

City of Providence

Community Conversation Agenda

The City of Providence, Department of Planning and Development, Division of Community Development is asking for the community's input about priorities for housing and community development needs throughout the city. This information will be gathered and used to shape future spending and project priorities and to update the City's Consolidated Plan – which guides the city's spending on housing and community development.

- 6:30 – Check In
- 6:40 – Welcoming Remarks
- 6:50 – Program Overview
 - What is Community Development Block Grant?
 - What can CDBG be used for?
- 7:00 – What We've Heard
 - Information from Previous Meetings
 - Community Assets
 - Previous Investments
- 7:15 – Breakout Discussion
 - Are we on the right track?
 - What are we missing?
 - What should our priorities be?
 - What do you want to see in your neighborhood?
- 8:00 – Wrap Up & Review

Please complete the following survey and return to City staff person or leave in the survey box.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

What are the most important issues of concern or priority needs in your community? **Circle Three**

Affordable Housing

Homelessness

Parks / Sports / Recreation

Senior Services

Poverty

Jobs / Economic Development

Public Housing

Public Safety

Low-Quality / Unsafe / Unhealthy Housing

Drug or Alcohol Addiction

Education

Housing and Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS

Social Services for Adults and Children

Accessibility for Those with Disabilities

Other: _____

How can the City better respond to and address your community concerns?

Additional Comments:

Community Conversation

March 4th, 2015

Fox Point Boys & Girls Club



City of Providence

Dept. of Planning & Development

Division of Community Development

Brian Hull, Director of Community Development

Agenda

- 6:30 – Check In
- 6:40 – Welcoming Remarks
- 6:50 – Program Overview
 - What is CDBG
 - What can CDBG be used for
- 6:55 – What We've Heard
 - Community Assets
 - Information from Previous Meetings
 - Previous Investments
- 7:00 – Breakout Discussion
- 7:45 – Wrap Up & Review



Program Overview

- **What is Community Development Block Grant?**
 - Federal program that provides communities with annual grants to address a wide range of unique community development needs.
- **What can CDBG be used for?**
 - Affordable Housing Development, Homeownership Programs, Park Improvements, Streets & Sidewalks, Public Services, Job Training, Economic Development, Community Centers, Food Banks, Senior Services, Tree Planting, Health Centers, Technical Assistance to New and Existing Businesses, Energy Efficiency and Weatherization Programs, Lead Abatement, Historic Preservation, Crime Prevention, Neighborhood Cleanups, etc.

Active Participation

- **Priority Needs Boards**
 - Please place your stickers on the boards throughout the room to identify your concerns
 - There are multiple locations – we will collect information for all
- **Neighborhood Maps**
 - If there are specific areas in the neighborhoods that you have concerns about, please write on the post-it notes and place them on the map
- **Community Survey**
 - On the reverse side of the agenda is a brief survey. Please complete and return to the survey box at the front of the room or hand it to a City employee.

Community Assets



What We've Heard

- **Mobility & Accessibility**

- Strong support for continuous pathway connections and public access along the waterfront (India Point Park, Providence River, Seekonk River)
- Concern about the “Brown wall” on Arlington Avenue and on the Butler Hospital campus
- Interest in more amenities, wayfinding signage, and access to transit
- Want enhanced pedestrian safety including crosswalks and expansion of the bicycle path network particularly along the waterfront
- Westminster Street should connect through Cathedral Square to fully link Downtown with the West End.
- Better connections along the West Side edge of Downtown via Broad Street, Washington Street, Broadway, Atwells Avenue, and Dave Gavitt Way
- Better connections within the Jewelry District and Hospital District
- Better connection from Promenade and Kinsley Streets to Capital Center
- Strong support for the planned I-195 pedestrian bridge between the Jewelry District and Fox Point

What We've Heard

- **Parks & Open Space**

- Interest in buried power lines, additional tree planting, and community gardens
- Promote green practices in parks operations
- Provide more recreational amenities
- City should promote active ground-floor uses along edges of open spaces
- Consideration should be given to views and vistas that will showcase iconic structures and open spaces
- Development of new waterfront parks and a pedestrian bridge that better links City neighborhoods from Fox Point to the Jewelry District to Upper South Providence and the Southside neighborhoods

What We've Heard

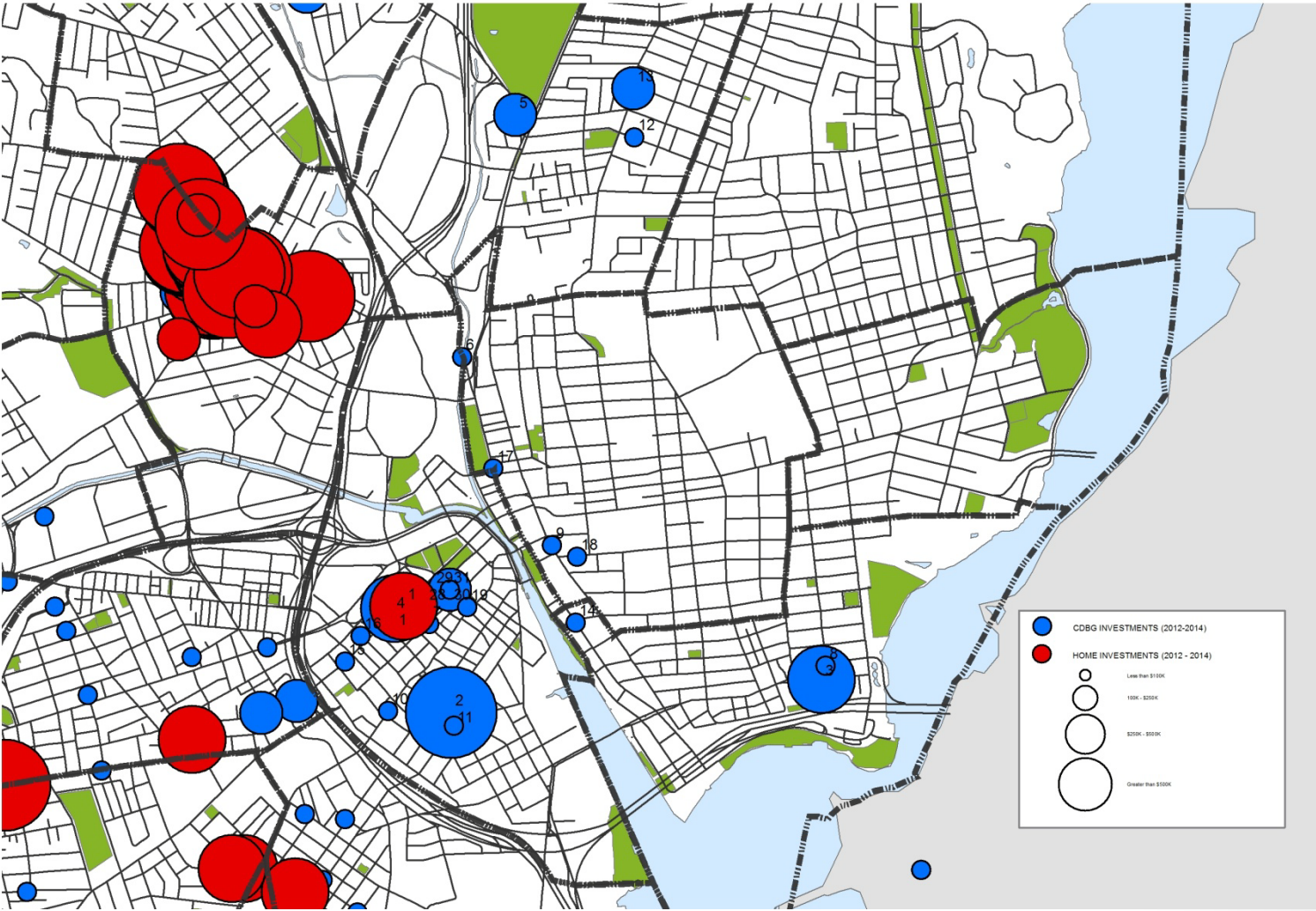
- **Healthy Neighborhoods**

- Retail and street-level activity should be strengthened along key corridors and nodes within Downtown, and expanded to connect to adjacent neighborhoods
- Integrate streetscapes, pedestrian amenities, signage, urban design, building heights, and land uses along key corridors and streets that connect Downtown to surrounding neighborhoods
- Activate Station Park and the train station through small-scale retail stalls or cafes in and around the park and plaza

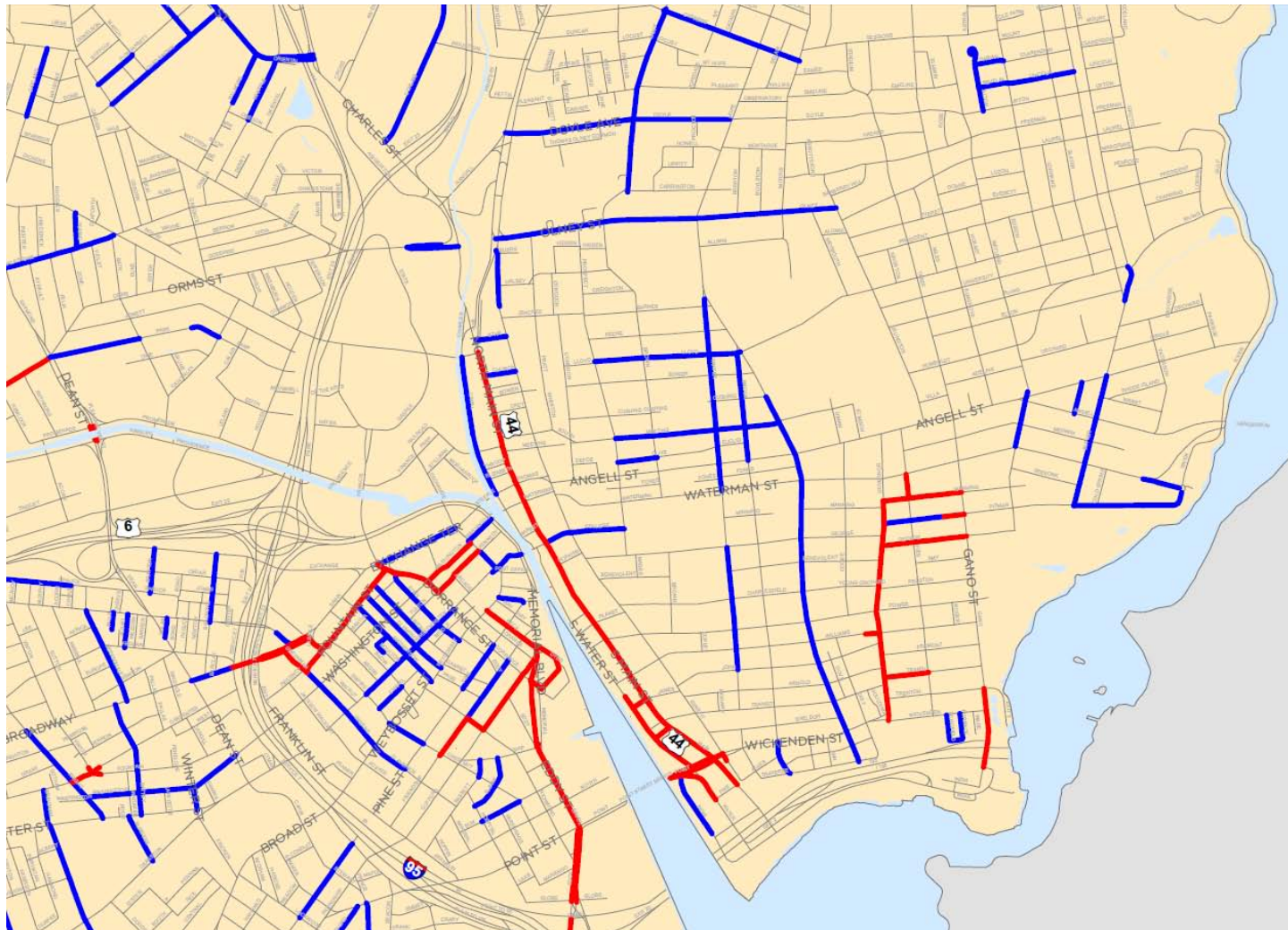
- **Infrastructure**

- Essential that Downtown infrastructure be upgraded and better maintained
- Desire sidewalk improvements throughout the area

Investments Made



Road Improvements



Breakout Discussion

- Are we on the right track?
- What are we missing?
- What should our priorities be?
- What do you want to see in your neighborhood?

Wrap Up

- **Breakout Discussion**
 - Feedback from Facilitated Conversations

Wrap Up

- **Consolidated Plan**

- Guidance document for CDBG funds
- Community Meetings – March & April
- The information will help inform the Consolidated Plan
- Public to review Consolidated Plan and offer comments
- Provide us with your contact information so we can contact you to review the Consolidated Plan
- Final draft will be completed in May

<http://www.providenceri.com/planning/consolidated-plan>

Meeting Schedule

Date	Time	Location
Tues. March 3	6:30pm	Webster Avenue School 191 Webster Avenue
Wed. March 4	6:30pm	Fox Point Boys & Girls Club 90 Ives Street
Tues. March 10	6:30pm	West Broadway Neighborhood Association 1560 Westminster Street
Wed. March 18	6:30pm	SWAP 500 Broad Street
Tues. March 24	6:30pm	Washington Park Community Center 42 Jillson Street
Mon. April 6	6:30pm	DaVinci Center 470 Charles Street
Thurs. April 9	6:30pm	Dr. Martin Luther King School 35 Camp Street
TBD	6:30pm	Mt. Pleasant Library or Smith Hill Library (TBD)



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Community Conversation #2 (March 4, 2015)

FOX POINT BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

DISCUSSION NOTES

- Residents believe that burying the power lines should be a priority of the City. Despite having raised \$17 million for the project over the past decade, it continues to lack strong leadership.
- Residents feel very strongly that funding for senior services and activities at the Fox Point Boys & Girls Club should be supported.
- Senior citizens expressed concerns about accessibility and mobility, especially from Fox Point Manor to the Senior Center, as there is no identified pedestrian crossing and drivers do not slow down. Seniors also expressed the need for bus stops to be located closer to the Senior Center.
- Many residents felt that snow removal at bus stops was inadequate.
- Residents suggested that the City post project timelines to the website to show their progression. Additionally, residents would like government spending to receive more public exposure.
- Residents expressed frustration over the City's lack of focus on environmental issues, such as stormwater management and green infrastructure. It was noted that the Office of Sustainability is very disconnected from the rest of city management.
- Residents are concerned about the failure of small businesses in certain parts of the neighborhood and suggested that the City develop specific training courses for these entrepreneurs.
- Residents expressed frustration about absentee landlords and suggested that a watchdog committee be established to monitor them.
- Many residents believe that allowing overnight street parking was a mistake.
- Residents expressed concern over the lack of public transit options on the East Side, and interest in creating a bus route that loops the neighborhood.
- Road conditions are very poor in particular parts of the neighborhood, such as Governor and Gano Streets.
- Residents identified Corliss Landing as being unsafe for pedestrians, largely due to drivers who do not respect traffic laws that are not adequately enforced by the City.
- Residents expressed frustration about infrastructure construction and repairs in the neighborhood, which seem ongoing and poorly-managed.
- Interest in a library at Wayland Square was mentioned.
- Residents feel that the historic street grid does not accommodate the larger RIPTA buses as well as the trolleys did, making it difficult for other vehicles to share the rights-of-way.
- The new Point/Wickendon Street intersections with Water and Main Streets lack clear signage that indicates access to I-195. Residents and visitors are easily confused by the new traffic pattern due to the lack of signage.
- Residents felt that signage throughout the neighborhood should be clear and consistent.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

- The southwestern I-195 park parcels at the terminus of Benefit Street lack adequate pedestrian access from Wickendon Street. Residents consider the area a “no-man’s land.”
- The Gano Street exit from I-195 is difficult to access due to merging traffic. Residents felt that this interchange could benefit from a *Merging Traffic* sign.
- Pedestrian access along Point Street is dangerous.
- Residents feel strongly that funds should support job creation and economic development efforts in the community.
- Residents would like to see pedestrian access to the Providence River and bay preserved and maintained.
- Ongoing maintenance at India Point Park is a priority, especially graffiti removal, signs to enforce picking up after pets, weeding along the pedestrian bridge, repairing the drinking fountains, and restoring the pedestrian path along the seawall.
- Residents would like to see a full-service Fox Point community center that supports youth, adult and senior services. Residents feel that there are many needs in the community, such as adult learning and meeting spaces, and that the Boys & Girls Club is not being fully utilized.
- Residents feel that the pool at the Fox Point Boys & Girls Club is a wonderful and well-utilized amenity.
- Residents were not pleased to learn that Providence Schools operate a choice-based system, instead of the traditional neighborhood school system. It was felt that those who live in the neighborhood and pay taxes should be accepted to their neighborhood schools. Additionally, it was felt that busing children across the city to schools further away is inefficient.
- The rear wall of Gregorian Elementary School that faces the highway is in poor condition and needs to be repaired.
- Residents would like to see implementation of the Wickendon Street streetscape plan that was completed as part of the I-195 relocation process.
- Some residents felt that a community or leadership group should receive and deploy funds to community-serving needs.



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Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Community Conversation #2 (March 4, 2015)

FOX POINT BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

SURVEY RESULTS

What are the most important issues of concern or priority needs in your community?

VOTES

ISSUE

1	<i>Accessibility for Those with Disabilities</i>
3	<i>Affordable Housing</i>
	<i>Drug or Alcohol Addiction</i>
6	<i>Education</i>
	<i>Homelessness</i>
	<i>Housing and Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS</i>
9	<i>Jobs / Economic Development</i>
8	<i>Parks / Sports / Recreation</i>
2	<i>Poverty</i>
	<i>Public Housing</i>
7	<i>Public Safety</i>
	<i>Low-Quality / Unsafe / Unhealthy Housing</i>
7	<i>Senior Services</i>
2	<i>Social Services for Adults and Children</i>
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Transit; environmental management; transportation connectivity; city integration of services; right-to-work legislation supported by elected officials; bury power lines at India Point Park; property taxes; stadium; plowing/sanding</i>

How can the City better respond to and address your community concerns?

- Better coordination with neighborhood groups
- Better distribution of alerts (e.g. parking bans)
- Communicating to taxpayers that attending Fox Point Elementary School is an application process????
- Transparency and updates via website
- Integrated infrastructure planning
- Clumping/few economic development



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Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

- Repair all street surfaces with clear, cohesive, consistent markings and signage
- Improve enforcement (code)
- Improve public access/pedestrian right-of-way along shorelines
- Improve sign posting for visitors/tourists/residents
- Rationalize bus service (downsize buses for historic streets)
- Inform the public on progress in these areas including timeline
- Bring back our trolleys – the buses are too big for the small streets
- The meetings should happen more often; look at the issues above and each could be a meeting itself
- Continue to increase funding to the senior center
- Work with inner city programs and people like Kobi Dennis
- Listen → respond → provide meaningful follow-up
- Personal safety (control traffic, late night behavior of club goers)
- More planning for/inclusion of support for aging population, including: support for senior center, more access designed with those with mobility issues, more pedestrian crossings
- Take a leadership role in getting the power lines at India Point Park buried after twelve years of public outcry and rising costs
- Keep the Fox Point Senior Center funded
- It is important to bury the power lines
- Plow the streets better and remove snow when we get too much snow

Additional Comments:

- Bury power lines in India Point Park
- Pedestrian access and safety
- Road repair
- Street cleaning
- Speeding on 195 entrance and exit
- We need to lift up our expectations of what our city can become. We are at the perfect moment to leverage our assets to become a jewel destination city in New England, the Northeast and the world!!
- Burying the power lines will create many jobs. There is \$17M already allocated to this project. The City administration has previously said it was a good idea BUT never exerted any leadership to make it happen. In fact, the City leadership joined with National Grid to express reasons why it would not be a good idea to do the project. We need leadership at the city level to make the project happen.
- I think it would be a terrible mistake to build a new stadium for the PawSox in Providence. Where would people park? It would add more of a traffic problem.