



# PROVIDENCE TOMORROW

our city ■ our neighborhoods ■ our future

## OLNEYVILLE, SMITH HILL, AND VALLEY NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

David N. Cicilline, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development  
Thomas E. Deller, AICP, Director

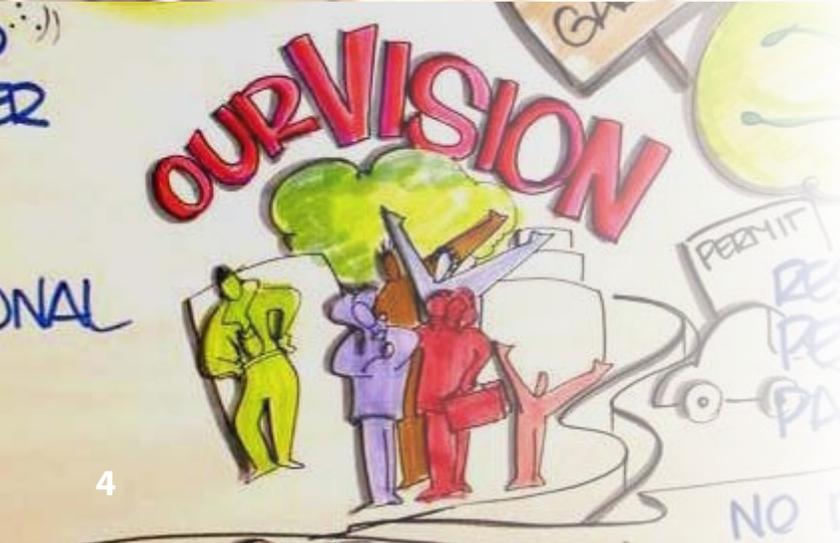
August 2009



## Introduction

On May 31, 2006, Mayor David N. Cicilline and the City Council announced the creation of Providence Tomorrow – an innovative planning process designed to provide a framework for the growth and preservation of Providence neighborhoods. Since then, the City Council has adopted a new Comprehensive Plan and the Department of Planning and Development has undertaken detailed planning studies for each of the city's neighborhoods. The Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill neighborhood charrette was held in December 2007.

This plan summarizes neighborhood history and demographics, illustrates existing neighborhood character through building typologies, and identifies key issues and neighborhood priorities. The most important part of this report is the Action Plan, which identifies short-, mid- and long-term goals for the neighborhoods and the parties that will lead each effort. The Action Plan identifies not only City-led actions, but those projects that can be initiated by groups of residents working together. This report will be used to guide the review of development projects in the Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill neighborhoods by City boards and commissions, and will help prioritize funding for projects and infrastructure improvements, as well as provide a guide for redevelopment efforts.



## Contents

Introduction	3
Contents	4
Charrette Overview	5
Charrette Schedule	6
Neighborhood Overview	7
The History - Neighborhood Backgrounds	7
Olneyville, Valley & Smith Hill History Timeline	8
The People - Neighborhood Demographics	10
Neighborhood Statistics	11
Development Patterns & Neighborhood Typologies	12
Historic Districts	17
Neighborhood Issues	18
Neighborhood Action Plan	21
Graphic Recordings	23
Next Steps	39
Appendix - Neighborhood Data	A-1
Appendix - Neighborhood Plan Map	B-1
Appendix - Development Overview: The Woonasquatucket River Corridor	C-1

## Providence Tomorrow Neighborhood Charrettes



Providence has 25 distinct neighborhoods, each with unique character and identity. While neighborhoods share many features, each has its own set of planning issues and concerns. An important part of Providence Tomorrow is the in-depth, detailed planning studies that are conducted at the neighborhood level. The neighborhoods have been grouped together so that there will be ten neighborhood charrettes, or planning studies, conducted from 2007 to 2009.

## Olneyville, Valley, Smith Hill Charrette



The Olneyville, Valley, Smith Hill Neighborhood Charrette was held December 3-6, 2007. Most sessions were held at the Eagle Square Shopping Plaza. A session with neighborhood youth was held at the Joslin Recreation Center. Approximately 100 people participated, voicing their opinions on how to activate public spaces in the neighborhoods, how to direct job and industrial growth in the future, the importance of artists in the neighborhoods, and where to and how to protect the existing character of their neighborhood, among other issues. The planning team collected all of the information from the week, and drafted an action plan that was presented at a follow-up meeting in April 2008. After further comment and review, this neighborhood plan was developed.

## What is a Charrette?

The term “charrette” originated at Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, the world’s top architectural school in the 19th century, and is derived from a French word meaning “little cart.” Carts were circulated to collect final plans. Students would jump on the cart, polishing their drawings up to the last minute.



Today the word “charrette” describes a process of dynamic, interactive community planning. Its goal is to bring all the stakeholders - and all the issues - into one room. This process can be applied to different projects, but always uses the same basic strategy. A team consisting of citizens, elected officials, planners, architects, developers, business owners, city officials, and other stakeholders works to root out potential problems, identify and debate solutions, and create a plan in a set amount of time. Meeting both day and night for several days, participants work together in both large and small groups through a series of brainstorming sessions, sketching workshops and other exercises.

## The Benefits of Charrettes in Planning

Charrettes provide a framework for creating a shared vision shaped by community involvement, directed by consultants representing all key disciplines.

Charrettes provide an opportunity to improve and expand the relationships between residents and their government through meaningful public involvement and education.

Charrettes help a community to develop a shared vision of its future by allowing for increased opportunities for residents to make positive contributions to the planning process.

Charrettes help to create better plans by gaining more diverse input and involvement and help increase the likelihood that plans will be realized.



# Charrette Schedule

	Monday 12.3.07	Tuesday 12.4.07	Wednesday 12.5.07	Thursday 12.6.07
Morning	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: Neighborhood History 9:00am-11:00am</b></p> <p>One of the special things about Providence is its long time neighborhood residents. Come share your neighborhood history with us. How have the neighborhoods changed over the years? What would you like to see in the future for your kids and grandkids?</p>	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: Major Employers 9:00am-11:00am</b></p> <p>If you own or work in a business in one of the old mill areas, this is your opportunity to share your ideas on how to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses.</p>	<p>The studio will be open. Stop by and see the progress on your neighborhood plan!</p>	<p><b>Team Work Day 9am to 9pm</b></p>
	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: Housing Developers 11:30am-1:30pm</b></p> <p>Housing and affordability are critical issues in each of these neighborhoods. This is an opportunity for housing developers, both non-profit and for-profit, to discuss the challenges and opportunities in expanding housing choice in the neighborhoods.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: Main Street Business Owners 11:30am-1:30pm</b></p> <p>Do you own or work in a small neighborhood business? This is your chance to meet with other business and share concerns and ideas on how to make your "Main Street" a success.</p>		
Midday	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: Neighborhood Youth 5:15pm-6:15pm Joslin Recreation Center</b></p> <p>Kids offer a whole different perspective than adults, but one that is equally important to understanding a neighborhood's challenges and opportunities. A lively discussion with kids of all ages on what they want their neighborhoods to be in the future.</p>	<p>The studio will be open. Stop by and see the progress on your neighborhood plan!</p>	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: The Woonasquatucket River 2:30pm-4:30pm</b></p> <p>The Woonasquatucket flows through all three neighborhoods and is an incredible natural resource for the entire city. Come share ideas on how to continue the river's rebirth.</p>	<p>Charrette Team Work Day! The studio will be open from 9:00am to 9:00pm. Stop by and see the progress on your neighborhood plan!</p>
	<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: Neighborhood Youth 5:15pm-6:15pm Joslin Recreation Center</b></p> <p>Kids offer a whole different perspective than adults, but one that is equally important to understanding a neighborhood's challenges and opportunities. A lively discussion with kids of all ages on what they want their neighborhoods to be in the future.</p>		<p><b>Stakeholder Meeting: The Woonasquatucket River 2:30pm-4:30pm</b></p> <p>The Woonasquatucket flows through all three neighborhoods and is an incredible natural resource for the entire city. Come share ideas on how to continue the river's rebirth.</p>	
Afternoon	<p><b>Community Workshop: Neighborhood Visioning 6:30pm-9:30pm</b></p> <p>Do you have a vision for what you want your neighborhood to be like in 20 years? What obstacles do you think exist to achieving that vision? Come share your thoughts and ideas with your friends and neighbors, and help to create a common vision for the future.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Housing 4:30pm-6:30pm</b></p> <p>Concerned with housing quality, availability and affordability in your neighborhood? Come tell us how we can continue to preserve and expand housing opportunities for every neighborhood resident.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Livable Neighborhoods 6:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Join your elected officials in an interactive discussion on how make your neighborhood a better place to live. Housing, jobs, safety, recreation opportunities, transportation-we want to hear your thoughts and ideas.</p>	<p><b>Final Presentation 7:00 pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Come and see how this week's meetings have been translated into guiding principles and a plan for the future of your neighborhoods. This is your opportunity to help us set priorities and let us know if we missed anything.</p>
	<p><b>Community Workshop: Neighborhood Visioning 6:30pm-9:30pm</b></p> <p>Do you have a vision for what you want your neighborhood to be like in 20 years? What obstacles do you think exist to achieving that vision? Come share your thoughts and ideas with your friends and neighbors, and help to create a common vision for the future.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Economic Development 7:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Businesses and jobs are crucial to the success of any neighborhood. Tell us the types of businesses and jobs your neighborhoods have and the kind of jobs and businesses you want to see.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Livable Neighborhoods 6:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Join your elected officials in an interactive discussion on how make your neighborhood a better place to live. Housing, jobs, safety, recreation opportunities, transportation-we want to hear your thoughts and ideas.</p>	
Evening	<p><b>Community Workshop: Neighborhood Visioning 6:30pm-9:30pm</b></p> <p>Do you have a vision for what you want your neighborhood to be like in 20 years? What obstacles do you think exist to achieving that vision? Come share your thoughts and ideas with your friends and neighbors, and help to create a common vision for the future.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Economic Development 7:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Businesses and jobs are crucial to the success of any neighborhood. Tell us the types of businesses and jobs your neighborhoods have and the kind of jobs and businesses you want to see.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Livable Neighborhoods 6:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Join your elected officials in an interactive discussion on how make your neighborhood a better place to live. Housing, jobs, safety, recreation opportunities, transportation-we want to hear your thoughts and ideas.</p>	<p><b>Final Presentation 7:00 pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Come and see how this week's meetings have been translated into guiding principles and a plan for the future of your neighborhoods. This is your opportunity to help us set priorities and let us know if we missed anything.</p>
	<p><b>Community Workshop: Neighborhood Visioning 6:30pm-9:30pm</b></p> <p>Do you have a vision for what you want your neighborhood to be like in 20 years? What obstacles do you think exist to achieving that vision? Come share your thoughts and ideas with your friends and neighbors, and help to create a common vision for the future.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Economic Development 7:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Businesses and jobs are crucial to the success of any neighborhood. Tell us the types of businesses and jobs your neighborhoods have and the kind of jobs and businesses you want to see.</p>	<p><b>Community Workshop: Livable Neighborhoods 6:00pm-9:00pm</b></p> <p>Join your elected officials in an interactive discussion on how make your neighborhood a better place to live. Housing, jobs, safety, recreation opportunities, transportation-we want to hear your thoughts and ideas.</p>	

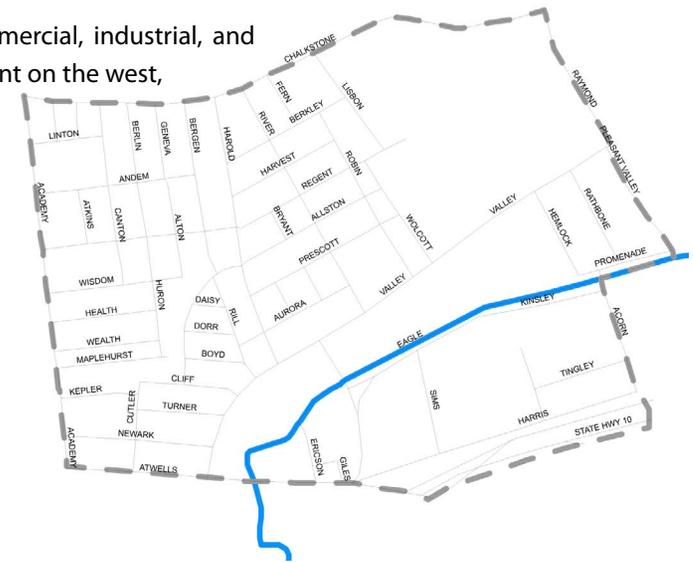


## Valley

Located west of downtown Providence, Valley is a small neighborhood with a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. The neighborhood is bordered by Olneyville and Federal Hill on the south, Mount Pleasant on the west, Elmhurst on the north, and Smith Hill on the east. Valley Street roughly divides the neighborhood into northern and southern sections. The majority of residences are in two- and three-family houses concentrated in the northern section of Valley. The neighborhood was built on a large slope rising from the Woonasquatucket River, providing many area residents with a view across the city.

The banks of the Woonasquatucket River, which winds through the southern section of the neighborhood, attracted industry in the mid-nineteenth century. During this period, the construction of three large factories in the neighborhood marked the beginning of Valley's industrial growth, which continued throughout the next two decades. Residential development in Valley followed closely behind the industrial growth. While a few factories established their own company housing, real estate speculators were responsible for the majority of residential development. The extension of streetcar service throughout the neighborhood allowed residential construction further away from Valley Street and the industrial corridor along the river.

Industry peaked in Providence and the Valley neighborhood during the 1920s, and began to fade soon after the end of World War II. Advancements in industrial technology and transportation meant factories were no longer dependent on the power and transportation provided by the river corridor. After factory closings and relocation, many buildings once occupied by industrial giants were largely vacant. Today, the industrial section of Valley is in transition, several large-scale mixed-use projects, such as Eagle Square, Rising Sun Mills and American Locomotive, have displaced smaller manufacturing shops and artists. These projects have changed the character of the historic industrial complexes. Some industry remains in Valley, including Capco Steel, which employees approximately 700 people, a significant percentage of whom live in the surrounding neighborhoods. Capco has a job training program targeted to area residents.



## Olneyville, Valley & Smith Hill History Timeline

1636 - John Smith settles in Providence after being banished from Salem, Massachusetts for his religious beliefs and builds a home and mill on what is later called Smith Hill.

1714 - The Plainfield Road is constructed along the path of today's Weybosset, Westminster and Plainfield Streets to connect the old Indian village site at the bend in the Woonasquatucket River to the center of Providence.

1745 - The Ruttenburg family establishes a paper mill and a distillery just north of the intersection of Atwells Avenue and the Woonasquatucket River.

1785 - Christopher Olney settles in present day Olneyville.

1805 - The Douglas Turnpike, later Douglas Avenue, is chartered and opened.

1810 - The Powder Mill Turnpike, later Smith Street and also Route 44, is chartered, and opens shortly thereafter.

1846 - Providence Dyeing, Bleaching and Calendering Company opens a plant in Olneyville on Valley Street.

## Smith Hill

Smith Hill was part of Roger Williams' original land grant in 1636. The neighborhood is defined by the Woonasquatucket River on the south near Promenade Street, the Chad Brown public housing complex on the north, Interstate 95 on the east, and the Elmhurst neighborhood on the west. The area was used as common land for livestock by settlers who arrived with Roger Williams. Smith Hill and the major artery, Smith Street, were named for John Smith, a mill owner and one of the original settlers. The Smiths were prominent in the area into the 18th century.

Significant building did not occur in the Smith Hill area until the nineteenth century, with most of the earlier development consisting primarily of country retreats. The Douglas Turnpike/Douglas Avenue was opened in 1807 and the Powder Mill Turnpike/Smith Street/Route 44 opened shortly after 1810. Prior to the mid-1800s, Smith Hill was essentially a rural addition to the more developed East Side and Downtown.

From 1830 to 1930, industrialization and immigration transformed Smith Hill into a dense urban neighborhood. The first wave of immigrants arrived during the 1820s from Ireland. Later immigrants came from Eastern Europe and the Balkan countries. Extensive construction and development changed the look of the neighborhood in the 1870s. Many streets were lined with small cottages and multi-family homes to accommodate the growing population of industrial workers. As in Valley and Olneyville, industry began to decline in Smith Hill after the end of World War II. Between the end of the war and the 1970s many mills and factories closed and the surrounding residential areas went into decline. In the 1970s several CDCs began neighborhood revitalization efforts. Most recently, these efforts have focused on the commercial corridors, most notably with the Smith Hill CDC's mixed use development on Douglas Avenue.



1860s - There is tremendous industrial growth around Smith Hill, as sites along the river are filled with factories supporting the Civil War.

1895 - The original horse-drawn streetcars are replaced by electric trolleys. New lines are extended out along Atwells Avenue to Academy Avenue.

1920s-1940s - Industry peaks in Providence and the Valley neighborhood and begins to fade soon after the conclusion of World War II.

1950s - The Route 6 connector is constructed, along with Interstate 95.

1970s - Neighborhood efforts begin to revitalize the area. Two of the most influential are the Capitol Hill Interaction Council and Project SHURE (Smith Hill Urban Revitalization Effort).

1980's - Artists and craftsmen move into vacant industrial space in Olneyville and Valley.

2000's - Large industrial complexes in Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill are converted to residential and mixed use.

## The People - Neighborhood Demographics

### Olneyville

The population in Olneyville in 2000 was 6,495, an increase of about 11 percent since 1990. Significant demographic changes took place between 1990 and 2000, when Olneyville's Caucasian population declined by half while the Hispanic population doubled. At the same time, the number of people who speak a language other than English at home grew to 65 percent, a 70 percent increase from 1990.

Median family income in 1999 in Olneyville was \$19,046, 40 percent lower than the citywide median. In 2000, 41 percent of families were living in poverty, more than half (54.4 percent) of all children were poor, and the proportion of elderly living in poverty was 21 percent, which was a 55 percent decrease from 1990.

In 2000 there were 5.8 percent fewer houses in Olneyville than there were in 1990. However, the proportion of owners to renters remained stable from 1990 to 2000. Almost 9 out of 10 homes in Olneyville were located in buildings with two or more units in 2000; one out of three housing units was located in a building with five or more units. Half of all housing units in Olneyville were built more than 40 years ago.

The median residential sales price in 2004 was \$190,500, 13 percent lower than the citywide median. The median rent in Olneyville in 2000 was 32 percent lower than the citywide level. According to the 2000 Census, a quarter of all residents in Olneyville had moved into their present house within the previous five years, while another quarter of all residents had lived in their home for more than 10 years.

### Valley

According to the 2000 Census, 4,765 people live in the Valley neighborhood, a 22 percent increase from 1990. About 42 percent of residents in Valley are Hispanic, 33 percent are Caucasian, 13 percent are African American, and 5.2 percent are Asian. In 2000, more than half (55.3 percent) of all Valley residents over the age of 25 had completed high school.

Median family income in Valley in 1999 was \$25,339, about 21 percent less than the citywide figure. A third of all the people in Valley had an income below the poverty level according to the 2000 Census, a significant increase from 1990. In addition, almost a third (26 percent) of all families were living below the poverty line, and 4

in 10 children in Valley were poor. A quarter of the elderly residents in Valley lived in poverty in 2000.

Homeownership increased slightly in Valley between 1990 and 2000. Seventy-six percent of the houses in Valley were constructed more than 40 years ago. The median residential sales price in Valley in 2000 was \$199,500, about nine percent lower than the citywide median sales price. In 2000, approximately 25 percent of Valley residents had lived in their home for more than 10 years, and 43 percent of residents had moved into their home within five years.

### Smith Hill

According to the 2000 census, 6,216 people lived in the Smith Hill neighborhood, an increase of 3.5 percent from 1990. During the previous decade, Smith Hill's nonwhite population increased substantially, from 50.4 percent in 1990 to 71.1 percent in 2000. The percentage of foreign-born residents in Smith Hill stayed the same between 1990 and 2000, at roughly a third of all residents.

The median family income in Smith Hill in 1999 was \$22,014, 31 percent lower than the citywide median family income. The incidence of poverty was up in 2000 particularly amongst Hispanics, for whom the poverty rate more than doubled. Overall, more one in three (36 percent) persons in Smith Hill was poor, 33 percent of families were living below poverty, 48.4 percent of all children were poor, and one out of five elderly persons had an income below the poverty level.

Housing tenure in Smith Hill was stable between 1990 and 2000. More than three quarters of all homes in Smith Hill were located in two to four family buildings. Eight out of ten homes were built more than 40 years ago. The median residential sales price in 2004 in Smith Hill was \$225,000, slightly higher than the citywide median of \$220,000. More than a third (36 percent) of all Smith Hill residents moved into their present home within the past five years, and 28 percent had lived in their current home for more than 10 years.

## Neighborhood Statistics

	Olneyville	Valley	Smith Hill	Citywide
Size (Square Miles)	.55	.47	.65	18
<b>Population</b>				
Households	2,228	1,601	2,229	62,389
Individuals	6,495	4,765	6,216	173,618
Percent Under 18	29%	34%	32%	26%
<b>Diversity</b>				
Percent White	45%	48%	42%	55%
Percent Black or African American	14%	15%	15%	15%
Percent Non-Hispanic White	22%	33%	29%	46%
Percent Hispanic	57%	42%	36%	30%
Percent Asian or Pacific Islander	7%	5%	14%	6%
Percent Native American	2%	2%	1%	1%
Percent Other	26%	23%	21%	18%
Percent Claimed 2 or more races	7%	7%	8%	6%
Percent of Public school children primarily speak a Language Other than English	63%	54%	61%	54%
<b>Income</b>				
Median Family Income	\$19,046	\$25,339	\$22,014	\$32,058
Median Household Income	\$17,538	\$25,077	\$21,432	\$26,867
Families Below Poverty	41%	26%	33%	24%
Households on Public Assistance	24%	18%	14%	10%
<b>Housing</b>				
Total number of housing units:	2,644	1,813	2,559	67,915
Percent Owner-occupied housing units	18%	25%	20%	35%
Percent Single-family units	12%	10%	10%	26%
Percent Duplex units	19%	23%	22%	22%
Percent Multi-family units	70%	67%	67%	50%
Percent of Housing built before 1960	50%	76%	79%	70%
Percent Vacant units	13%	12%	12%	8%
Percent Overcrowded housing units	16%	17%	10%	8%
<b>Median Sales Value and Number of Sales by Year</b>				
for Single-family residence	\$65,000	\$109,250	\$82,000	\$130,000
for 2 to 5-family residence	\$103,750	\$126,250	\$112,000	\$129,000

# Development Patterns

## Neighborhood Typologies

The Planning Department is reviewing ways to preserve the existing character of the residential neighborhoods throughout the city, those areas that were identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan, Providence Tomorrow, as "Areas of Stability." The goal for these areas is to reinforce their stability, character and diversity by respecting valued development patterns and attributes. The strategies to achieve this goal include ensuring that new development maintains existing density levels and complements existing neighborhood scale, massing and design, and preserving the existing building stock in each of the city's neighborhoods.

One step toward that goal is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the existing development patterns in each neighborhood. The character of an area is defined by a number of elements that combine to create a cohesive identity. Building placement and form, lot coverage as well as lot size, shape, and orientation are some of these elements. As part of the neighborhood planning process, streets, blocks and structures were evaluated and grouped into areas that have common features. These areas are referred to as "typologies." By understanding the elements that combine to create the character of an area, it is possible to then identify those characteristics that current and future development may need to reflect or respect in order for this character to be maintained and preserved over time.

Key characteristics of the typologies identified for each neighborhood will be used to fine-tune zoning to make it a more effective tool to protect neighborhood character.

Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill have a fairly homogeneous range of housing styles and types, reflecting the working class history of their development. Residential development patterns are generally high density, though scale varies according to housing type (single-family, 2-family, etc.), with minimal front and side yard setbacks, small lots and irregular distribution of street trees.

### Olneyville

The residential development patterns and housing types in the Olneyville neighborhood can be broken down into five distinct areas:

- A: The area bordered roughly by Delaine Street, Manton Avenue, Florence Street, and Amherst Street, with an eastern border on the east sides of Bowdoin and Audrey streets.
- B: The area bounded roughly by Atwells Avenue on the north, the north stub of Florence Street on the west, Amherst on the south extending to Donigan (Lonigan) Park, north on Cutler, east on Barstow, down Valley, and encompassing the area contained by the Woonasquatucket River that includes Tuxedo Avenue.
- C: The area bordered on the west by the confluence of Atwells and Manton avenues, on the south by Amherst Street, and on the east by the north stub of Florence Street.



- D: The triangular area roughly bounded by Manton Avenue, Amherst Street and Florence Street.
- E: The area between Route 6 and Manton Avenue, concentrated in the Glenbridge Avenue area and the one-block-deep area south of Manton Avenue extending almost to Olneyville Square.

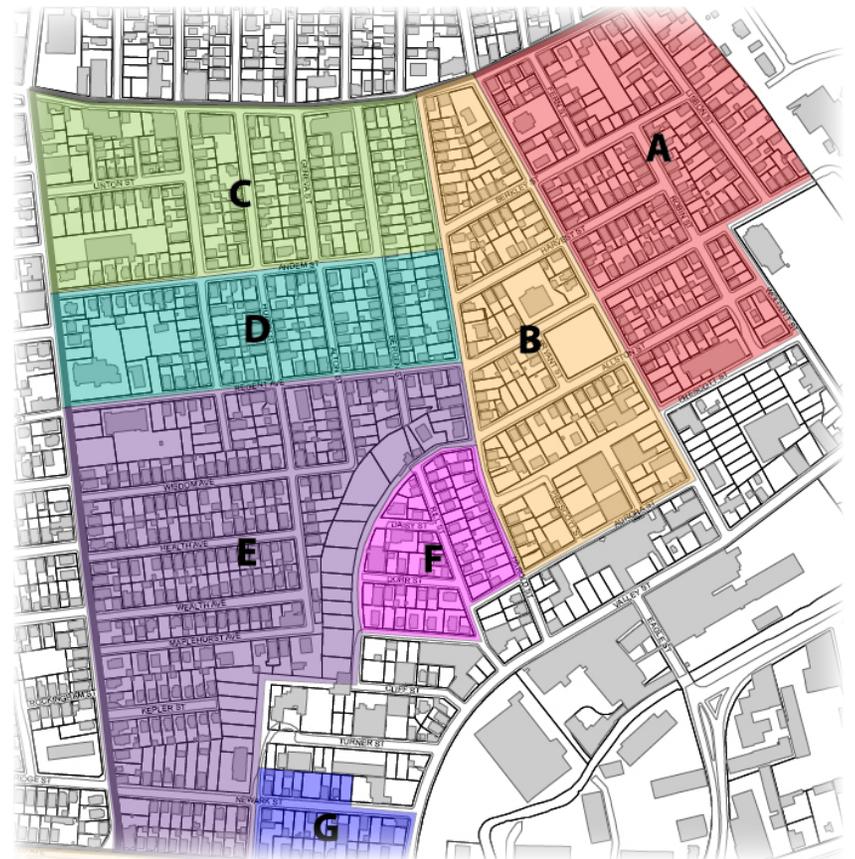
Olneyville has a dense mix of primarily two, three, and four family houses, with scattered single-family houses, as well as larger apartment complexes. The area has a primarily rectilinear street grid with continuous concrete sidewalks on both sides of most of its streets. The uniformity of the grid is offset by hilly topography, and the presence of large industrial complexes (many of which have been converted to other uses). On-street parking exists on most streets, primarily on one side only. Street trees are present in some areas, such as along Tuxedo Avenue, more than others, in an irregular pattern. Architecturally, Olneyville is fairly consistent, with most houses constructed between the late 1800s and the early 1900s. Front and side yard setbacks are almost uniformly minimal, some buildings lack driveways and, in some cases, houses are sited on back lots.

### Valley

The Valley neighborhood breaks down into six areas:

- A: The area bounded by Chalkstone Avenue on the north, River Avenue on the west, the VA Hospital on the east, and Regent, Wolcott and Prescott on the southeast and south.
- B: The wedge of blocks bounded by Harold, River, Chalkstone, and Aurora.
- C: The area bounded by Chalkstone, Academy, Andem, and Harold.
- D: The area just south of C, bounded by Andem, Academy, Regent, and Harold.
- E: The area to the south of D, extending from the top of the bluff above Valley Street on the east with Huron, Academy and Regent as its primary bordering streets on the south, west and north.
- F: The small area adjacent to the Valley Street industrial/commercial area including Rill, Daisy and Dorr streets.

Valley is a smaller neighborhood with industrial origins and edges that reflect both those origins and its valley/bluff topographical context. Residential development patterns and the rectilinear grid are interrupted in places by dead ends, steep slopes and non-residential uses. The housing types vary. Much of the neighborhood is characterized by large two-, three- and even four-unit, mostly gable-roofed structures, many with gable dormers and variations on cross-gables, as well as shed dormers. Two-story front porches are common. In some areas house roof types include hip and Italianate variations. Typically, there is little to no front setback, a high percentage of lot coverage, minimal yard space, and densely concentrated development. Some areas have pockets of single-family bungalows or similar styles with enclosed front porches. On the periphery of the Valley Street area some houses reflect the industrial legacy, including former company housing and mixed-use structures with stores on the first floor. Sidewalks exist on most streets and street trees are irregular.

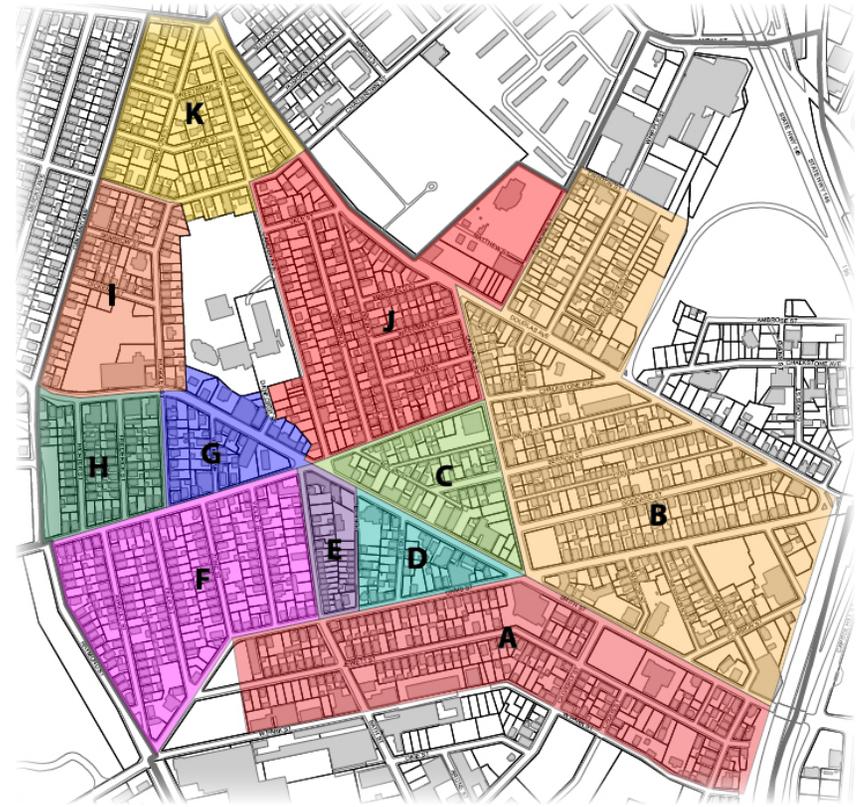


## Smith Hill

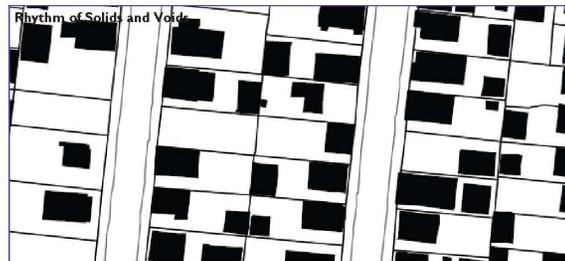
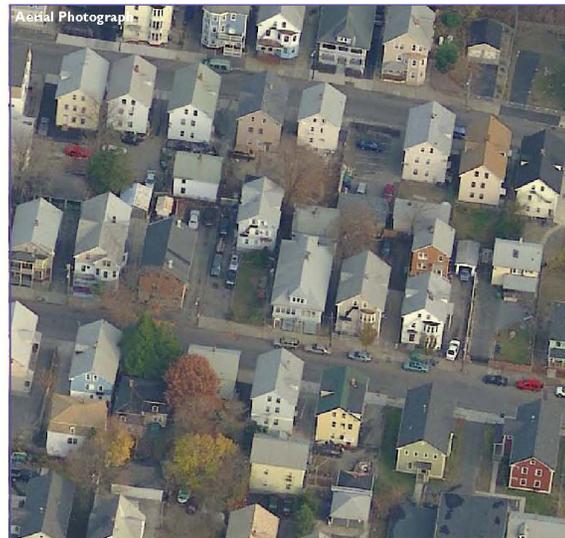
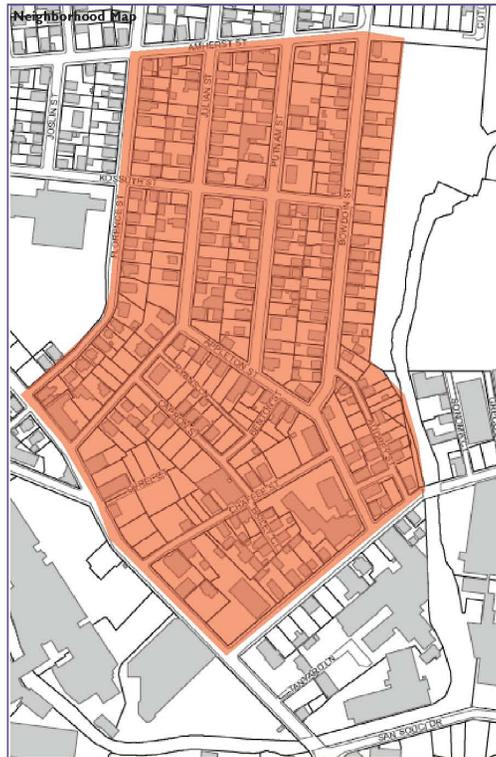
The Smith Hill neighborhood is made up of eleven typological areas:

- A: The area north of West Park Street and south of Orms/Smith bounded by Bath Street and I-95.
- B: The area west of I-95 bounded by Smith, Candace and Orms.
- C: The triangle bounded by Candace, Smith and Chalkstone.
- D: The small triangle within Duke, Orms and Smith.
- E: The block between Bath, Duke, Smith, and Orms.
- F: The area between Raymond and Bath, with Chalkstone forming the northern boundary and Valley and Orms the southern boundary.
- G: The two block triangle bounded by Chalkstone, Smith and Ruggles.
- H: The three blocks within Oakland, Smith, Ruggles, and Chalkstone.
- I: The area containing the Aldi's grocery store site, extending back to Chad Brown Street, bounded by Oakland and Ruggles.
- J: The area contained within Camden, Chad Brown, Candace, and Chalkstone Avenue.
- K: The area contained by Chad Brown, Oakland, Eaton, and Camden streets.

While also characterized predominantly by two- and three-unit houses, Smith Hill has a greater variety of housing types and patterns than the other two neighborhoods. These range from variations on the two-, three- and sometimes four-unit buildings found in all three neighborhoods (here represented by a range of styles and a greater variety of porches and roofs types) to single-family dwellings. The primarily late-nineteenth century housing stock is complemented by some older houses, including side-gabled single-family houses from the early 1800s and a variety of worker housing, including the row of tiny mill houses on Bath Street. Most of Smith Hill is characterized by high-density housing, though in many cases there is more room between houses and a greater number of driveways than in Olneyville and Valley. Smith Street and its intersections with Orms and Chalkstone in places blur the edges between residential and commercial/service uses. While the tree canopy coverage is slightly higher overall in the Valley and Olneyville neighborhoods, discounting undevelopable areas, most residential streets in Smith Hill appear to have a greater distribution of street trees.



## Olneyville—Typology A



### Defining Characteristics

Streetscape		Lots		Buildings			
Pavement Width	24 feet	Lot Size	3,600-4,000 s.f.	Type	2-3 unit	Roof Type/Pitch	Gable 5/6/12; Hip; Mansard
On-Street Parking	Single-side	Lot Width	40 feet	Lot Coverage	30-40%	Materials	Wood, vinyl, other
Sidewalks	Yes, concrete	Density	3	Height	2.5 stories average	Garages	Some
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	Units/lot	Porch/Stoop	Yes, most	Outbuildings	Some
Front Yard	0-2 feet	Rear Yard	30-40feet	First Floor Elevation	2-3 feet		
Fences	Chain link	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%		

Above is a sample neighborhood typology, consisting of a typology area map, fieldwork photos and observational data, an aerial photo of the area, and an illustration of the area's lot layout.

# Sample Olneyville, Valley & Smith Hill Neighborhood Typologies

### Olneyville—Typology A

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,800-4,000 sq. ft.	Type	2.3 unit
Front Street	Single side	Lot Width	40 feet	Lot Coverage	30-40%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	3	Height	3.5 stories average
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	3.0-6.0 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes, wood
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	30-60 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.5 feet
Front	Chain link	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Olneyville—Typology B

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,500-4,000	Type	2.4 unit
Front Street	Single side	Lot Width	40 feet	Lot Coverage	30-40%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	3.5 units/acre	Height	3.5-3.8
Street Trees	Yes	Side Yards	3-6 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	25-35 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.5 feet
Front	Chain link	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Olneyville—Typology C

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,800-4,000 sq. ft.	Type	2.3 unit
Front Street	Single side	Lot Width	40 feet	Lot Coverage	30-40%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	3	Height	3.5 stories
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	3-6 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes (stone)
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	30-60 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.5 feet
Front	Wood, chain link	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Smith Hill—Typology A

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,800 square foot average	Type	2.3 unit
Front Street	Single side	Lot Width	40 feet	Lot Coverage	30%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	3 units per lot	Height	1.5, 2.3 stories
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	3.0-6.0 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	30-60 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.5 feet
Front	Chain link, some masonry	Parking	Side, rear, other	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Smith Hill—Typology B

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,500-3,000	Type	2.3 unit
Front Street	Single side	Lot Width	40-60 feet	Lot Coverage	30-40%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	1.5, 2.4 units/acre	Height	1.5, 2.3, 3.5
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	3-6 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	15-20 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.5 feet
Front	Chain link, wood	Parking	Side, rear, none	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Smith Hill—Typology C

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	2,000-3,000	Type	1.3, 2 unit
Front Street	Single and double ended	Lot Width	40-50 feet	Lot Coverage	30-35%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete, some one side only	Density	1.5-2 units/acre	Height	1.5-2 stories
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	3-6 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	15-25 feet	First Floor Elevation	3 feet average
Front	Chain link	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	20-25%

### Valley—Typology A

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,500 sq. ft.	Type	2.3 unit
Front Street	Both sides	Lot Width	25-40 feet	Lot Coverage	35-50%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	3 units/acre	Height	3.5-4 stories
Street Trees	Yes, irregular	Side Yards	3-6 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	3-5 feet	Rear Yard	20-25 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.4 feet
Front	Chain link	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Valley—Typology B

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	1,500-3,000	Type	2.3 unit
Front Street	Single side and both sides	Lot Width	25-40 feet	Lot Coverage	35-50%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	3 units/acre	Height	3.5-4 stories
Street Trees	Yes	Side Yards	4-8 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	0-4 feet	Rear Yard	15-25 feet	First Floor Elevation	3.4 feet
Front	Chain link, wood	Parking	Front, side, corner (garage)	Street Facing Transparency	15-20%

### Valley—Typology C

Defining Characteristics		Lots	Buildings	Roof Type/Pitch	Galva 5-612, Hq
Blockage	24 feet	Lot Size	2,000-4,000	Type	1.3 unit
Front Street	Both sides	Lot Width	20-40 feet	Lot Coverage	25-35%
Side Streets	Yes, concrete	Density	1.5 units/acre	Height	1.5-2.5 stories
Street Trees	Yes	Side Yards	3-6 feet	Porch/Overhang	Yes
Front Yard	0-3 feet	Rear Yard	15-20 feet	First Floor Elevation	2.4 feet
Front	Wood, chain link, hedge	Parking	Side, rear	Street Facing Transparency	30-35%

## Historic Districts

Providence derives much of its character from its large stock of historic buildings. The City has long recognized the value of preservation and has established eight Local Historic Districts and 40 National Register Districts that cover over 9,000 properties citywide. In addition, there are 150 individual properties listed on the National Register. National Register Districts identify an area or group of buildings that are significant on a local, state or national level; however, they do not provide regulatory protection through local zoning. Property owners in National Register districts may be eligible for state and federal tax credits for maintenance and renovation. Properties listed in a Local Historic District (LHD) are in a zoning overlay which requires that building alterations be approved by the Providence Historic District Commission. This is to ensure that the historic attributes and qualities of the properties within the district are maintained and preserved over time. Property owners in LHDs are eligible for the same tax credits as the National Register Districts.

The Industrial and Commercial Buildings District (ICBD) is one of the eight LHDs in the city. Many of the buildings that made up the industrial and manufacturing centers in Providence's history are included in this district. Smith Hill has three National Register Historic Districts within its boundaries. Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill contain multiple buildings listed in the ICBD, a reminder of the industrial character and history of these three neighborhoods. Olneyville and Valley do not contain any National Register Historic Districts.



## Neighborhood Issues

Over the course of the Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill neighborhood charrette, residents were asked what issues concerned them most about their neighborhoods. During that exercise and throughout the charrette, they identified numerous issues, which could be grouped into several categories: Commercial Areas, Manufacturing, Jobs and Business Opportunities, Amenities and Services, Housing, Safety, Circulation, Infrastructure, Land Use Conflicts, and Aesthetics and Character.

### Commercial Areas

The commercial activity in Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill centers around Olneyville Square and the key commercial corridors: Valley Street, Westminster Street, Manton Avenue, Atwells Avenue, Smith Street, and Douglas Avenue. Of these, Olneyville Square and the Eagle Square Shopping Center (Valley at Atwells) are the liveliest, with the highest concentration of small-scale neighborhood-serving uses. Olneyville Square is the neighborhood center of Olneyville, with banks, restaurants, a library branch, and some offices. Olneyville Square is almost entirely built out and will likely remain a small-scale commercial area, but with enhanced transit and walkability. There are opportunities in Olneyville for redevelopment in existing underutilized buildings. Just northwest of Olneyville Square there are several parcels with underutilized shopping centers and a high rate of vacancies (see map). This area is prime for redevelopment as an additional commercial node for Olneyville, complementing the existing commercial center.

The Eagle Square shopping center provides the neighborhood with a grocery store and a mix of businesses. The businesses on Valley Street are more varied, with offices, auto service centers and a few restaurants, as well as the American Locomotive Works project ( a mixed-use development with housing, commercial/retail and office space). Manton Avenue contains a mix of residential development, with most commercial development concentrated closer to Olneyville Square. In Smith Hill, Smith Street and Douglas Avenue serve as the major commercial centers for the neighborhood. The businesses along Smith Street tend to be smaller-scale neighborhood-oriented businesses and restaurants. A new grocery store also recently opened on Smith Street. The businesses along Douglas Avenue also tend to be smaller-scale, neighborhood-oriented businesses. Douglas Avenue also borders a smaller industrial area along Chalkstone Avenue and Kane, Victor and Ambrose streets. Currently, the lots bordering this industrial area on Douglas Avenue are zoned residential. The redevelopment of these lots would serve as the logical extension of the commercial corridor already existing on Douglas Avenue and would also serve as a buffer between the industrial uses and the existing residential neighborhood on the south side of Douglas Avenue. The Smith Hill CDC has recently built a mixed-use building on Douglas Avenue which adds to the small-scale neighborhood commercial on the street.

### Manufacturing

The mills along the Woonasquatucket River historically were the industrial heart of Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill. The majority of these brick structures were built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and housed textile companies, jewelry manufacturers, plating companies, and tool makers. Though many of the businesses have relocated or closed over the last several decades, a number of the buildings are still used for manufacturing. Other mill buildings in the area have been converted into residential and professional office uses. One of the largest businesses in the area, Capco Steel, is a steel manufacturing and fabricating company that employs over 700 people, many of whom are neighborhood residents. Capco is a national industry leader, providing steel for several major projects nationwide, including Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, MA; the new Yankee Stadium in New York, Lucas Oil Stadium, home of the Indianapolis Colts, the Boston Convention Center, and Mohegan Sun Casino. Other manufacturing businesses still located in the neighborhoods include Oster Pewter, Eagle Tool and Umicore.

The Steel Yard, a non-profit organization which provides manufacturing space to local artists and neighborhood residents, is also located in the Valley neighborhood. In addition to expanding their existing studio facilities and adding new open space for large fabrication projects, craft markets and public programs, the Steel Yard's long-term site plans include the addition of a 10 unit studio 'village' constructed from shipping containers, trailers and subway and train cars as well as 4,000 square foot

## Neighborhood Issues (Cont.)

high-bay, green-built studio. This work will complement the neighboring project at One Sims which supports a range of tenants in the fields of design, fabrication and visual and functional arts as well a restaurant and opportunities for outdoor events.

While many of the mills in the three neighborhoods have been converted to residential uses over the past decade, many remain as industrial spaces. To protect these industrial uses, the City proposed Job Only districts which prohibit all residential uses as part of the Comprehensive Plan. In these neighborhoods two Jobs Only areas were identified. During the Charrette, neighborhood residents expressed their desire to have a Jobs Only district to protect the jobs in the industrial buildings just south of Olneyville Square (see Map.) As mentioned above, there is a smaller industrial area in the northeast corner of Smith Hill. While the Jobs Only designation has not been proposed for this locale, there are active industrial uses in the area and no changes are proposed.

An additional legacy of these neighborhoods industrial pasts is the environmental contamination of properties and the river. This contamination poses a significant barrier to redevelopment for any use due to the high costs of environmental remediation. Additionally, the location of the mills in such close proximity to the river requires RIDEM regulatory oversight which can also be a time consuming and costly permitting process.

### **Jobs and Business Opportunities**

Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill once made up the manufacturing center of Providence. Over the past 50

years, many industries have left Providence, hitting these neighborhoods particularly hard. The need for jobs that pay good wages and provide benefits was a focal point of discussion. Residents spoke of the need for more small businesses within the three neighborhoods and more support for the existing small businesses. There was also concern over mill redevelopment projects displacing existing small businesses and the loss of residents' jobs as a result. The merchants association in Olneyville Square has been an active participant in the Neighborhood Markets program, receiving funding for new trash cans, tree plantings, and tree guards to improve the shopping experience in Olneyville Square. The program also provides training and support to merchants who request it.

The corridor between Olneyville Square and Downtown contains the largest concentration of "green" buildings and "green" industries in the state. Significant investment and opportunities for growth in the "green" economy will be a catalyst for jobs and business growth in these neighborhoods. Providing skills and education to residents for these emerging jobs will be essential to link residents with job opportunities.

### **Amenities and Services**

These neighborhoods have many amenities: Donigian Park, Riverside Park, the Woonasquatucket River Bikeway, and the Joslin Recreation Center, among many others. Neighborhood residents had very specific ideas on how these amenities could be improved, including new lights in Donigian Park and re-striping the bike lanes on Kinsley Ave and

Promenade Street. Charrette participants would like to see more after school opportunities for neighborhood youth through improvements at the local recreation centers and parks. Residents also felt city services such as trash and recycling collection need improvement. Several residents voiced concern over the hours of trash collection and the handling of the trash cans and recycling bins by collection personnel.

The YMCA of Greater Providence will be relocating to the Olneyville neighborhood and is currently in the planning stages of a redevelopment for the remaining mill building at Riverside Park. The YMCA is proposing to renovate the existing building on Aleppo Street and construct an addition. The completed building will serve as the corporate offices for the YMCA of Greater Providence. The building will also serve as a youth services center and will contain a flexible wellness center, a community room, and offices for YMCA support staff. The YMCA has entered into an agreement with the City of Providence Parks Department and will provide public programming in Riverside Park as part of this agreement. The YMCA should be operating in this space by Fall 2010.

### **Housing**

Most of the housing stock in Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill is over 50 years old. Over the past decade, several of the historic industrial properties in the neighborhoods have been converted to residential uses. While many houses in the three neighborhoods are well maintained and in good condition, there are also many homes in the three neighborhoods that have not been maintained for a variety of reasons. Residents expressed concern about these buildings and

## Neighborhood Issues (Cont.)

their affect on the neighborhoods through blight and declining property values. Conversely, there was also concern regarding the rise in property values associated with the development of new housing in the area that is targeted to people moving into the neighborhood who have higher incomes. Residents were also concerned about the high number of absentee landlords and the lack of maintenance of non-owner-occupied homes, as well as concern regarding property owners not maintaining their homes out of fear of higher property taxes. Residents also expressed concern about vacant foreclosed houses in the neighborhoods. All three neighborhoods have been affected by the foreclosure crisis, but Olneyville has been hit particularly hard, with several streets that have multiple foreclosed homes. Across the neighborhoods, many of the foreclosed properties have been vandalized and/or are not adequately maintained by the banks that now own them.

Additionally, residents perceive a disconnect between the definition of affordable housing as defined by HUD and financial institutions and rental and homeownership prices that neighborhood residents can afford.

### *Keep Space*

A significant new project planned for the Olneyville neighborhood is the Rhode Island KeepSpace Project. The Olneyville Housing Corporation (OHC) has been selected by Rhode Island Housing as the developer of one of the first KeepSpace Initiative projects in RI. KeepSpace projects are partnerships between various organizations to build and improve communities throughout Rhode Island, with safe, affordable housing

as the foundation of each project.

The Olneyville KeepSpace Initiative has four housing components. The first, King Crossing, will develop 46 affordable housing units along King Street and Hillard Street and will also serve as a connection to Riverside Park for residents of the Manton Avenue Providence Housing Authority development. On Delaine Street, KeepSpace looks to preserve 24 affordable units in three properties in danger of foreclosure. Riverside View involves the transformation of an existing casket warehouse and vacant jewelry shop into housing. This project includes 37 units of affordable assisted living for neighborhood elderly, seven single-family houses with in-law apartments, and 10 market rate townhouses. The last housing component of the Olneyville KeepSpace Initiative is the acquisition and renovation of Curtis Arms, a four story, 106 unit elderly and disabled housing complex.

The Olneyville KeepSpace Initiative also has a commercial component. OHC is working to create an industrial campus in Paragon Mill, former home of the ArtCraft Braid Corporation. In areas where the property reaches Manton Avenue and Delaine Street, OHC plans retail and mixed-use.

The Smith Hill Community Development Corporation is working on a 52 unit project that will provide affordable housing in the Smith Hill neighborhood.

### **Safety**

Safety is a major concern in the three neighborhoods. Residents want improved community safety through increased police presence in the neighborhoods. Increased lighting was suggested at several

locations to deter illicit activities such as drug dealing. Residents also identified enforcement of existing laws and regulations as needing improvement. Though there is a very active neighborhood police presence in Olneyville some residents expressed concern about being unfairly targeted by police officers. Continuing the ongoing dialogue between the neighborhood and community police officers was recommended to improve relationships. Participants also expressed concern about the presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agents in the neighborhood.

### **Circulation**

These neighborhoods are densely developed with a tight street network. As automobile traffic has increased over the years, traffic congestion has become a problem in the neighborhoods, particularly in Olneyville Square. Residents expressed concern about the level of congestion in Olneyville Square and the effect it has on surrounding streets. Residents also spoke of the need for road maintenance, such as paving and pothole repair throughout the three neighborhoods, to improve mobility. Residents also spoke of their desire for improved pedestrian crossings throughout the neighborhoods. Additionally, residents expressed the need for more transit service to downtown and the need for cross-town transit service. The Manton Avenue and Westminster Streetscape Enhancement projects, which include new traffic signals, ornamental street lighting, new sidewalks, and street trees, have been in design for several years and will be constructed within the next two years.

## Neighborhood Issues (Cont.)

### **Infrastructure**

The three neighborhoods are bisected by the Woonasquatucket River. Many buildings in the neighborhoods lie within the river's 100-year flood plain. Areas such as Eagle Square and Rising Sun Mills flood on a regular basis during heavy rains. Residents spoke of the need for better storm water management to lessen flooding during storms. The installation by RIDEM of a fish ladder at the Rising Sun dam has raised concerns that the flood level will rise due to its presence in the river. Residents also spoke about clogged storm drains, which cause localized flooding on certain streets. Additionally, residents spoke about the condition of sidewalks and streets throughout the neighborhoods and the need for repaving on several major roads, especially in Olneyville Square.

### **Aesthetics/Character**

These historic neighborhoods have character distinct from other areas of the city. Residents expressed concern, however, that neighborhood character was changing in negative ways, and discussed improvement through clean-up programs for streets and home improvement programs for property owners. Residents also expressed a desire to see improvements in the Olneyville Square business district and the other small commercial areas of the neighborhoods.

### **Land Use Conflicts**

Charrette participants identified areas where the current land use regulations are out of sync with the existing or desired uses. After an extensive review of existing uses and current land use regulations, several areas were identified that may require zoning or comprehensive plan amendments to protect the existing character of the area, reflect the existing uses, or in some cases encourage the desired uses to be developed in the future. A list of these specific areas is included in the action plan. The Planning Department will review these areas and forward recommendations for any amendments to the regulations to the City Plan Commission and City Council for their consideration.

# Neighborhood Action Plan

The key outcome of the Olneyville, Valley & Smith Hill charrette was the development of a multi-phase action plan for the neighborhoods. The action plan and its associated map illustrate the short-, mid- and long-term goals (<5 years, 5–10 years and 10+ years) of the neighborhoods while the action plan below identifies specific actions needed to achieve the vision.

## Key to Acronyms for City and State Departments and Agencies:

DPD-Department of Planning and Development (City of Providence)

DPW-Department of Public Works (City of Providence)

DIS-Department of Inspection and Standards (City of Providence)

RIPTA-Rhode Island Public Transit Authority

ACT-Department of Arts, Culture and Tourism (City of Providence)

Parks-Department of Parks and Recreation (City of Providence)

PPD-Providence Police Department

PEDP-Providence Economic Development Partnership

PRA-Providence Redevelopment Agency

HDC- Historic District Commission (City of Providence)

RIDOT-Rhode Island Department of Transportation

CRMC-Coastal Resources Management Council

ZBR-Zoning Board of Review (City of Providence)

TED-Traffic Engineering Division (City of Providence)

Schools-Providence Department of Public Schools

CDCs-Community Development Corporations

RIDEM-RI Dept. of Environmental Management

## Graphic Recordings

The drawings found throughout and after the action plan were created during charrette sessions by a graphic recorder. They reflect the comments and issues raised during each session.



## Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill Initiatives

Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>Actively involve Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill Neighborhoods in community decision making.</b>			
Promote collaboration between City government, neighborhood residents and businesses to achieve the vision for Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill.	Identify strategies to broaden community participation in implementing the plan, such as creation of neighborhood and merchant associations, outreach plans, etc.	Community Groups, DPD	Ongoing
	Identify potential partners, such as businesses and non-profit organizations, that can assist in completing specific projects.	Community Groups, DPD	Ongoing
Ensure that all projects and initiatives contribute to achievement of the long-term vision.	Evaluate projects for consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood plan.	DPD	Ongoing
	Include neighborhood outreach and communication as part of the planning and development of significant public and private projects.	DPD	Ongoing
	Develop education and awareness programs to assist residents in understanding how different projects, such as street tree plantings, recycling programs, etc., can improve their neighborhood.	DPD	Ongoing
<b>Preserve and enhance Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill as urban neighborhoods with a high quality of life.</b>			
Maintain and improve the character of the neighborhoods, particularly residential areas.	Amend residential zoning regulations to promote the best examples of existing neighborhood character as identified in the neighborhood typologies to ensure that new development will blend with the existing character of the neighborhood. Ensure that regulations include alternatives that address unique topography and other unique site conditions.	DPD	Short-term
	Increase tree canopy by focusing resources for street tree planting on streets with gaps in the canopy.	Parks, Community Groups	Ongoing
	Encourage applications to Providence Neighborhood Planting Program.	Parks	Ongoing
	Work with the Graffiti Task Force to continue to find new ways of reducing graffiti in the neighborhoods.	Community groups	Short-term
	Increase enforcement of City environmental ordinances regarding trash and recycling.	DPW	Ongoing
	Identify need for landscape buffers between commercial/industrial uses and adjacent residential neighborhoods.	DPD	Short-term
	Work to create a neighborhood gateway at the intersection of Smith and Chalkstone and preserve the views of the state capitol from this intersection.	DPD, Community groups	Mid-term
	Organize neighborhood clean-up days and similar events.	Community groups	Ongoing

Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>Preserve and enhance Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill as urban neighborhoods with a high quality of life. (Cont.)</b>			
Increase opportunities for and access to safe and affordable housing.	Target properties with minimum housing code violations and complaints for enforcement.	DIS	Ongoing
	Improve blighted/foreclosed properties in the area between Amherst, Delaine, Manton, and Steere, to serve as a catalyst for revitalization in the surrounding neighborhood.	PRA, CDCs	Short-term
	Promote existing housing programs to homeowners, such as down payment assistance, emergency repairs, and lead abatement, through distribution of brochures at neighborhood centers, meetings and events.	DPD	Ongoing
	Promote existing housing counseling programs to new buyers to reduce risk of foreclosure.	DPD, CDCs	Short-term
	Streamline the plan review and permitting process for housing production.	DPD, DIS	Short-term
	Strengthen partnerships between for-profit developers, community development corporations and the community.	DPD, CDCs	Ongoing
	Explore opportunities to increase affordable housing through land trust and co-op mechanisms.	DPD, CDCs	Ongoing
	Increase the number of owner-occupied multi-family dwellings throughout all three neighborhoods.	CDCs	Ongoing
	Work with banks to mitigate the impact of foreclosures and facilitate transfer of foreclosed properties to public agencies and community development corporations for affordable housing.	DPD	Short-term
	Develop a Tenant's Bill of Rights to particularly address the needs and concerns of tenants in properties facing foreclosure.	DPD, CDCs	Ongoing
	Implement regulations to require banks to notify homeowners and tenants of the intent to foreclose and to participate in a HUD certified counseling session with the homeowner to attempt to prevent the foreclosure.	Mayor's Office, City Council, DPD, RIH, CDCs	Underway



Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>Preserve and enhance Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill as urban neighborhoods with a high quality of life. (Cont.)</b>			
Improve neighborhood infrastructure.	Publicize the citywide pavement management program to improve road conditions, including regular lane striping.	DPW	Mid-term
	Prioritize streets in the neighborhoods in need of paving, especially Hannah and Handy.	DPW	Mid-term
	Evaluate the need for a traffic signal on Douglas Avenue at Fillmore to facilitate pedestrian access to Times <sup>2</sup> Academy.	Traffic	Mid-term
	Work with utility companies to quickly replace lights that are damaged or knocked down by vehicles in industrial areas.	DPW	Short-term
	Improve maintenance of the infrastructure (sidewalks, street lights, sewers) in industrial areas along Promenade Street, Kinsley Avenue, Harris Avenue, Dike Street, San Souci Avenue, and Aleppo Street.	DPW	Short-term
	Improve traffic flow and pedestrian amenities (sidewalks, crosswalks, street trees, street lighting) along Westminster Street and Manton Avenue through the completion of the Westminster and Manton Streetscape enhancement projects.	DPW, DPD	<u>Underway</u>
	Create a City standard for sidewalks that includes a planting strip for storm water percolation.	DPW	Short-term
	Work with the DPW to identify funding for a comprehensive inventory of sidewalks throughout the city, and develop clear maintenance and performance goals, eliminating the need for special requests to be made for routine maintenance and repairs.	DPD	Mid-term
	Identify specific types of permeable paving that could be used for parking lots, sidewalks, bike paths, etc.	DPW	Short-term
	Consider amending parking regulations to reduce pavement. Potential strategies include establishing maximum parking requirements, shared parking, and allowing on-street parking to count toward minimum parking requirements.	DPD	Short-term
	Encourage replacement of median portions of driveways with permeable material.	Community groups	Ongoing
	Develop incentives for removing unnecessary pavement.	DPD, DPW	Short-term



Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>After an extensive review of existing land uses and current land use regulations for the neighborhoods, zoning amendments and comprehensive plan amendments should be considered for the following areas to reflect existing uses, encourage appropriate new uses or, in some cases, to protect the existing character of the area.</b>			
Olneyville	Elderly housing complex in Olneyville Square from general commercial to multi-family dwelling.	DPD	Short-term
	Former Price Rite Plaza on Manton Avenue from heavy commercial to general commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels along Manton Ave between Chaffee and Julian from heavy commercial to limited or neighborhood commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels along Manton Ave between Julian and Greenwood from general commercial to limited or neighborhood commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Residential parcels between Aleppo/King and Manton Ave. to Dearborn from multi-family dwelling to three-family dwelling.	DPD	Short-term
	Residential parcels between Atwells Ave. and Manton Ave. from multi-family dwelling to three-family dwelling.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels at the intersection of Manton Ave. and Atwells Ave. from general commercial to limited or neighborhood commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels along Atwells Ave between Hannah and Hardy from general commercial to limited or neighborhood commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels along Tuxedo and Amherst from general commercial and industrial to three-family residential.	DPD	Short-term
Valley	Overlay the "Jobs Only" district on the M1 zone found along Kinsley, Tingley, Sims, Harris and Turner to preserve these areas for heavy industrial uses.	DPD	Short-term



Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>After an extensive review of existing land uses and current land use regulations for the neighborhoods, zoning amendments and comprehensive plan amendments should be considered for the following areas to reflect existing uses, encourage appropriate new uses or, in some cases, to protect the existing character of the area. (Cont.)</b>			
Smith Hill	Overlay the "Jobs Only" district on the M1 zone found between Kinsley, Pleasant Valley Parkway and Harris Ave to preserve these areas for heavy industrial uses.	DPD	Short-term
	Overlay the "Jobs Only" district on the M1 zone found between Calverley and Pleasant Valley Parkway to preserve these areas for heavy industrial uses.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels at West Park and Pleasant Valley Parkway from general commercial to heavy industrial and overlay the "Jobs Only" district.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels at Valley and Ayrault/Felix from heavy commercial to general commercial uses.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels at Valley and Jewett from heavy commercial to general commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels on Smith St. from I-95 to Wayne/Bernon/Esten from general commercial to limited or neighborhood commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels on Smith St. between Ruggles and Chalkstone from residential to commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Parcels at Camden at Malbone from general commercial to limited or neighborhood commercial.	DPD	Short-term
	Rezone the Times <sup>2</sup> Academy parcel from residential to public space.	DPD	Short-term



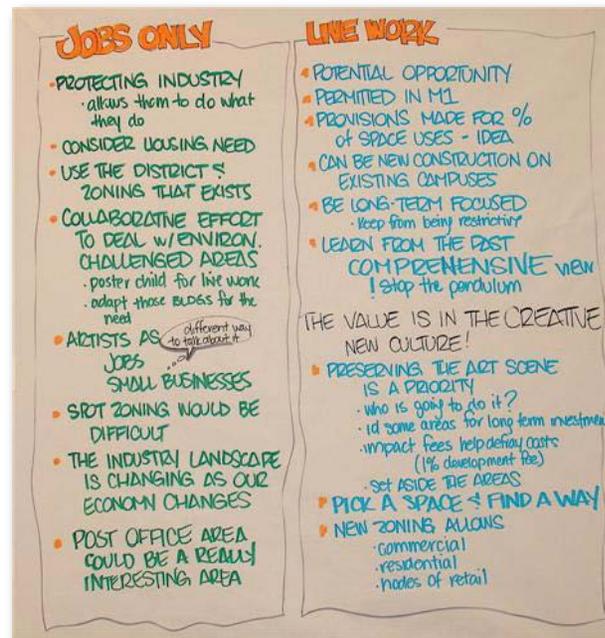


Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>Increase opportunities for business and job growth.</b>			
Promote business growth in the neighborhoods.	Work with the CPC to develop a commercial node centered on the parcels located between Hartford Avenue and Manton Avenue, as well as the parcels on the north east side of Manton Avenue from Tanyard Lane to Chaffee Street.	DPD	Short-term
	Change the zoning designation on the north side of Douglas Avenue from the Douglas/Orms intersection to the Douglas Chalkstone intersection, including the parcels on the westside of Delphi Avenue to Dan Street from Residential to Commercial in order to promote the continuation of the neighborhood commercial district along the street.	DPD	Short-term
	Publicize incentives available for job creation, such as the revolving loan fund.	DPD, RIEDC	Ongoing
	Promote business assistance programs such as technical assistance, storefront improvement grants and micro-loans, and the Neighborhood Markets Program.	DPD	Ongoing
	Work with the State to adjust regulations to the historic tax credit so that industrial owners can take advantage of the credits to improve their buildings.	DPD	Ongoing
	Partner with institutions such as Brown University and RISD to develop incubator spaces for local businesses in industrial buildings.	Community groups	Mid-term
	Develop an inventory of local businesses and services to distribute among neighborhood businesses to encourage local spending.	DPD	Underway
	Provide flea market outlets for cottage industries.	Community groups	Short-term
	Provide incubator space for neighborhood businesses.	Community groups	Short-term
	Promote neighborhood-serving businesses, such as markets, within walking distance of residents in all three neighborhoods.	DPD, Community groups	Ongoing
	Identify potential sites for farmers markets in the neighborhoods.	Community groups	Short-term
Assess means for providing more parking for businesses in Olneyville Square.	TED, DPD	Mid-term	

Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
Increase opportunities for business and job growth. (Cont.)			
Promote and expand job and training opportunities for neighborhood residents.	Work with community development corporations to develop an on the job training program in the community kitchen model, supplying local restaurants with prepared items.	Community groups	Mid-term
	Focus job training on skills needed for "green" jobs, such as weatherization and wind, bio-diesel and solar technology.	Community groups	Short-term
	Encourage cooperatives for interpretation and day laborer jobs.	Community groups	Short-term
	Promote the First Source program by distributing brochures and applications at neighborhood centers, meetings and events, and continue to promote job training opportunities sponsored through the First Source program to everyone on the First Source list.	DPD	Ongoing
	Work with the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) to develop a catalogue of existing job and training opportunities.	DPD	Short-term
	Work with the Hanley Career & Technology High School to expand vocational education and training programs to meet the needs of local industrial businesses.	Schools, Community groups	Short-term
Protect space for jobs in the neighborhood.	Implement the "Jobs Only" district through the zoning ordinance to protect existing industrial businesses and industrial areas.	DPD	Short-term
	Expand the "Jobs Only" designation to the mill buildings south of Olneyville Square between Dike Street and Magnolia Street, from Service Road Three to one parcel on the west side of Agnes St.	DPD	Short-term
	Maintain affordable industrial spaces.	Community groups	Ongoing
	Maintain the existing industrial base and discourage conversion to other uses such as office and residential.	DPD	Ongoing
Create a community that is welcoming to artists.			
Promote the Providence-based art market.	Examine ways to connect artisans with consumers, such as the development of an artisan directory.	Arts organizations, ACT	Short-term
	Identify opportunities to create additional market/retail space for artists.	Arts organizations, ACT	Short-term
	Analyze the possibility of creating an "arts district".	Arts organizations, ACT	Mid-term
	Consider extending existing tax incentives for artists in downtown and on the west side to other parts of the city.	Arts organizations, ACT	Short-term
Increase opportunities and access to safe and affordable housing for artists.	Examine ways in which live/work could be adjusted to meet the expanded needs of artists.	Arts organizations, DPD	Short-term
	Expand the existing AS220 model to other housing locations and arts organizations.	Arts organizations	Mid-term
Increase connections between artists and other organizations.	Connect artists with youth development organizations for the dual goals of youth education and artist employment.	Arts organizations, ACT	Mid-term

Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>Continue and expand efforts to restore and revitalize the Woonasquatucket River with a goal of being fishable and swimmable by 2025.</b>			
Strengthen the community's connection to the river.	Continue to organize neighborhood clean-ups of the River.	Community groups	Ongoing
	Develop community education programs regarding the importance of the river and how individuals can contribute to improving the overall environment.	Community groups	Ongoing
	Work with property owners along the river to identify potential locations for publicly accessible canoe and kayak launches.	Community groups, DPD	Ongoing
	Work with property owners to improve visual and physical access to the river as properties are improved.	CRMC, Community groups	Ongoing
	Promote and expand recreational opportunities along the river with designated areas for fishing and other water-based activities.	Community groups, RIDEM	Ongoing
	Continue to install fish ladders along the river, including Riverside Dam.	RIDEM	Ongoing
	Enhance the Woonasquatucket River Bikeway with amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians, such as pedestrian-scale lighting and food kiosks.	City, Community groups	Mid-term
Reduce river debris.	Investigate appropriate sites and install 4 to 6 additional trash receptacles in the Promenade area along the river, as well as recycling receptacles where feasible.	Community groups, DPW	Short-term
	Develop a community education program, including signs for the bikeway and storm inlets discouraging litter and dumping.	Community groups	Short-term
	Explore opportunities to establish a community recycling center.	Community groups, DPW	Mid-term
Improve the river edges.	Identify visual and physical access points and establish specific landscape and maintenance standards for those areas.	DPD, Parks	Short-term
	Manage invasive species and replace with native species where possible.	CRMC, Property owners	Ongoing
	Design infrastructure improvements to minimize opportunities for vandalism.	DPW	Ongoing
	Encourage appropriate visual access to the river along the Promenade through selective clearing, in consultation with the City Forester and CRMC.	Property owners	Ongoing
	Work with property owners to repair river walls.	Community groups	Ongoing
Improve water quality and reduce storm water flow into the river.	Consider amending regulations to apply guidelines that would require "green" approaches toward storm water management, reducing new storm water discharges.	DPD	Short-term
	Work with the Department of Environmental Management to identify strategies to reduce river sedimentation and siltation and improve river flow to reduce flooding.	Community groups, DPD	Short-term
	Develop and implement strategies to reduce surface runoff into river from surrounding streets and properties such as rain gardens and vegetated swales.	Community groups, DPD	Short-term

Initiatives/Projects	Actions	Project Lead	Target Date
<b>Improve access to and increase opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of open space.</b>			
Create opportunities for new parks, open spaces and community gardens.	Identify and evaluate the best locations for new community gardens and the level of sustained interest among residents in those areas to maintain and support community gardens, with the goal of creating three new gardens in the next five years.	Community groups	Short-term
	Work with community groups to identify additional beautification areas in the three neighborhoods, particularly on key corner sites, one site in particular need of beautification is the corner of Smith and Chalkstone (next to 7/11).	Parks, Community Groups	Short-term
	Construct the water park planned for Riverside Park and ensure ongoing maintenance of the waterpark.	Parks	Short-term
	Identify additional sites for water parks, playing fields and other recreational activities.	Community groups	Short-term
Improve neighborhood maintenance, programming and access to existing park spaces.	Complete installation of solar-powered lights at Donigan Park.	Parks	Completed
	Evaluate the lighting at the Candace Street Playground for potential upgrading.	Parks	Short-term



# OLNEYVILLE, VALLEY & SMITH HILL CHARTERETTE

DEC 3-6 2007

POLICY

- NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY
- HOUSING DEVELOPERS
- NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH
- NEIGHBORHOOD VISIONING

EMOTION

- MAJOR EMPLOYERS
- MAIN STREET BUSINESS OWNERS
- HOUSING
- ECON. DEVELOPMENT

FACTS

- ARTS IN THE NHOD
- THE WOODSQUATUCKET
- UNABLE NEIGHBORHOODS



WHAT PROCESS

RESPECTEN LAS OPINIONES DE CADA UNO; SIN GRITAR O BLOQUEAR OTROS PUNTOS DE VISTA ESPECIFICOS

GIVE EVERYONE A VOICE; NO SOUND-STANDING OR BLOCKING SPECIFIC POINTS OF VIEW

(PERSONA A CARGO) ESCRIBAN TODAS LAS IDEAS Y PUNTOS DE VISTA

(FACILITADOR) RECORD ALL IDEAS AND POINTS OF VIEW

DO YOU SPEAK SPANISH? ¿HABLA UD. ESPAÑOL?

GROUND RULES

A VECES SE PONE ALGO CAÓTICO, PERO SIGAN LA CORRIENTE NOS IRÉMO AJUSTANDO

USE LOS MARCADORES PARA EXPRESARSE

TALK WITH WORKERS!

EXPECT A LITTLE CHAOS BUT GO WITH THE FLOW we'll adjust!

EFFECT THAT POSITIVE CHANGE IS POSSIBLE AND LOOK FORWARD

PM PROVIDENCE TIMORON our city is our neighbor, our future

WALL GROUP 3-10 COM AGENDA 14-24

## MAJOR NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING CHARTERETTE

### EMPLOYERS

BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE ON HOW TO STRENGTHEN EXISTING BUSINESS & ATTRACT NEW BUSINESS

### CHALLENGES

- EMPLOYING PEOPLE: jobs available, immediate need
- THE RIGHT FIT FOR THE JOB: many over qualified, Spanish speaking is a plus, commodity prices have impacted margins & markets, finding new markets
- MILLS RELOCATING: DON'T NEED SUDEN SURPRISES! CONTH. OF LONG TERM PLANT, need to know the use or reuse or
- NEED TO SECURE PARKING
- INDUSTRIAL NEEDS PROTECTION: best location strategy
- SMALL BUSINESS CAN NOT PROTECT

### SUPPORTIVE ASPECTS

GREAT CITY GREAT PEOPLE IN THE SAME INDUSTRY FOR MANY YEARS LOTS OF PEOPLE RIDE THEIR BIKES TO WORK



### JOB DISTRICT

- 1 YEAR HORIZON... IS THERE SCENARIO PLANNING CONSIDERED?
- ASK THE PEOPLE IN THE CROSS HATCH... where do you want WORK ONLY? mixed use?
- ENGINE INDUSTRIAL DOES NOT GET PUSHED OUT FOR DES

### POSITIVE FEATURES

- GETTING NEIGHBORHOOD RECALL AND LOCAL TIES
- ZONING THAT WORKS
- SUBS OUT 2 MILLION/ YEAR TO LOCAL BC
- DRIVE ALONG T. AVE
- DRIVE TRASH EFFORT IS GOOD
- USING COMMUNITY IDEAS
- MANUFACTURING IS COMING BACK TO THE US (with jobs)
- BUSINESS NETWORKING

### OF WORKERS

- TECH SKILLS
- INDUATORS
- TRAINING
- CHEAP INDUSTRIAL SPACE
- INCORPORATE CHARTERETTE DISCU

### WE NEED PREDICTABILITY

SUPPORT INDUSTRY & LET THINGS EVOLVE

### INCUBATOR

TAX CREDITS FOR IMPROVEMENTS INVESTMENT

### HISTORICAL TAX CREDITS EXPILING?

rewards need to be dispersed

### TIMELY SNOW PLOWING

KEEP THINGS UP - the driver replace the concrete pay for the high parts? replace them

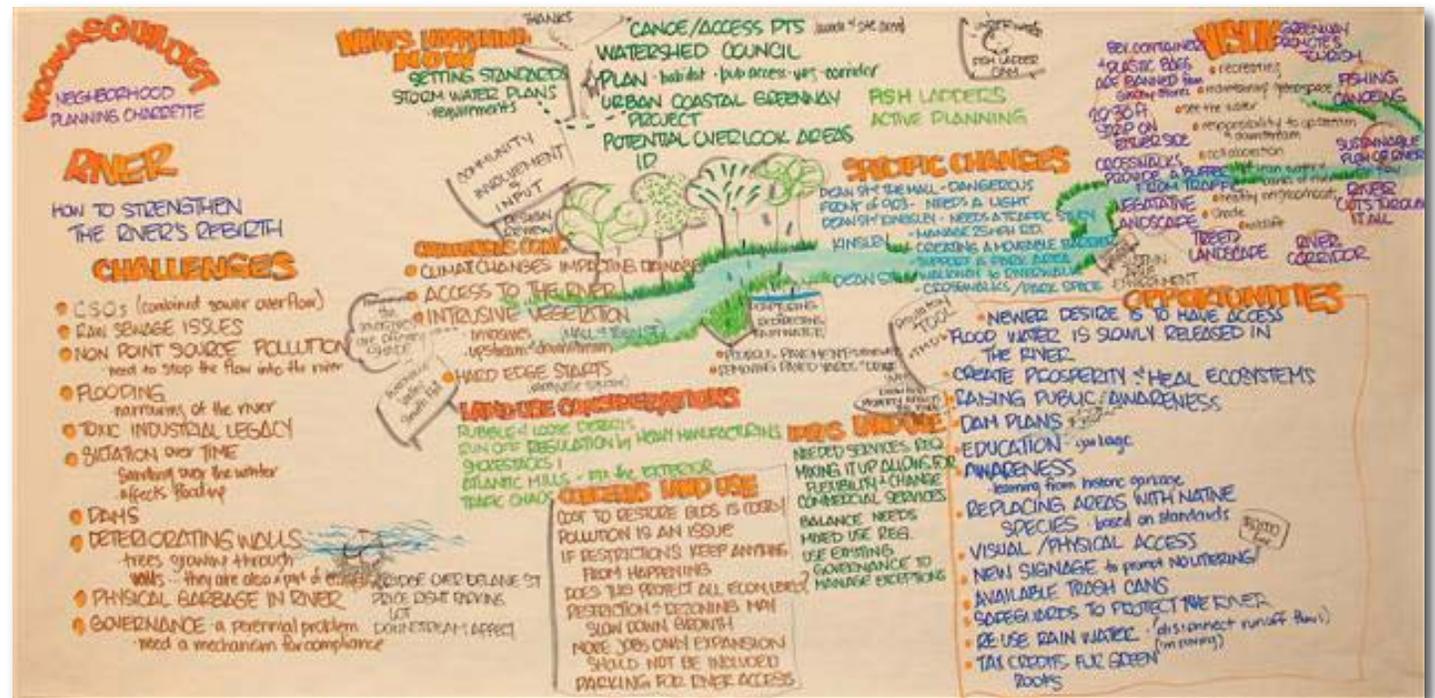
### WATER PRESSURE

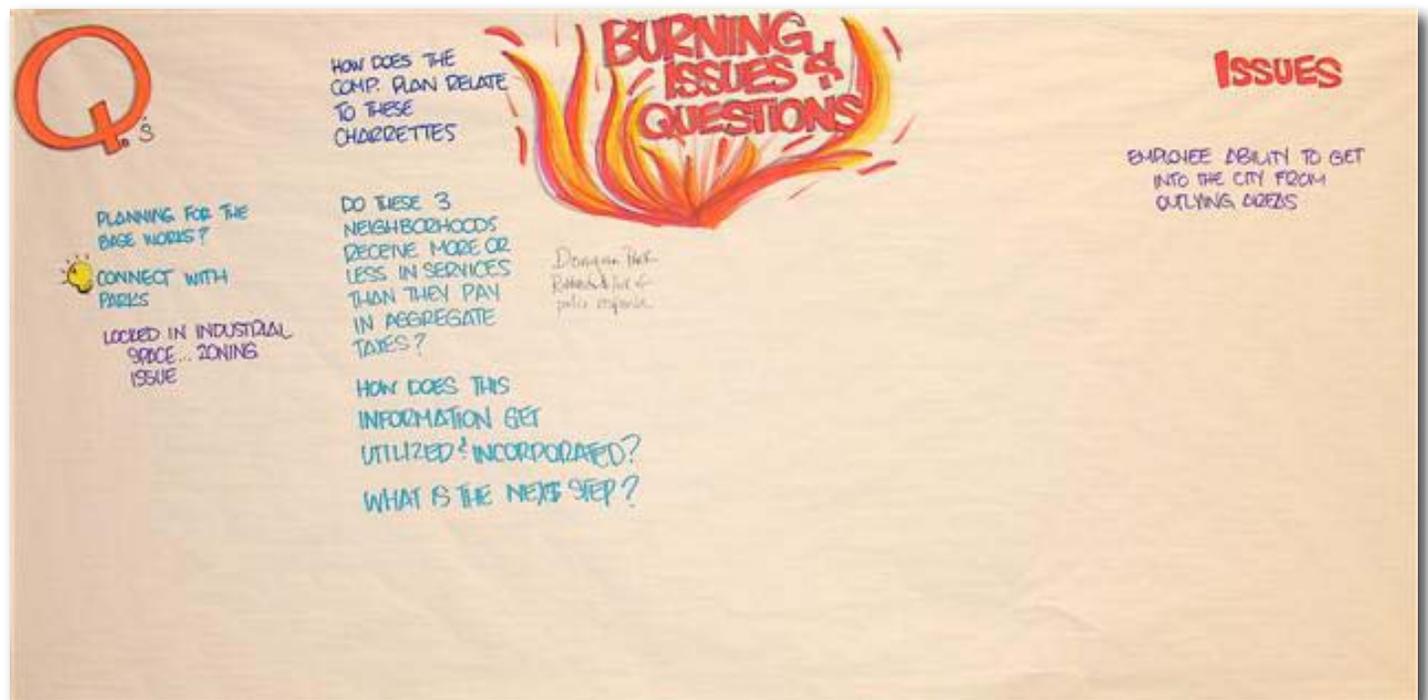
FIRE ALARMS

### PHYSICAL CHANGES

- RESIDENT UNDERSTANDING OF ZONING & ORDINANCE LANGUAGE (learn language)
- EDC IMPROVS MAKE FOR HARD TIMES
- OIL RESERVE IN THE OLD MILLS
- MONEY INVESTED IN STUDIES COULD BENEFIT BIZ
- GETTING PEOPLE TO THE CITY
- PHYSICAL UPKEEP ON BUILDINGS INDUSTRIAL FIRST/RES SECOND







## Next Steps

This plan is not meant to sit on a shelf - it is a guide to neighborhood action. City departments, neighborhood leaders and residents should use this plan to guide decisions in the neighborhood, and to prioritize funding and neighborhood improvement projects. The action plan sets out short-, mid- and long-term goals so that we can periodically check in to see how we are doing. The plan is also not a static document – it can and will be changed over time. New concerns, issues or conditions in the neighborhood will be reflected in updates to the plan. Finally, the plan will set out the course for amending zoning regulations that have impacts in the neighborhood.

Thank you to the charrette team and to the residents of Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill for participating in this effort, and to the Eagle Square Shopping Plaza for generously donating space for the charrette.

## The Charrette Team

Mayor David N. Cicilline

Councilwoman Josephine DiRuzzo

Councilman Terrence Hassett

Councilman Joseph DeLuca

ReVision Architecture

Thomas E. Deller, AICP, Director

Linda M. Painter, AICP, Deputy Director

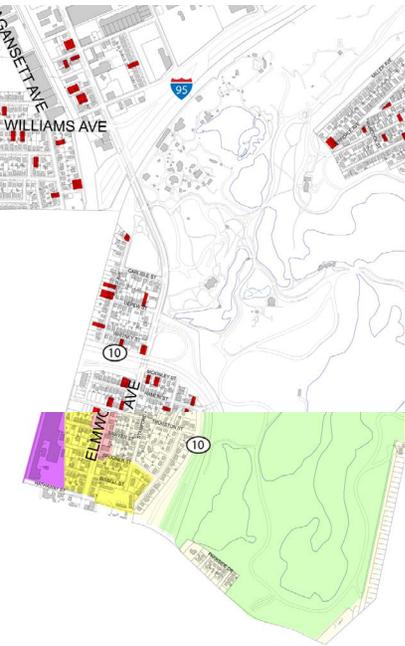
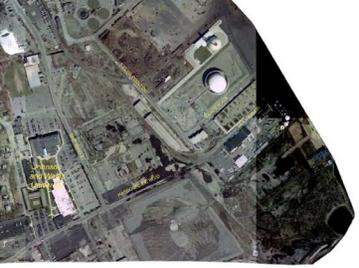
Bonnie Nickerson, AICP, Director of Long Range Planning

Melanie A. Jewett, AICP

Keelia Wright, AICP

David Everett





## APPENDIX - NEIGHBORHOOD DATA

# Neighborhood Boundaries

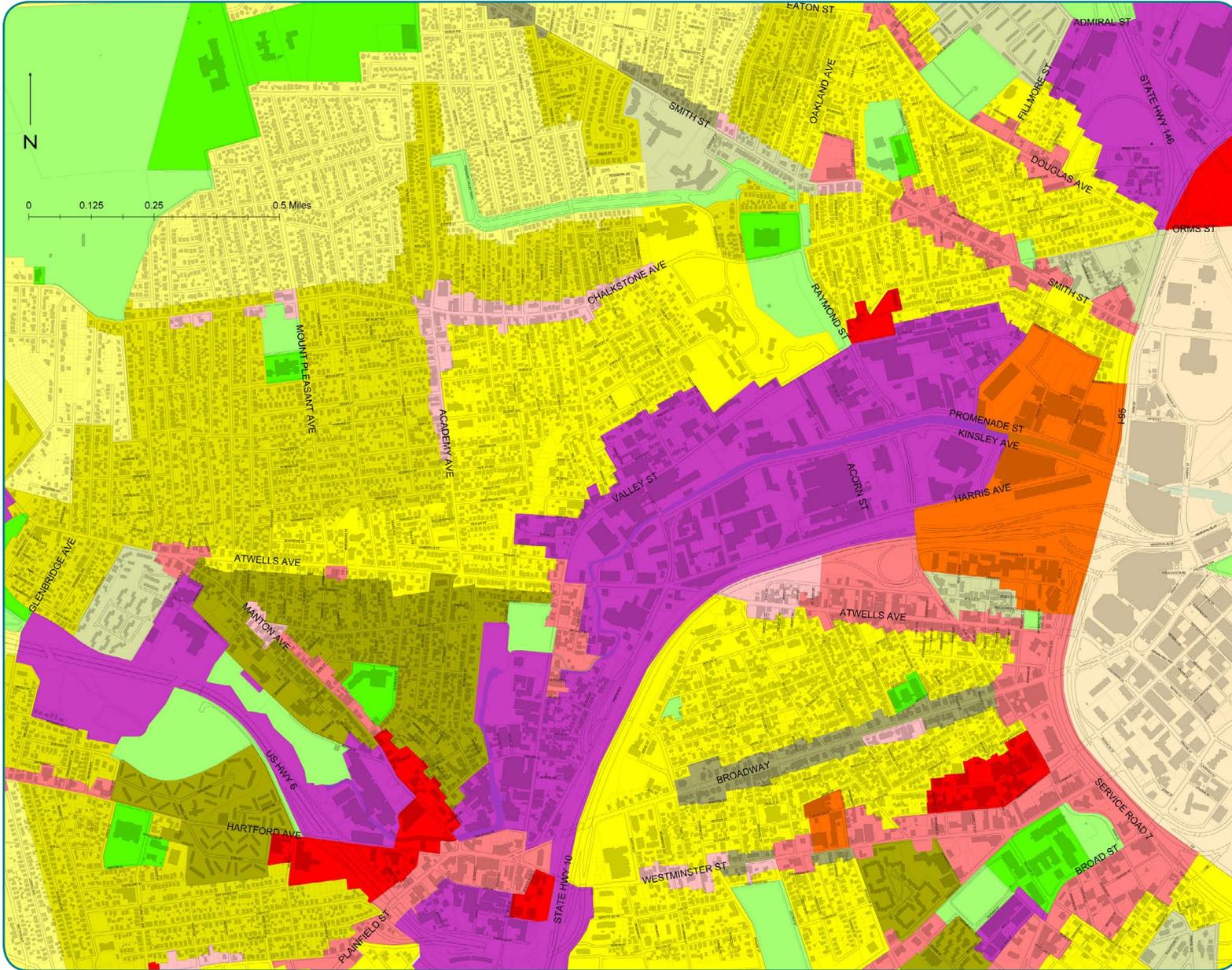


## Legend

- Neighborhood Boundary



# Current Zoning

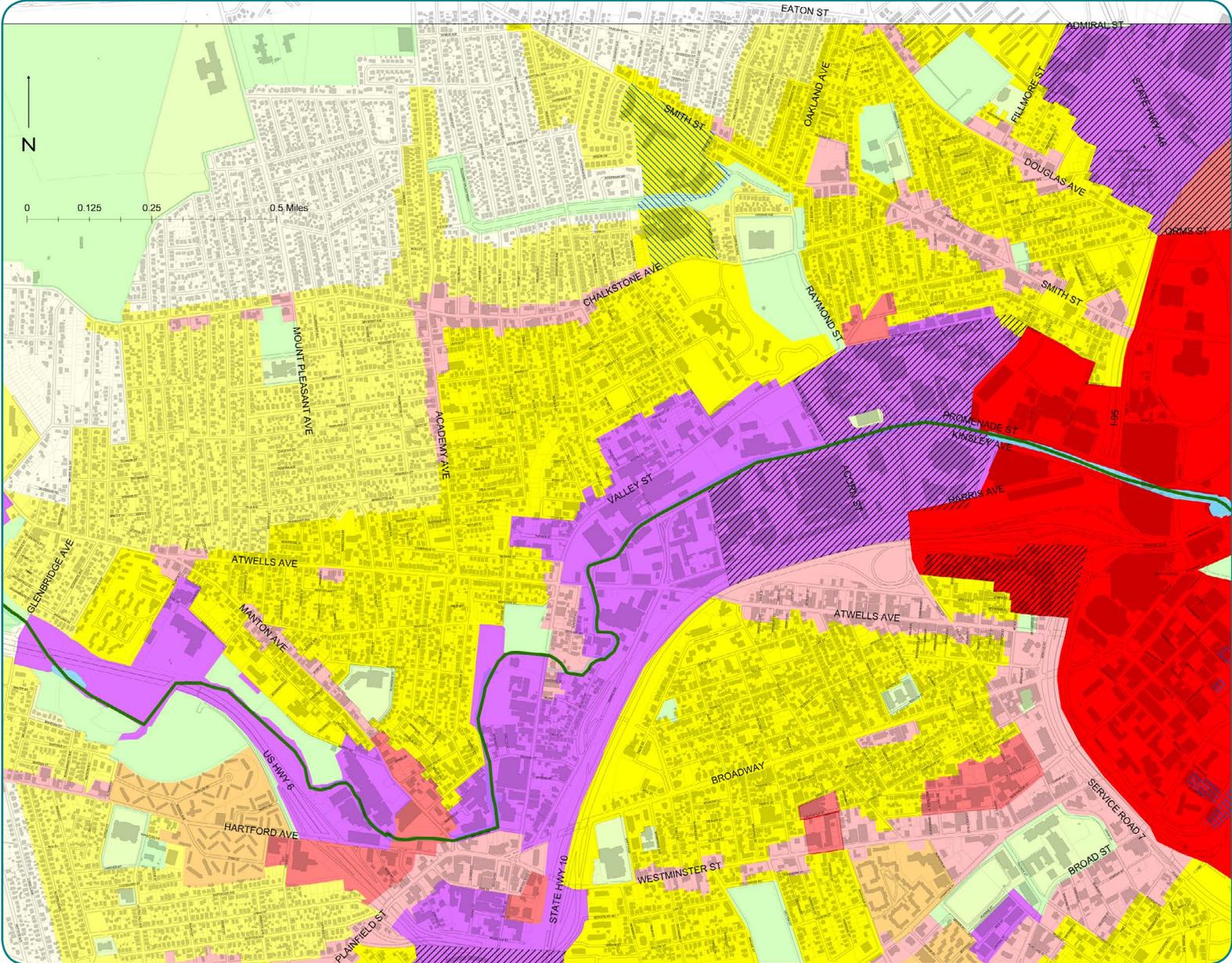


## Legend

R1	RG	C1	O.S.	D1-45	D1-150	D2	W1
R2	RM	C2	P.S.	D1-75	D1-200	M1	W2
R3	RP	C4	CD	D1-100	D1-300	M2	W3

June 2009

# Future Land Use

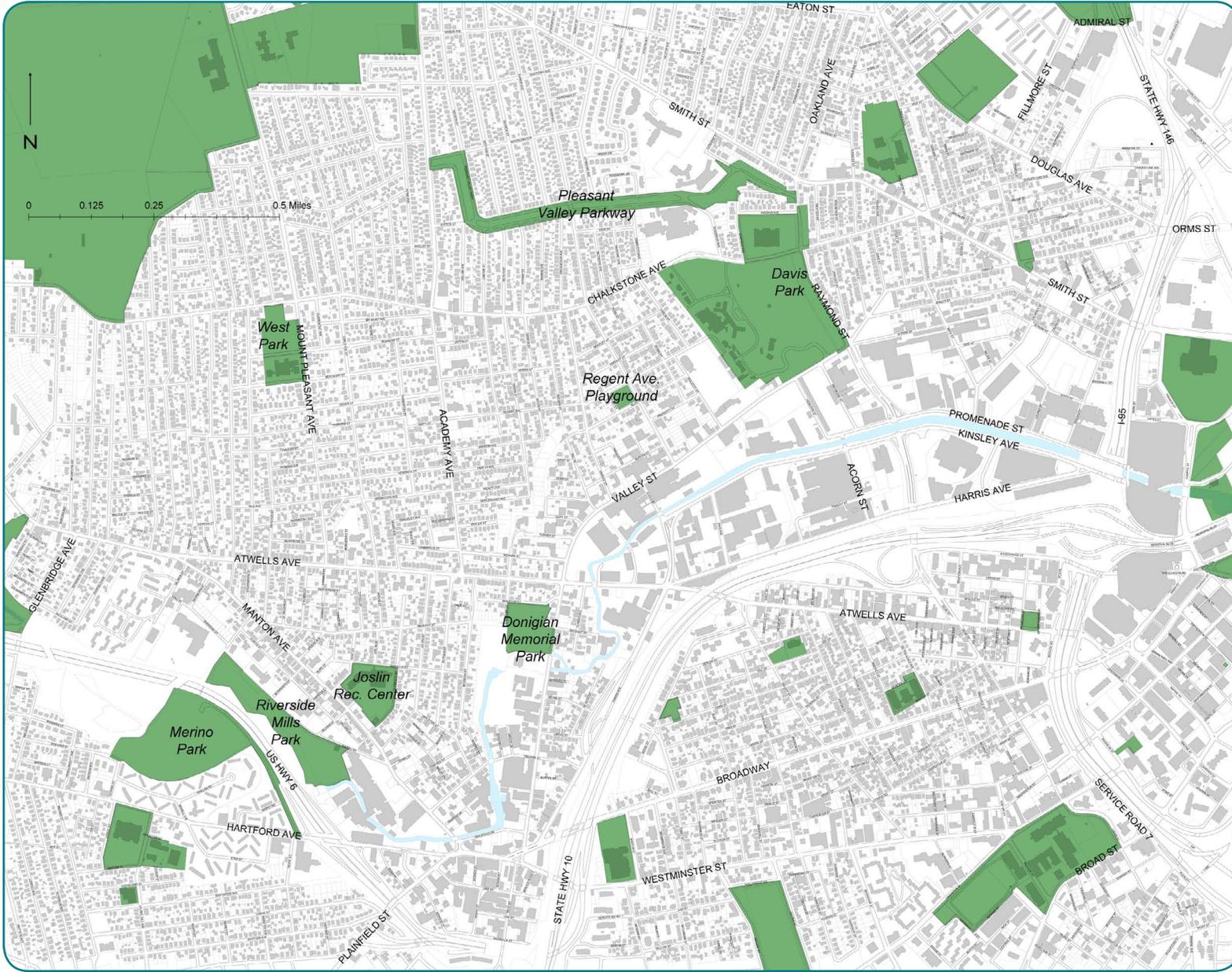


Legend

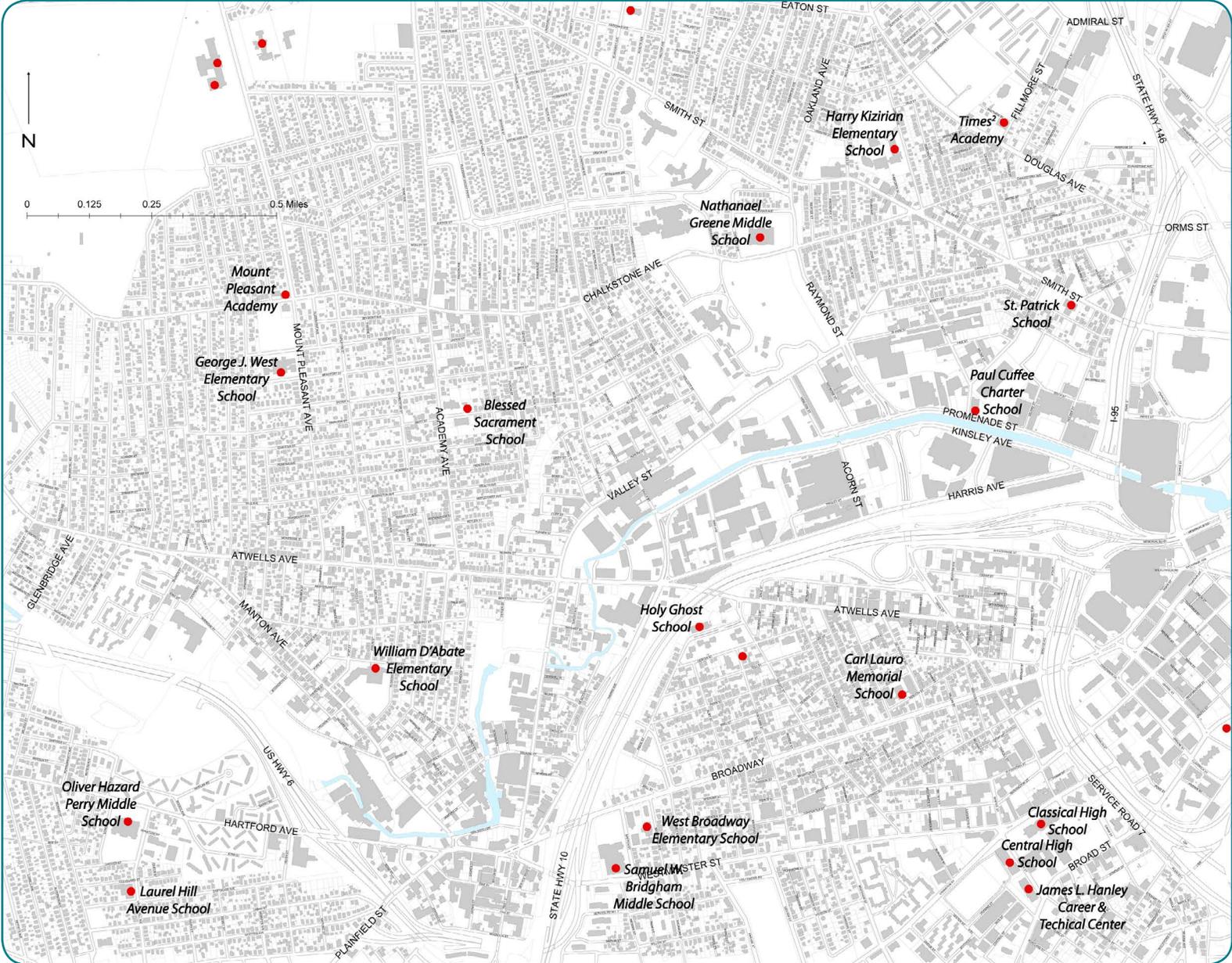
- |                    |                     |                        |                               |                         |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Institutional      | Low Density Res.    | Neigh. Comm./Mixed Use | Business/Mixed Use Waterfront | Waterfront/Port         |
| Jobs District      | Medium Density Res. | Gen. Comm./Mixed Use   | Mixed Use/Neigh.              | Public Space/Open Space |
| Single Family Res. | High Density Res.   | Downtown/Mixed-Use     | Waterfront Mixed Use/Gen.     | Conservation            |

December 2007 (Comprehensive Plan)

# Parks and Open Space



# Schools



# Historic Districts



## Legend

- Local Historic District
- National Register Historic District
- ICBD

# Street Tree Conditions

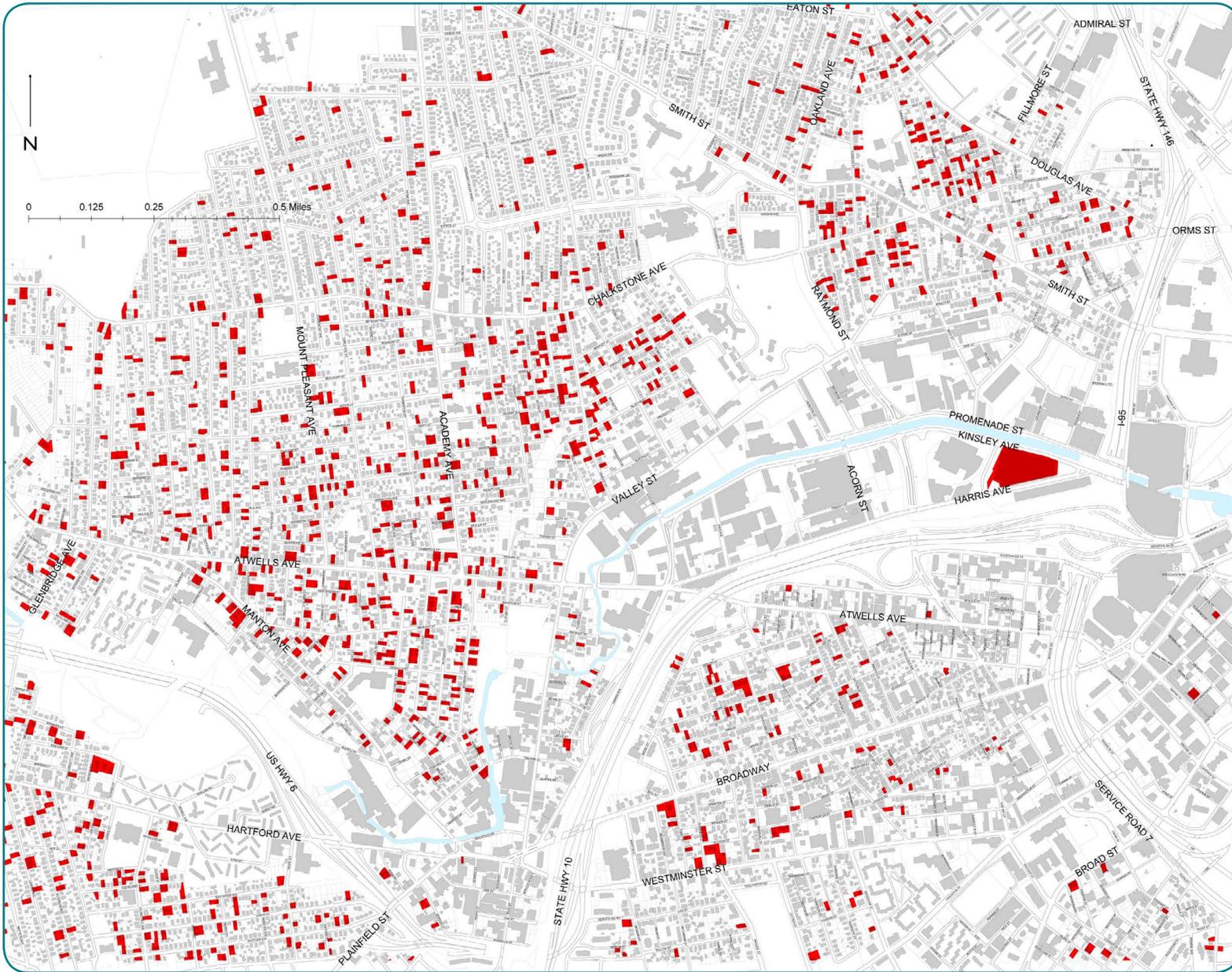


## Legend

- Excellent
- Fair
- Dead
- Empty Pit
- Good
- Poor
- Stump

March 2007

# Foreclosures

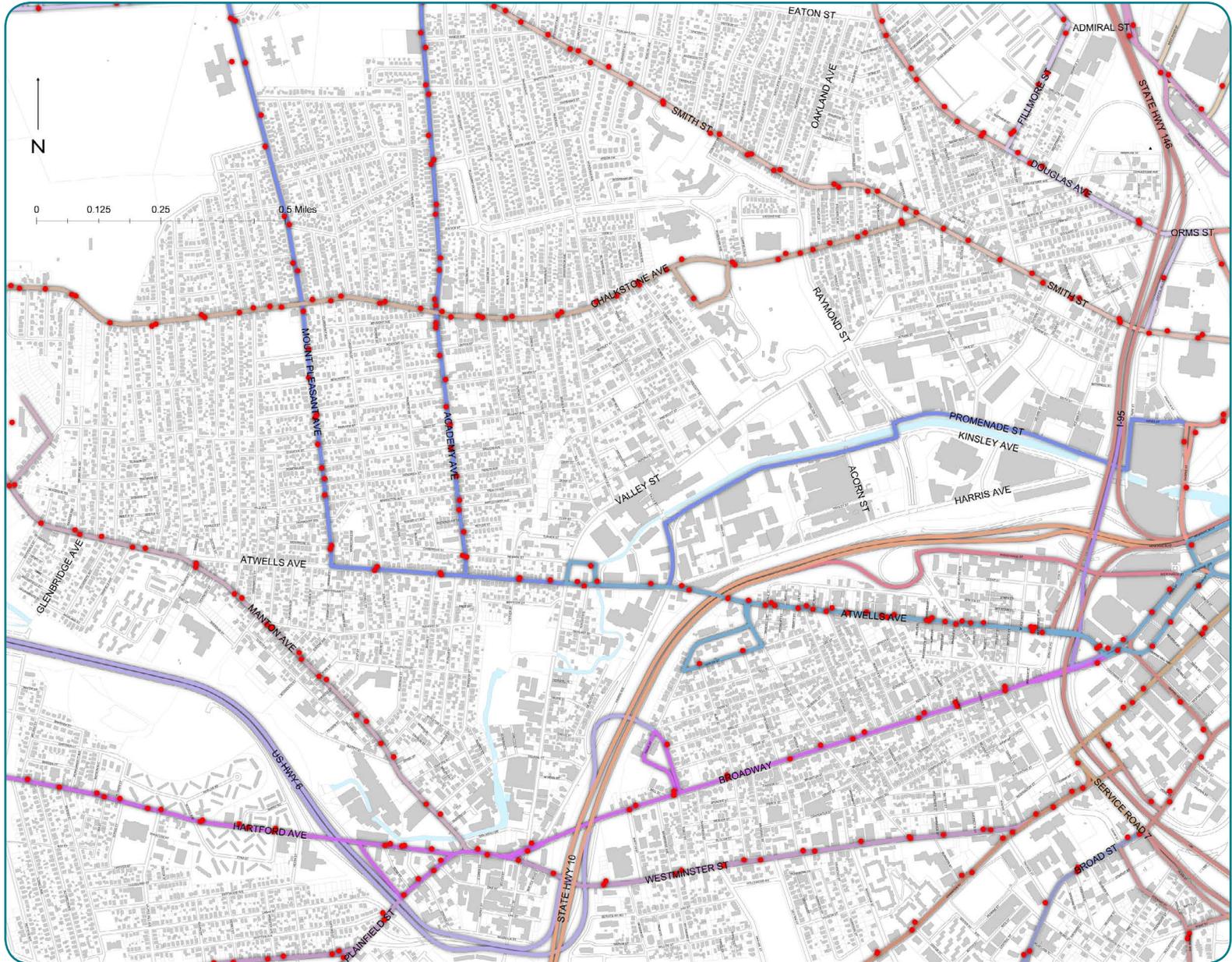


Legend

■ Foreclosure

January 1, 2006 - May 31, 2009

# RIPTA Routes



## Legend

- RIPTA stop
- RIPTA route

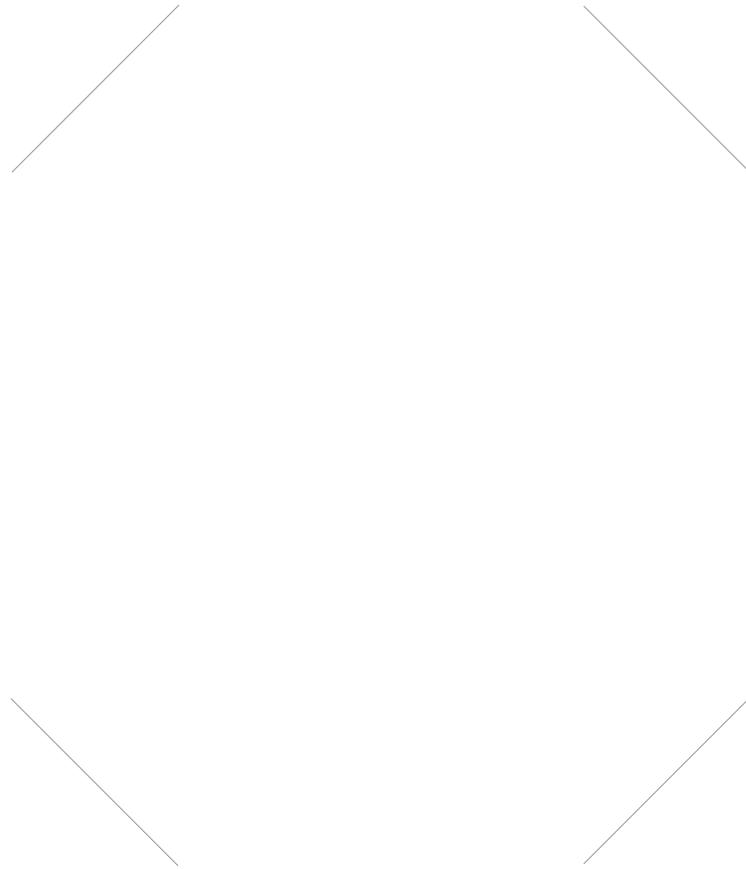


## APPENDIX - NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN MAP





# APPENDIX – DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW: WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER CORRIDOR







# PROVIDENCE TOMORROW

our city ■ our neighborhoods ■ our future

City of Providence, Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street, Providence RI 02906

Tel:(401) 351-4300

[www.providencetomorrow.org](http://www.providencetomorrow.org)