone.

Improving access and connectivity plays a key role in reducing vehicle miles traveled. See Section 2.4 “Improve Access and Connectivity” for additional strategies and actions that may be applicable to reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Action

Retrofit streets to meet Complete Streets standards, paying particular attention to supporting bicycling, walking, and continued truck access.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Partner with car sharing services such as Zip Car to establish car sharing parking locations at neighborhood centers within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Establish a bike share system and include bike share stations in the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Restore high-quality public transit service to the Woonasquatucket Corridor (see Section 2.4).

Timeframe

Long-term

Increase the Share of Vehicles that are Electric

While Electric Vehicle use is on the rise, the pace of change is slow, partially due to a lack of infrastructure available to support widespread access. The City of Providence can prepare for Electric Vehicles and charging stations by considering best practices for amending local regulations to be more electric car-friendly. These policy changes should reflect that the type and level of a charging stations needed may vary depending on location and estimated electric vehicle-usage. It is important for the City's permitting processes, building codes, and other regulations to support easy installation of charging stations.

Action

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require parking facilities associated with large development projects to be wired for a certain number of electric charging stations.

Timeframe

Near-term

2.1.5

Establish Incentives and Standards to Encourage Green Building Practices

Ensure that major building projects: are planned, designed, constructed, and managed to minimize adverse environmental impacts; conserve natural resources; are resilient to climate change; promote a more sustainable city; and enhance quality of life. A first step in this effort is to establish requirements that utilize current industry best practices such as the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system and facilitate property owners and developers to consider these issues when planning their projects. This is most critical in regards to assessing the risks associated with climate change. For example, a Resiliency Checklist should be established that provides a framework and specific resiliency targets for assessing project vulnerabilities and adverse impacts. Projects would be required to identify initial (first build) strategies for reducing vulnerabilities and adverse impacts as well as future adaptation strategies for meeting or exceeding resiliency targets and further reducing vulnerabilities and adverse impacts due to future climate conditions.

Action
Require permit applicants to complete a Climate Change Resilience and Preparedness Checklist, regardless of whether this is required for approval.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Engage in the current State process for creating a Rhode Island Stretch Code that will help to push new development to achieve greater energy efficiency.

Timeframe
Near-term



Build Ongoing Capacity around Resiliency

As a waterfront city, Providence can and should be a leader in proactively addressing the challenges that face us from a changing climate.

Action

Establish a resiliency task force to set priorities and measure results.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Host a Climate Change and Resilience Convening with civic and business leaders from Providence to begin a community conversation about these issues and create initial recommendations to prepare Providence for climate change.

Timeframe

Near-term

SUPPORT AND GROW ARTS, FOOD & MAKERS ECONOMIC CLUSTER



Establish an Innovation District Focused on Supporting the Arts, Food, and Makers within the Woonasquatucket River Corridor

The City of Providence is in the process of implementing an economic development framework that will stimulate innovation and strengthen the City's creative culture to drive investment and economic growth that is inclusive, equitable, and resilient within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. The Brookings Institute defines innovation districts as "geographic areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators and accelerators. They are also physically compact, transit-accessible, and technically-wired and offer mixed-use housing, office, and retail." The Woonasquatucket Corridor has the potential to accommodate all of these economic, physical, and networking assets. As an innovation district focused on the arts, food, and makers, the formal establishment of this area as an Innovation District will likely require some creative innovation itself to ensure that housing, higher-rent office space, and incompatible land uses are not located in close proximity or displace existing operations located at the core geography which currently defines this area as a center for the creative, fabrication, and food economies.

The resulting Innovation District in the Woonasquatucket River Corridor needs to possess several key characteristics to be best positioned for success. The district must be walkable, bikeable, and have good access to transit and support the co-location of firms, research centers, universities and other institutions of excellence so that workers are in close proximity to each other. Innovation Districts must be competitive places that drive economic growth as well as possess cool spaces within them to establish an identity and culture that sincerely connects all those working within the district. Innovation Districts are being used throughout the globe as this centuries "productive geography" much like the historic mill structures found throughout the Woonasquatucket River valley are remnants of the last centuries productive geography. It is fitting that these structures now be repurposed to further economic, cultural, and social pursuits.

The new Innovation District must take advantage of activating the underutilized, privately-owned spaces found throughout the study area such as Paragon Mills, Capitol Records, and the Max Pollock building. DIY fabrication, small batch manufacturing, and independent commercial studios are already established in the district and should be further supported, protected, celebrated, and provide an anchor within the Innovation District. These existing facilities can be augmented with additional programming that supports the continued development of the district such as coworking space, incubators, accelerators, conversations, lectures, classes, workshops, conferences, convenings, and business plan competitions. Providence also has a constellations of colleges and universities that could benefit from satellite facilities that could co-locate within the Woonasquatucket River Corridor.

Action

Develop a physical space as an Innovation Center for the creative and food economies that is open to the public and is a physical expression of the larger Innovation District. The space should be staffed and funded to support innovation within the business sectors of the Innovation District and establish business to business programs and systems that help these industries prosper.

Timeframe

Long-term

Action

Establish and build a collaborative leadership network of existing innovation drivers to cooperate on the design, delivery, marketing, and governance of the District. This leadership network should include key institutions, firms, and sectors (United Natural Foods, The Steel Yard, WaterFire, TellArt, and others) to provide input on the Innovation District strategy.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Establish a strategic plan to support “innovation cultivators” (companies, organizations, or groups that support the growth of individuals, firms, or ideas) within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. These cultivators might include incubators, accelerators, shared workspaces, job training firms, and community colleges.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Ensure that the physical spaces within the Woonasquatucket Corridor support the development of the Innovation District. These spaces need to be digitally-accessible and encourage people to spend time allowing for casual networking to occur. Look for opportunities to engage the streets, parks, and squares as living labs within the District to test new ideas, install art, and demonstrate the innovations being created by people in the surrounding blocks. Give priority to civic spaces that are in close proximity to the creative uses already happening or in development. Building from these investments will help to establish physical places that represent the Innovation District and reinforce continued investment by other businesses and institutions that can gain value from existing activity.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Establish a working group to explore co-operative models for business services, procurement, and logistical support for the creative economy business working within the Innovation District.

Timeframe

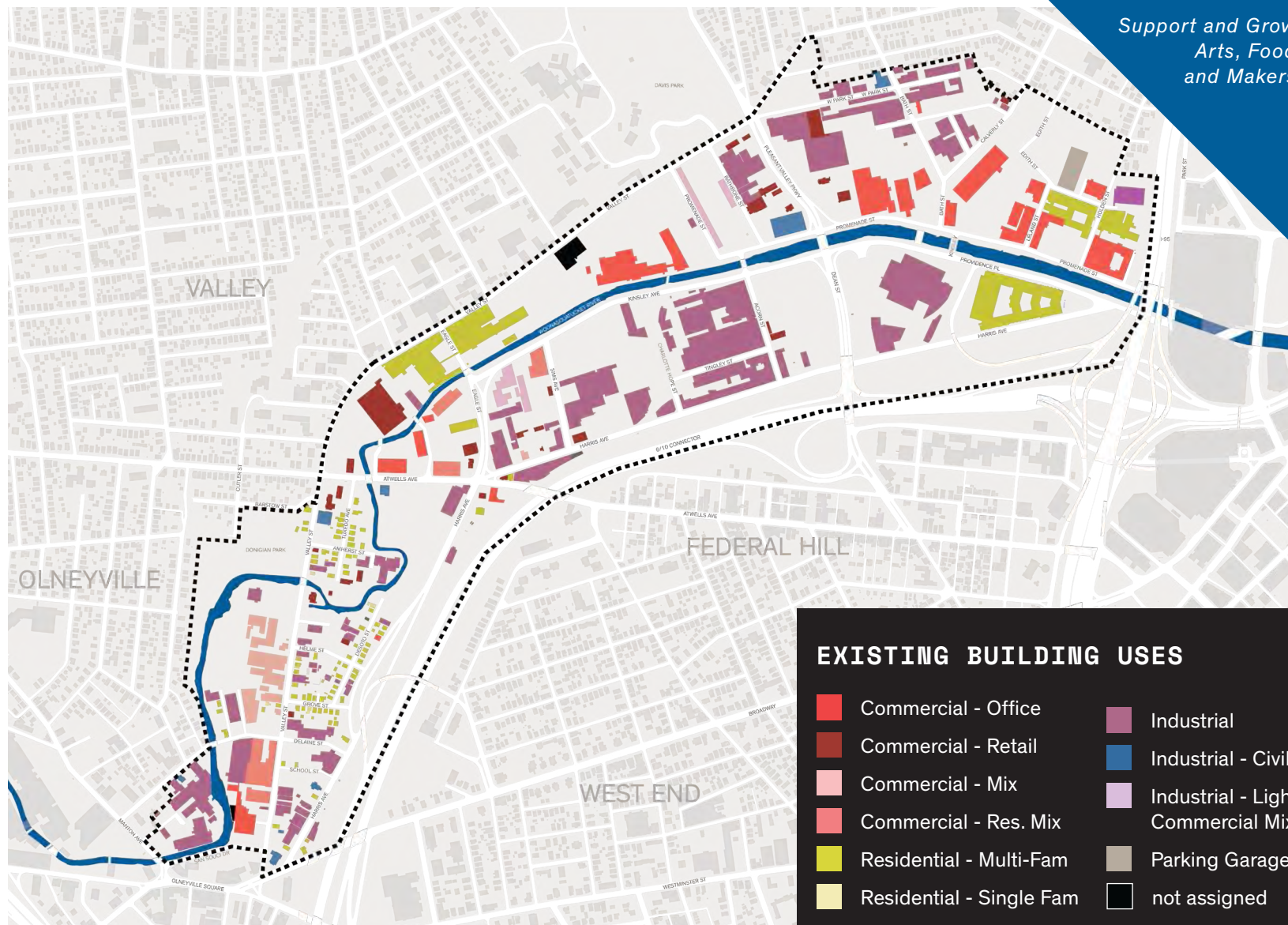
Long-term

Action

Continue to engage the City’s anchor institutions (Brown, URI, RISD) to implement specific innovation projects and satellite facilities in the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term



Action

Promote inclusive growth by identifying clear educational, employment, and other opportunities produced by the Innovation District for low-income residents of the city.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Support a team of community art rangers who lead tours, answer questions about the neighborhood, and pass on important cultural information between segments of the community, including responsible use of industrial buildings and public space.

Timeframe

Near-term

The Woonasquatucket accommodates a broad range of uses that define this area as a rich neighborhood for commercial and jobs activity.

Action

Establish a means by which to quantitatively and qualitatively measure the results of the Innovation District strategy to provide clear feedback and guidance to the District leadership. Quantify the starting assets of the District and establish a baseline to measure against in the future.

Timeframe

Near-term

“Add buildings that help small businesses through shared services.”

2.2.2

Provide More Access to Local Food and Fresh Produce

The City of Providence and Rhode Island Commerce Corporation have both identified food production and the arts as priority sectors targeted for growth and enhancement within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. By treating this area as an innovation center for these industries and focusing on the benefits of co-location and shared-district amenities, the City and its partners within the community can work together to grow this market and strengthen the Corridor as a center of business for the food and arts.

Farm Fresh RI’s campus and Gotham Greens development at the G.E. Baseworks Site are both investments that have grown out of the city’s ongoing Urban Innovation Strategy. These companies will further advance the Woonasquatucket River Corridor as a targeted food economy and provide greater access to fresh food by the creations of this new food hub and the hosting of farmers markets. Efforts should continue to further leverage this co-location strategy to attract additional anchor institutions to the district.

Action

Work with Farm Fresh RI and Gotham Greens as well as existing food sector businesses in the Woonasquatucket Corridor to develop a list of potential business that would benefit from co-locating in the area. Establish a direct marketing and recruitment campaign for these identified business and segments of the industry.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Find a way to scale up the ongoing and successful Urban Innovation Strategy for the Woonasquatucket Corridor targeting food and design clusters.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Identify and recruit an institutional partner working in the food sector to anchor the innovation district.

Timeframe

Near-term

“Lots of food options!”

Improve Requirements in the City's Zoning Ordinance for Site Design and Building Form

Planning for and incentivizing a built environment that supports economic development and a vibrant public realm is critical to the community and ensuring the resilience of the Woonasquatucket Corridor. New development projects should be required to respond to the unique industrial, maker, and artistic character of the area through attention to appropriate site design that supports the definition of the street, building massing that is consistent with the industrial character of the Corridor, quality building materials, authentic design, and integration of art into all facets of the built environment. New buildings should be required to face outwards onto existing public streets to remain open to the community and provide eyes on the street. Currently, the MM-U design standards allow for the creation of automobile oriented site design that is not characteristic of the Corridor. This can detract from the community's goals of making the Corridor more economically viable through design that invites human activity and commerce. Basic design standards for the M-1 district should also be considered so that site design and building massing for these uses support a walkable, pedestrian-oriented public realm. To the extent possible and through creative means, buildings should provide ground-floor publicly accessible spaces, which could be accomplished through provision of incubator space for retail, artist, and maker activity.

Action

Adjust the standards in the existing zoning districts within the Woonasquatucket River Corridor to establish key form-based standards that support the goals of this plan. Recommendations for those standards to be considered are as follows:

- Establish a minimum ground story fenestration on the front facade of 50% and on the side facade of 20%.
- Establish a minimum upper story fenestration of 20% and a maximum of 50%.
- Allow blank walls for a maximum of 50 feet.
- Establish build-to requirements for front and side streets and adjust the facade build out on the front street and side street to be a minimum of 65%.
- Establish a set of parking setbacks that at a minimum are 20 feet back from the primary building facade.
- Establish a requirement for commercial space to occupy the ground floor for a minimum depth of 30 feet before garage parking or tuck-under parking occurs. This ensures that there is an active facade facing the public realm and not blank walls enclosing parking.
- On key streets within the Corridor, such as Kinsley Avenue, Dean Street, and Atwells Avenue, establish a requirement that buildings have entrances spaced at a maximum distance of 30 feet to ensure that long facades have some life and interact with the street.

Timeframe

Near-term

PRESERVE AND CREATE AFFORDABLE SPACE



Preserve and Create Affordable Spaces for the Arts, Food, and Manufacturing Sectors

The Woonasquatucket Corridor has long been host to a unique array of affordable working spaces that have contributed to the incubation of a dynamic fabrication culture associated with small, local, light industrial businesses and the creation of art. The special economic situation that enabled these uses to flourish has long been under threat as real estate prices increase and development pressure causes the inventory of available industrial space to decrease.

In order to maintain affordability in the area, two primary things need to happen. First, existing tenants should increase the level of tenant control over fabrication space within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Thought should be given to how ownership options for buildings and spaces could be included in redevelopment projects. Second, the inventory of available industrial space should be kept high enough to maintain low prices within the area. New construction of appropriately scaled infill structures should be explored to produce a scalable solution to both problems, by increasing tenant ownership and the overall inventory of space.

Existing regulations should also be carefully explored with businesses, developers, and residents to understand where there are extra steps and friction for uses that should be incentivised to locate in the Corridor. Removing potential conflicts as well as any other regulatory

**“An active celebration
of the history of the
industrial revolution
mixed with a celebrated
embrace of art chaos —
give everyone cheap space
and inspiration.”**

hurdles will help the arts, food, and manufacturing sectors thrive in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. There is also a challenging history relating to unsanctioned artist and maker space and also a desire to provide permanence for artists and a diversity of affordable artist spaces.

Action
Review M-1 and M-MU zoning uses to ensure specific use types that align with key innovation district activities are clearly allowed, such as artisan production, art galleries, arts studios, arts exhibition, arts sales and services, coworking, design services, shared workspaces and arts education, work/live creative studios, food halls, food production, plant agriculture, permanent farmers markets, and food markets.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Reduce or eliminate required vehicle spaces for key creative economy uses and provide district parking solutions for these uses. For example, the Industrial - Artisan use has a minimum vehicle space of 1 per studio which is likely excessive for this use type and is also limiting the ability for properties to be used for arts activities due to parking inadequacies.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Incorporate the provision of commercial spaces and small-scale incubator spaces for the creative economy, arts, and food sector into scoring criteria for the Tax Stabilization Agreement process and other incentive programs.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Identify impediments to creative economy and fabrication uses. Convene a task force to identify and remove barriers for businesses, including local and state land use regulations and building codes.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Set up a task force to investigate the impact of taxes on businesses, including the tangible tax, affordable spaces, and other taxes. Consider allowing artisan districts and affordable spaces to be exempt from tangible taxes.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
During the planning process it was communicated that multiple spaces that we not occupied and laying vacant because the improvements to life safety were difficult or impossible given the existing tenancy of the buildings. Establish multiple paths forward for an existing structure or space to be brought up to an acceptable level of life safety. Consider using an affidavit system or performance based solution to supplement the prescriptive requirements of the current codes.

Timeframe
Near-term

“Don’t kick the artists out! Help them create permanence.”

“Don’t make it too pretty. Keep the artist.”

Support Construction of New Maker Building Types

Much of the cultural significance of the Woonasquatucket Corridor is associated not only with the historical architecture and heritage of the industrial revolution, but also with the artists and creative community that work and live in the area today. The City has a long history of working to support Providence's artistic community; however, opportunity exists to further allow creative pursuits to be incubated within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.



A number of unique typologies for building new spaces were developed during the public process for this Vision Plan. A range of building configurations that can be built affordably have been studied and are discussed at length in the Extras Affordable Maker Building Toolkit at the end of this Plan.

Care should be given when creating redevelopment plans to include a variety of structures with a range of sizes to support the continued growth of the creative, fabrication, and food economies within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Providing additional artists spaces and small incubator spaces will help maintain ongoing supply and keep a range of price points and affordability within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

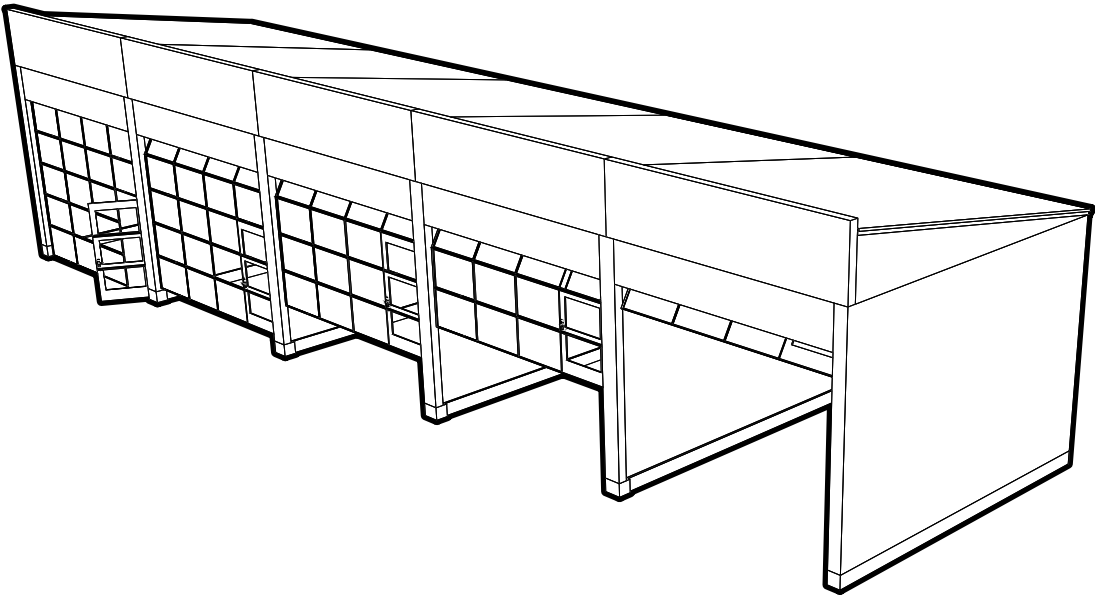
In addition to small incubator space, live/work studios and maker compounds should be allowed and encouraged to provide a rich diversity of spaces to attract and retain artists, and provide options as people’s businesses grow or change.

Action
Partner with land owners to build new affordable inventory of maker space through lighter, quicker, cheaper models, such as those included in the Extras Affordable Maker Building Toolkit at the end of this Plan.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Review M-1 and M-MU zoning to require large projects to provide a certain amount of small street-level incubator spaces.

Timeframe
Near-term



Reduce Conflicts between Existing Activities and Economic Growth to Minimize Displacement

Cities throughout the northeast are under increasing pressure to provide housing in walkable neighborhoods with multi-modal access to jobs. Providence is well positioned to capture the growing demographic looking for the character, sense of place, and convenience that Providence's walkable neighborhoods provide. The Woonasquatucket Corridor, with its proximity to Downtown and supply of underutilized land, could become increasingly more popular for housing development.

As land becomes less available and the cost of housing increases across the city, housing will need to be incentivized in mixed-use areas appropriate for large numbers of new residential units, such as Downtown. Additionally, the City should explore adjustments



“Artists are pioneers and we need to create cheap pioneer space for them...”

to locations of M-1 Light Industrial districts on the Zoning Map to restrict new residential development from priority fabrication zones, or creation of new zoning districts that more effectively protect artists and fabricators from residential development pressure and the inherent conflicts between industrial and residential activity.

Managing the demand for housing and its effect on land values within the Woonasquatucket Corridor is critical to maintaining the long-term viability of the creative economy, food economy, and manufacturing sector.

Action
Review the City's Zoning Map to ensure M-MU Mixed-Use Industrial and M-1 Light Industrial zoning districts are in the best locations to allow or disallow residential development within the Woonasquatucket Corridor and remove market pressures on properties from being converted to multi-family dwellings. Balance investment and displacement by carefully allowing residential development in areas of the Woonasquatucket Corridor that won't adversely impact commercial and artist activities and rents. This will require keeping housing out of areas where noise, odor, and bright lighting is a part of the current industrial and artist operations.

Timeframe
Near-term

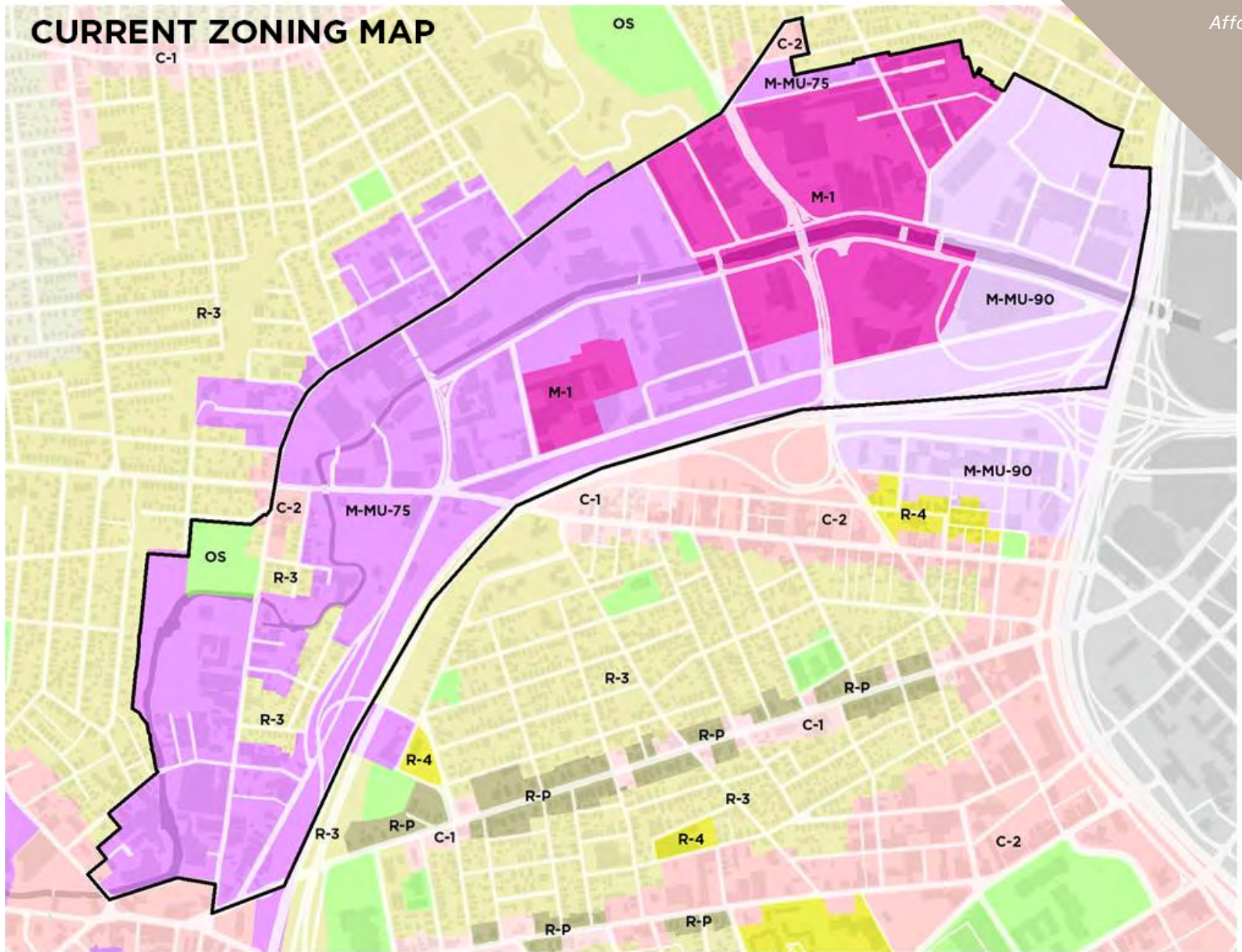
Action
Consider form-based regulations that protect the existing scale and intensity of areas intended for on-going affordable maker, artist, and industrial space. This might include adding building types to the zoning code that provide for a nuanced range of recognizable buildings, with standards related to scale, shape, roof design, use, and other items that help protect and promote diversity within a narrow range of common typologies.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Consider strategies for removing barriers to investment, such as pre-approved building types that allow for a quick path to building permits, removal of fees, and elimination of off-street parking requirements in neighborhoods to encourage development of residential units throughout areas of the City that are appropriate for development, infill, and redevelopment.

Timeframe
Near-term

"I would move here
but don't want
to contribute to
gentrification."



The vision for the Woonasquatucket Corridor is largely based on the idea of balance and restraint. The Vision Plan recommends careful adjustments to existing regulations, including changes to the City's Zoning Ordinance to allow both continuation of affordable commercial spaces by limiting residential uses, as well as transformative change in targeted areas. Potential adjustments to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map should: preserve affordable space by limiting residential uses within areas where makers, artists, and warehousing currently exists in high concentration; allow for mixed-use mill redevelopment in areas where historic mills and contextual infill development, including residential units, would be appropriate; promote high-density mixed-use development in areas that could benefit from a more intensive land use pattern; and protect existing residential areas that currently exist in small pockets of the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

“Improve without displacement”

Preserve and Create Affordable Housing

Affordable housing within the area surrounding the Woonasquatucket Corridor is, for the most part located on the hillsides surrounding the industrial corridor in historic triple decker neighborhoods. In places where residential development already exists and is deemed to be appropriate, all efforts should be made to allow the development of new affordable units. Partnerships with local Community Development Corporations (CDCs) in surrounding neighborhoods should be facilitated so that affordable housing can be stabilized and increased. Further emphasis should be placed on prioritizing infill sites in surrounding neighborhoods for residential development, while working with community partners to ensure new construction behaves in a matter compatible with the existing character of neighborhoods in which it is proposed.

During the public process, there was an interest in more affordable housing opportunities for a variety of household types. People wanted to see quality affordable housing options with safe outdoor space,



storage, and yards, as well as a focus on homeownership that would lend to greater permanence. Both the public and private sectors can play a role in providing a greater diversity of housing to meet the needs of the area and supplement existing housing stock provided within surrounding neighborhoods.

Action

Leverage the Special Redevelopment Plan (ORD-2017-49) to acquire abandoned properties and redevelop them as affordable housing in and around the Woonasquatucket Corridor (Note: The City of Providence's Special Redevelopment Plan gives preference to developers who building housing that is affordable to households earning 60% of Area Median Income).

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Establish an Affordable Housing Trust Fund (potentially funded through budget allocations, CBAs, linkage fees, and donations) to support construction, acquisition, and maintenance of affordable housing.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Encourage naturally occurring affordable housing, including tiny homes, accessory units, and micro-units, in residential areas adjacent to the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Identify and address any barriers to building these affordable units.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Continue to advocate for affordable housing bonds at the state level. Support a successor bond to the 2016 \$50M Housing Bond.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Establish an inclusionary zoning policy that requires or incentivizes the construction of affordable housing or a linkage fee to an affordable housing trust fund.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Partner with local Community Development Corporations to acquire properties for and build affordable housing in and around the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Establish an artist registry to qualify for artist housing opportunities.

Timeframe

Near-term

“Homes are falling apart — we need to increase home ownership, less abandoned properties.”

2.3.5

Connect Existing Residents and Businesses to Job Opportunities

The City should support the work of Building Futures, located on Acorn Street, and other organizations supporting programs that include training and accelerate career pathways. Increasing vocational training, arts mentorships, and other programs to help train workers for the kinds of jobs that are clustered within the Woonasquatucket Corridor will help support its economic resiliency. The City should also help minority and women owned businesses to more effectively compete within the market by providing training on how to enroll in the program.

A diverse community of people currently run many small and multicultural businesses in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. It is important for the future of the district that these business have support and are encouraged to grow. The community has a deep interest in prioritizing home grown, local, family-owned businesses. There was also an interest in welcoming in new businesses into the area that would make for a more livable and vibrant neighborhood. These additional shopping and service uses might include restaurants, bodegas, grocery stores, arts supply stores, hardware store, and other services that would support the neighborhoods within the Woonasquatucket River Corridor as walkable places with easy access to daily needs.

Action

Host registration workshops to encourage more people to sign up for WBE/MBE Registry.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Advertise the Providence Business Loan Fund to local businesses to grow their businesses in the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Find more effective ways to make referrals to job training programs (such as Building Futures, Real Jobs RI, and RWU's Business Skills for the Construction Trades).

Timeframe

Near-term

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Non-Hispanic White
- Non-Hispanic Black
- Non-Hispanic Asian
- Hispanic

1 dot = 1 person (2016)

Preserve and
Create
Affordable
Space



“It would be great to facilitate connections between different cultural and work groups.”

IMPROVE ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

“I wish,
if anything,
that there
was better
bike
transit.”



Make Complete Streets a Standard Practice

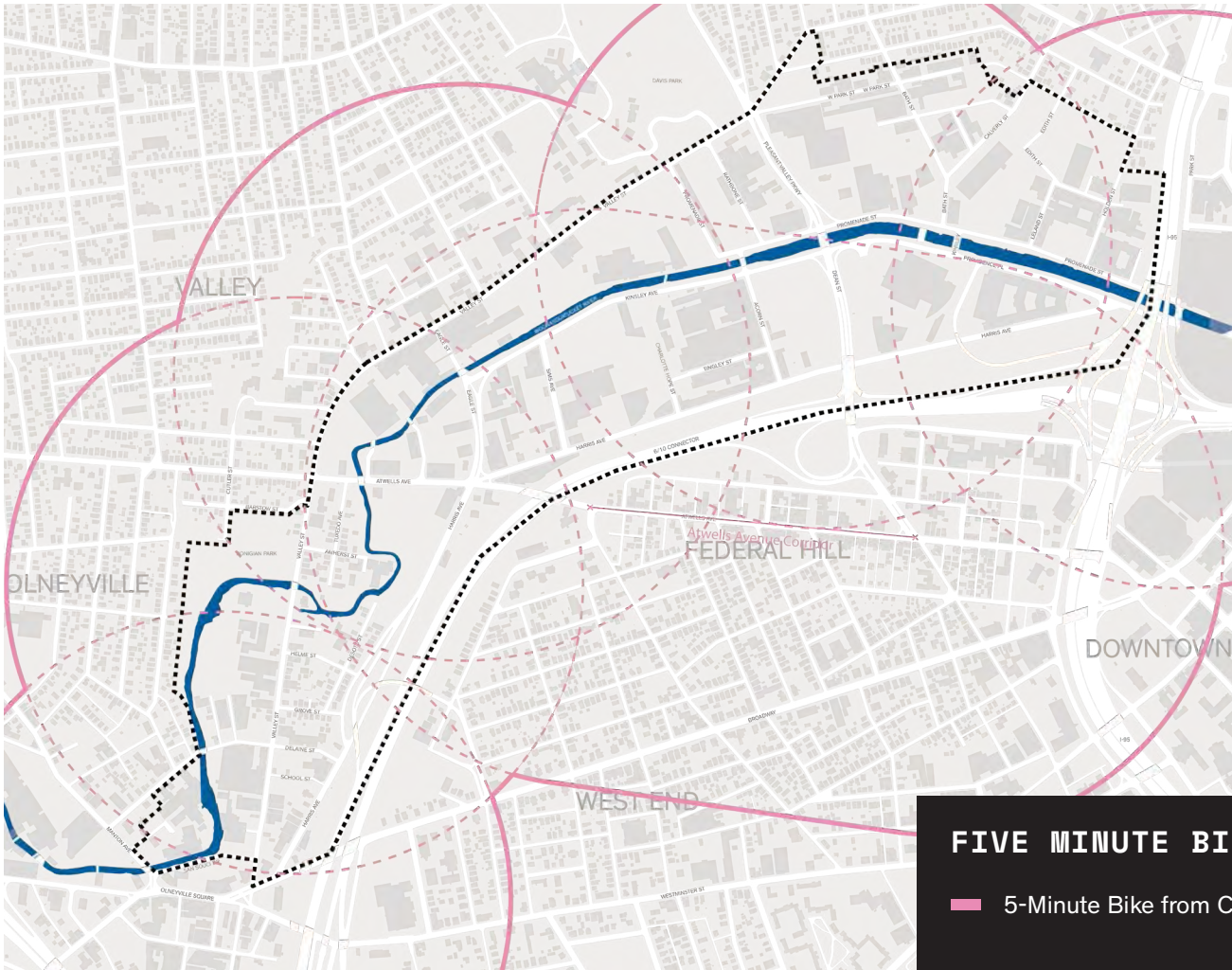
Complete Streets prioritize safety for people of all ages and abilities and re-balance a system that, currently, overwhelmingly supports automobiles. Streets and intersections within the Woonasquatucket Corridor should be designed in a way that slows vehicular speeds to allow for safe and comfortable use of streets so that more people can safely walk, bike, and use public transit throughout the area and travel to and from other parts of the city.

Key streets and intersections were identified by participants during the planning process as needing complete street interventions. While a number of ideas and different approaches were discussed, an overwhelming number of people consider street quality and safety to be a high priority. In particular, a number of locations were identified as being extremely hazardous for people on foot or bicycle.

This plan proposes a new system of on street and off street routes to create a friendlier bicycle network for people of all ability levels. Bicycle travel times across the Corridor will improve dramatically once infrastructure is upgraded, which will in turn improve the attractiveness and convenience of riding a bicycle for residents, visitors, and commuters.

The current quality of the pedestrian experience through the Woonasquatucket Corridor is almost universally low, and this contributes to a lack of desirability to walk for any distance. Improvements to the pedestrian realm should be made on all streets but special attention should be paid to priority the priority corridors in this Plan.

**“There are not
enough bike
paths or walkable
streets.”**



For planning purposes, walkable and bikeable distances are generally considered to be equivalent in size to a five-minute walking or five-minute biking radius. This unit, referred to as a “ped-shed” and “bike-shed”, have been drawn as an abstract circle to analyze the existing neighborhood structure and determine where deficiencies exist in the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Action

Allocate and prioritize funding to build Complete Street improvements, including funding from the City's Capital Improvement Plan, the State Transportation Improvement Plan, and through a possible Tax Increment Finance District for the Woonasquatucket Corridor for all modes of transportation.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Create a Public Realm Guide and codify it as the standard for how the City designs its streets.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Retrofit Harris Avenue to meet Complete Streets standards. Pay particular attention to supporting this corridor as a commuter route for bicyclists.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Redesign Dean Street to Complete Streets standards so that bike and pedestrian connections can be made to Federal Hill, Downtown, and the West Side.

Timeframe

Long-term

Action

Return Kinsley to two-way traffic from Acorn Street to Park Street, with on-street parking and bike facilities. Install crosswalks at each intersection to allow for pedestrians to access the bridges.

Timeframe

Short-term

Action

Redesign and reconstruct the intersections of Eagle Street at Atwells and Kinsley Streets to Complete Streets standards and in keeping with this Plan.

Timeframe

Short-term

Action

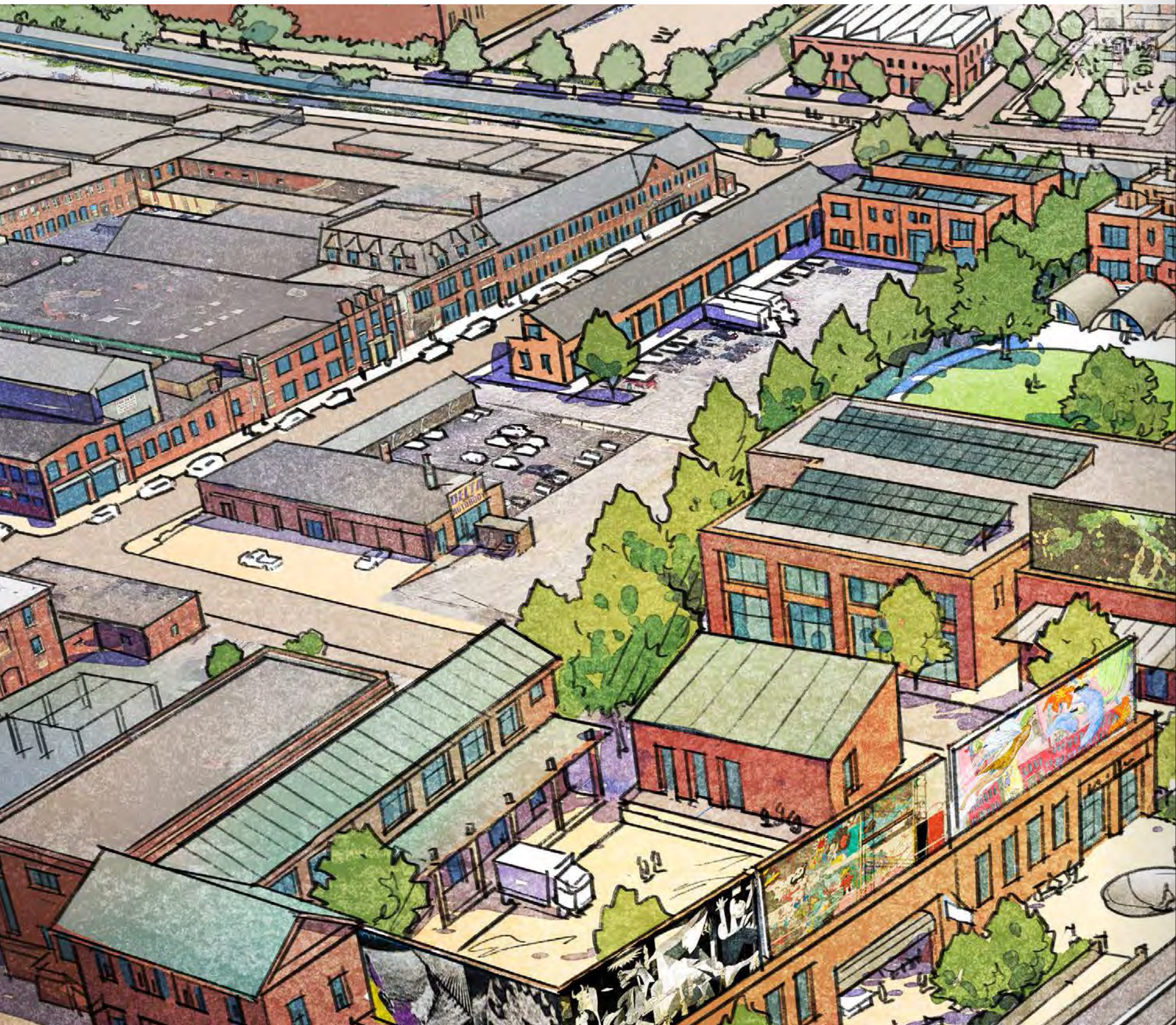
Redesign Atwells Street to Complete Streets standards to connect the Corridor with adjacent neighborhoods.

Timeframe

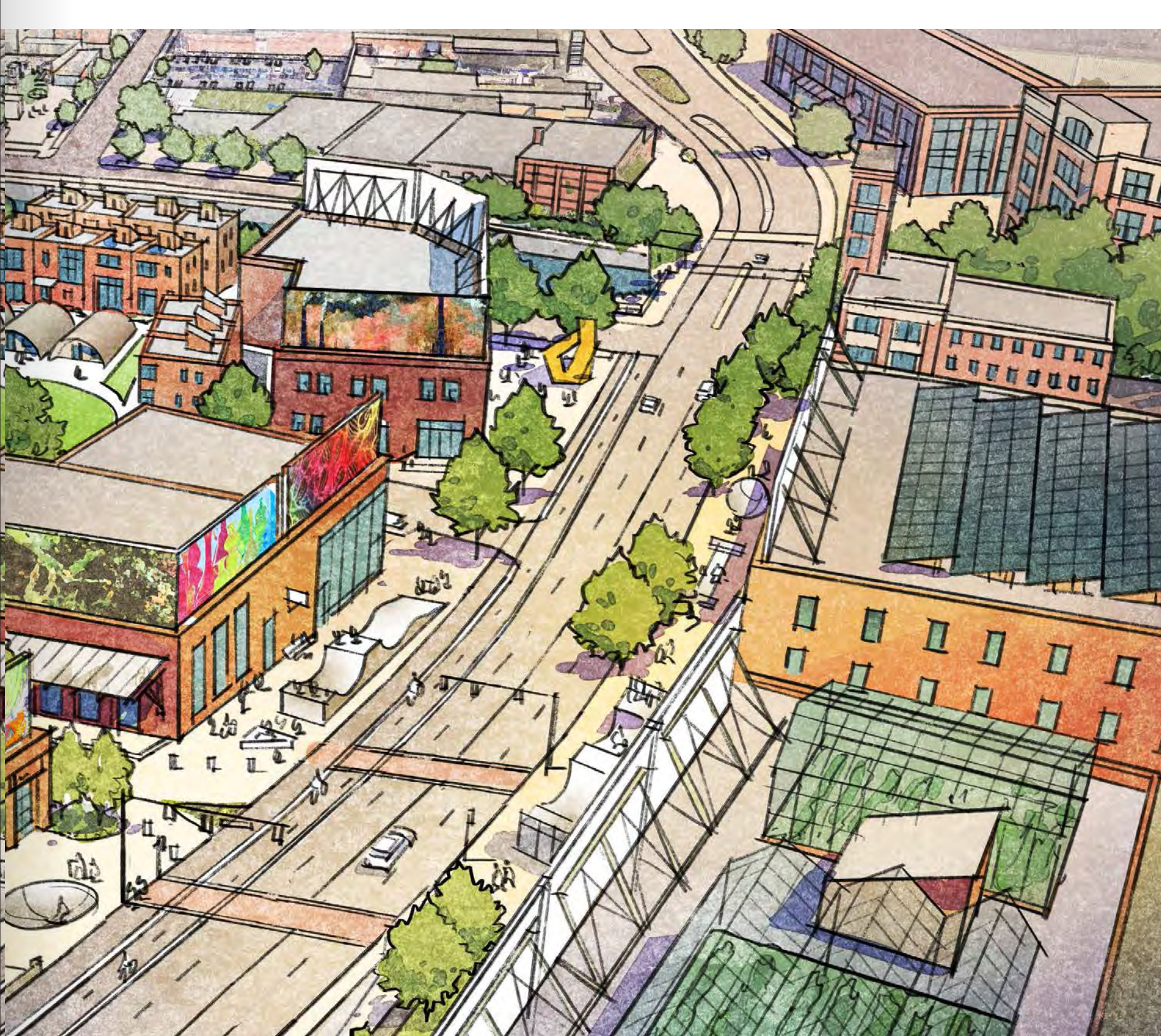
Short-term

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to its community context.

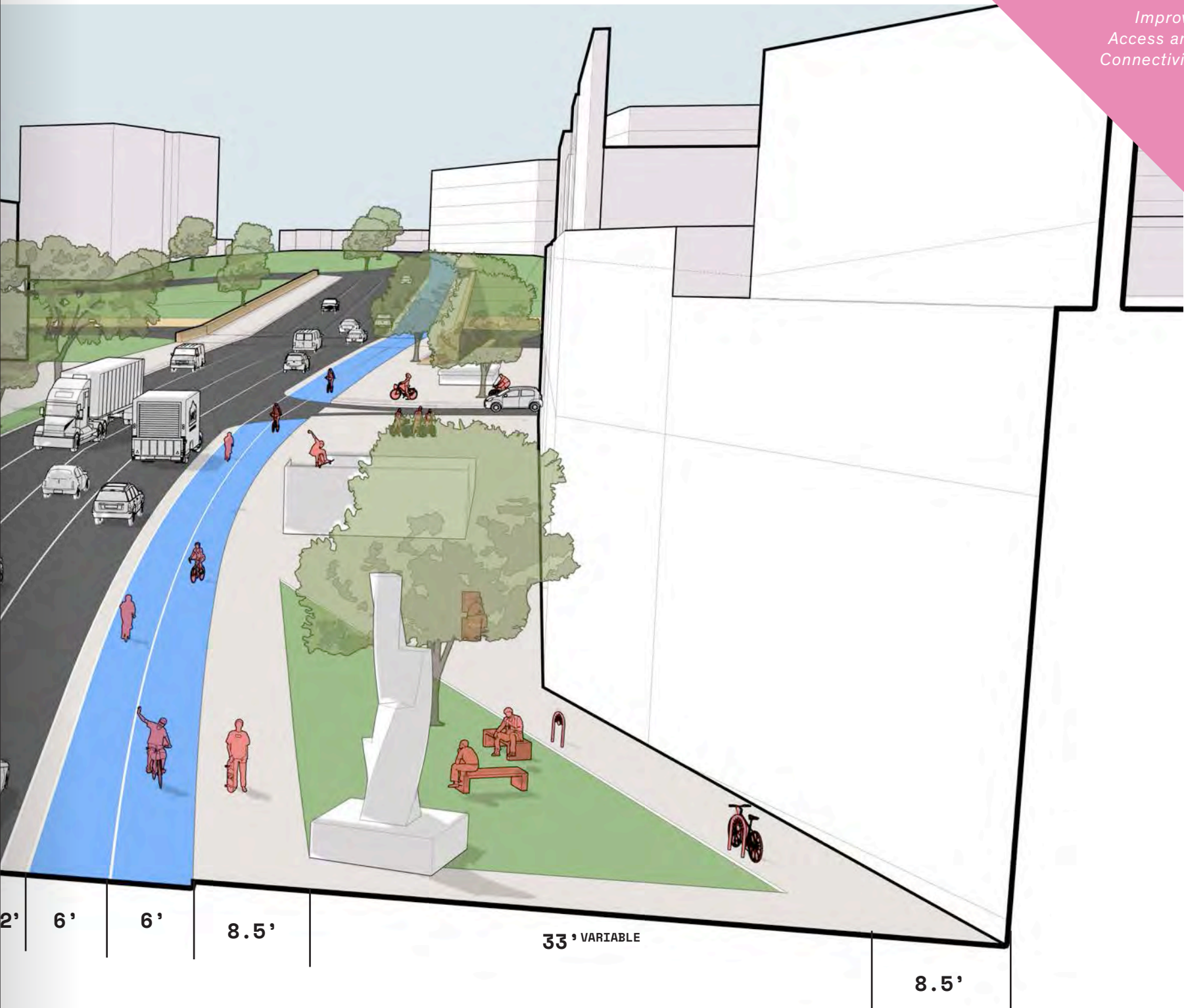


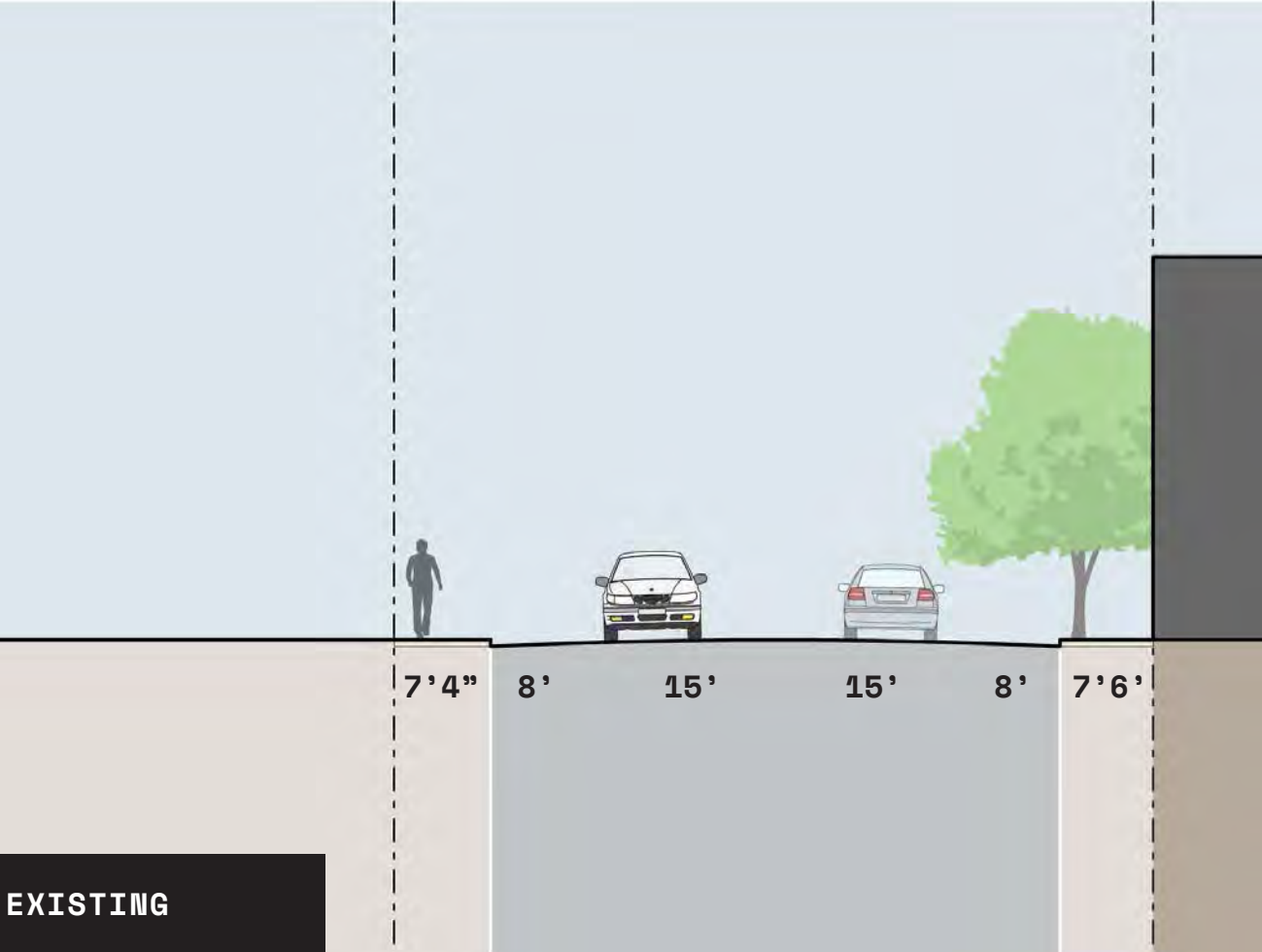
The proposal for Dean Street shows a narrowed street, with travel lanes reduced in width and other excess space making way for a two-way protected bicycle lane to help connect the Woonasquatucket Corridor with Federal Hill and Smith Hill.





The proposal for Dean Street shows a narrowed street, with travel lanes reduced in width and other excess space making way for a two-way protected bicycle lane to help connect the Woonasquatucket Corridor with Federal Hill and Smith Hill.



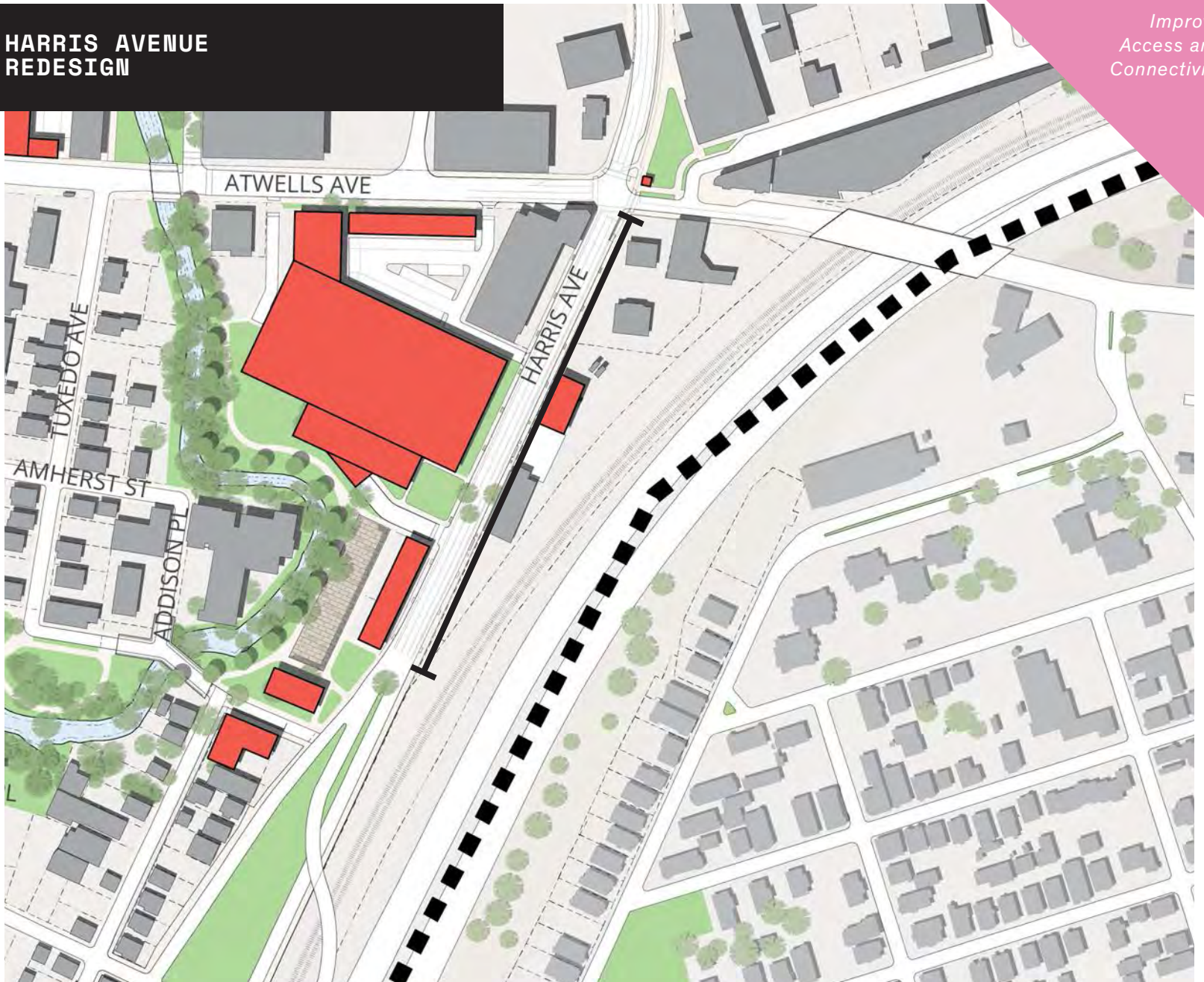


HARRIS AVENUE – EXISTING

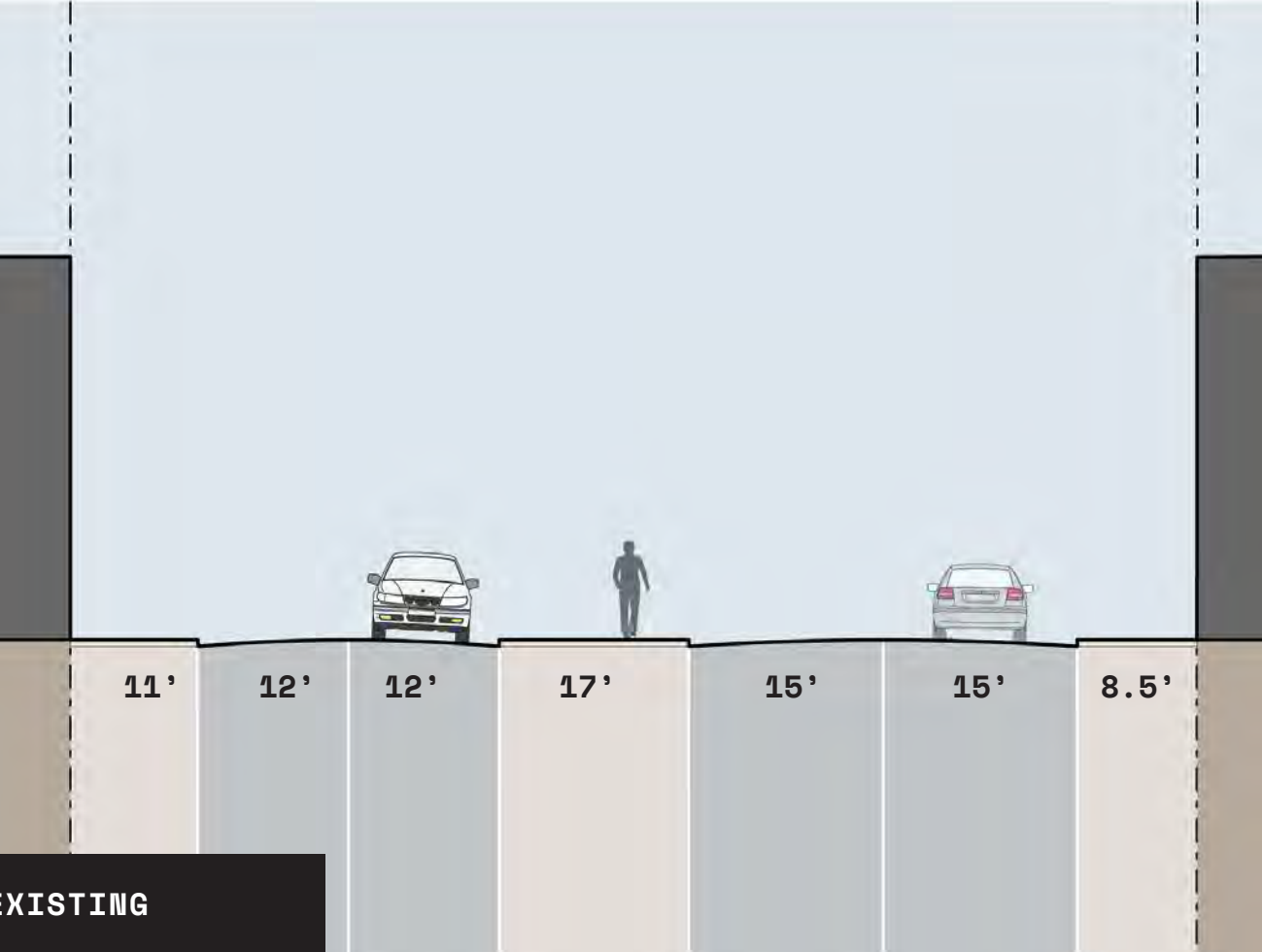
Harris Avenue is currently a high speed road, characterized by its lack of defined space and friction, allowing drivers to travel at high speeds. While this road will continue to be a major truck route, the goal is to also allow bicyclists to safely use this direct connection from points west to downtown Providence. The proposed street section maintains a lane of parking, creates 11 ft marked travel lanes, and add protected bike lanes to help define safe space for bicycle travel.



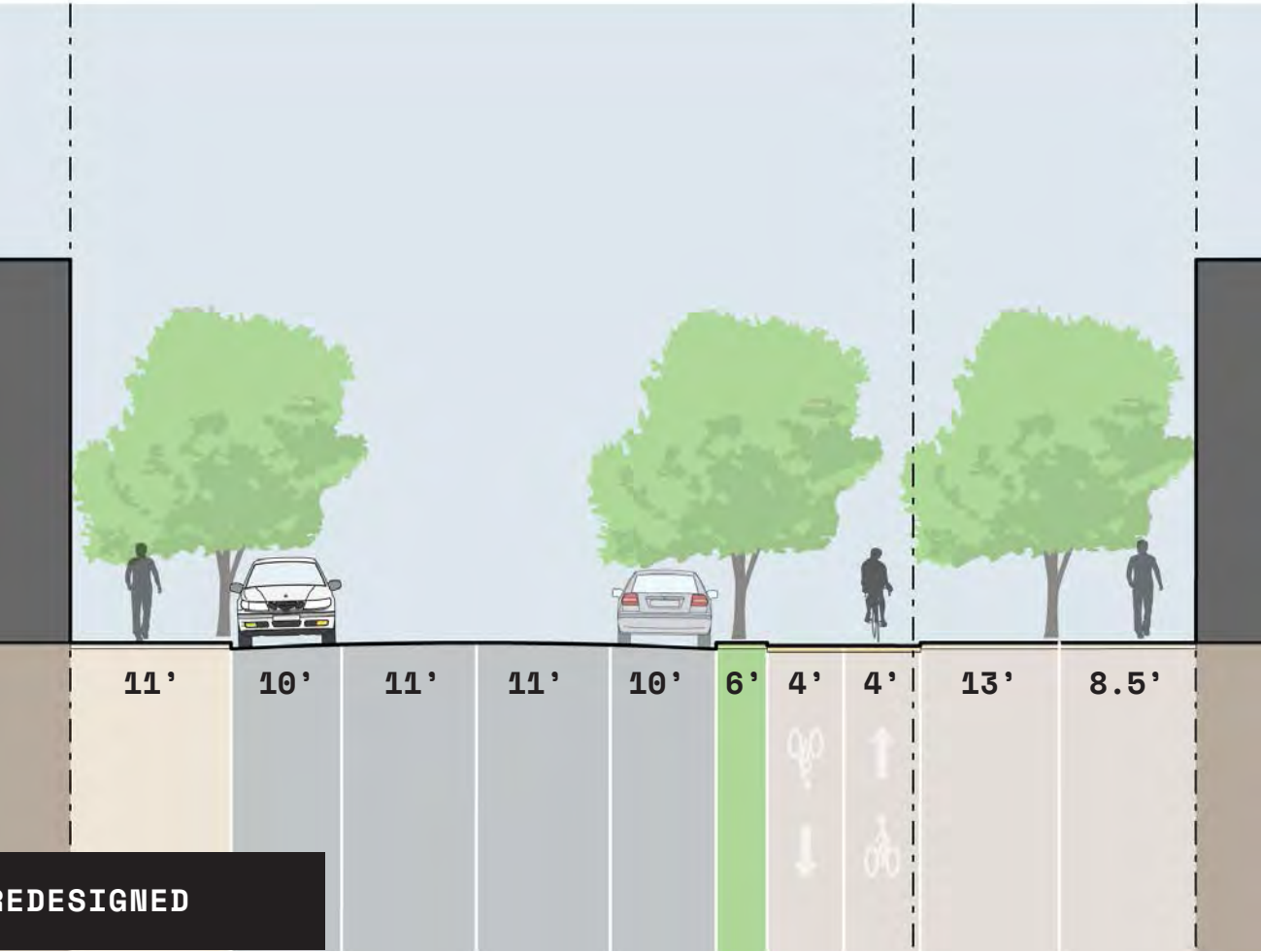
HARRIS AVENUE – REDESIGNED



Harris Avenue is redesigned to slow traffic as it approaches the intersection with Atwells and areas where pedestrian and bicycle activity is occurring and should be promoted. Techniques such as defining and narrowing travel lanes and providing buffered or protected bike lanes helps to define safe space for cyclists and slow vehicular travel speeds.



EAGLE STREET - EXISTING



EAGLE STREET - REDESIGNED

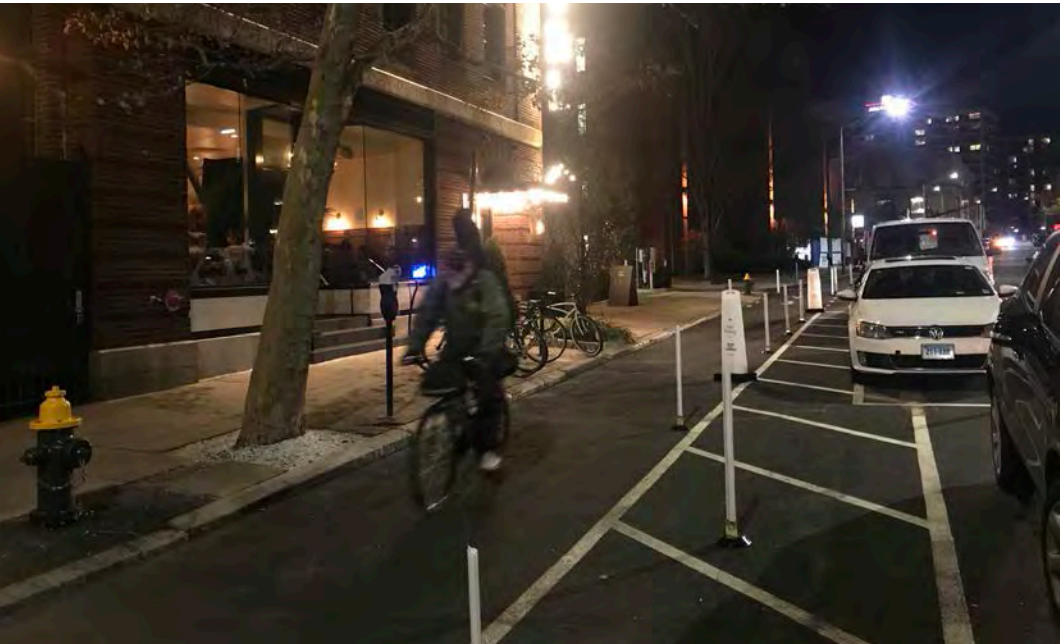
EAGLE STREET INTERSECTION REPAIRS



The intersections of Eagle Street with Atwells Ave and Kinsley are currently prioritized for vehicular movement at the expense of bicycle and pedestrian safety. The proposed plan provides alternative intersection designs that allow traffic to continue to move efficiently, but at a slower speed to minimize conflicts between all people using the streets.

Use Demonstration Projects to Quickly and Inexpensively Improve Street Safety

Cities across the country are changing their approach to street design and implementation, embracing a test-before-you-invest mantra. When it’s feasible, testing changes to the redesign of a street provides real life feedback that takes into account unexpected human behavior and leaves room for adjustment before significant money is spent on a permanent change. This approach also gives users and elected officials a chance to see an idea in action before having to make a final decision. Taking an incremental and temporary approach to street modifications is also more affordable, which means more dangerous streets and intersections can be addressed quickly. Providence recently used temporary and inexpensive materials (striping and easily removable flexible delineator posts) to build a protected bike lane on Fountain Street in Downtown. A similar approach should be applied within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. To slow traffic, improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, and generally improve the comfort and function of local streets, the City should explore: Adding on-street parking where it doesn’t currently exist to slow traffic and provide physical barrier between traffic and pedestrians, using planters to slow traffic and create sense of place; replacing traffic lights with stop signs to reduce intersection conflicts and fatalities; and reducing travel lane width and assigning more space to protected bike lanes.



Action

Use inexpensive and temporary / semi-permanent materials to test Complete Streets improvements tied to the City’s restriping and repaving schedule, including on Harris Avenue.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Make changes to the intersections of Dean at Promenade and Kinsley to address the extremely dangerous blind crosswalks.

Timeframe

Near-term

Design Streets to Balance Industrial Needs with Safety for all Users

The Woonasquatucket Corridor is and will remain an industrial center within the City of Providence. Creative approaches are needed to balance on-going trucking activities with other users and maintain the culture of a truly mixed industrial and arts neighborhood. A network of slow-flow, shared streets will be critical to efficient movement of goods and safe travel by those on foot and on bike. The specific techniques used should ensure adequate room for maneuvering large trucks. Interventions should be tested using paint and temporary or semi-permanent materials to test performance and results, prior to making more permanent investments in alternative street designs. Criteria for evaluating success should include vehicular travel speeds, trip counts for all modes, and interviews of pedestrians, bicyclists, and truck drivers.

Action
Test a shared street design that maintains truck access along Charlotte Hope Street, but allows the space to transform into a welcoming pedestrian plaza for events and celebrations.

Timeframe
Long-term

Action
Narrow painted travel lanes to 10 feet, strategically apply textured materials to the street, and use other subtle design strategies that create more friction within the street. This greater friction will create a dynamic that relies on eye contact between drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Timeframe
Long-term

Action
Create a truck route map for the Woonasquatucket Corridor that identifies shared shipping streets and prioritizes pedestrian streets. Coordinate infrastructure improvements based on these categories to ensure all modes of travel are accommodated in a coordinated fashion.

Timeframe
Long-term

2.4.4

Improve Pedestrian Safety and Comfort

Many people from the community indicated that more needs to be done to improve the safety and comfort of streets through better maintenance and lighting. A number of areas feel extremely unsafe because of trash and debris or poor lighting at night. Keeping streets clear of snow and debris was also a high priority for many people who would like to walk or bike, but can't because of a lack of clear roads and sidewalks.

There are a number of elevated bridges that create dark underutilized spaces along underlying streets, including bridges associated with I-95, the Dean Street bridge, Harris Avenue, and the Route 6/10 on ramp along Harris Avenue. Making these spaces safer and more comfortable for people who are walking and biking is critical to many people in the community. Improvements to these areas should be explored through a collaborative public / private effort to envision and design a strategy for enlivening each of the areas, through art, civic space design, and lighting.

Action
Analyze the study area for inadequate walking infrastructure, such as poor lighting or buckling sidewalks, and put in place a capital plan to repair these basic elements that will help make walking in the Woonasquatucket Corridor safer and more appealing.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Work with community groups to plan clean ups of the Woonasquatucket Corridor to reduce trash and debris.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Purchase snow removal equipment that is designed for narrow bicycle and pedestrian thoroughfares.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Organize winter snow removal staff training for best practices for snow-removal on pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Enforce existing snow removal ordinance through the issuing of tickets.

Timeframe
Near-term



Action

Launch a media campaign to encourage reporting of snow violations through use of the 3-1-1 app.

Timeframe

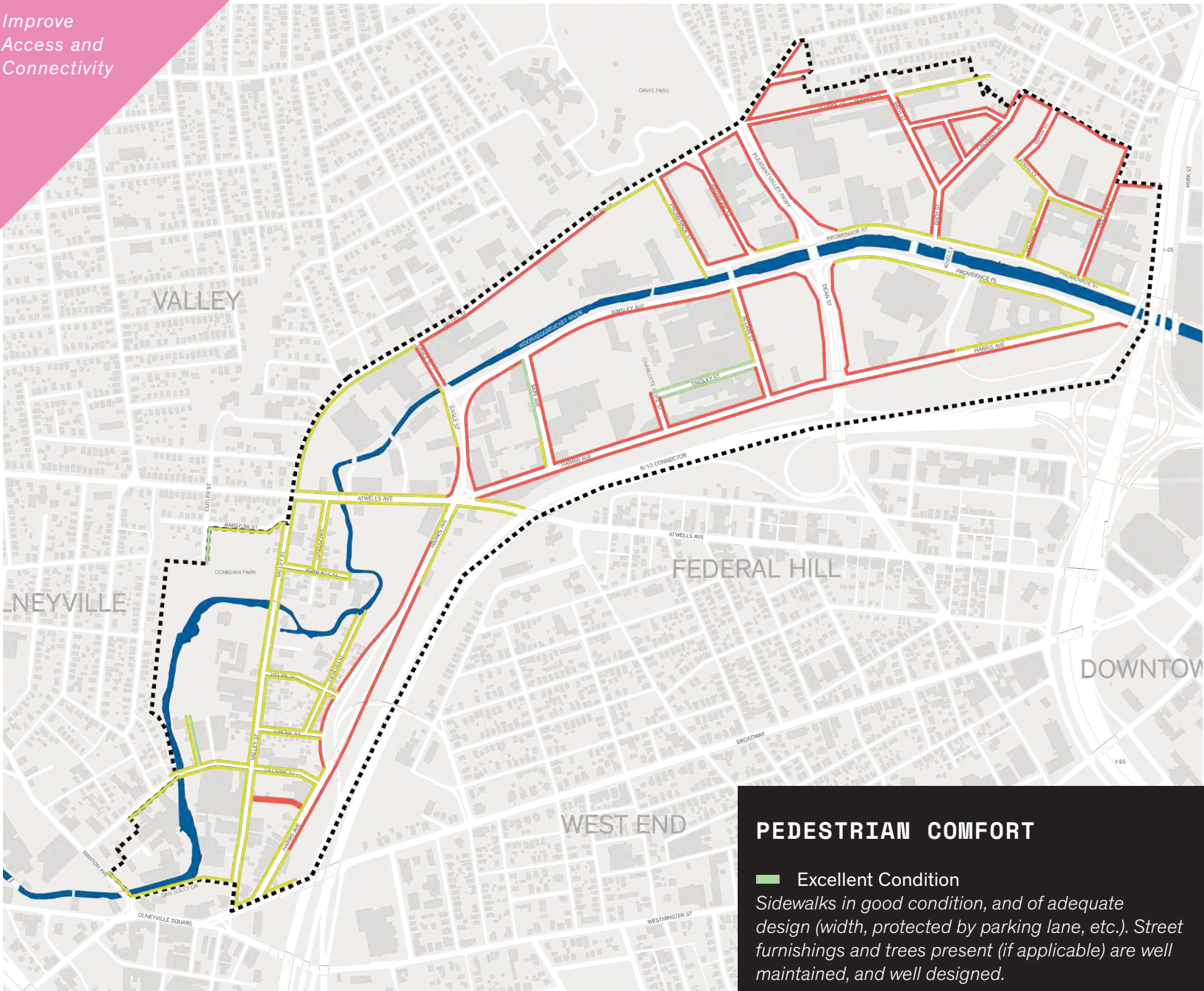
Near-term

Action

Issue a call for proposals for improvements to the Dean, Tobey and I-95 underpasses and secure funding for construction of the winning design.

Timeframe

Near-term



PEDESTRIAN COMFORT

- Excellent Condition**
Sidewalks in good condition, and of adequate design (width, protected by parking lane, etc.). Street furnishings and trees present (if applicable) are well maintained, and well designed.
- Acceptable Condition**
Sidewalks in fair to good condition, and of adequate design (width, protected by parking lane, etc.). Street Furnishings and trees absent or in poor condition, or of substandard design (if applicable).
- Needs Improvement**
Sidewalks absent or in poor condition, and/or of substandard design (width, unprotected by parking lane, etc.). Street Furnishings and trees absent (if applicable).

Rehabilitate and Build Bridges Across the River

In order to facilitate cross-neighborhood connections, it is critical to look closely at river crossings. During the public process, it became apparent that the community and City share similar ideas for which river crossings were highest priority. Work should be done to rehabilitate existing bridges and build new bridges across the River.



Action
Rehabilitate the two abandoned railroad bridges over the River near Charlotte Hope Street (between Kinsley Avenue and the ALCO site) into pedestrian and bicycle only bridges/mini-pocket parks.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Construct a new bridge at Sims Avenue for automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle travel across the River. Coordinate with the US Rubber Lofts, WaterFire Arts Center, and ALCO to establish shared use of the parking facilities on the properties north of the River with seasonal and event based parking demands created in nearby areas of the Corridor.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Construct new bridges at Holden Street and at Leland Street for automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle travel across the River.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Construct a new bridge from San Souci Drive to the Cathedral Arts property for bicycle and pedestrian travel across the River.

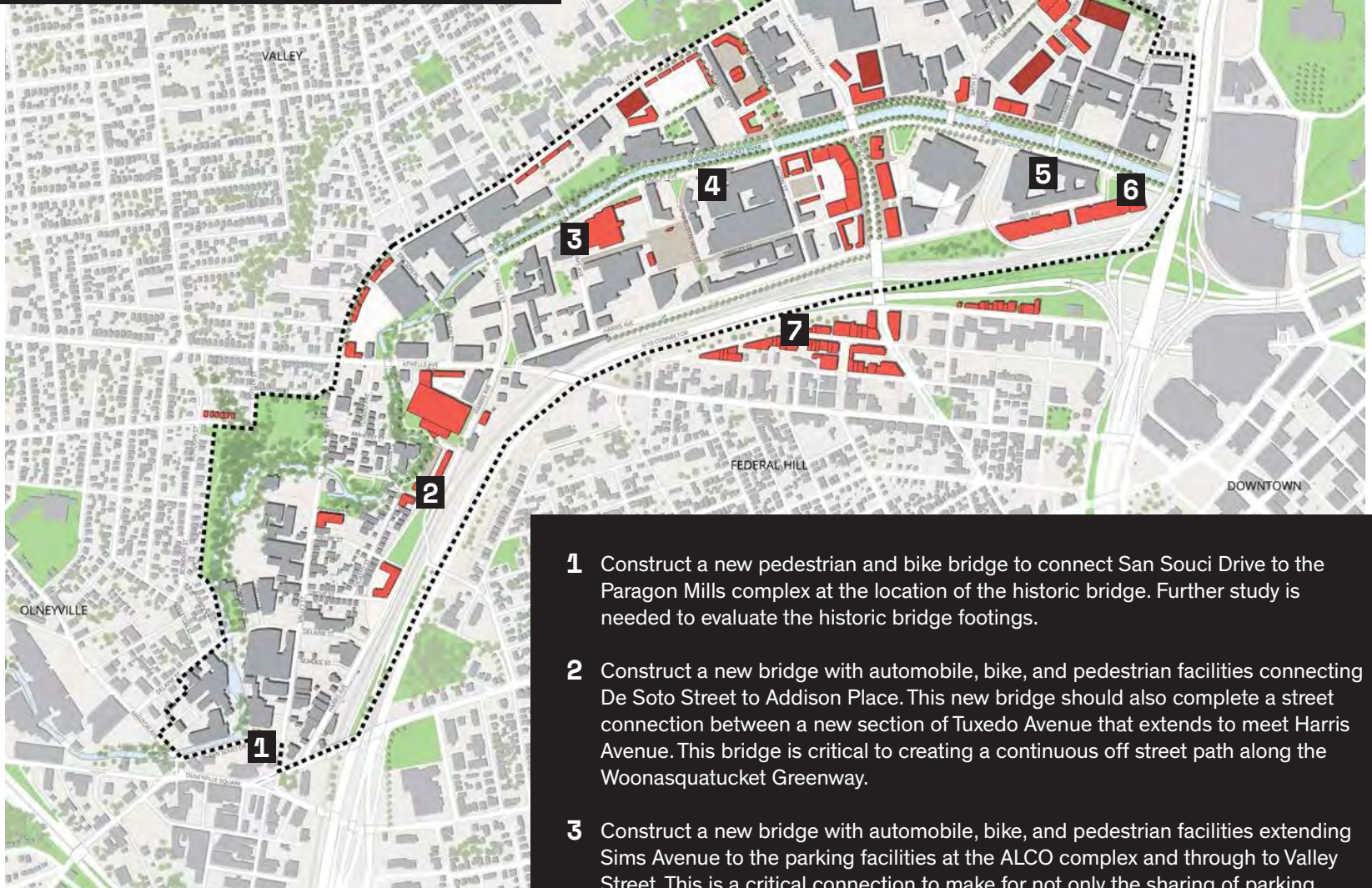
Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Construct a new bridge that connects De Soto Street to Addison Place for automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian travel across the River.

Timeframe
Long-term

“The number of bridges cutting this neighborhood off from the rest of the city really make walking and biking unattractive in this area.”

REHABILITATED AND PROPOSED BRIDGES



- 1** Construct a new pedestrian and bike bridge to connect San Souci Drive to the Paragon Mills complex at the location of the historic bridge. Further study is needed to evaluate the historic bridge footings.
- 2** Construct a new bridge with automobile, bike, and pedestrian facilities connecting De Soto Street to Addison Place. This new bridge should also complete a street connection between a new section of Tuxedo Avenue that extends to meet Harris Avenue. This bridge is critical to creating a continuous off street path along the Woonasquatucket Greenway.
- 3** Construct a new bridge with automobile, bike, and pedestrian facilities extending Sims Avenue to the parking facilities at the ALCO complex and through to Valley Street. This is a critical connection to make for not only the sharing of parking resources, but also to promote comfortable walking and bicycling between the WaterFire Arts Center, ALCO, the Steel Yard, and, the in development Farm Fresh RI site.
- 4** Rehabilitate the pedestrian and bike bridge connecting Charlotte Hope Street across to the ALCO complex using a historic rail bridge. This is currently utilized by parts of the community as a short cut for walking and should be improved to formalize and celebrate this connection.
- 5** Construct a new bridge with automobile, bike, and pedestrian facilities connecting Leland Street to Providence Place. This bridge will not only help to establish stronger walking and bicycling connections over the River, but will also support the traffic improvements to the District which will be needed to create the Woonasquatucket Greenway Promenade that is envisioned to run along what is now Promenade Street.
- 6** Construct a new bridge with automobile, bike, and pedestrian facilities connecting Holden Street to Providence Place. This bridge offers the same improvements as Bridge #5.
- 7** Construct a new pedestrian and bike bridge connecting the Spruce Street at McAvoy Street over the 6/10 Highway and rail corridor to Harris Avenue. This new bridge offers the opportunity to knit together the neighborhoods of Federal Hill and West Side to the Woonasquatucket River Valley as well as create an iconic new gateway to Providence.

Improve the Mall Area Connection

One of the more dramatic barriers between the Woonasquatucket Corridor and Downtown is the massive bulk of the Providence Place Mall, as it bridges over both the Woonasquatucket River and Northeast Corridor rail line below. Although a pedestrian underpass exists beneath I-95 and the Mall, the pendulous bulk of the Mall provides a dark and seemingly unsafe experience for anyone attempting to walk or bike below. Riding a bicycle on the existing ramp up and under the Mall to Francis Street is also an uncomfortable experience due to the tight turns in the ramp. At a minimum, the City should improve and activate the pedestrian underpass to make it safe and inviting. More ambitious concepts for an artistic pedestrian and bicycle bridge suspended from the highway piers and mall structure above have been developed by Barnaby Evans. This concept would make for an interesting entrance to the Woonasquatucket Corridor and give priority to pedestrians and bicyclists. This area should further be improved by redevelopment of the former Providence Fruit and Produce Warehouse site, which should frame a new public space at the intersection of Harris and Kinsley and, coupled with other atmospheric, lighting, and public art improvements, make the underpass area beneath I-95 and the Mall a definite gateway to the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Action

Design and construct improvements to the existing underpass under the Mall and I-95 to improve the safety and attractiveness of this important connection.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Secure funds to engineer and construct an artistic "gateway" pedestrian and bicycle bridge suspended from the highway piers and mall structure.

Timeframe

Long-term

Action

Work with the owner's of Providence Place Mall to activate the underpass area and explore new storefront openings onto the underpass.

Timeframe

Long-term



Action

Work with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation to ensure that the Northbound I-95 Viaduct project includes improvements under I-95 that enhance safety and attractiveness along Promenade Street and Providence Place.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action

Implement the WRWC's signage and mural designs around and underneath the I-95 underpass and the Mall.

Timeframe
Near-term

Reduce Block Sizes

The Woonasquatucket Corridor’s inventory of large impenetrable mega-blocks, or blocks with a perimeter greater than 1/4 mile, should be reduced by breaking them up with interior streets and lanes. The resulting increase in permeability will make it easier and more attractive for walking and provide network efficiency for cars and bikes as well. The illustrative plan for the project area shows where key connections, either streets, or pedestrian or bicycle only paths should be prioritized within the Corridor.

Action
Update the Zoning Ordinance to create maximum block sizes and the creation of additional thoroughfares when new development or redevelopment occurs.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Conduct a site planning study of the Kinsley, Dean, Harris, and Sims megablock to determine landscape strategies for the PRA site as well as new intra-block connections.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Explore partnerships with land owners and developers to create new connections through mega-blocks. This includes working with the Foundry and surrounding landowners to open up additional street connections at key locations where the Foundry campus connects with the surrounding neighborhood. For example, open Edith Street to connect with Calais Street and connect Edith Street with a new connection to Caverly Street.

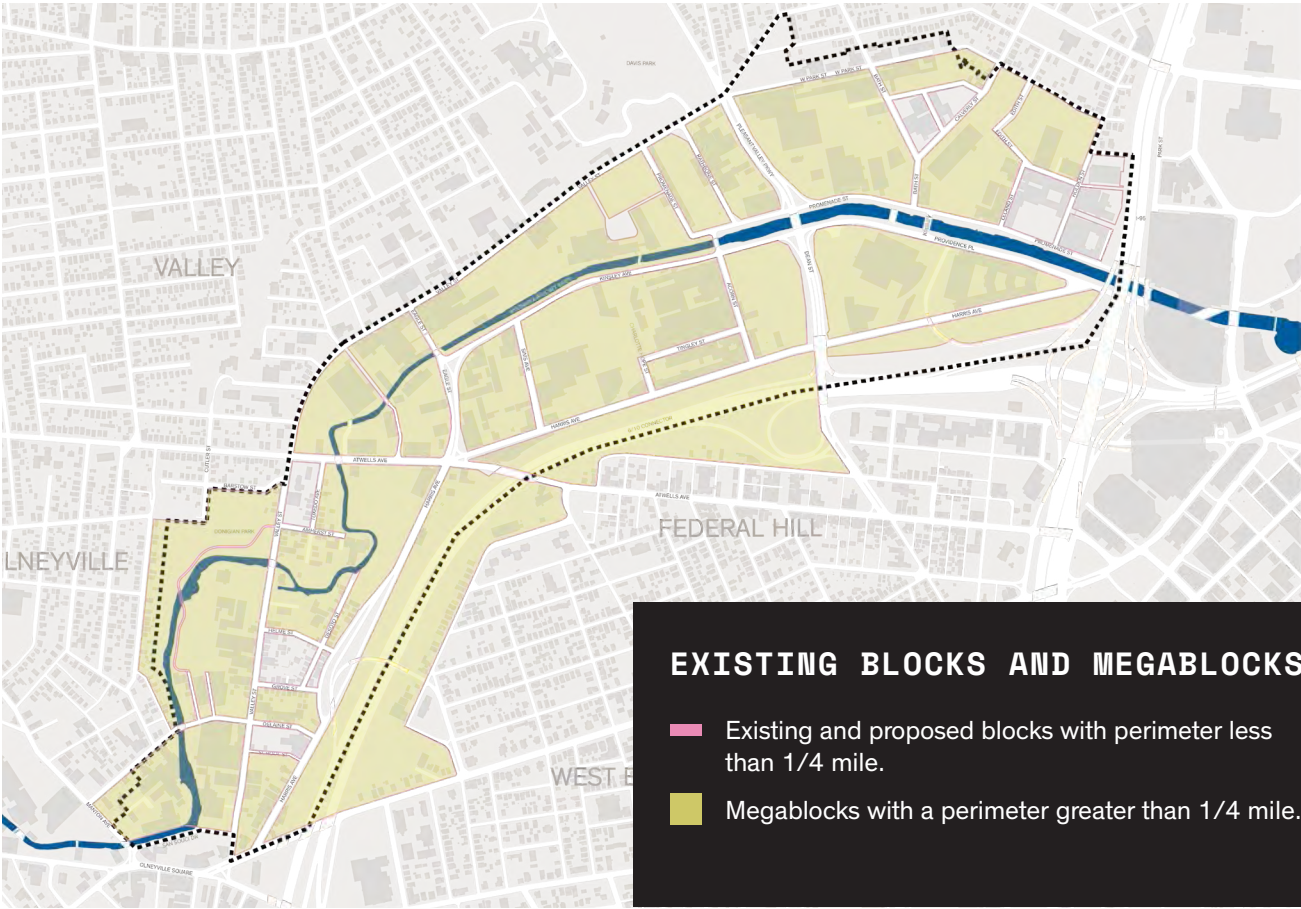
Timeframe
Long-term

Action
Work with the Coca-Cola Company and the owners along Bath Street to formalize a through block connection from Pleasant Valley Parkway to Bath Street that would help to right-size this mega-block.

Timeframe
Long-term

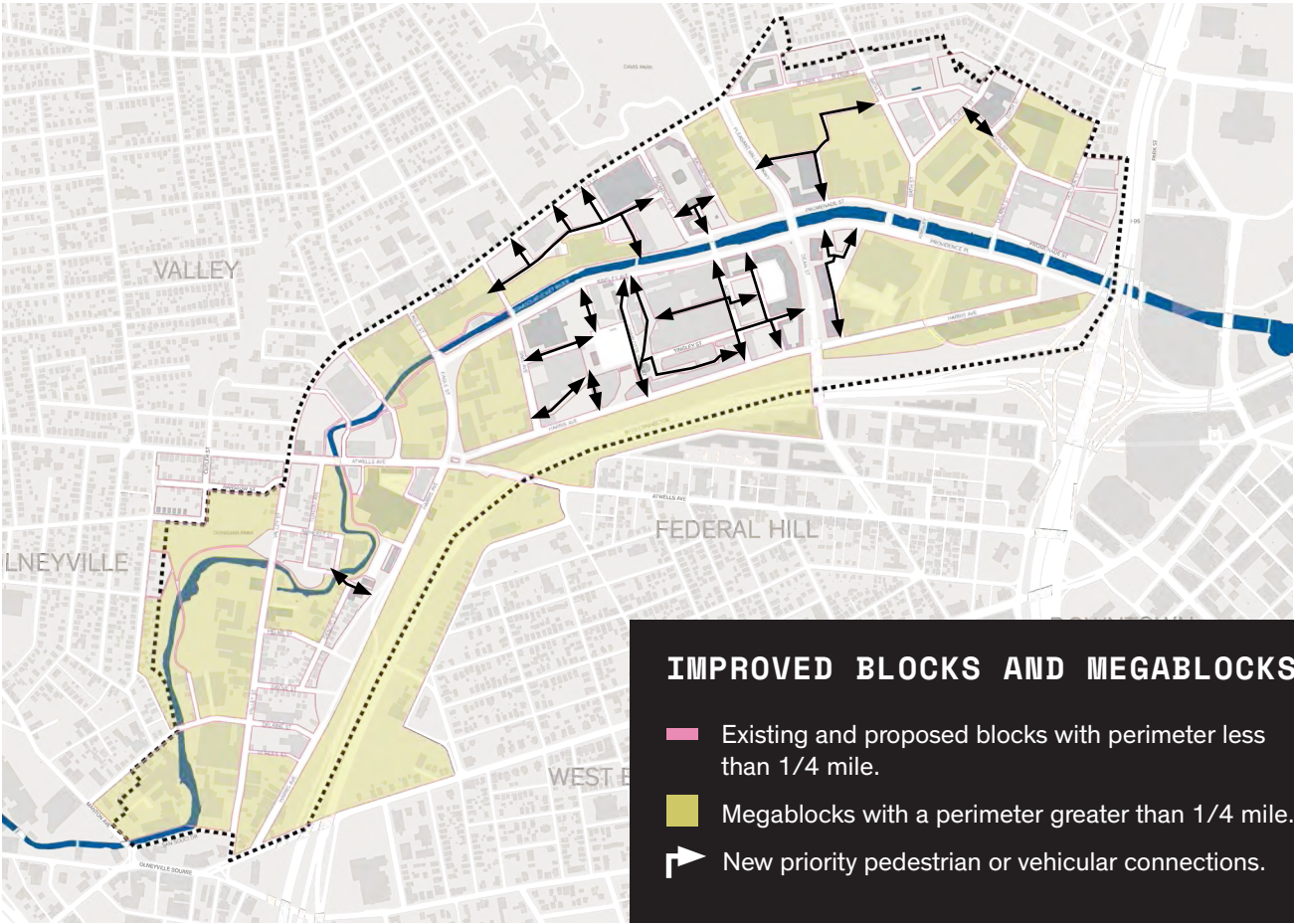
Action
Explore the feasibility of reconnecting West Park Street between Bath and Calverly streets.

Timeframe
Long-term



EXISTING BLOCKS AND MEGABLOCKS

- Existing and proposed blocks with perimeter less than 1/4 mile.
- Megablocks with a perimeter greater than 1/4 mile.



IMPROVED BLOCKS AND MEGABLOCKS

- Existing and proposed blocks with perimeter less than 1/4 mile.
- Megablocks with a perimeter greater than 1/4 mile.
- New priority pedestrian or vehicular connections.

Blocks with a perimeter distance greater than 1/4 mile have been shown to act as a barrier to pedestrian movement. Because of the industrial heritage of the Woonasquatucket Corridor, the area has a majority of mega blocks, which has been a challenge for walkability and transit ridership. A key to strengthening the neighborhood is to create more safe connections through blocks with vehicular or pedestrian connections.

Improve Public Transit Service

Currently, there is no public transit service available between Chalkstone Avenue and Atwells Avenue, leaving a ½- to ¾-mile swath of the Corridor without access to any form of public transit. One of the key reasons cited by Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) for discontinuing Route 26 bus service through the Corridor was the inability for riders to easily walk from areas south of the River to bus stops located north of the River on Promenade Street and Kinsley Avenue. For future public transit service to be successful, steps must be taken to improve the permeability and walkability of of the Corridor.

Action

Work with RIDOT to explore and test new public transportation options including an Autonomous Shuttle between Olneyville Square and Providence Station via the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Work with RIPTA to locate potential bus stops and prioritize improvements to the streets within a 5-minute walk of the bus route in order to make walking to the bus safer and more attractive.

Timeframe

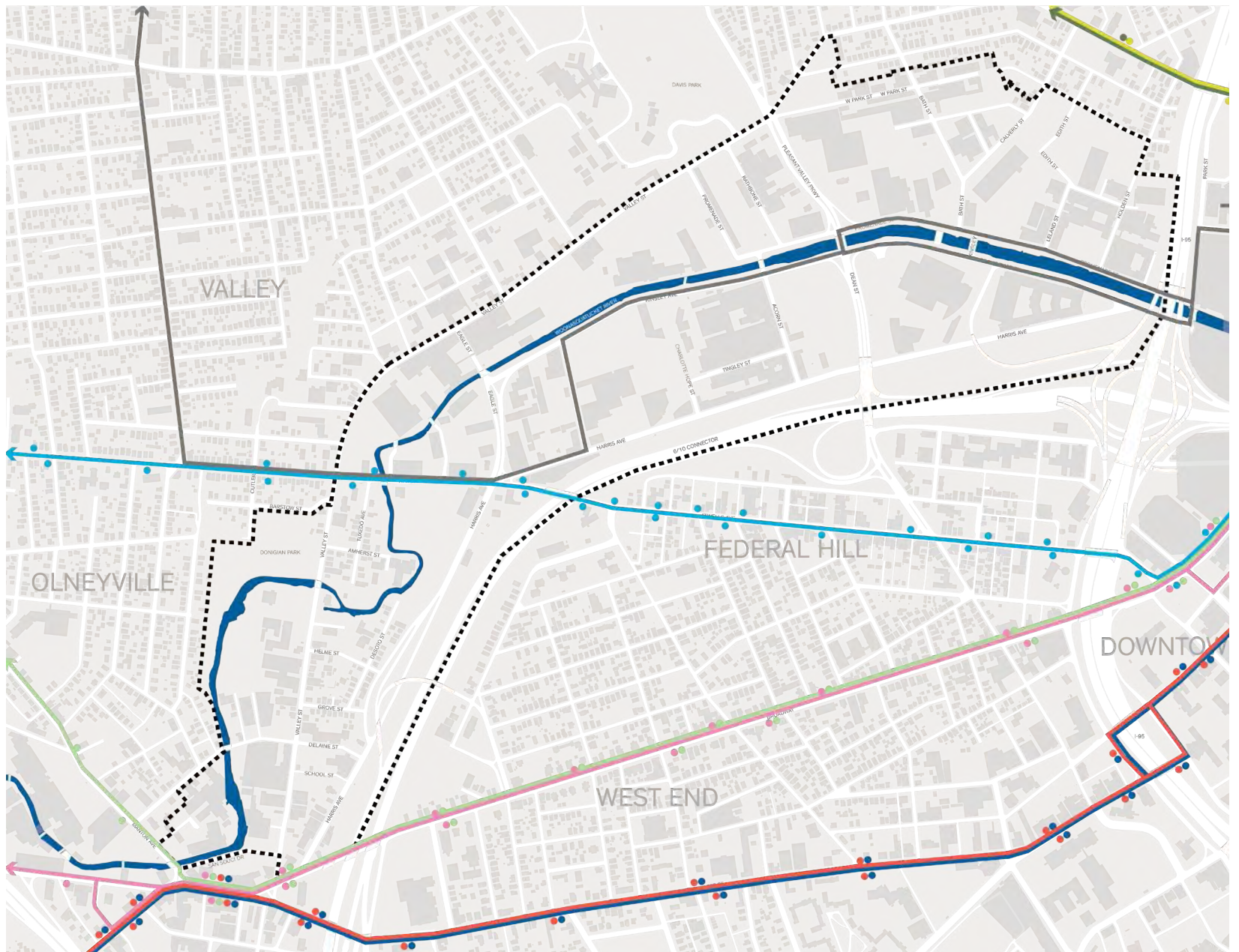
Near-term

Action

Work with RIPTA to explore additional opportunities for new transit routes through the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term



RIPTA KEY CORRIDOR BUS ROUTES

- Route 27: Broadway / Manton
- Route 28: Broadway / Hartford
- Route 56: Chalkstone Ave.
- Route 92: RI College / Federal Hill / East Side

RIPTA URBAN SERVICE BUS ROUTES

- Route 17: Dyer / Pocasset
- Route 19: Plainfield / Westmister
- Route 57: Smith Street

DISCONTINUED BUS ROUTES

- Route 26

Tie Into Citywide and Statewide Bike Routes

Currently, the street network within the Woonasquatucket Corridor is unsafe and uncomfortable for people travelling by bicycle. Most importantly, the main routes that connect the Corridor to surrounding neighborhoods -- Atwells Avenue and Dean Street -- should be prioritized for improvements. The City should also prioritize extending and connecting the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Bike Path to the Downtown, to surrounding neighborhoods, and to the Washington Secondary bike path. While several projects to fill in gaps are planned or underway (including the San Souci Greenway segment, the Promenade/Kinsley project, and the Gotham Greens Greenway segment), gaps still exist in other locations including between the planned San Souci Greenway segment and Riverside Park to the west and Donigian Park to the north and between Donigian Park and Eagle Square. Advancing construction of the planned projects and funding design and construction to fill in remaining gaps should be prioritized.

Action
Create an additional connection across the 6/10 Connector and Northeast rail corridor by creating a new bridge for pedestrians and bicyclists from Spruce Street in Federal Hill to Harris Avenue.

Timeframe
Long-term

Action
Connect the planned Washington Secondary Trail Extension to the Woonasquatucket Greenway via the Tobey Street Bridge that will be constructed as part of the 6/10 Connector project.

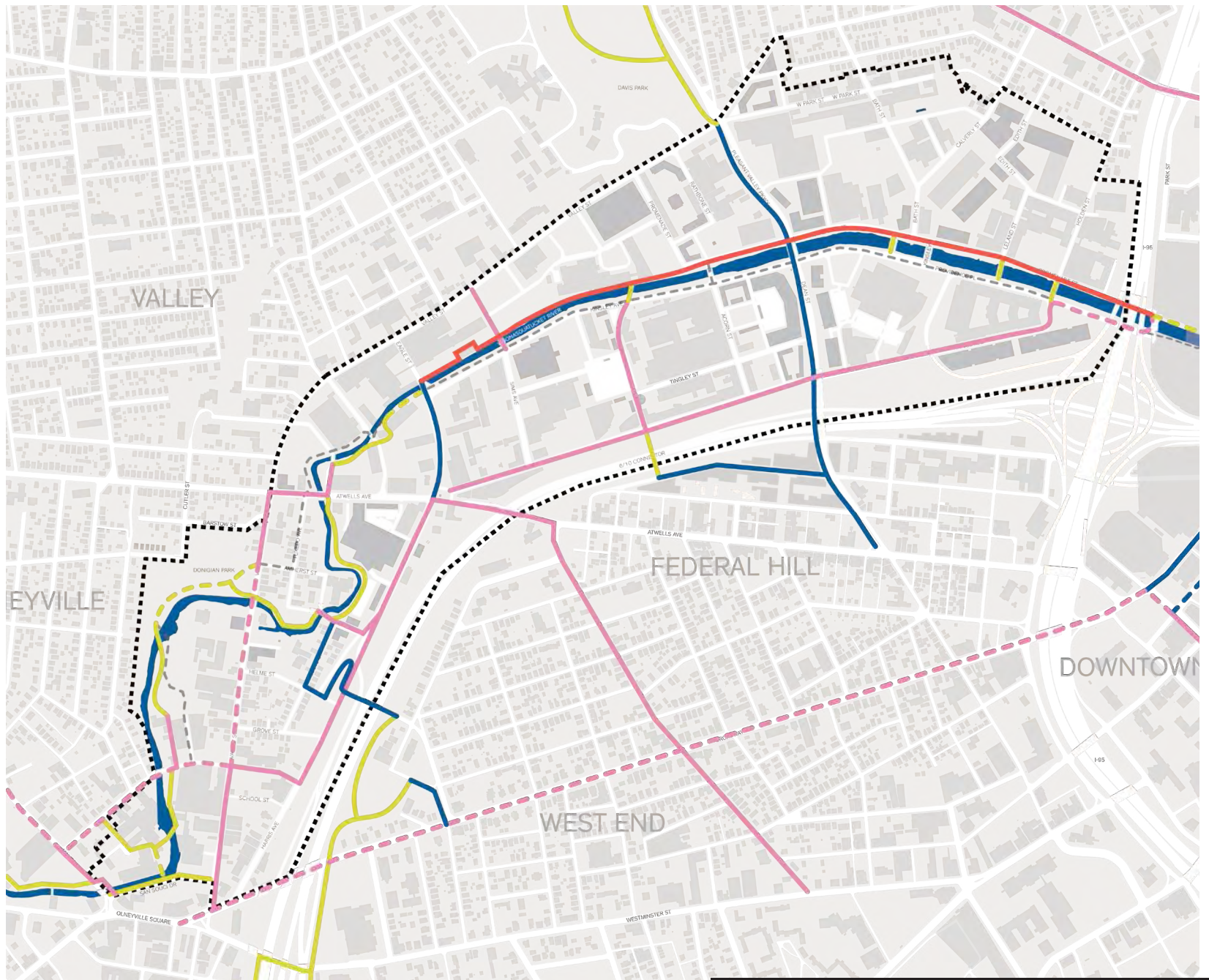
Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Create a continuous safe route for bicyclists along Pleasant Valley Parkway and Dean Street to connect surrounding neighborhoods to the Corridor and to the Woonasquatucket Greenway.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Fill in gaps in the Woonasquatucket Greenway Bike Path to provide a continuous off-road bike path through the Corridor. Priority should be given to the gap from Donigian Park to Eagle Square as well as the significant stretch along both Kinsley Avenue and Promenade Street running from Eagle Street to the Providence Place Mall.

Timeframe
Near-term



BIKE ROUTES

- Proposed Shared Space, Promenade
- Proposed Bike Lanes, On Street
- - Existing Bike Lanes, On Street
- Proposed Protected Bike Lane
- Proposed Off-Street Multi-Use Path
- - Existing Off-Street Multi-Use Path
- Existing Bicycle Infrastructure Removed

Improve the Identity of Gateways to the Woonasquatucket Corridor

The Woonasquatucket Corridor should be identified at its various major points of entry through art and wayfinding. Creative installations that provide visual cues that people are entering a place worthy of notice should be supported. The City should work with local artists for a call for entry to generate a cohesive but unique installations that respect the Corridor’s creative and industrial heritage. It will be critical to avoid a corporate, sterile approaches to this effort, so that the gateways truly reflect the spirit of the local people and energy. Wayfinding signage should also be incorporated throughout the Corridor.

Action
Implement the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council signage and wayfinding plan.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Issue a call for entry to artists and fabricators for design and construction of gateway elements, including at the intersection of Dean Street with Promenade and Kinsley, under the Providence Place Mall, at the intersection of Dean and Valley Streets, and at the intersection of Atwells and Greenway Path next to the existing Fire Station.

Timeframe
Near-term

Retain Neighborhood Jobs and Housing Patterns

There is a strong historic and ongoing connection between surrounding residential neighborhoods (including Olneyville, Mount Pleasant, Elmhurst, Smith Hill, and Federal Hill) and the jobs center down in the valley along the Woonasquatucket River. For generations people walked or took public transportation to and from these neighborhoods to work in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. The proximity and accessibility between home and work was historically an important part of the success and growth of the area. There is a strong desire among community members to better support connectivity between housing in the surrounding neighborhoods and jobs in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. The City should reinforce and support this relationship by improving streets to make walking and biking a safe and convenient option, supporting better public transportation, and encouraging affordable housing in surrounding neighborhoods within walking distance of the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Action

Prioritize Complete Streets upgrades on streets that will improve access to jobs centers in the Corridor for people walking and riding bicycles from surrounding neighborhoods, including Dean Street to the south and north up Pleasant Valley Parkway; Valley Street going East at Pleasant Valley Parkway to Orms Street connecting to Smith Street; Atwells (both east over the highway and west into the neighborhood); and River Avenue up to Chalkstone Avenue.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Improve connectivity as a way to support public transportation to help increase convenient, non-vehicular travel between the neighborhoods and the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Remove barriers to affordable housing within adjacent neighborhoods in a manner that is compatible with local character, including increasing the number of residential units allowed where appropriate (while protecting the scale of neighborhoods) and increasing flexibility for accessory dwelling units.

Timeframe

Near-term

“The valley should return to providing good paying jobs to workers walking to and from home.”

Implement a Park Once Strategy for the District

On street parking is generally underutilized in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Use of on-street parking and shared parking should be encouraged to minimize creation of off-street parking lots and increase foot traffic, ultimately creating safer streets and allowing for more productive use of land. Parking ratios should also be examined to make sure that an oversupply of parking is not created in the Corridor. Studies have found that too much parking can significantly impair the economic development of an area.

The current cost of new construction in the region coupled with high parking ratios expected by the market have conspired to damage the overall development value of many sites. In numerous cases, buildings that can not be replaced with new construction in an economical way, have been demolished to make way for surface parking. This has contributed to degradation of the urban fabric and suburbanization of new business developments within the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

A unified parking plan will help leverage necessary increases in the intensity and diversity of uses in parts of the Woonasquatucket Corridor and service adjacent high value parking areas such as Federal Hill. After successful deployment of such a policy, large areas of the Woonasquatucket Corridor could potentially be open for sensitive and dynamic infill development, helping justify some potential public investment in the creation of this shared resource.

Action

Require parking to be unbundled from rents and leases to allow the true cost of parking to be presented and reduce parking demand.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Help broker shared parking agreements for private lots.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Appropriately sign and stripe on street parking throughout the Woonasquatucket Corridor to encourage better utilization of on street parking and reduce demand for surface lots.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

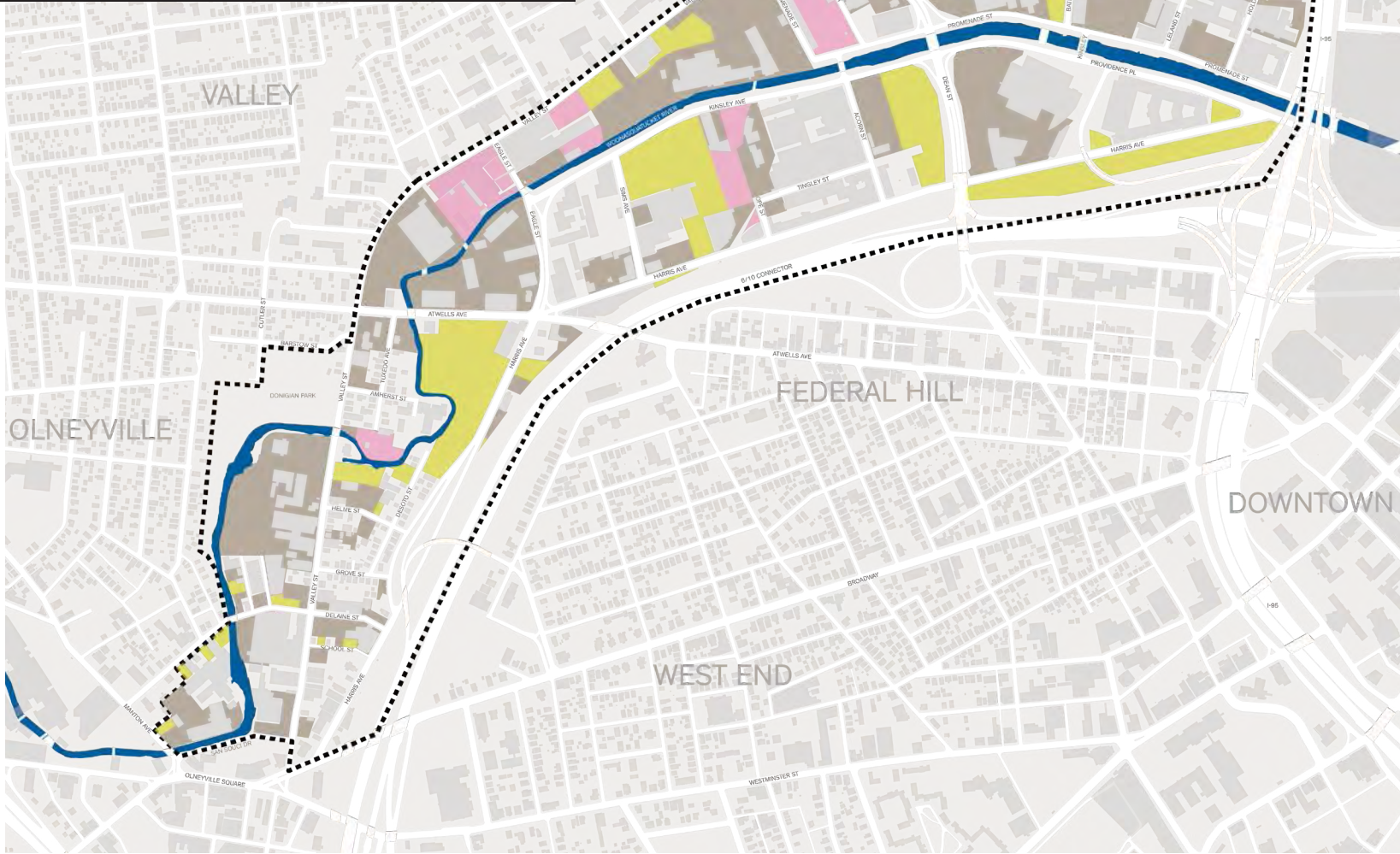
Develop a snow emergency plan that provides more access to on-street parking, even in snow emergencies.

Timeframe

Near-term

UNDERUTILIZED LANDS

- Parking Lots
- Work Lots
- Vacant Land



Action

Commission a comprehensive mobility study that looks at establishing mode share targets to guide transportation planning and policies. This study can inform the creation of parking maximums and should also ensure that improvements are made in parallel to encourage shifts in behavior and the establishment of comprehensive transportation demand management plans for larger commercial uses within the Corridor.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Increase the supply of on-street parking spaces by adding parking spaces where feasible to help narrow streets and slow traffic.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Create and implement a district-wide integrated parking plan with provisions made to produce more centralized parking infrastructure, encourage shared parking, and prevent clearance of land for more surface parking lots.

Timeframe

Long-term

Action

Relax minimum parking requirements in the City's Zoning Ordinance for all uses that deal with fabrication, making, arts, and food production, processing, packaging, or related activities to reduce surface parking and allow land-owners to determine parking based on market demand.

Timeframe

Near-term

The value of buildings for reuse and future commercial activity far outweighs the benefits of surface parking lots, which in many cases have overestimated the peak usage required in their design. As demonstrated above, the vast majority of open land within the Woonasquackett Corridor has already been converted to parking for a few hours each day, further contributing to the perception that areas are vacant and unsafe because of the inherently antagonistic relationship between pedestrian experience and surface parking.

ENHANCE AND MAINTAIN PUBLIC SPACES AND THE RIVER



Enhance the Woonasquatucket River

The Woonasquatucket River is the natural, spiritual, and historical fiber that weaves together many varied parts of the industrial corridor. Indeed, without the River it is doubtful that any of the the surrounding industrial fabric would ever have been built at all. You wouldn't assume the River's importance upon seeing it, however. That is, if you could even see it beyond the overgrown riverbanks that, during summer, make it nearly impossible to even catch a glimpse of running water for much of its length. This is not the legacy this river deserves.

The Woonasquatucket River is used at various times of the year by people for recreational boating. These kayak trips are typically only possible during high tides or when the River is full because of up stream storm run off. There is a great opportunity and local interest in increasing access to the water, with a strong desire for more boat launches, as well as tide clocks, storage spaces, and rental facilities.

In order to celebrate the River's natural beauty and historical importance, it deserves a more fitting tribute in the manner of its care and accessibility. This Plan calls for a dramatic change to the River with the creation of a riverfront automobile-free promenade fully replacing the aptly name Promenade Street. Car traffic should be relocated to Kinsley Avenue, which should be converted to a two-way street.

**“Have street art
and sculptures to
make the community
feel that any place
is a good place to
gather.”**

Several new bridges will be required to bring North-South oriented automobile traffic across the River. These bridges should be built at Holden Street, Leland Street, and Sims Avenue. The two abandoned railroad bridges near Charlotte Hope Street should be rehabilitated to serve as pedestrian/bicycle bridges to connect into the promenade. An additional new automobile bridge is also being proposed further south unrelated to the promenade, connecting Harris Avenue across the River to the Natareno Salvage Site.

The promenade itself should be built with flood mitigation infrastructure in mind, and may alter in section to support stormwater mitigation strategies utilized on adjacent sites.



River flood improvements - hard edge



River flood improvements - soft edge

Action

Build the Woonasquatucket Greenway Extension between Eagle Street and Providence Place Mall. Develop a phasing and implementation plan to make a riverfront automobile-free promenade that fully replaces Promenade Street.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Advance design and construction of the San Souci Greenway segment between Valley Street and Manton Avenue.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Advance design and construction of the Greenway Easement along the River through the former GE Baseworks site.

Timeframe

Near-term

Action

Acquire and create a public park on the Natareno Salvage lot and connect the Greenway through the Natareno Salvage lot.

Timeframe

Long-term

Action

Prioritize sites and secure funding to construct boat launches for kayaks and other non-motorized boats, tide clocks, and storage spaces along the Woonasquatucket River to increase access to the River.

Timeframe

Long-term

Action

Prioritize sites and create pocket parks along the River.

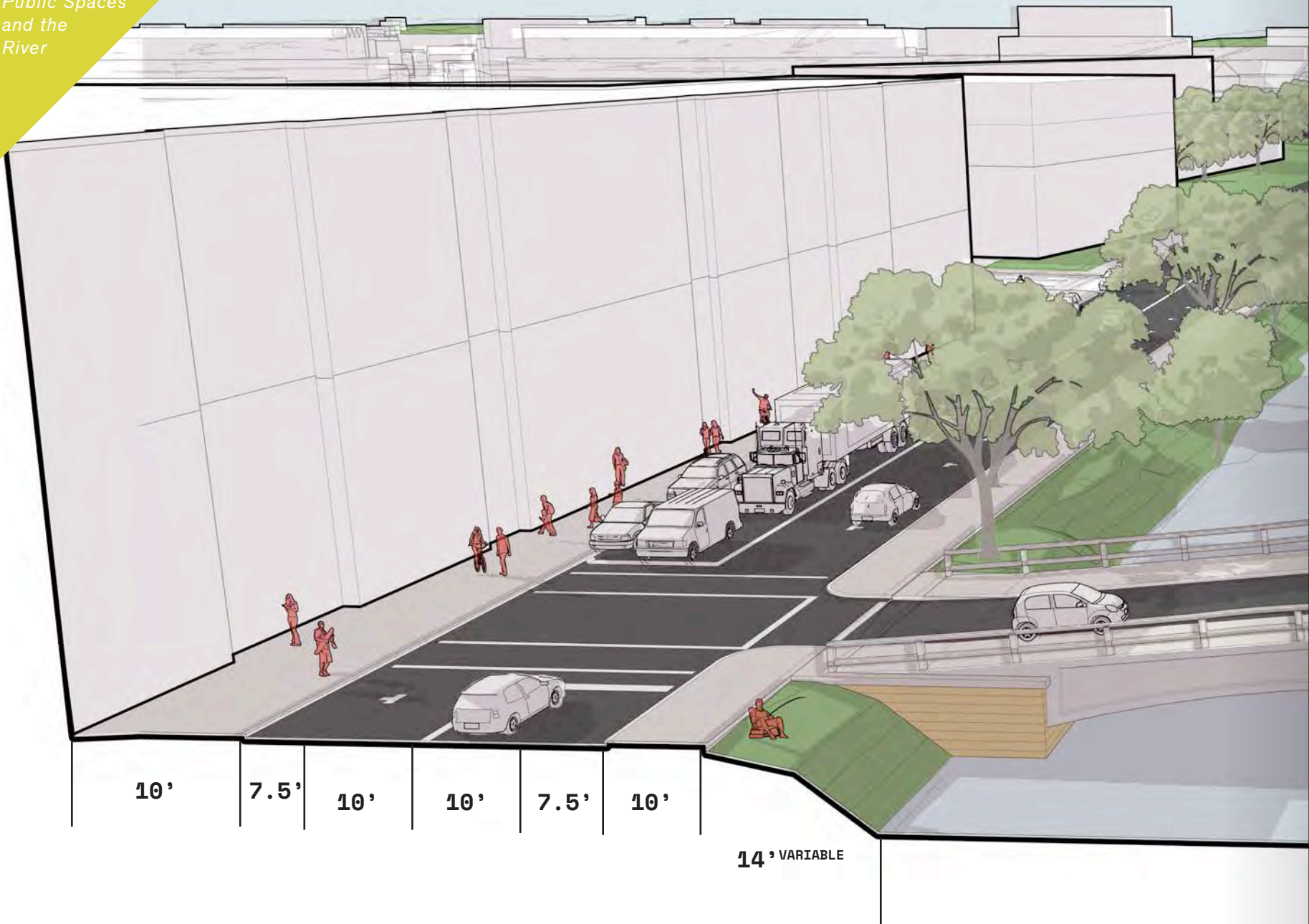
Timeframe

Near-term



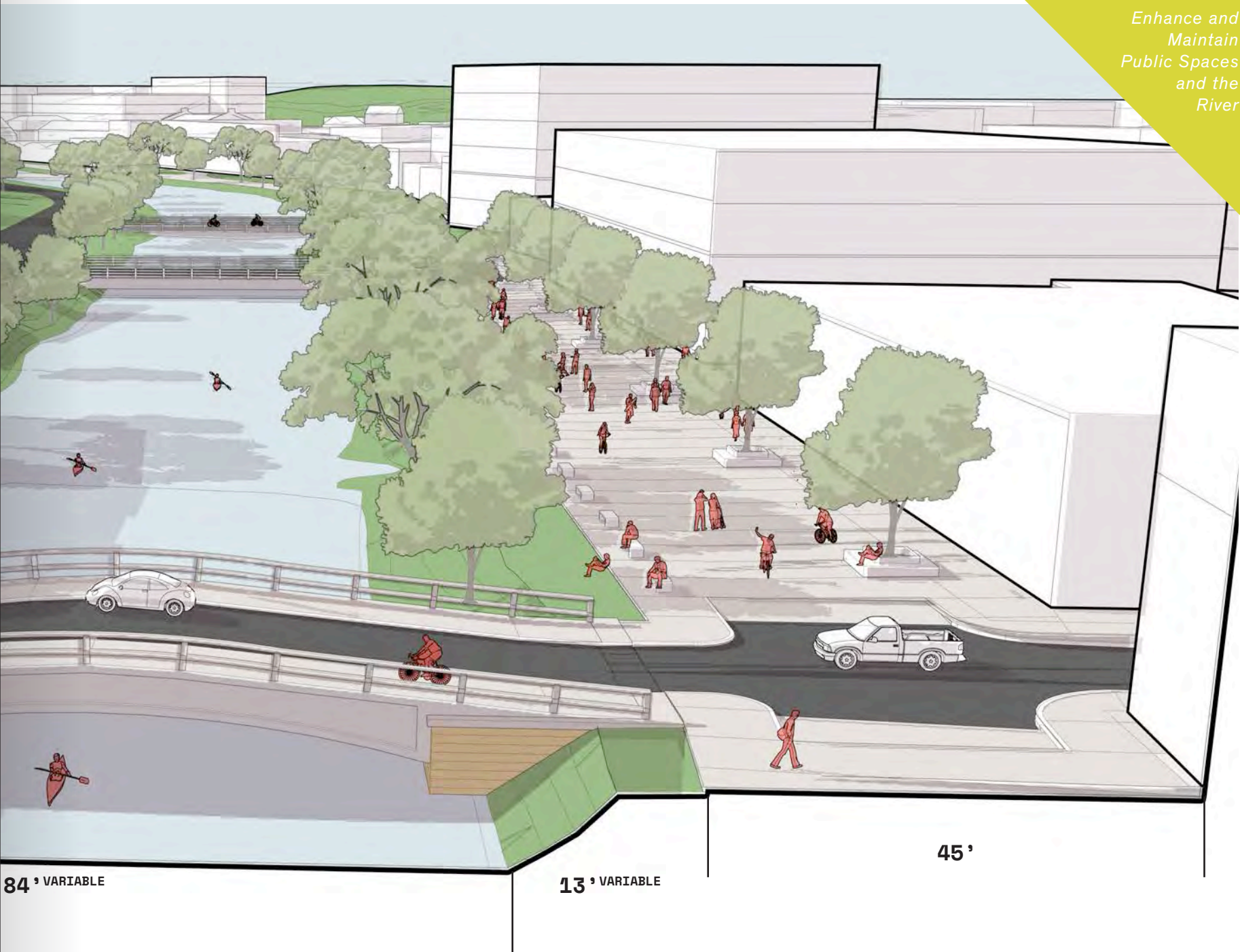
This view east up a transformed Promenade Street toward the Paul Cuffee School and the Acorn Street Bridge. The Woonasquatucket Greenway is envisioned as not just a riverfront park, but an integrated shared space that treats the River as a central and celebrated asset within the community. The space is designed to prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists, while some limited traffic is permitted. Public art is intergrated into the shared space as well as trees, landscaping, and seating.





KINSLEY PROMENADE REDESIGN

A new vision for Promenade was developed during the public process to create a bold new shared use space along the Woonasquatucket River. Vehicular traffic is shifted to the south side of the River along Kinsley Avenue with a wide, human-prioritized street along the north side of the River, in the current location of Promenade Street. Cross streets will continue to flow north / south. This investment in a high-quality, safe shared-street environment will capitalize on the presence of the River and create a strong connection between the urban neighborhoods and nature.



2.5.2

Create Flexible and Multi-Functional Civic Spaces

The civic spaces proposed for various catalyst sites and other parts of the Woonasquatucket Corridor have unique constraints that differentiate them from run of the mill green parks. Most civic spaces will need to be flexible in how they are used from day to day or even hour to hour. Many public spaces will be required to recognize their location in an industrial working context, and must serve double duty as loading and work yards as required. Spatial flexibility may extend to a given space starting the day as a parking plaza, in the afternoon being used for the loading and unloading of equipment and trucks, on the weekends hosting an impromptu soccer match, and at various times throughout the year be set up as one of the venues of a music festival.

In areas of less intense industrial activity, a civic space may not be required to function as a work yard, however, it will almost certainly at the very least have to integrate advanced stormwater controls, swales, and retention areas in line with the strategy for resiliency and flood mitigation discussed earlier.

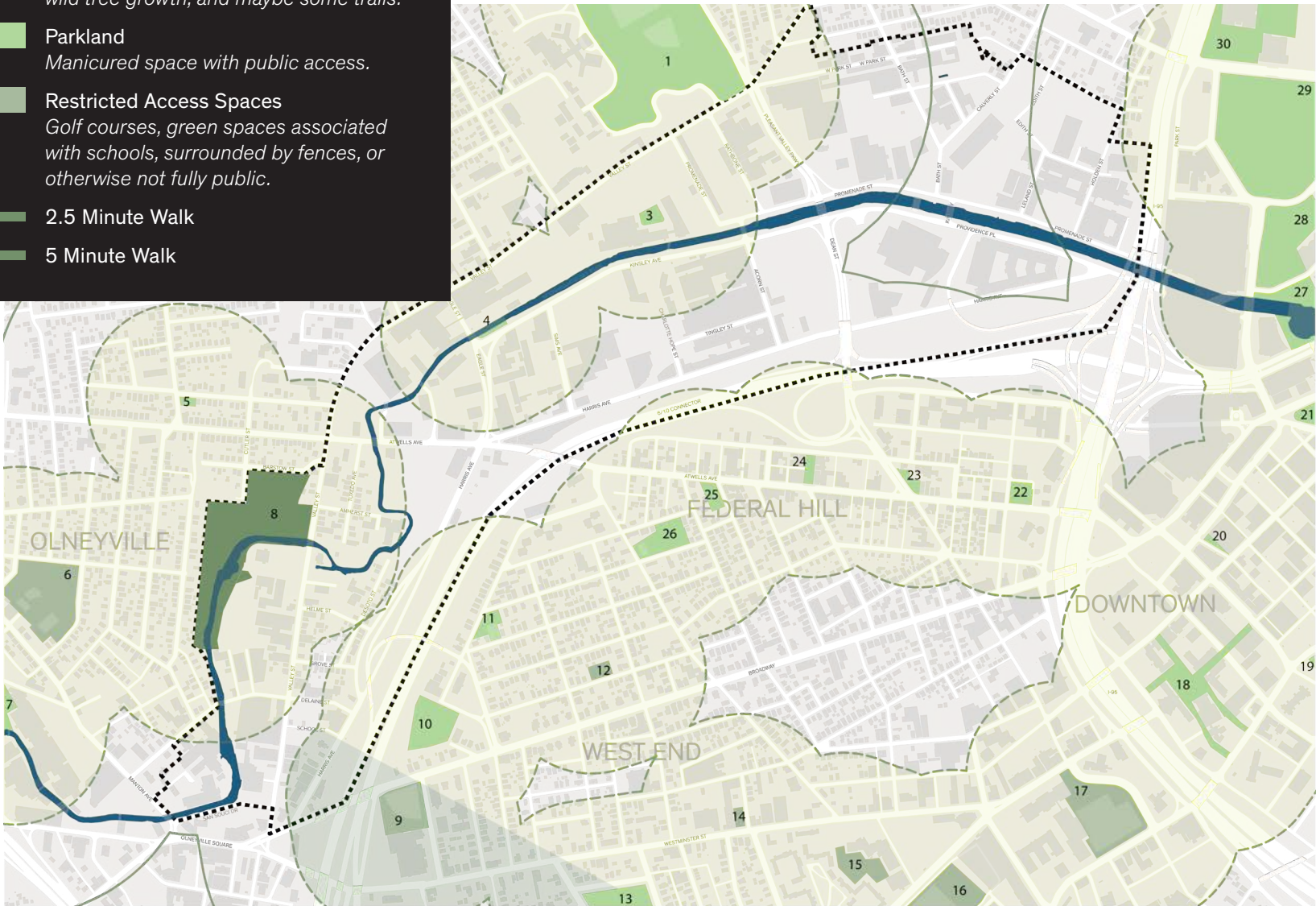
There is an opportunity and desire within the Woonasquatucket Corridor for a more diverse range of civic spaces that support community life and provide flexible space for work and play. These spaces can and should be anchored by the arts and provide places for safe outdoor activity and gathering. The community indicated a preference for recreation corridors, play spaces, skate parks, playgrounds, and ample green spaces to balance the gritty hardscape that people love about the area. Hardscape plazas that support retail and artists space were also desirable, as well as more seating, benches, and places to rest.

Flexible public space at the Wurks accomodates a variety of community activities.



EXISTING PUBLIC SPACE

- Urban Wild
No paved paths or large manicured lawns, wild tree growth, and maybe some trails.
- Parkland
Manicured space with public access.
- Restricted Access Spaces
Golf courses, green spaces associated with schools, surrounded by fences, or otherwise not fully public.
- 2.5 Minute Walk
- 5 Minute Walk



Action
Amend the Zoning Ordinance to incentivize development projects to provide publicly-accessible pocket parks, plazas, and other civic spaces.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Design and build flex public space at the PRA / Umicore Site to draw people into the center of the block for a variety of activities that support adjacent economic and cultural activities.

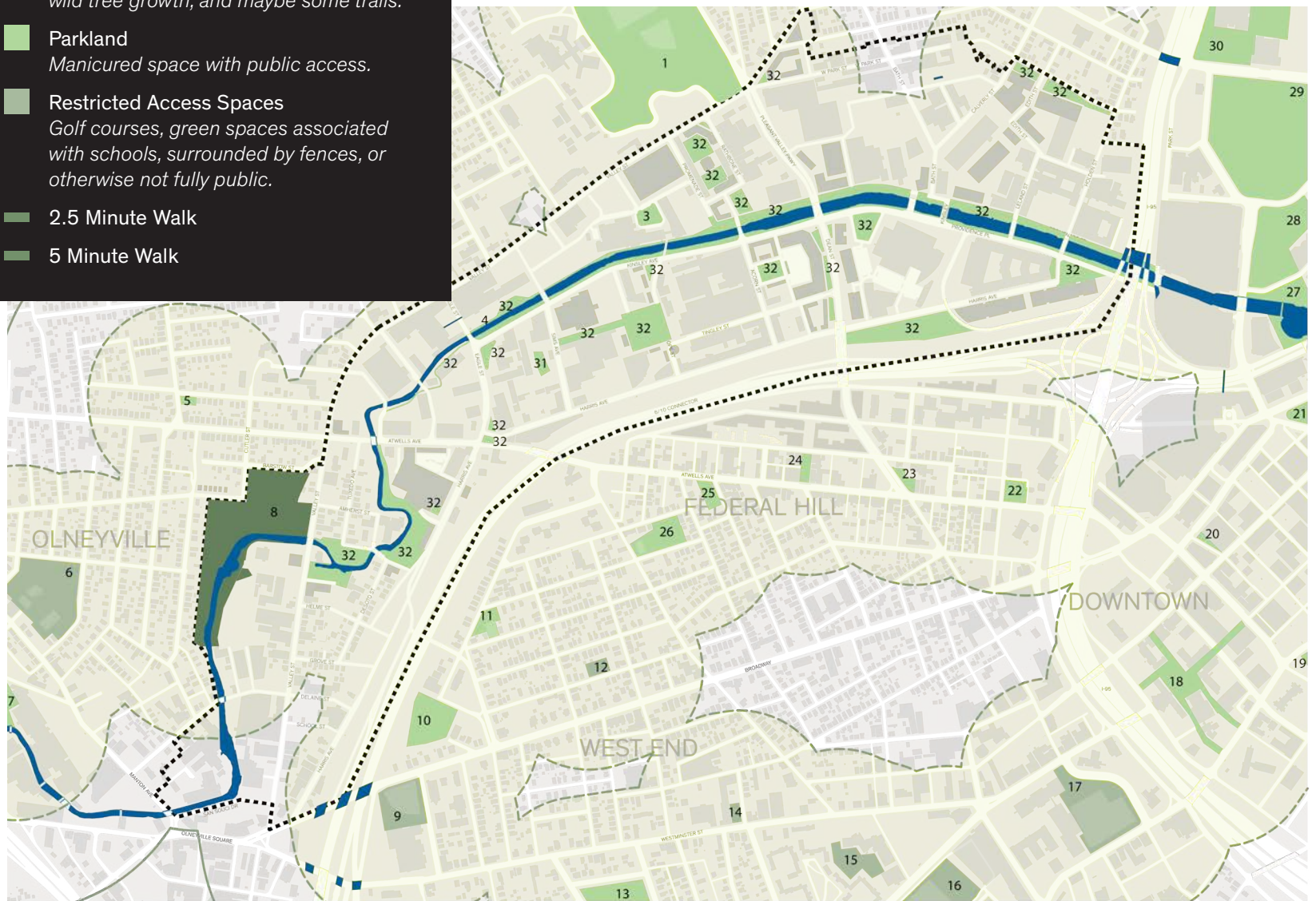
Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Work with property owners at key locations to create new publicly accessible open space where there is a currently deficiency in available open space as illustrated on the existing open space network map. Provide incentives for density bonuses or tax breaks for open space contributions, or change zoning to require parcels above a certain size to create open space when developed or require developers to pay into an open space fund to purchase land and build public open space.

Timeframe
Near-term

PROPOSED PUBLIC SPACE

- Urban Wild**
No paved paths or large manicured lawns, wild tree growth, and maybe some trails.
- Parkland**
Manicured space with public access.
- Restricted Access Spaces**
Golf courses, green spaces associated with schools, surrounded by fences, or otherwise not fully public.
- 2.5 Minute Walk**
- 5 Minute Walk**



Existing Parks

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Davis Park | 17. Classical Grounds |
| 2. John J. O'Brien Memorial Park | 18. Cathedral Square |
| 3. ALCO Pocket Park | 19. Abbot Park |
| 4. Woonasquatucket Greenway Pocket Park | 20. Adrian Hall Skate Park |
| 5. Mount Pleasant Memorial Park | 21. Burnside Park |
| 6. Joslin Rec Center Grounds | 22. Garbaldi Square |
| 7. Riverside Mills Park | 23. Mount Carmel Grounds |
| 8. Donigian Park | 24. DePasquale Square |
| 9. Asa Messer Grounds | 25. St. John's Park |
| 10. Franciscan Park | 26. Zuccolo Rec Center Grounds |
| 11. Ridge Street Playground | 27. WaterPlace Park |
| 12. Grove Street Garden | 28. Station Park |
| 13. Dexter Training Ground | 29. Rhode Island State House Grounds |
| 14. Bridgham Street Community Garden | 30. Rhode Island State Office Grounds |
| 15. Wiggin Village Grounds | 31. The Steel Mill |
| 16. Hoyle Square | 32. Proposed Public Spaces |

2.5.3

Celebrate Art in Public Space

Through the public engagement process, many people expressed a strong interest in seeing more art within the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Public art can be used as a way to call out gathering spaces, to notify people they are entering the district, or to create visual interest in underutilized spaces. Two unique tracks for installing art in public spaces should be considered - one more formal and juried and a second that is informal and administrative. The formal process should focus on high-profile, prominent locations within the area and tie into the City’s large efforts to fund public art. The informal process should make it easy for local people to quickly and easily incorporate art within the neighborhood, so it can occur relatively organically at the hands of local artists and makers. A simple protocol should be developed and communicated to the arts and maker community to make it easy for people to program existing and new civic spaces.

Action
Partner with property owners and arts organizations to commission muralists to paint art walls throughout the Woonasquatucket Corridor.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Identify locations on public land for temporary art installations and provide this information to local arts groups to manage independently.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Review the existing process required for installing art in public spaces. Pay specific attention to how the City promote more public art projects by streamlining this approval process.

Timeframe
Near-term

Action
Ensure the continued maintenance of long-term, permanent art pieces.

Timeframe
On-going

Action
Coordinate public art proposals with the Art In City Life Commission and incorporate the recommendations of the Public Art Master Plan into the implementation of the Woonasquatucket Vision Plan.

Timeframe
Near-term



Public art mixes with a historic smoke stack at The Plant on Valley Street, a brownfield redevelopment project.





CHAPTER 3

CATALYST SITES: RE - DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS AND MARKET ANALYSIS

Artwork by Maggie J Siegel



OVERVIEW

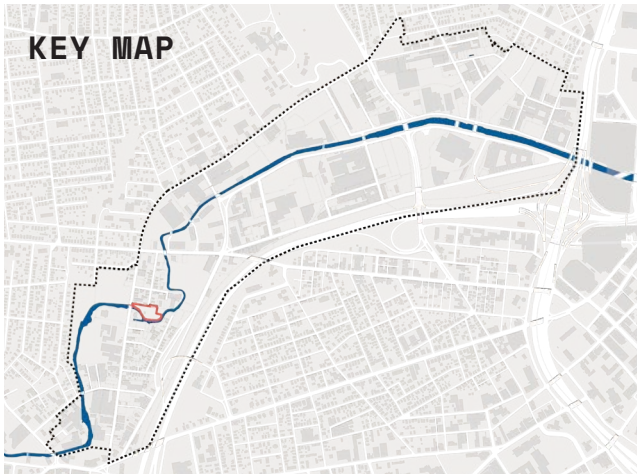
The six catalyst sites shown here were determined to be the most critical sites for redevelopment within the Woonasquatucket Corridor--those that would bring about catalytic change for the entire area (and for other brownfield sites) if they were to be redeveloped in line with the goals of this Vision Plan. Each catalyst site has unique constraints and contamination issues. All catalyst sites possess some level of brownfield contamination, although remediation may not have begun, or been completed depending on the site in question.

Check out the “Remediate Catalytic Brownfields Sites” strategy in Chapter 2 for additional actions related to the clean-up and redevelopment of catalytic brownfield sites.





View looking southwest of the GE Baseworks Site.



**NATERNO SALVAGE SITE-
ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

OWNER
Caesar Natereno

PHASE I & PHASE II ASSESSMENT FINDINGS
There are no records of environmental assessments.
Letter from RIDEM records lead, arsenic, TPHs, and PAHs on Lots 612 and 613.

REMEDIAL ACTION WORK PLAN STATUS
No record of environmental remediation.
Phase I and II assessment recommended.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS ON DEED
N/A

ZONING DESIGNATIONS
M-MU-75, Mixed-Use Industrial District (Lots 613, 612, 283)

3.1.1 NATARENO SALVAGE BACKGROUND

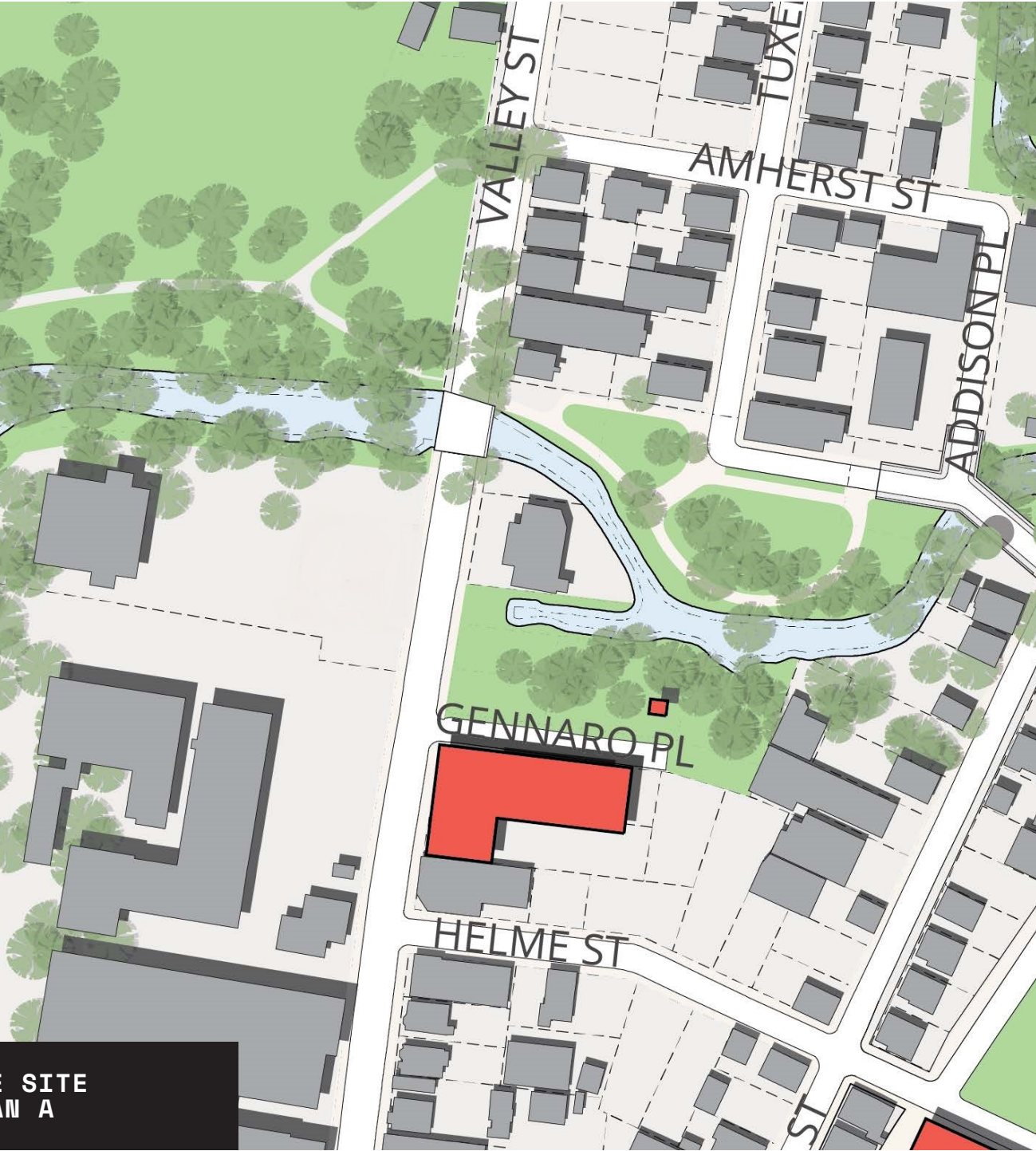
The Natareno Salvage Site, at the terminus of Tuxedo Avenue, has operated as a wrecking and car storage yard for many years. The distinguishing feature of this site is its dramatic location in regards to the River. Located along a complete double curve of the Woonasquatucket, it is surrounded by water on three sides, unique among the catalyst sites. Its location at the center of a low point within the River's disturbed floodplain, coupled with extreme narrowing of the River due to embankment at the first curve means that this is where the River runs fastest, deepest, and is most prone to flooding.

3.1.2
NATARENO SALVAGE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A

The preferred plan for this site calls for opening the site to the River as parkland. In line with the extreme need in this area for a more naturalistic approach to flood mitigation, the highest and best use for the site is as a flood mitigation park. This proposal includes a new street and bridge linking the stub ends of Addison Place and Tuxedo Avenue with Harris Avenue on the other side of the river. This proposed park would contain a second branch of the Woonasquatucket River Greenway bike route that would follow the path of the River directly up through to Eagle Square.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

This scenario assesses the cost of using this site as part of a plan for the river to manage flooding. The total cost of acquiring the site, improving the street access and remediating the land for a 37,000 square foot park is estimated to cost approximately \$2,000,000.



NATARENO SALVAGE SITE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A

- 1 Engage with the property owner to secure funding through local, State, and Federal sources to assist with environmental assessment of the site.**

Little is known about the environmental characteristics of this site and to what degree any clean up is required. All future planning for this site and the determination of reuse options require this information. The city should work collaboratively with the current owner to secure funding and commission the required Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental studies.

- 2 Engage with the property owner to create a formal master plan for the site.**

The location of this site is critical in creating a long term mitigation plan for future flooding in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. The City should engage with the current property owner to explore sale or transfer of the property and develop a long-term master plan for clean-up and redevelopment that addresses private ownership needs and those of the larger community.

- 3 Integrate a flood mitigation park into the Natareno Salvage Site.**

Include a landscape architect and civil engineer on the master planning team that have experience with the creation flood mitigating park design. The characteristics of the River adjacent to this site as well as the narrow bridge abutments at Valley Street make this an opportune location to create a river edge that is able to help mitigate flood events. Serious consideration should be given to creation of a park that utilizes best practices for naturalizing the river banks, provides additional flood capacity during heavier storm events, and ensures that the park is a friendly, safe, and inviting place.

- 4 Develop a funding plan that establishes options and amounts for the various ownership and partnership alternatives that would create the park.**

- 5 Coordinate with the team working on the redevelopment of the GE Baseworks site to ensure that a future connection to a new bridge for pedestrian, bicyclists, and cars is integrated into plans for the property.**

By connecting Tuxedo Avenue and Addison Place over the river with a new bridge to the dead end of De Soto Street several benefits to the neighborhood are created such as increased walkability, improvements to public safety, improvements to the traffic network, and the possibility of increased open space connectivity. The construction of this new bridge and connecting these streets makes establishing a second spur of the Woonasquatucket Greenway bike path possible by establishing a connection with the former GE Baseworks site as well as a street connection to Harris Avenue, where a connection to the Washington Secondary Bike Path Extension is planned.

- 6 Advance engineering and cost estimating for the bridge to connect DeSoto Street with Addison Place, street extensions, and bike path spur.**

3.1.3
NATARENO SALVAGE
ALTERNATIVE PLAN B

The second option for the Natareno Salvage Site keeps many flood mitigation strategies included in Option A, but also makes some space at the most dramatic part of the river bend available for development of new infill housing. This option may be necessary to financially defray costs associated with contamination cleanup and construction of the flood mitigation park.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

By redeveloping a portion of the site and only retaining the riverbed as parkland, this scenario would require an estimated \$1,600,000 in public investment in acquisition, remediation, street improvements and landscaping. The value added by the proposed development of a 5,000 square foot residential building would provide a return to the developer without tax subsidy and a net annual tax benefit of \$17,000 for a public return on investment of around 7.5%. This provides a positive return to the public while producing 19 units of new housing.

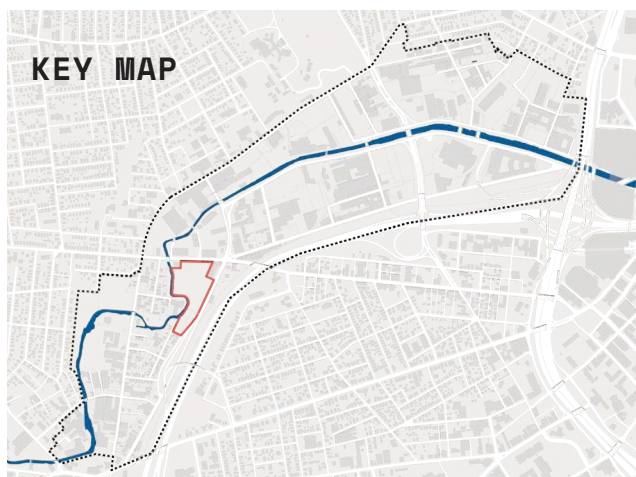


NATARENO SALVAGE SITE
ALTERNATIVE PLAN B

GENERAL ELECTRIC BASEWORKS SITE



View looking southwest of the GE Baseworks Site.



GENERAL ELECTRIC BASEWORKS- ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

OWNER

General Electric Company

PHASE I & PHASE II ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

SVOCs, PAHs, arsenic beryllium, and lead; LNAPL and fuel oil

REMEDIAL ACTION WORK PLAN STATUS

Maintained existing cap, installed new cap, maintained ELUR, passive recovery of LNAPL

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS ON DEED

Guidelines on cap maintenance and soil disturbance

ZONING DESIGNATIONS

M-MU-75, Mixed-Use Industrial District (Lots 30, 634, 282, 657, 556); Historic District - Providence Landmark District (Lot 30)

3.2.1 GE BASEWORKS BACKGROUND

Upon its closure in 2000 the General Electric (GE) Baseworks Factory had produced lamp bases for nearly a century. When the facility was demolished in 2015, a large empty site was created at the foot of Atwells Avenue, extending around the historic Max Pollack building at the corner of Atwells and Harris avenues. The site is large, highly visible, and has the longest single section of direct frontage on the Woonasquatucket River of any of the catalyst sites.



*View looking west down
Atwells Avenue, standing at
intersection with Harris.*



*View looking north down
Harris toward intersection
with Atwells Avenue.*

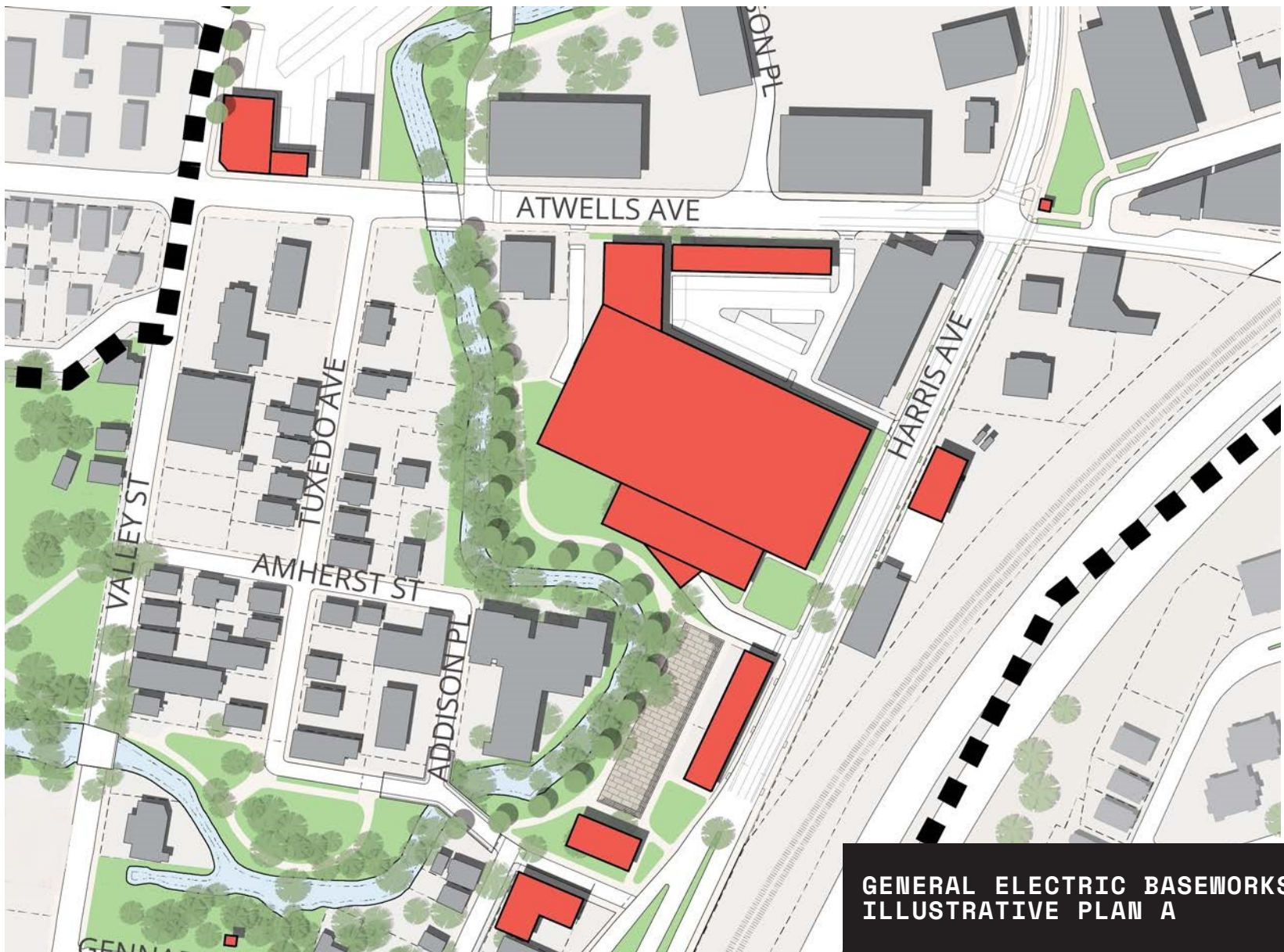
3.2.2 GE BASEWORKS PREFERRED PLAN

The Illustrative Plan for the General Electric Baseworks site was informed by the Fall 2017 announcement that the property was being acquired by Gotham Greens, with plans to develop a 94,000 square foot hydroponic greenhouse facility on the site. In this development scenario Gotham Greens lines their frontage with a few strategically placed flex row spaces and outlying commercial and residential units.

Market / Economic Analysis

For this scenario, the anticipated public costs would include providing new access streets with water

and sewer, a 23,000 square foot plaza, and 80,000 square feet of park in coordination with a stormwater remediation plan. The total public cost for this potential scenario is estimated at \$2,750,000. The coordinated development, without tax incentives, should provide a healthy return to the developer and a net tax benefit of \$748,000 annually, or a 27% return on public investment. It would also provide space for 189 employees and 41 new residential units.



1 Activate the frontage along Atwells Avenue.

The redevelopment of the GE site should include the addition of a liner building along Atwells Avenue to create an active frontage with small scale commercial space that can add value along this street and help ensure that future investment will continue in this area. Streets that have active street frontages, with ground floor uses and active entrances that are open to the public, can attract more pedestrians, bicyclists, and investment dollars. Entrances to these spaces within the liner building or buildings should be frequent and occur every 30 to 50 feet.

2 Minimize impervious parking on the site.

Impervious parking on the GE site should be minimized to the extent possible to help the site manage its own stormwater.

3 Incorporate stormwater mitigation into redevelopment of the site.

This section of the River is of critical importance for the overall district flood mitigation and adaptation solution. It is critical that the site design incorporates smart solutions to accommodate flood events adjacent to the River. The plan shows the southern end of the site converted to an extension of the river itself, with a large park, plaza, and system of swales replacing the River's existing embankment at the lower levels.

4 Work with property owner and adjacent owners to encourage shared parking.

The redevelopment of the GE site should take advantage of the parcel's size to construct a shared parking facility that can help to further larger improvements to the Woonasquatucket Corridor. These parking spaces could be leased or otherwise available to other key redevelopment sites where the creation of parking is limited, such as the Max Pollock Building or Capitol Records complex.

5 Create a public easement for the Woonasquatucket River Greenway along the River.

The GE site is currently a gap in the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Bike Path. Closing this gap, by creating a public easement along the length of the River, from De Soto Street to Atwells Avenue will help accomplish several of this Plan's community priorities, including improving sustainability and resiliency, improving access and connectivity, and enhancing the Woonasquatucket River.





PRA/UMICORE SITE



PRA / UMICORE SITE- ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

OWNER

Providence Redevelopment Agency

PHASE I & PHASE II ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

DEM file did not contain Phase I or II assessments. Instead, the findings on contaminants were contained in a "Site Investigation Report" (2006). Findings listed below are from this report:

Soil: arsenic, PAH, lead, mercury, selenium

Groundwater: VOC, but not exceeding limits

Vicinity of Building 12 (on PRA Parcel): mercury and selenium

Vicinity of Building 13 (on PRA Parcel): selenium

REMEDIAL ACTION WORK PLAN STATUS

Plan: Excavate contaminated soils, groundwater monitoring, install engineered controls, create ELUR.

Status: All remedial activities complete. Excavated soil, installed engineered controls (including cap), created ELUR with deed, created groundwater monitoring program; appears that monitoring ended.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS ON DEED

No residential

Industrial/Commercial only

Maintain engineered caps

Prohibits drinking groundwater

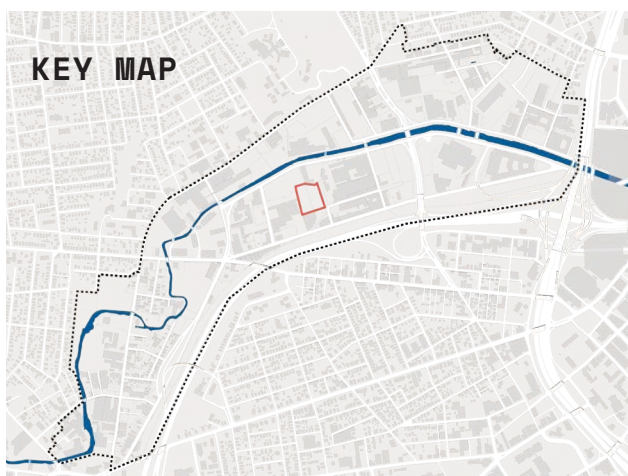
RIDEM approval required for soil excavation below cap/concrete/ buildings

Soil Management Plan

ZONING DESIGNATIONS

M-1, Light Industrial District (Lots 285, 286)

Footnote: Adult use is not permitted



3.3.1 PRA / UMICORE BACKGROUND

The Providence Redevelopment Agency site is the nexus of the small arts and fabricator activity in the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Located at the center of the megablock delineated by Sims Avenue, Harris Avenue, Acorn Street, and Kinsley Avenue, the block contains several art studio complexes (The Wurks, Ajay Land, and Nicholson File) and industrial spaces (Capco Steel, Eagle Tool and the former Umicore building). This megablock is also the future home of Farm Fresh RI's new food hub. The density of interesting and unique uses found in this one central section of the neighborhood is a case study for how other parts of the corridor could evolve to include additional industrial and artist space.

*View from Harris Avenue
looking north toward the
Nicholson File Building.*



3.3.2
PRA / UMICORE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A

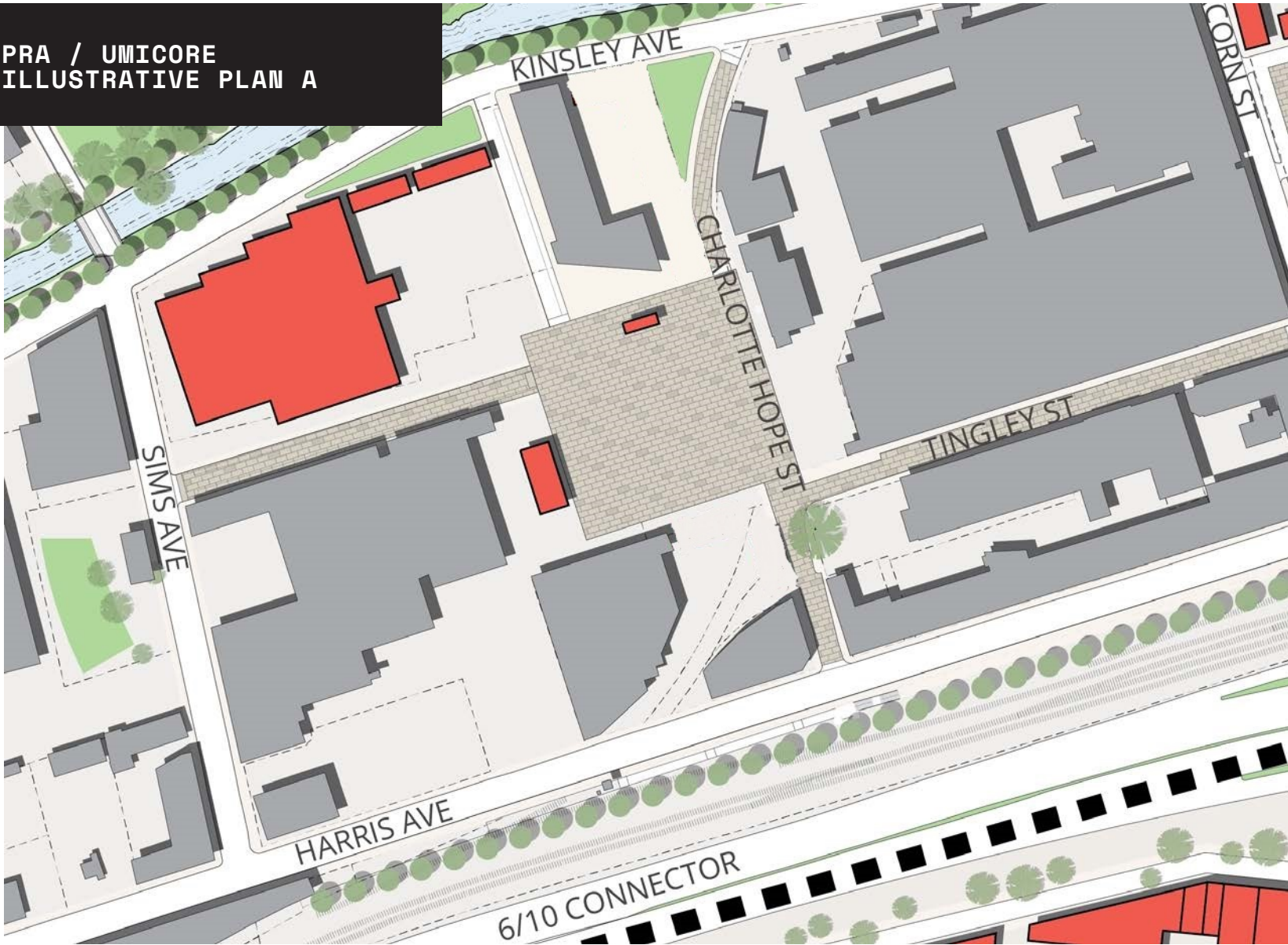
In this option the center of the block is shown as a very large flexible civic space that doubles as a loading yard for Capco Steel. During weekday business hours, the multi-functional space can continue to provide parking and truck unloading but within a more open and easier to use work yard. In the evenings, on weekends, and for seasonal events, the space can accommodate special events. A large civic podium built to one side belies the intended use for this space for large concerts, festivals, or other gatherings when not being used as an industrial space. Two new streets have been opened from the center of the block out to Kinsley on either side of Eagle Tool in order to increase permeability of the block. A beloved tree has been preserved holding the corner of Tingley and Charlotte Hope streets. Across Harris Avenue from the mouth of Charlotte Hope Street, the foot of a new pedestrian/ bicycle bridge is shown that would cross the Northeast

Corridor rail line and 6/10 Connector highway corridor, connecting the Woonasquatucket Corridor to Federal Hill.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Our recommendation for this site includes public improvements in new streets, water and sewer, and an 85,000 square foot public plaza totaling almost \$1,500,000, and a public pavilion for \$370,000. In this scenario no land is returned to private development, so there is no tax benefit. Instead, there is opportunity for rental incomes from festival and event use of the pavilion. The Pavilion is estimated to generate almost \$34,000 annually. We assume no tax is currently assessed on the publicly owned land. While the return to the public in this development is slight, it provides a positive return on investment as well as the opportunity to create a shared space to support and celebrate the fabrication community.

PRA / UMICORE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A



-
- 1 Create an easement for pedestrians and bicyclists through the block along Tingley and Charlotte Hope Streets.**

A central feature critical to the enhancement of this catalytic site is the proposed path that serves as both a pedestrian and bicycle route and spillover maker space.

-
- 2 Restore Charlotte Hope Street to provide access to the interior of the Harris/Kinsley/Sims/Acorn megablock, facilitate deliveries, and make walking and bicycling within the area more practical.**

-
- 3 Seek a tenant for the former Umicore complex that is open to the ideas set forth in this Vision Plan and is amenable to setting aside a portion of the site as a civic space to accommodate various functions and events.**

-
- 4 Establish an Innovation Center within former Umicore Building.**

It is common for innovation districts to establish a physical presence within a district. A Woonasquatucket Innovation Center could be housed in the larger Umicore facility owned and managed by the Providence Redevelopment Agency. A 5,000 to 10,000 square foot facility could provide shared facilities, programming, and business to business services that would be able to assist with the advancement of the Woonasquatucket Industrial Corridor as the innovation center for the food and creative economy in Providence.

**3.3.3
PRA / UMICORE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN B**

Similar to the concepts included in Option A, the alternate plan for this site places an emphasis on maximizing infill space and celebrating new block cross connections, not just in the form of streets, but with a new pedestrian connection that ties together the incredible collection of industrial courtyards woven among the large building complexes. This plan also calls for two slightly smaller flexible civic spaces, one with a dedicated bandshell that takes advantage of the shape of existing buildings to approximate an outdoor amphitheater, as well as a larger stabilized soil square, which could serve as a dirt soccer field when not being utilized as a plaza or work yard space. This option also proposes that the former Umicore complex, with its unique shape on its southern side, becomes an outdoor gallery for mural art along a pedestrian path, creating a dramatic day or night time pedestrian experience.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Instead of a pavilion, this scenario provides space for “micro maker boxes”, small 500 square foot structures that can house artists, artisans and fabricators. Lined around the plaza, they can create a market or festival environment that anchors the fabrication community. With a combined total of 15,000 square feet, these units would cost around \$1,600,000 to construct. This scenario also requires the public construction of new streets, water and sewer, and an 85,000 square foot public plaza for almost \$1,500,000. The total cost including land would be around \$3,300,000. Managed by the city, net income from the maker units could total \$178,000 annually, for a 5% return on public investment. Alternatively, a development agreement could offer a land lease to a developer or directly to artisans to construct and manage the units.

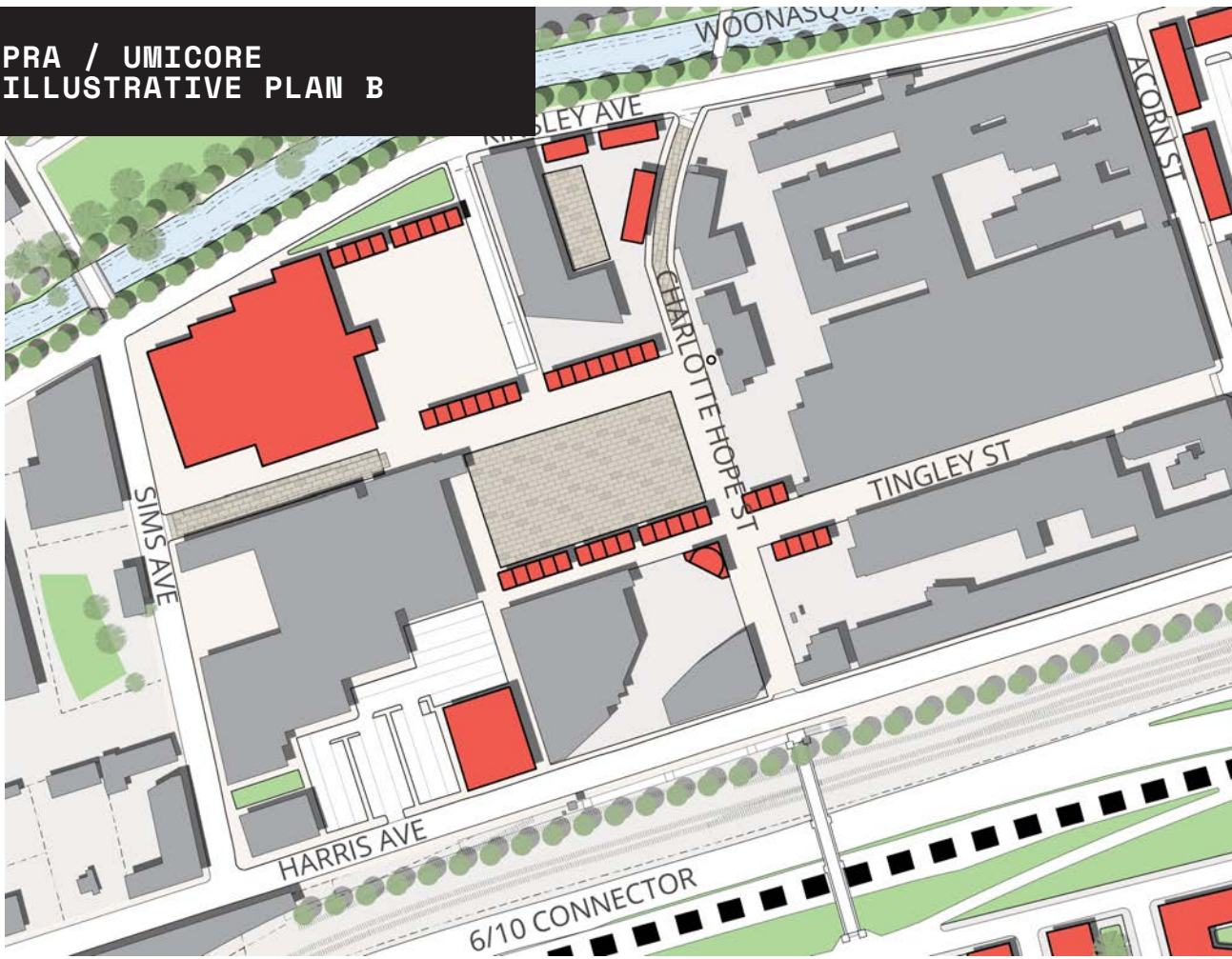
**3.3.4
PRA / UMICORE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN C**

In the spirit of New England ingenuity, this alternative site plan looks to create a new public space that can do many things on the same area of land. This plaza can support parking during normal operations and event demands on this block for all of the various users. Especially, the seasonal and weekly demands of not only parking for the future Farm Fresh RI, but also truck activities. This new plaza can be a flexible public space that during normal business hours can accommodate parking as well as truck loading and unloading. During weekends or special events this plaza can transform to house large functions such as farmers markets, concerts, and festivals. With a tree planting pattern that can accommodate flexible parking layouts and truck routes this new plaza can provide a multi-functional space for all of the various aspects of running industrial and fabrication uses as well as the public life goals for the district. The new Farm Fresh RI building can frame this new public space and help to celebrate what might become known as Sims Square.

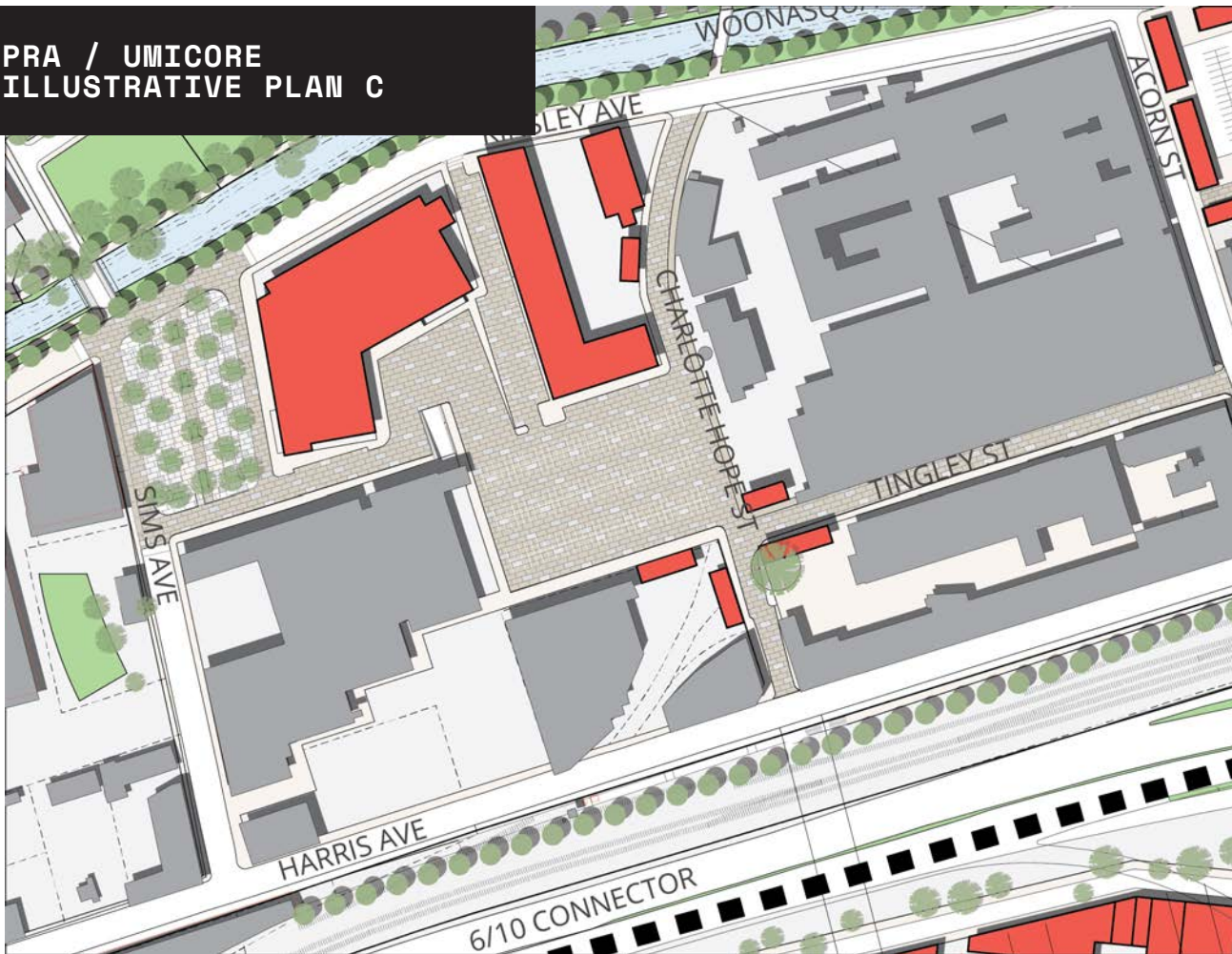
MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

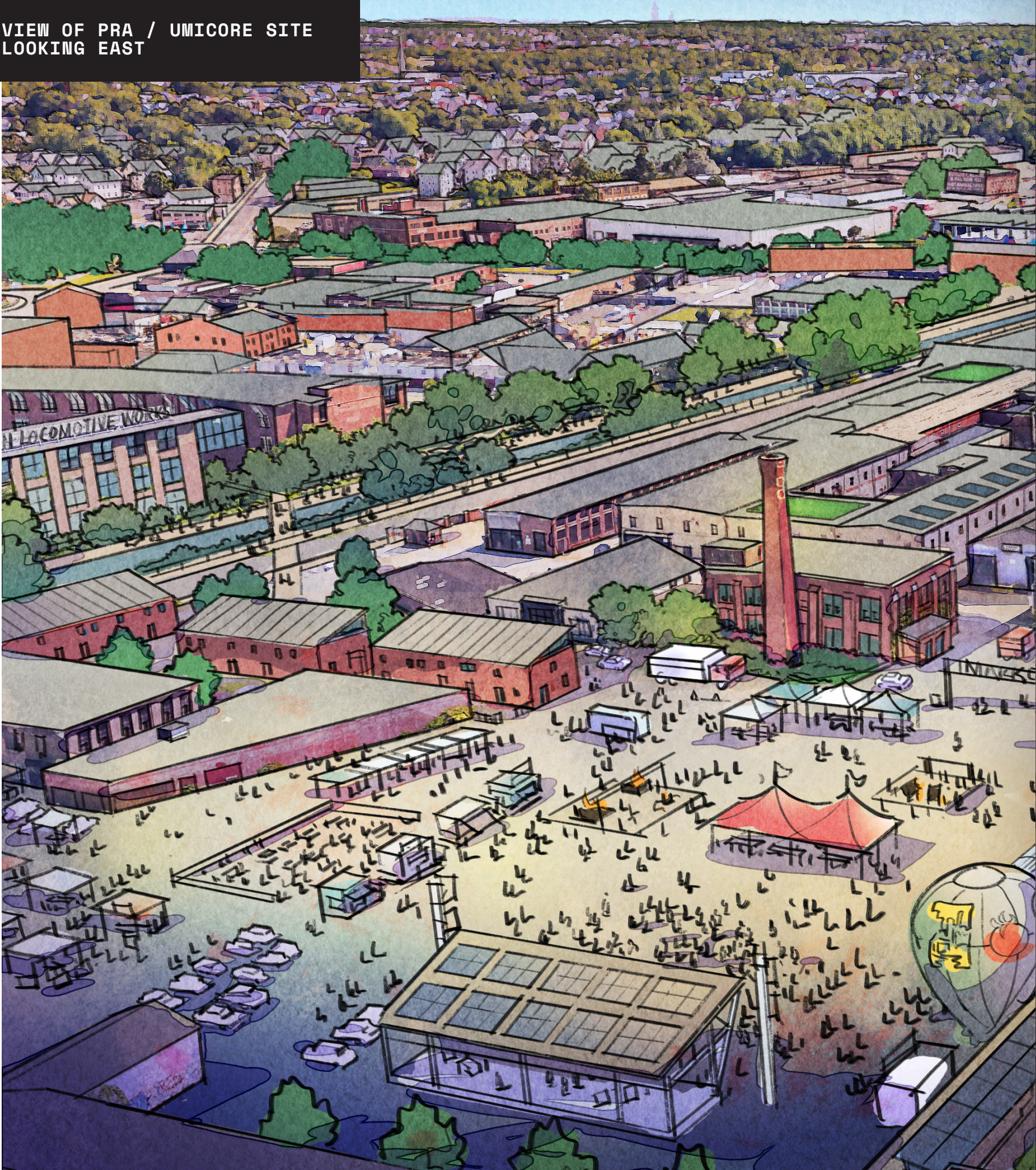
In this scenario, no new water and sewer are required to support the flexible plaza. Instead, a larger hardscaped and landscaped area of 114,000 square feet and shared street improvements should cost around \$1,700,000. Although there is no program for revenue recapture, this provides a public amenity that can be used for festivals, markets and to support and celebrate the fabrication community.

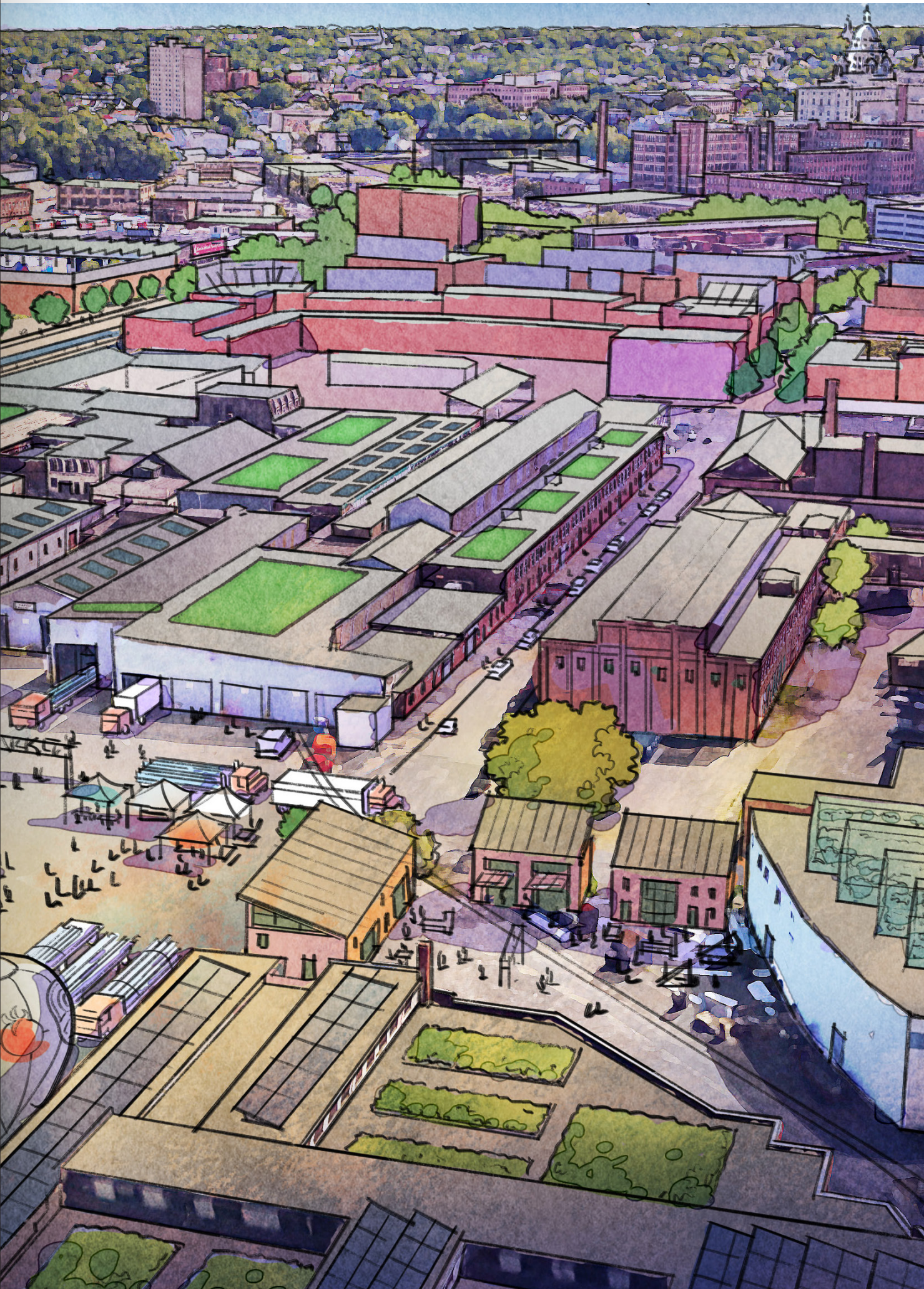
PRA / UMICORE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN B



PRA / UMICORE
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN C

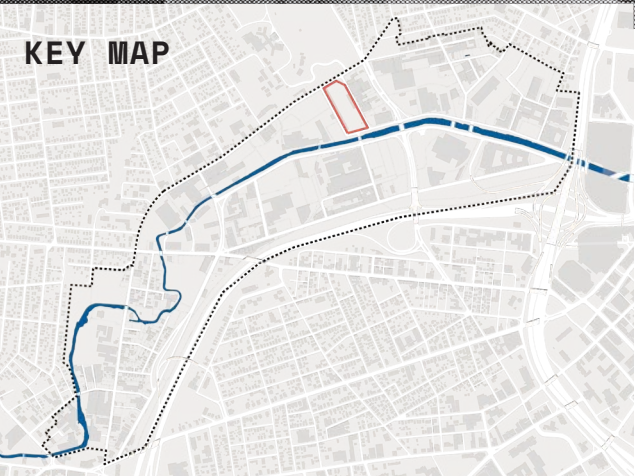






View of the PRA / Umicore site looking east toward downtown Providence. The heart of this industrial block is activated with pop-up programming and light-weight buildings to help support and celebrate the local vitality of this place. This flex space could accommodate large festivals, concerts, markets, or other activities that suit the interests of the community.

NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION SITE



NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION- ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

OWNER

Narragansett Bay Commission

PHASE I & PHASE II ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Soil: arsenic, lead, PAH

REMEDIAL ACTION WORK PLAN STATUS

Soil excavated, capped

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS ON DEED

Draft ELUR: no residential usage, no drinking groundwater, no disturbing soil, water can't infiltrate contaminated soils, can't construct subsurface structures over contaminated groundwater, maintenance of engineered controls.

ZONING DESIGNATIONS

M-1, Light Industrial District (Lot 87)

Historic District - Providence Landmark District (Lot 87)

3.4.1

NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION BACKGROUND

The Narragansett Bay Commission Site has a long and interesting connection to the trading history of Providence and distribution of food. The buildings currently located on the block surrounded by Promenade, Rathbone, Valley, and Hemlock streets were built as part of the Governor Dyer Public Marketplace, which served as Providence's local produce market for the sale of fruits, market vegetables and other produce from area farmers. The buildings also housed private food processing operations, some of which still inhabit the site today. The property was acquired by the Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC) as part of the Combined Sewer Overflow project. The permanent presence of this work is visible at the southeast corner of the site where a headhouse to one of the large drop shafts accessing the NBC tunnel is located.

The site is well-positioned to help accomplish several community priorities, including preserving and creating affordable space to anchor the Woonasquatucket Corridor as a place for creative, manufacturing, and food uses to flourish. Care should be taken with any redevelopment of this site to celebrate and build from its heritage as a public market. Redevelopment of this site should also further connect the River to surrounding neighborhoods. A greenway connection can be made coming down the hill from Davis Park through the Narragansett Bay Commission block and connect directly to the Woonasquatucket River Greenway.



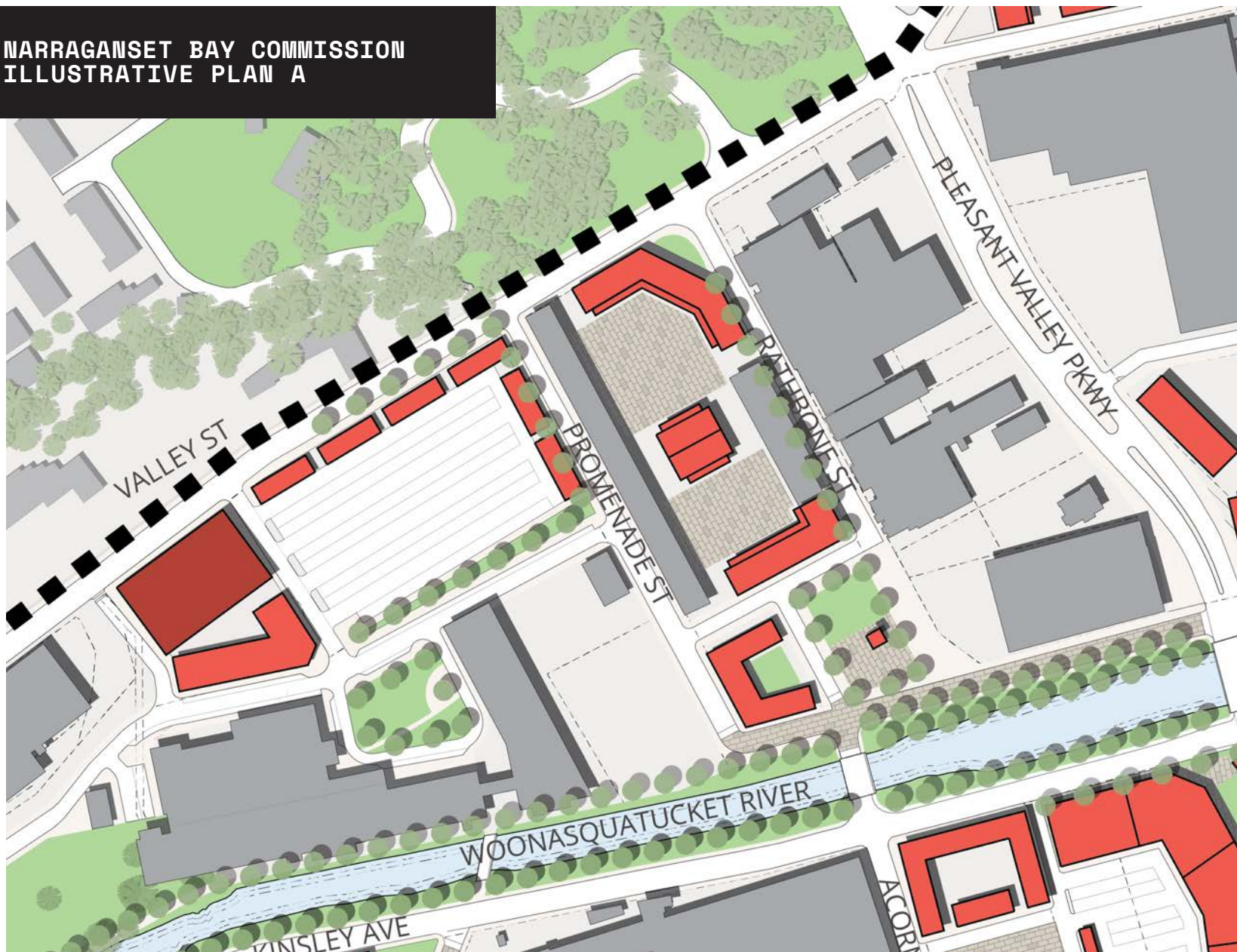
**3.4.2
NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A**

The plan aims to preserve as much of the existing marketplace as possible, while constructing additional fabrication and industrial market buildings in a complementary style around two central service courtyards. Promenade Street and Hemlock Street would have a ribbon of green, perhaps rain gardens with significant trees, installed along one edge to help link the new pedestrian promenade traveling along the north side of the River with Davis Park to the north. A new market hall building would be constructed opening directly onto the shared space Woonasquatucket Greenway Promenade. In this option the fences surrounding the Narragansett Bay Commission drop shaft are removed, with the site re-paved as an extension of the shared plaza space. The existing head house would be celebrated as a piece of civic art, and also serve to anchor one side of a new playground that would service the adjacent Cuffee School.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

In this scenario the existing warehouse space is preserved with existing tenants and new commercial buildings enhance the site as a marketplace. We assume the public will bear the costs of improving streets with water and sewer and constructing a 20,000 square foot public plaza for an estimated \$1,300,000. Paying for the site and the pre-approved development, a developer should be able to make a return on investment without tax abatements. The return to the City on the tax value of the new development would provide a projected 15% annual return on public investment in infrastructure while establishing space for an estimated 74 new employees.

**NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A**



- 1 Work with the Narragansett Bay Commission to create a master plan for the site that includes the creation of new thoroughfares, a park/greenway connection, and the subdivision of the site for the creation of additional commercial development.

The redevelopment of this site should reconnect Hemlock and Rathbone streets to the Acorn Street bridge to assist with the conversion of Promenade Street into an expanded Greenway. The pedestrian connection of Davis Park to the River should also be incorporated.

- 2 Coordinate with existing tenants to accommodate them within the site's master plan or establish a relocation plan for them if it is not feasible for their businesses to remain during redevelopment.

- 3 Work with the Paul Cuffee School to incorporate outdoor programming elements for the school that can be shared with the neighborhood, such as a playground or small, flexible playing field.

- 4 Develop a plan with the Narragansett Bay Commission for transforming the land surrounding the tunnel head house into a civic space for public use that can also accommodate the functional requirements of operating the Combined Sewer Overflow tunnel.

Further discussions with the Narragansett Bay Commission should include plans for the land surrounding this shaft's head house and how it could be utilized for greater public benefit. Although there are operational requirements for the site when work and access to the tunnel is required, this land could be utilized for a variety of other uses instead of a unused circulation and lay-down space for NBC operations. This land should function as a shared plaza that offers public access and amenities. In particular, the site should include play space for students at the adjacent Paul Cuffee Lower School.

- 5 Improve the connection between the site and Davis Park by partnering with the Narragansett Bay Commission, VA Hospital, Parks Department, and other agencies to develop a plan for restoration of the historical stairs adjacent to Valley Street.

Ruins of several sets of historical stairs that once climbed up the the hill from Valley Street north to Smith Hill and Davis Park historically made a strong connection between these two sections of the city.

- 6 Partner with the Narragansett Bay Commission to restore the Pleasant Valley Parkway stream and create a greenway link between Davis Park and the Woonasquatucket River.

There is an opportunity to make a strong connection between the Woonasquatucket River Greenway, Davis Park, and Pleasant Valley Parkway. In addition to restoration of the historic stairs between Valley Street and Davis Park, other options for establishing a green link between Davis Park and the River should be planned to create more comfortable pedestrian connections.

3.4.3 NARRAGANSET BAY COMMISSION ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN B

An alternate version of development on this catalyst site imagines the complete redevelopment of the market into new working industrial space. The connection between Davis Park and the Promenade is further expanded with a linear park running along Hemlock Street terminating at a new park located at the current connection of Hemlock Street to Promenade Street. A flexible civic space makes up the center of the block, capable of acting either as a service workyard or a plaza-type public space, depending on the required programming or time of year. In this version the Narragansett Bay Commission drop shafts are not modified in any way.

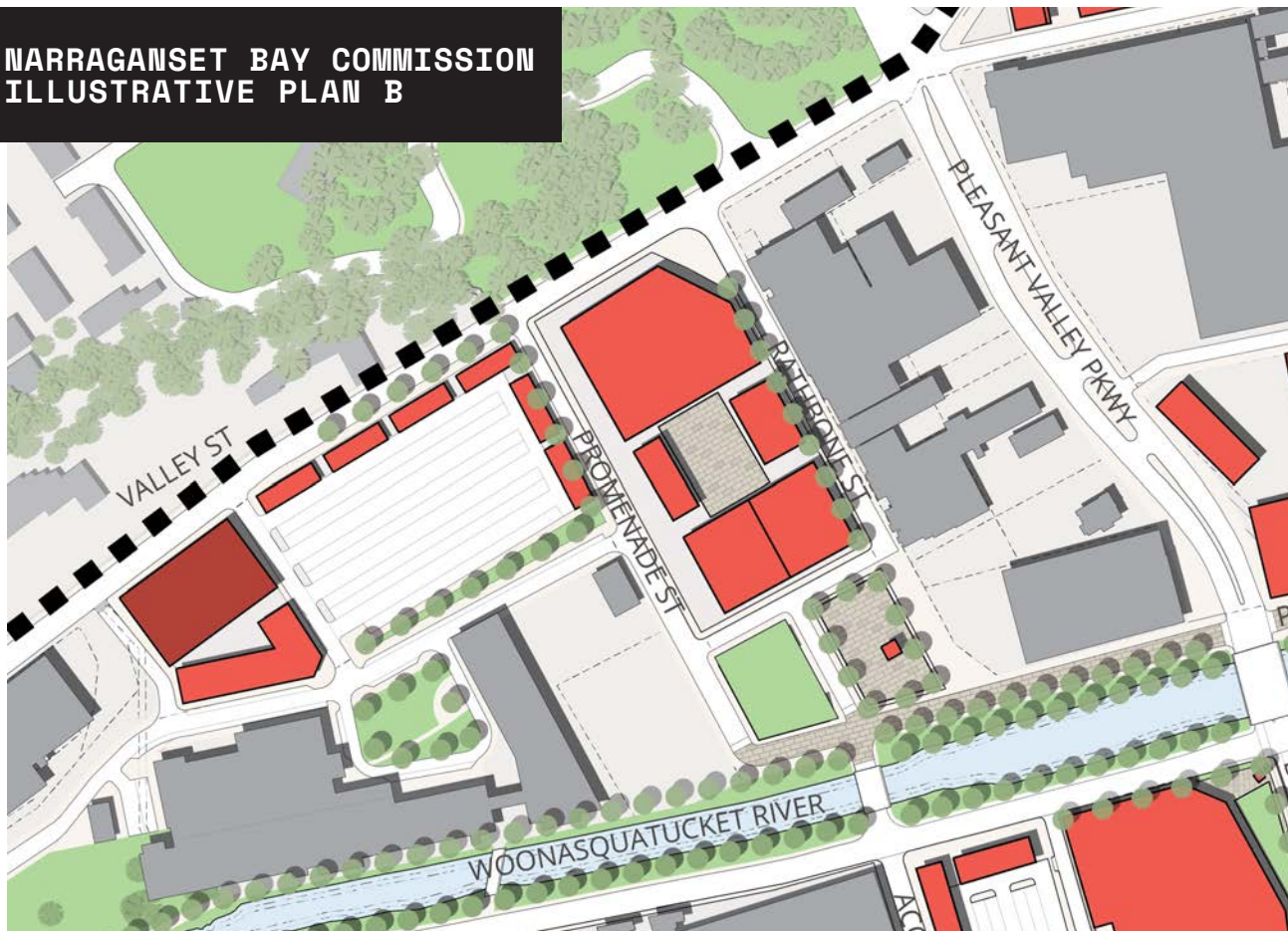
MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

In this scenario the existing warehouse space is replaced and tenants are relocated in newer, more functional space in a new commercial hub located on-site. The public will need to provide for the removal of the existing structures, new water and sewer, new interior street network, a 20,000 square foot plaza, a 16,000 square foot park and a block long landscaped planting strip. Also, the public will need to subsidize the cost of land acquisition by almost \$900,000, for a total public cost of almost \$3,300,000, plus the unincorporated potential cost of relocating tenants. However, this comes back as a public benefit in a 15% return on investment from new taxes and space for an estimated 139 employees (number reflects employees genated by the new development and does not account for the loss of employees in existing buildings). While the public expense is higher, the return rate is equivalent and the developer return is slightly higher. Between this and option A, the public will need to weigh the presence of design and contribution to the public realm and willingness to invest additional capital in the project.

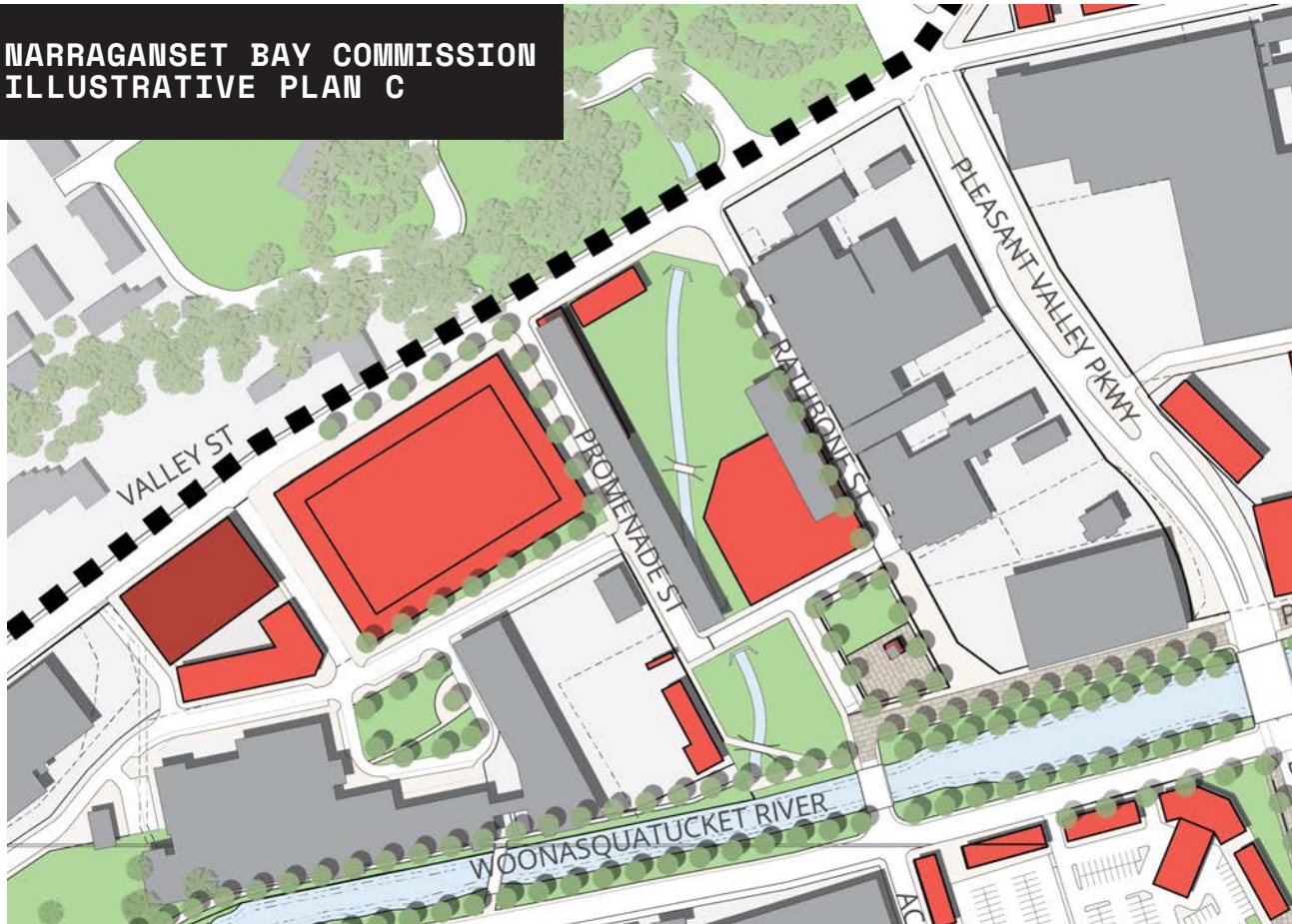
3.4.4 NARRAGANSET BAY COMMISSION ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN C

Option C is a modified version of Option B, but with the stream daylighted. This option not only improves the health of a waterway but also allows for a more dynamic place with a unique interface between the built and natural environment. Further study will be needed to assess the viability of daylighting the stream in regards to underground infrastructure and the existing remediation strategy for the site.

**NARRAGANSET BAY COMMISSION
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN B**



**NARRAGANSET BAY COMMISSION
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN C**



PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES



PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES- ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

OWNER

WEST: The Providence Journal Company
EAST: LMG Rhode Island Holdings Inc.

PHASE I & PHASE II ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

No records found in RIDEM.
Phase I and II environmental assessment recommended.

REMEDIAL ACTION WORK PLAN STATUS

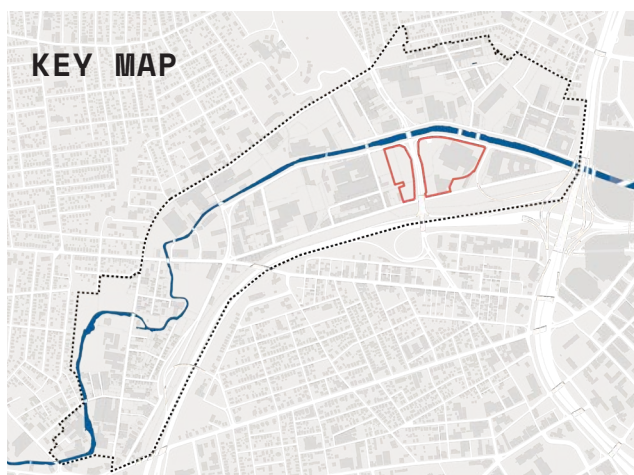
N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE RESTRICTIONS ON DEED

N/A

ZONING DESIGNATIONS

M-1, Light Industrial District (West Lots 269, 36; East Lots 248, 47)
M-MU-75, Mixed-Use Industrial District (West Lot 234)



3.5.1 PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES BACKGROUND

The Providence Journal East and West sites span both sides of the notoriously unsafe and hostile Dean Street. Despite being the only major connection between the entire northwest quadrant of the City and Federal Hill, Dean Street is a terrifying commute on foot or bicycle, due to improper visibility, long crossing times, and a roadway design that invites inappropriately high traffic speeds. On the eastern side of Dean Street, the site consists of the Providence Journal's Printing Press and distribution center; on the western side is a large vacant lot. The two Providence Journal sites are significant because they straddle one of only a few points of entry that cross the Woonasquatucket Corridor in a north-south direction. Despite the challenging location, the Providence Journal sites provide great opportunity for dense development that serves as a welcoming gateway to the Woonasquatucket Corridor.



3.5.2

PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES

ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A

In the first option studied, new fabrication spaces on both sides of Dean Street are built up to meet the street as its surface rises. This creates a front along Dean Street that can be programmed with interactive surfaces and art. At the ground-level, a linear park, running parallel to Dean Street activates the corridor. Tingley Street is continued through from the adjacent block and ramps up to meet Dean Street at a new intersection. Fabrication spaces to the west are serviced internally by flexible civic spaces, while new construction on the east side has a more conventional system of alleys and parking lots that are accessed from a green space that functions as the gateway to the block. All new buildings in this concept also have large public art canvases deployed on their rooftops, serving as a huge outdoor gallery with a curated and changing display of important artworks. A large public green park on currently vacant land adjacent to the rail corridor is envisioned for the southern boundary of the site.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

This development scenario with many small, inexpensive, and efficient buildings requires minimal public investment for the greatest net tax revenue, while providing developers marketable and profitable products.

On the eastern site, development is in commercial space that might include artist or craftsman live-work units totaling 84,000 square feet. Although the lot is already paved, assumptions include a remediating asphalt cap, 20,000 sf of park and landscaping, new water and sewer for development and access streets with a total public cost of almost \$2,000,000. The projected development of the site should provide a return to the developer without tax subsidy. The net revenue from new taxes of \$380,000 would provide a projected 19% return on public investment. This is both more profitable, requires a lower public investment and provides a more realistic return to the developer than option B.

On the western site, this scenario includes the development of many small, efficient commercial buildings that total almost 114,000 square feet. The public cost would be expected to include a 19,000 square foot park and landscape, new access streets with water and sewer, and a 17,000 sf plaza totaling an estimated \$1,400,000. The proposed development would support as many as 190 new employees and provide a net tax revenue of \$500,000 and return on public investment of 37%, the highest return of any evaluated scenario and the third lowest public investment cost.

STRATEGIES

- 1 Work with private and public partners to secure funding for construction of the linear park proposed to run parallel to Dean Street.**

Space between Dean Street and new buildings on the site to the west of Dean Street should be secured to provide a unique opportunity for nature and recreational space.

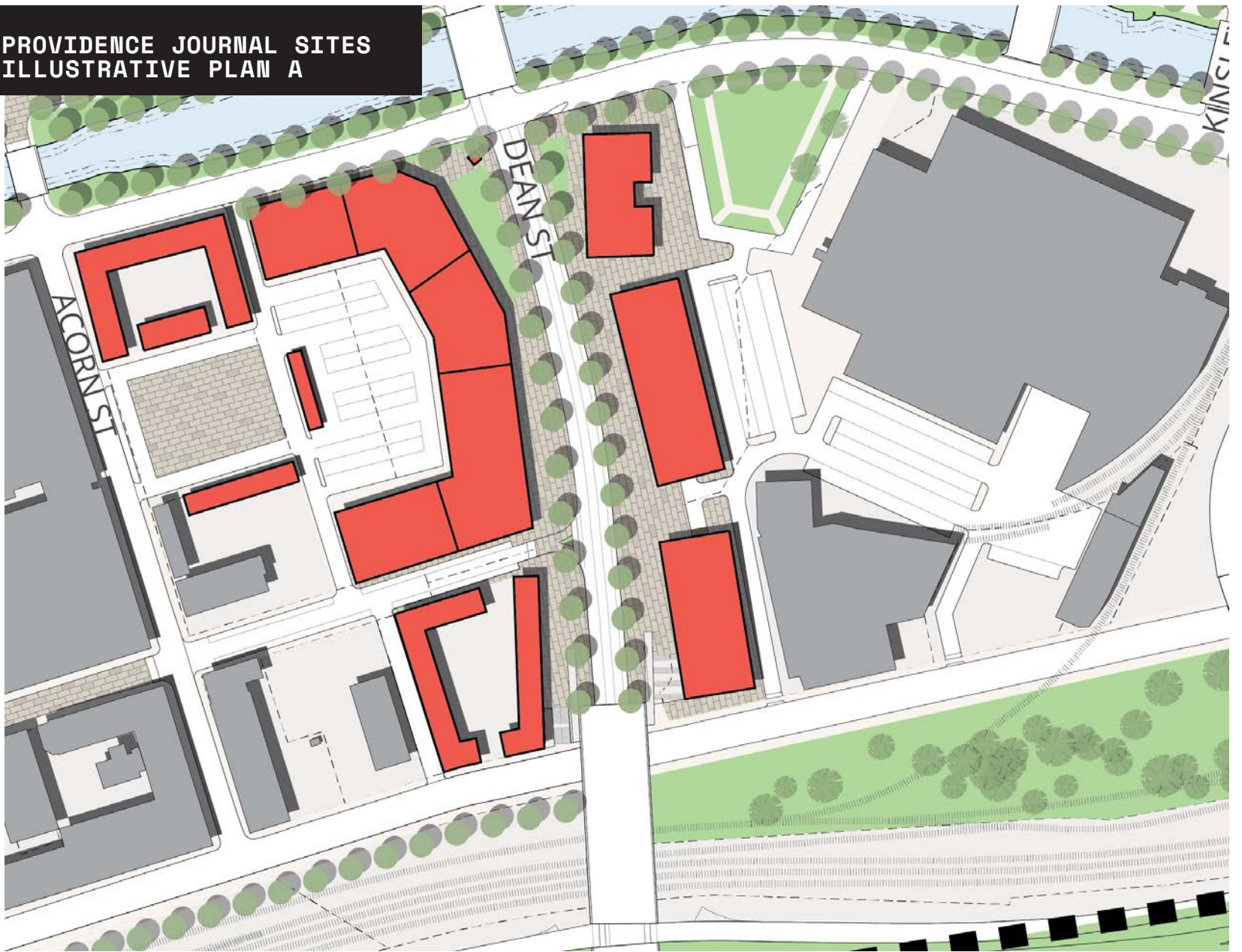
- 2 Redesign Dean Street and remove existing slip lanes.**

Currently, these slips lanes and their crosswalks are configured in a way that creates a blind pedestrian crossing at a point where vehicles are maintaining high speeds around a generous curve. The space used up in these unnecessary turn lanes can be better utilized as civic space, specifically plazas. Consistent paver treatment should be applied from the plazas, across Kinsley Avenue, and onto the Dean Street Bridge that crosses the River, transforming what is currently one of the most hostile streets in the Woonasquatucket Corridor into an attractive and safe place for people on foot.

- 3 Create a new connection to Dean Street by extending Tingley Street.**

New intersections along the length of Dean Street would help slow traffic and knit Dean Street into the neighborhood. While Tingley Street currently dead ends at a lower grade, the street should be ramped up to meet Dean Street, at a point where it has already begun ramping down from its highest elevation over Route 6 and the railroad tracks. This connection would provide a second means for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians to make a right-hand only turn onto Dean Street, reducing the traffic burden on the intersection of Dean Street and Kinsley Avenue.

PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN A



3.5.3 PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN B

Option B includes many recommendations that are similar to Option A: the buildings along Dean Street are built to meet the level of the bridge as a front; the public realm adjacent to Dean Street is given over to interactive play space; and a large green park is inserted between the rail corridor and Harris Avenue, optimally located to serve an area that lacks access to available parks and open spaces. This concept includes a large dedicated public space on the southern side of the site bounding Harris Avenue. New infill on the western side has a different configuration of fabrication spaces while the eastern side is reconfigured to provide a shared parking structure that could serve both Federal Hill and the Woonasquatucket Corridor. This option includes provision of large public rooftop canvases for art and maintains the proposed Tingley Street connection to Dean Street by means of a ramp.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

This aggressive development scenario provides great benefit to the city but may be financially unfeasible for a developer, and may lack market support.

On the eastern site, this option assumes aggressive development of the site with 390,000 square feet of 5 to 14 story multi-family residential buildings, 7,000 square feet of first floor commercial space, and includes a public parking lot to accommodate development. This scenario does not include room for landscaping and public space, but does include necessary asphalt capping, water and sewer, and access streets for a total of over \$13,300,000.

Assuming development does not receive tax incentives the net tax revenue would be around \$2,500,000 and return on public investment of 18%. However, this scenario is not likely to occur in the near future without significant subsidies since it projects a financial loss to the developer. Until rents are higher or construction costs lower, new mid and high-rise residential development in this area is challenged.

On the western site, this scenario reduces the amount of development from option A, but increases the public commitment. The costs in this scenario include the 19,000 square foot park, new access streets with water and sewer and a 36,000 square foot plaza for a total of almost \$2,100,000. While still advantageous, the anticipated annual net tax benefit would be around \$300,000 or a return on public investment of 15%. The development program would include 70,000 square feet of commercial space with room for an estimated 118 new employees.

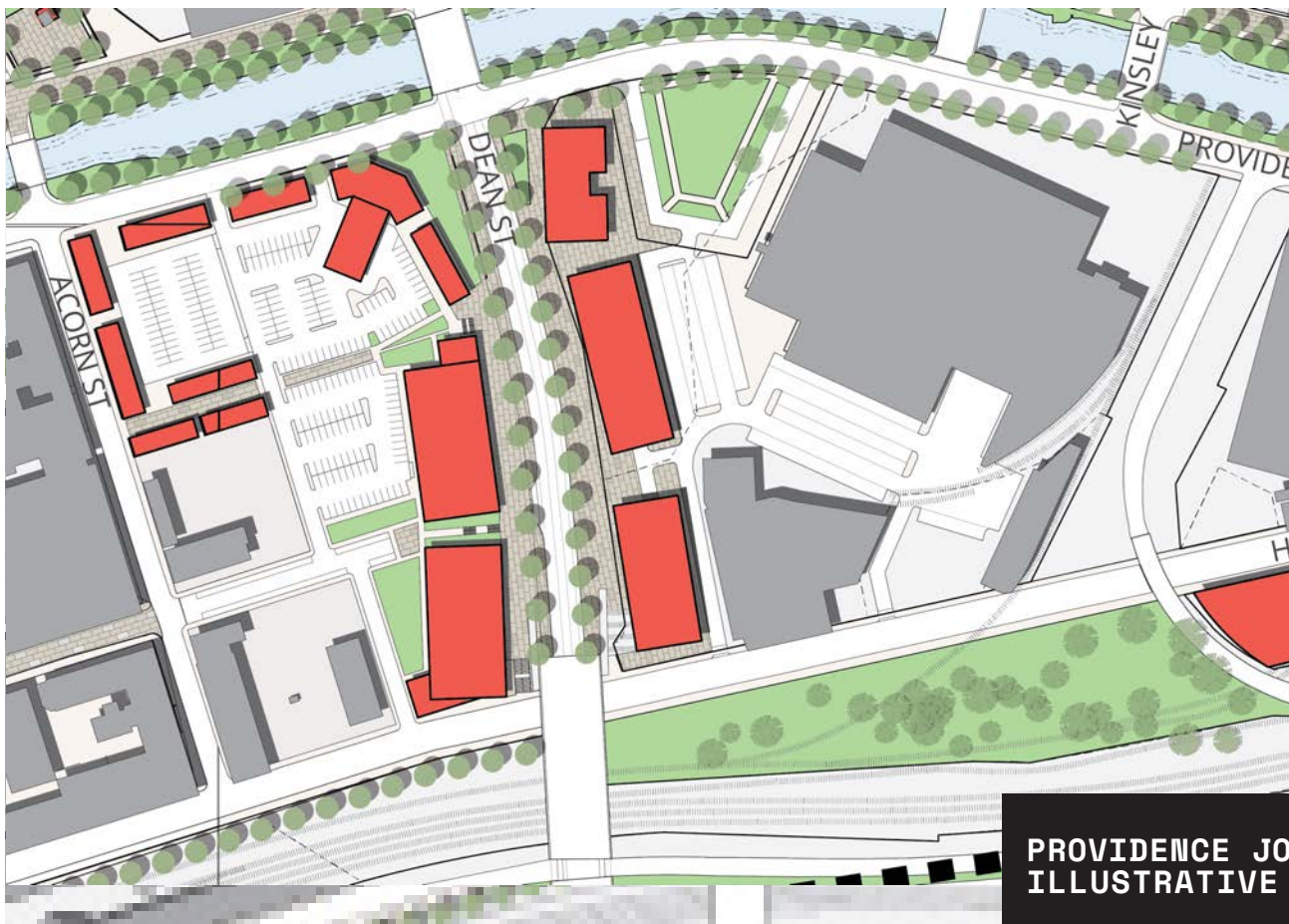
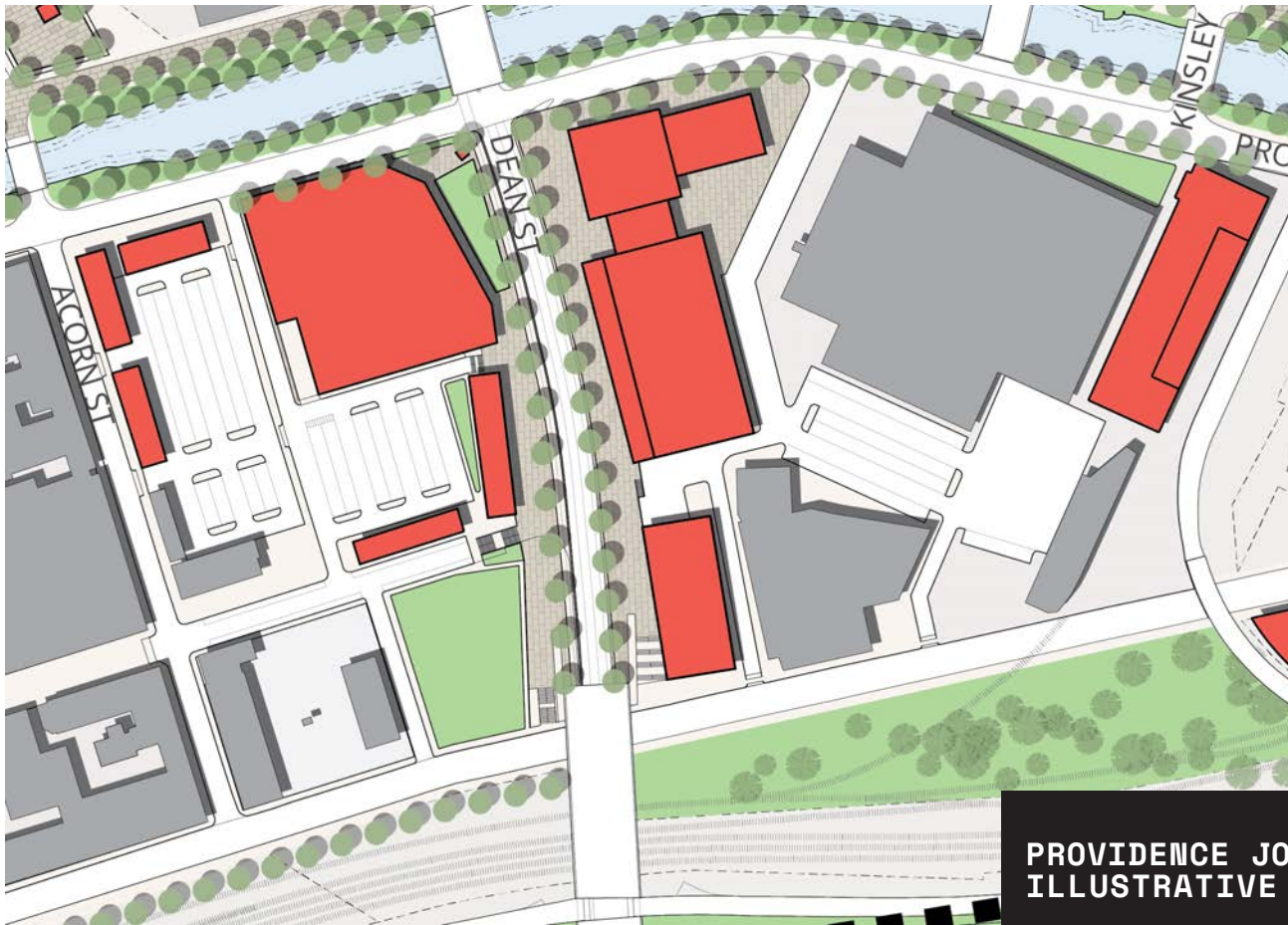
3.5.4 PROVIDENCE JOURNAL SITES ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN C

Option C incorporates a more auto-oriented program that market forces might expect based on the site's proximity to the highway. At the corner of Dean Street and Kinsley Ave this plan shows how a gas station can be incorporated into the site so that the commercial component of the station can hold the street corner and function as a proper corner store. The other buildings on this site can function as flexible warehouse, commercial, or industrial structures.

MARKET / ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

This scenario anticipates proposed development on the west side and no change on the eastern lot.

On the western site, currently a privately held gas station and storage units, this scenario anticipates required public improvements of only \$800,000 for landscaping, water and sewer, streets, and the addition of a small, 5,000 square foot plaza. Assuming no property tax relief, although the developer return is projected to be remarkably low, this scenario would generate a net tax revenue of \$200,000 to provide a 26% return on public investment. However, it only provides space for an estimated 20 employees. Both the developer and City are at greater advantage with scenario A.



ADDITIONAL PRIORITY SITES

3.6.1 CAPITOL RECORDS SITE ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

431 HARRIS AVE
Plat 27 / Lot 8

The Capitol Records site is an underutilized building most recently used as a storage warehouse, but originally built in 1892 as the American Brewing Company. This site holds a significant corner at one of only two entry points into the Woonasquatucket Corridor from Federal Hill, obviating its importance as a redevelopment site and gateway to the corridor.

3.6.2 FLEA MARKET SITE ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

490 VALLEY ST
Plat 66 / Lot 437

The former flea market building on the northside of Valley Street represents a great opportunity for new food or fabrication space along a major route through the Woonasquatucket Corridor. Located across from the WaterFire Arts Center, there is significant possibility for this site to be approached as a complementary set of uses to that complex.

3.6.3 QUALITY FOODS SITE ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

30 ARLINE ST
Plat 67 / Lot 564

The Quality Foods Corporation has been one of the pioneering small restaurant and cash-and-carry food distributors in Providence for over 80 years. The block of buildings in their control also contains one of the most significant and endangered of Providence's remaining art deco warehouse buildings. The rehabilitation of the former maintenance headquarters of the Rhode Island State Board of Public Roads could be an iconic building brought back to life that provides compatible food related fabrication space, for the burgeoning food sector in this Woonasquatucket Corridor.

3.6.4 WEST PARK FOOD HALL SITE ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

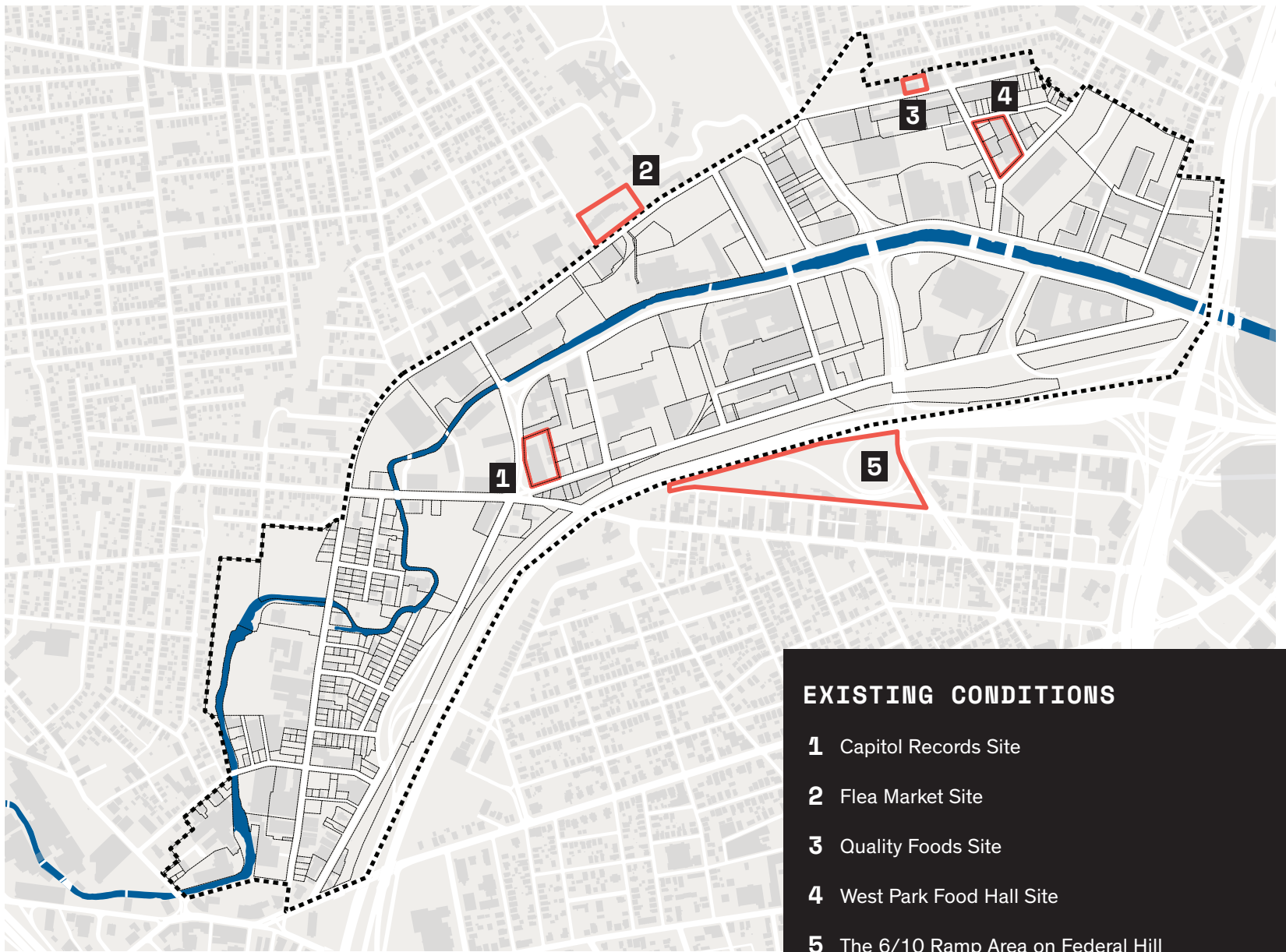
221 WEST PARK
Plat 67 / Lot 319

The West Park Food Hall is an old paper box manufacturing plant. Eat Drink RI intends to purchase the building and convert it into a multi-tenanted food and beverage retail and manufacturing space. It will be the first food hall in Rhode Island, supporting local farms and producers. The retail space will be made up of multiple small restaurants, community seating, a bar, and a rooftop deck. The Food Hall's industrial area will house a brewery, coffee roastery, and other food and beverage production. The building and parking lot will be accessed via Jewett Street. Eat Drink RI is in the process of crowdfunding to generate broad-based community support and assist with pre-development funding.

3.6.5 THE 6/10 RAMP AREA ON FEDERAL HILL ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

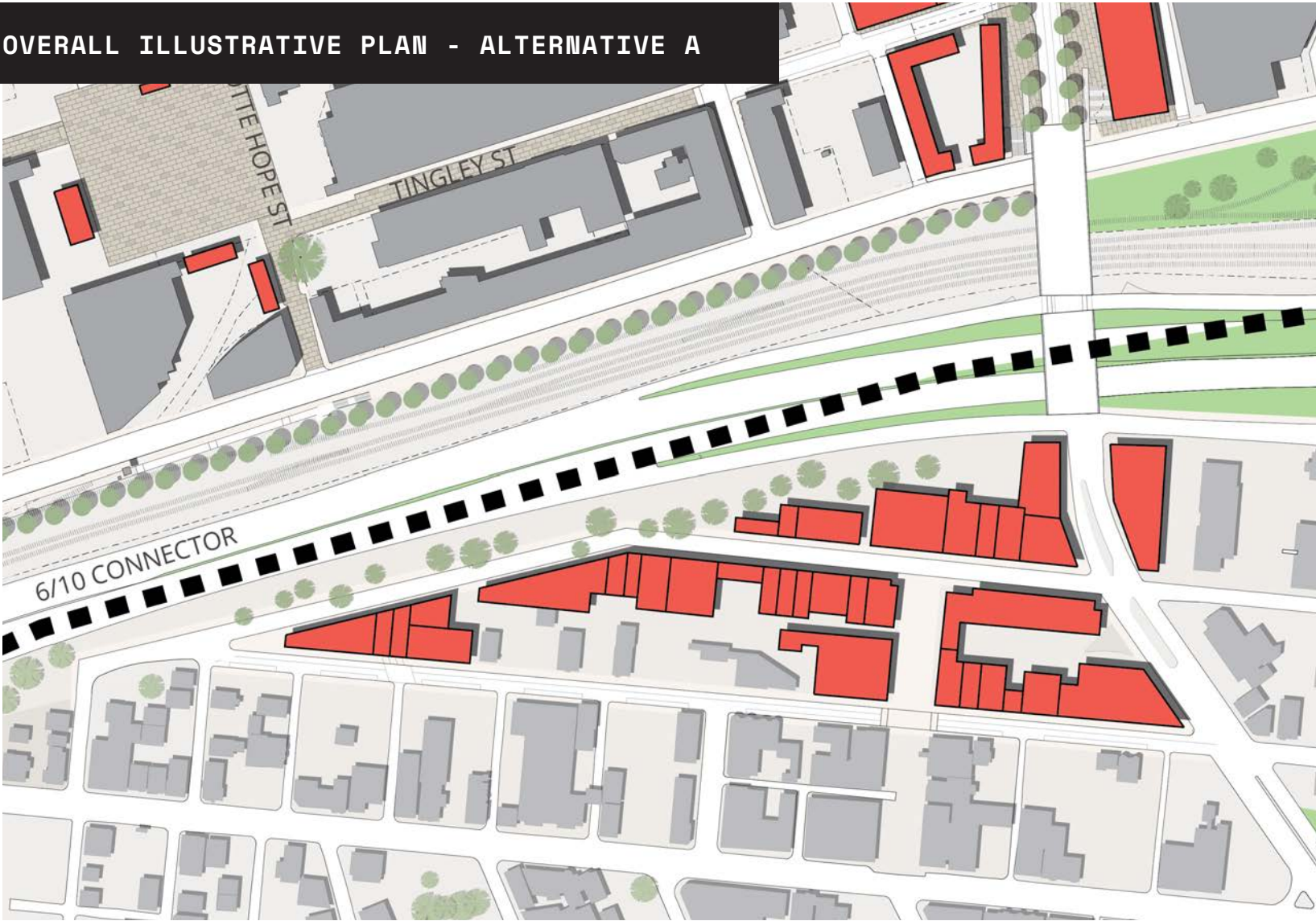
BETWEEN SPRUCE STREET AND THE 6/10
CONNECTOR

The plan for this area shows the recreation of lost neighborhoods on northern edge of Federal Hill. During the period of American highway expansion and urban renewal, this economically and socially productive area filled with homes and business was demolished to create access to the 6/10 Connector.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

- 1 Capitol Records Site
- 2 Flea Market Site
- 3 Quality Foods Site
- 4 West Park Food Hall Site
- 5 The 6/10 Ramp Area on Federal Hill



OVERALL ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN - ALTERNATIVE B

The plan shows a street layout with 'TINGLEY ST' and '6/10 CONNECTOR'. A dashed line with black squares runs along the connector. Numbered zones (1-8) are marked for 'PLAN BIG MOVES'. Zone 1 is at the top left, zone 2 is along the connector, zone 3 is at the bottom left, zone 4 is in the center, zone 5 is at the top right, zone 6 is in the center right, zone 7 is at the bottom right, and zone 8 is at the bottom right corner.

PLAN BIG MOVES

This site plan represents an alternative potential layout to the 6/10 Connector ramp reconstruction. This plan allows for the inclusion of both an off and on ramp to the 6/10 Connector from the Dean Street corridor which is currently not included in the City's adopted plan for this area. This plan also creates several new public spaces as well as a site for a shared, public parking garage.

PLAN BIG MOVES

- 1 New Pedestrian / Bike Bridge
- 2 Relocated 6/10 Highway On Ramp
- 3 Extension of McAvoy Street
- 4 Existing building & restaurant to remain
- 5 Extension of West Exchange Street
- 6 Shared parking garage for public parking & "park once" neighborhood use
- 7 New Piazza as an extension of DePasquale Square
- 8 New Park
- 9 New Piazza as an extension of DePasquale Square.



when do you feel happy



when do you feel happy

EXTRAS

AFFORDABLE MAKER BUILD- ING TOOLKIT



Artwork by Amanda Soule



Artists, fabricators, small retail businesses and other creative or low-margin businesses will continue to need affordable space. While the Woonasquatucket Corridor currently has enough space, the neighborhood should try to add new inventory to ensure an ample supply, as a way to both welcome more businesses into the area and also keep prices affordable.

INTRODUCTION

The potential for infill in the Woonasquatucket Corridor holds much promise for the future of affordable workspace. The assembled tool-kits in this section are intended to serve as guides for the economical development of infill fabrication buildings that will help meet community affordability objectives, provide an alternative type of fabrication space that can be operator controlled, and reduce potential vulnerability of fabricators and artisans.

Each building type is presented with a floor plan, axonometric drawing, and static pro-forma sheet associated with each individual unit within a building. These pro-formas help to take the guesswork out of the economics of developing these structures and should be viewed as a public resource to anyone interested in developing these buildings.

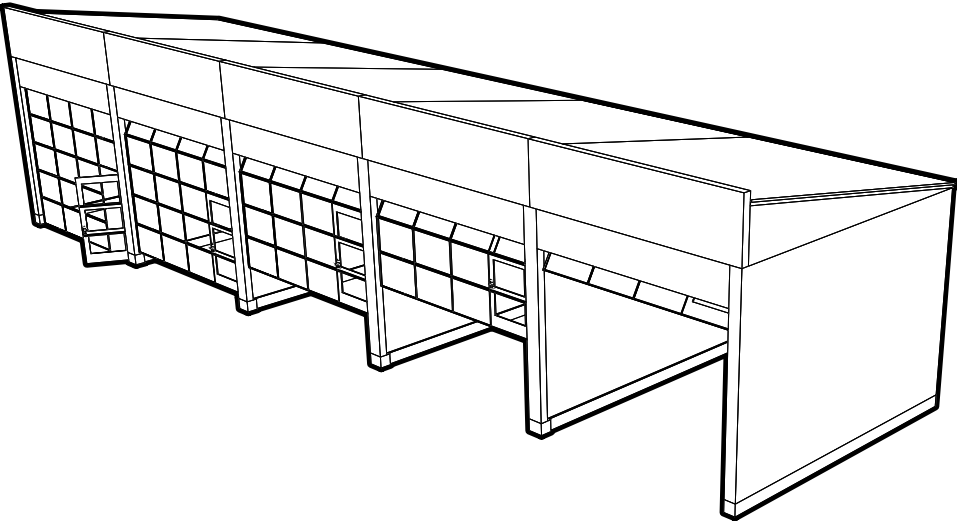


X.1.1

Micro Maker

The Micro Maker is an entry level artist space. It is a flexible 18 ft wide by 25 ft deep white box with basic electrical and water hook ups. Each unit has a roll up translucent front lifting door with an integral entry door for efficient access on front. A single wythe masonry wall extends up past the roof system to provide a fire break. Extra space in the roof can accommodate a loft or mezzanine condition.

Unit Size	500 sf
Land Cost	\$10,000
Construction Cost	\$66,000
Sale Price	\$95,000
Mortgage	\$600
Rent	\$625

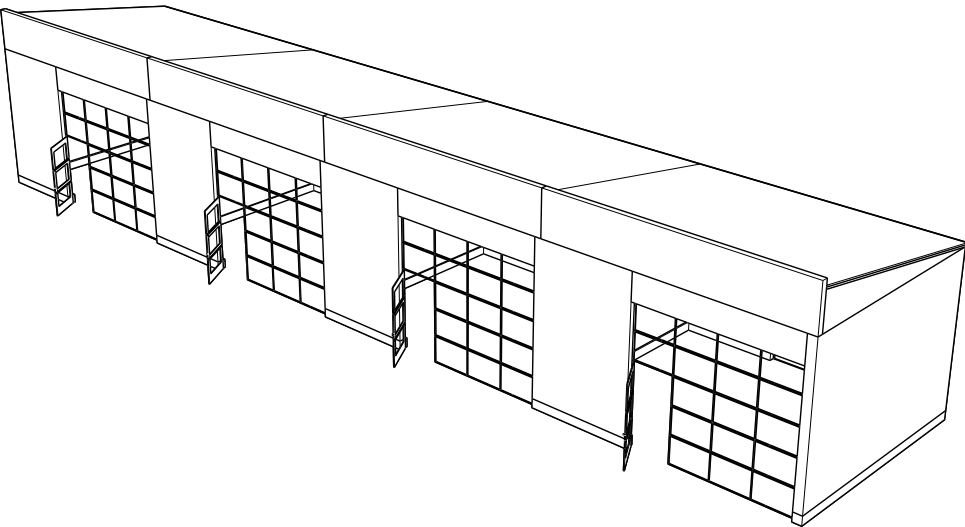


X.1.2

Maker Box

The Maker Box is similar to the Micro Maker, but with a wider 25 ft wide by 25 ft deep footprint. The extra half-bay can accommodate expansion space for larger mechanical or storage equipment that might be required for food service or light industrial users. The added building width also allows for the mezzanine or loft to be accessed by a more convenient egress stair.

Unit Size	750 sf
Land Cost	\$13,000
Construction Cost	\$91,000
Sale Price	\$135,000
Mortgage	\$850
Rent	\$875



X.1.3

Maker Loft

Stepping up from the Maker Box, the Maker Loft has the flexibility to accommodate a residential loft on a mezzanine floor, or additional office or storage space. This maker type is important to the vitality of the street by providing for “eyes on the street” within what might be a predominantly industrial area.



Unit Size	1,250 sf
Land Cost	\$13,000
Construction Cost	\$133,000
Sale Price	\$190,000
Mortgage	\$1,200
Rent	\$1,220

X.1.4

Maker Apartment

Graduating from a loft to an apartment on a full second floor, this unit is a “single family home” with a flexible first floor “garage” that can be used for a maker’s workshop or studio.



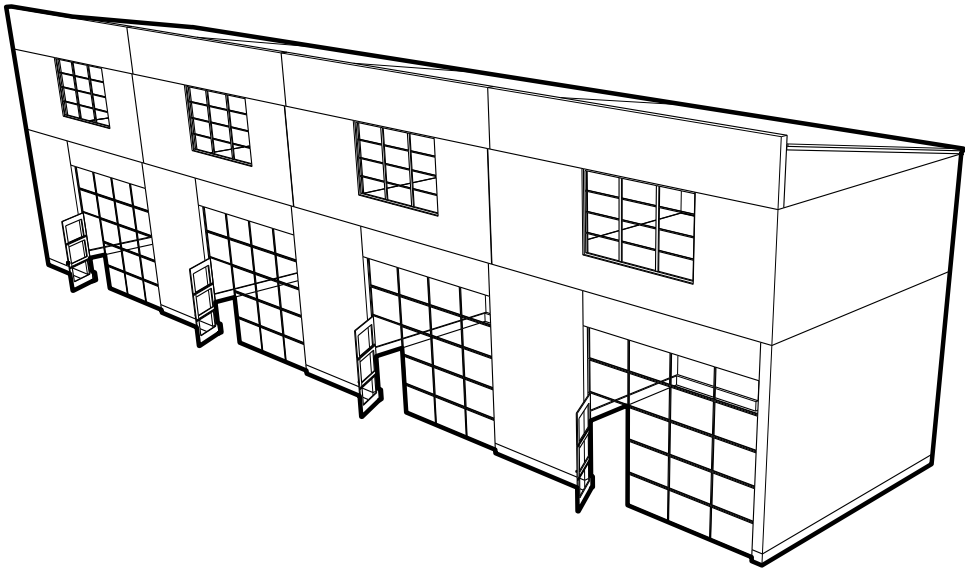
Unit Size	1,550 sf
Land Cost	\$13,000
Construction Cost	\$184,000
Sale Price	\$255,000
Mortgage	\$1,600
Rent	\$1,630

X.1.5

DIY Living

A larger version of the Maker Apartment, this simple single family home is an ideal project for the Do-It-Yourself lifestyle. Anticipating a deeper lot and a deeper building of 50 feet, the second floor can accommodate a roomy 1,200 square foot unit. The flexible first floor can accommodate both a traditional garage in the back and artist studio, workshop, or a home office facing the street.

Unit Size	2,500 sf
Land Cost	\$25,000
Construction Cost	\$319,000
Sale Price	\$450,000
Mortgage	\$2,850
Rent	\$2,920

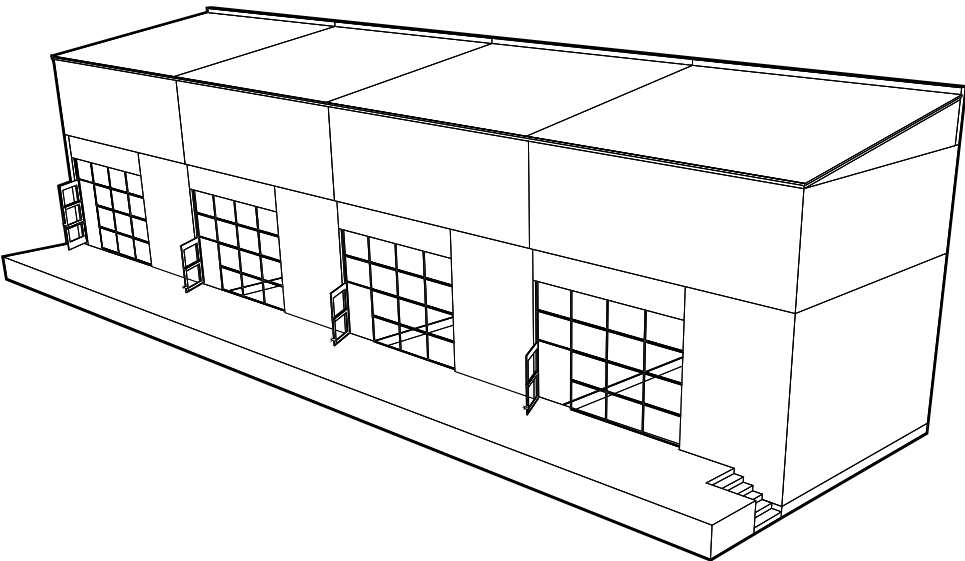


X.1.6

Loading Bar

A great multi-tasker, the Loading Bar includes an elevated slab along the rear elevation to ease the transfer of goods off of trucks and into the retail floor below. The Loading Bar is also useful as a transition type due to its potential for a more commercial front door, which can be paired with the elevated industrial loading platform in the back.

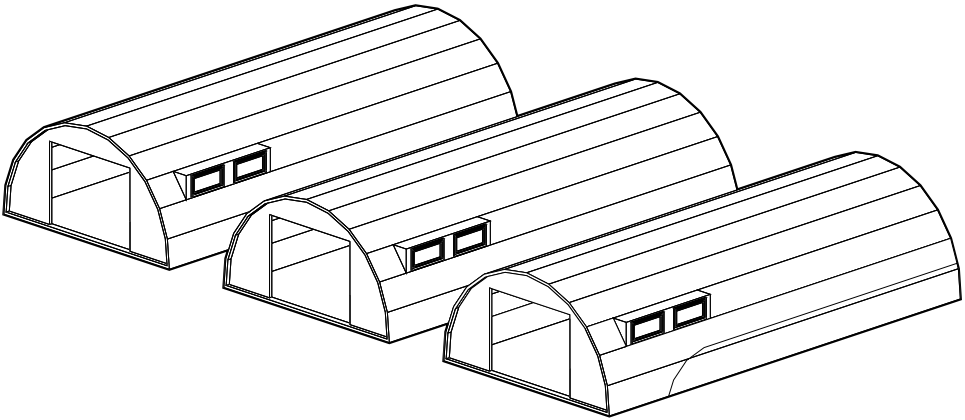
Unit Size	7,000 sf
Land Cost	\$150,000
Construction Cost	\$932,000
Sale Price	\$1,330,000
Mortgage	\$8,400
Rent	\$8,750



X.1.7

Quonset Hut

The Quonset Hut is based on a tried and true pre-fabricated metal building, designed off-site and delivered ready for rapid on-site assembly. The Quonset Hut is the gold standard for flexible maker space with a long service lifetime. This flexible building type may take many configurations based on the manufacturer and may be enhanced with thermal divided light windows along the frontage.

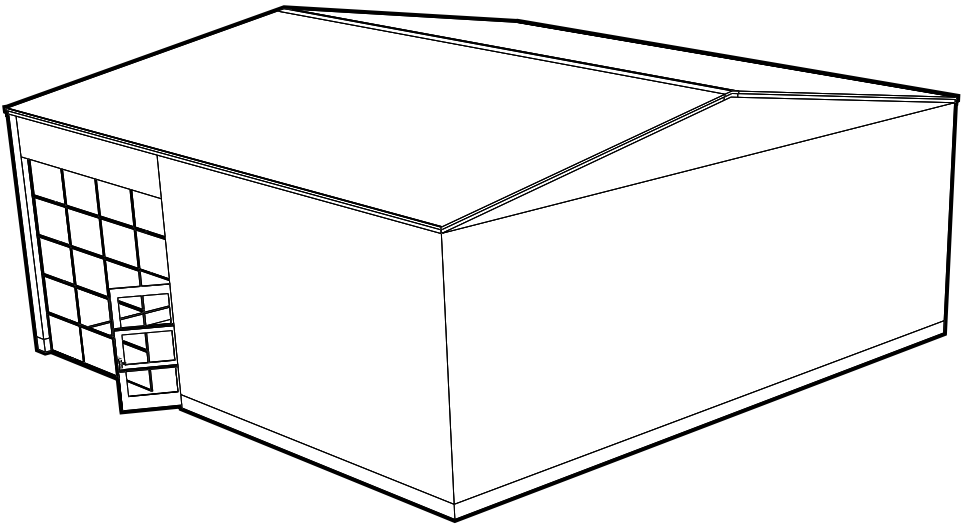


Unit Size	750 sf
Land Cost	\$13,000
Construction Cost	\$71,000
Sale Price	\$108,000
Mortgage	\$680
Rent	\$700

X.1.8

Made-It Maker

The Made-It Maker is a flexible warehouse type space that can handle large volumes of goods or industrial production, such as brewing operations. The building can be designed with a retail or a more functional industrial front. This building could also be operated as a collective with one master-lessee and sub-tenant, or as a co-operative ownership building.



Unit Size	11,000 sf
Land Cost	\$150,000
Construction Cost	\$1,273,000
Sale Price	\$1,800,000
Mortgage	\$11,400
Rent	\$12,200

