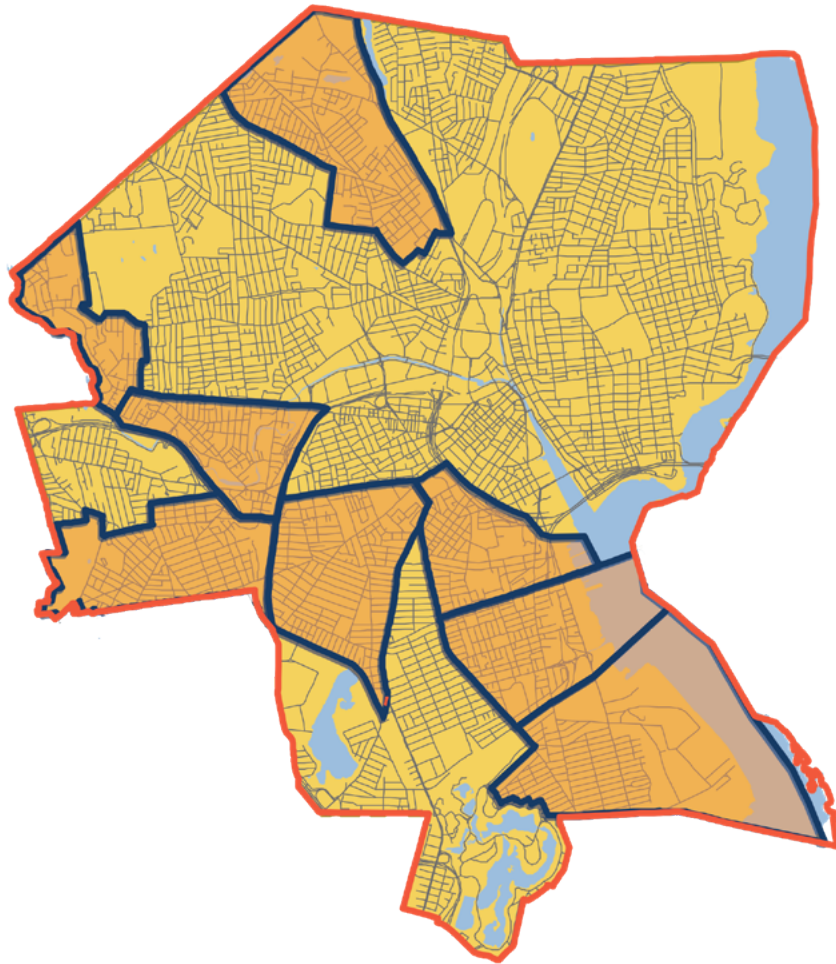


# Draft Zoning Assessment:

## Review of Zoning Regulations to Assist in Implementing the Climate Justice Plan





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## I. Introduction

The aim of this project is to advance recommendations of Providence's Climate Justice Plan (CJP) through strategic updates to the City's Zoning Ordinance. To understand how zoning can assist in implementing CJP policies, it is important to understand what can be addressed through zoning, and which aspects of the Plan would be more appropriate for implementation through other initiatives.

It is also important to acknowledge that state and federal statutes have a significant impact on local zoning, as they establish certain legal requirements and limitations for zoning that local governments must follow. The Rhode Island General Laws establish limitations on the scope of zoning regulations that local governments can enact. Federal statutes also impact local zoning; for example, the Fair Housing Act requires that zoning controls do not discriminate in housing regulations on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, or disability. Simply put, federal statutes control over state statutes, and state statutes control over local zoning. State level zoning laws and regulations supersede and pre-empt local zoning ordinances, which means that if a local zoning ordinance conflicts with state law, state law takes precedence. Supersession over local ordinances also applies to regulations created by state level commissions, such as the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CMRC), which has the authority to adopt and enforce regulations and policies related to development in the coastal zone, including zoning regulations.

### What Can Zoning Control?

As a framework for the proposed amendments within this Assessment, it is important to recognize what zoning can and cannot control.

#### **Zoning can:**

- Control the siting and dimensions of a building on a lot.
- Control the type of uses allowed on a lot/within a structure and impose reasonable conditions on those uses.
- Control the exterior design elements of a building.

#### **Zoning cannot:**

- Control the design and construction of the public right-of-way.
- Control the construction details and interior design of a building. This is controlled through the Building Code, which is separate and distinct from zoning.
- Control whether a building gets built. Zoning provides the permissions for what can be built on a lot, but this does not mean that such development will happen.
- Control whether a building gets torn down. There may be exceptions to this in certain areas, such as historic districts and Downtown that have a demolition review process, but these must be clearly defined parameters and include a public review process.
- Control the specific owner/operator of a use.
- Control the ownership of the use (rental, owned, condominium, etc.).

As the above outline indicates, zoning provides a menu of options for the development of a piece of private property in a district – the building envelope for a structure (height, setback, lot coverage) and, in some districts, certain elements of its design, as well as the range of uses that are appropriate for that district. Across a district, the same zoning rules and regulations are applied to all properties and individuals within the district without discrimination or bias. All individuals and property owners have equal opportunities to use and develop their properties within the bounds of the zoning regulations.

Zoning regulations can be divided into four categories, based upon types of regulation:

- **Requirements** which must be met as development occurs. Within the zoning ordinance, requirements are typically communicated with language such as “must” or “shall.”
- **Restrictions** that either prohibit or limit development. Restrictions are typically communicated within the ordinance with language such as “may not” or “shall not.”

- **Permissions** establishing actions that may be taken in accordance with the standards of the zoning ordinance. These may include permissions for uses, building forms, or other development activities, and are typically communicated with language such as “may.”
- **Incentives** offering alternative development options in exchange for adherence to specific conditions or standards. Incentives may include allowances for additional intensity of development, reductions in requirements, or the granting of additional permissions. (Of note, there are other incentives that exist outside of zoning, such as financial or tax incentives, that can encourage desirable land uses to located within targeted areas in Providence.)

A key principle of zoning, no matter that type, is rational nexus. Rational nexus is a legal concept that requires a connection or relationship between a zoning action and its public purpose. The rational nexus test requires that zoning be *rationaly* related to a legitimate government interest. Generally, policy documents, such as comprehensive plans, define these interests and shape the parameters of zoning regulations.

Rational nexus is important for the use of incentives in zoning to encourage development that meets public goals. It allows a city to balance by-right development rights with additional permissions to achieve defined goals. But zoning cannot use incentives punitively. For example, if a city would like to implement an incentive for affordable housing through a height bonus, it cannot create or lower the by-right height permission to a level that makes any development infeasible in order to force property owners to use the incentive.

This Assessment offers some potential zoning incentives to implement CJP policies. However, a broader slate of more nuanced incentives, typically seen in ordinances as bonuses for building height, density, and/or coverage, are outside the scope of this report. These require a detailed study of current development conditions and trends, and a larger Zoning Ordinance update, which would need to be supported by policies within the Comprehensive Plan.

### Zoning and Nonconformities

Nonconformities, in terms of zoning, refer to uses or structures that do not comply with current zoning. A nonconformity is a use or structure that was legally established under previous zoning regulations but does not conform to the requirements of the current zoning district. Nonconformities in Rhode Island, as well as throughout the country, are afforded protections in zoning. Generally, they are allowed to continue until the nonconforming use is abandoned or, in the case of a structure, damage or destruction of that building occurs.

This overview has been provided as the CJP has identified certain uses as being problematic, in particular certain heavy industrial uses within the Port of Providence. Generally, an ordinance will create a nonconforming use when that particular use is considered incompatible with the purpose and character of a zoning district. As may be self-evident, eliminating use permissions for port-related industrial uses within a port industrial district is a heavy lift as the uses are consistent with the purpose and character of the district and other agencies also have control over this area. Significant policy changes and related zoning changes, as will be discussed below, are needed in order to craft regulations that could potentially accomplish this.

### Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan

Rhode Island is considered a **consistency state**, which means that zoning regulations must be consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, which include land use policies. Per Rhode Island General Laws:

*§ 45-24-34 General provisions – Purpose and consistency with comprehensive plan. – (a) A zoning ordinance adopted pursuant to this chapter shall provide a statement of its purposes. Those purposes shall be consistent with § 45-24-30. A zoning ordinance adopted or amended pursuant to this chapter shall include a statement that the zoning ordinance is consistent with the comprehensive plan of the city or town adopted pursuant to chapter 22.2 of this title, or as otherwise provided below and shall provide that in the instance of uncertainty in the construction or application of any section of the ordinance, the ordinance shall be construed in a manner that will further the implementation of, and not be contrary to, the goals and policies and applicable elements of the comprehensive plan.*

Currently, *Providence Tomorrow (2014)* is the adopted comprehensive plan in effect, meaning that any changes to the City’s Zoning Ordinance must be consistent with the land use policies within that plan. As identified during this process, some significant policies included within the CJP are not currently addressed or supported within the framework of *Providence Tomorrow*, and as such cannot be legally implemented through zoning until the Comprehensive Plan is updated.

Fortuitously, as of the Summer of 2023, the City is currently in the early stages of updating *Providence Tomorrow*. This update is an important opportunity for the community and the City to work together in ensuring that items within the CJP that are broadly supported are reflected in the updated plan, creating a path for subsequent zoning changes in the future, should the plan be adopted. Acknowledging the opportunity presented by the comprehensive plan update, this assessment includes not only discussion of those items which can be implemented through zoning right now, but identification of some significant items within the CJP that require policy support in an updated Comprehensive Plan, providing a road map for some critical decisions that are best addressed within that process.

For more information –  
Providence Comprehensive Plan Update Process:  
<https://plan.providenceri.gov/>

**Organization of this Report**

While this project is focused specifically on potential zoning ordinance changes that can be undertaken now to help implement certain policies of the CJP, this Assessment highlights how other policies can be implemented in the future. A key is provided below each topic area as follows:

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>An amendment to the current Zoning Ordinance that can be undertaken in the near term.</i>
<b>Other Ordinances</b>	<i>Potential revisions to other City ordinances that can help to implement CJP policies.</i>
<b>Comprehensive Plan Action</b>	<i>Policies within the CJP that need support within the Comprehensive Plan in order to create regulatory changes.</i>





## II. Potential Zoning Actions

Potential Ordinance amendments that can implement components of the Climate Justice Plan are organized around the following categories: Transportation + Connectivity; Open Space + Landscape; Stormwater + Flooding; Housing; Administration; and Uses.

The sections below provide a brief introduction to each category and outline any current updates being undertaken by the City, as well as potential additional zoning actions that can implement related policies of the CJP.

### TRANSPORTATION + CONNECTIVITY

The City's transportation networks and focus on connectivity play an integral role in Providence's climate resilience framework. The reduction of reliance on fossil fuels across these networks can be encouraged by careful planning of transportation infrastructure promoting the use of alternative fuels, access to public transportation, and urban design patterns that increase and encourage active modes of transportation. Such changes can help to reduce health disparities that result from hazardous air pollutants, the single largest source of which is combustion of fossil fuels to power automobiles.

#### *Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations*

The State of Rhode Island recently adopted legislation that requires parking facilities over a certain number of spaces to install electric vehicle spaces. This would apply to new construction of parking facilities and expansion of current facilities over a certain percentage.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Update Ordinance to include the State's electric vehicle requirements.</i>
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#### *Increased Connectivity*

##### **Land Development Project Process**

The City has already undertaken numerous actions that increase connectivity throughout Providence. The Department of Planning has exempted certain districts from parking requirements and continues to look at zoning requirements to increase connectivity and multi-modal transportation (bike, pedestrian, public transit) and place less emphasis on automobiles.

To continue to support these efforts, the land development project process (Section 1904 of the Ordinance) affords applicants incentives to implement City goals through modification of certain required dimensional and design standards. Currently these incentives are available to developments where housing for low- and moderate-income families is provided, or when other amenities not required by Ordinance are provided. Proposed developments that meet the following thresholds are required to undergo review: new construction of 10,000 square feet or more in gross floor area; additions or enlargements of 10,000 square feet or more to existing structures; construction of new gross floor area that creates ten or more dwelling or rooming units; or construction of 50 or more new parking spaces. Increased connectivity standards can be added to the review criteria for allowed modifications.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Include review criteria for site designs that create pathways through and along a development for pedestrians and/or bicyclists, as well as internal connections to larger pedestrian/bicyclist paths outside the development. Review criteria should also include site designs that offer safe circulation patterns to public transit stops as well as private amenities such as transit stop shelters.</i>
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##### **Cross-Access**

The current Ordinance allows for a reduction in required parking through the use of a shared parking formula. Cross-access easements (i.e., a connection between adjoining parking lots) are also able to take advantage of that formula to reduce required parking spaces. In addition to a reduction in parking, cross-access easements can reduce the number of curb cuts and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment along the street. As opposed to the current application of the shared parking formula, provision of cross-access could be further incentivized through offering a straightforward decrease in the amount of required parking.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Include a percentage reduction in required parking for developments with cross-access easements.</i>
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**Design Standards**

The convenience, visibility, and accessibility of multi-modal infrastructure are important factors in making alternative modes of transportation viable and appealing. Additional design standards for new development can enhance the appeal of the City’s multi-modal network by acknowledging the presence of transit stops, bike lanes, greenways and other features within a certain proximity, through the orientation of building entrances and design.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Include design standards that encourage building entrances to be oriented to transit stops and other multi-modal infrastructure in proximity to new development, in addition to encouraging the design of building facades that incorporate transit stops and bus shelters as part of their plazas and similar elements.</i>
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**Truck Idling Performance Standards**

Truck idling, especially when abutting residential areas, is a noxious activity. There is currently a state law regarding this issue - Rhode Island Diesel Engine Anti-Idling Program (250-RICR-120-05-45) – which prohibits excessive idling. As a state law, this is an issue of enforcement rather than a zoning action. In order to further protect residential areas from this activity, the Ordinance can address on-site truck activity areas by requiring loading areas to be sited away from adjacent residential areas, requiring these areas to be a certain number of feet from any shared lot line. In addition, within the performance standards (Section 1304 of the Ordinance), the state law can also be specifically referenced.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Require on-site loading areas to be distanced from residential areas.</i>  <i>Include a reference to the Rhode Island Diesel Engine Anti-Idling Program within the Ordinance’s environmental performance standards.</i>
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**OPEN SPACE + LANDSCAPE**

Increasing and preserving open space, prioritizing green infrastructure, and focusing on ecological restoration are key measures recommended in the CJP. In addition to the myriad environmental and pollution mitigation benefits these elements provide, thoughtful landscape regulations can address issues of compatibility between adjacent uses, and buffer or minimize any potential negative external impacts of incompatible uses.

**Landscape Standards**

The current Ordinance encourages the use of native landscape (“All plant materials shall be of good quality and meet American Association of Nurserymen (AAN) standards for minimum acceptable form, quality, and size for species selected, and capable to withstand the seasonal temperature variations of Rhode Island, as well as the individual site microclimate. The use of species native or naturalized to Rhode Island is encouraged.”). This can be strengthened to require native species, building off existing resources such as the “Providence Tree List” from the Department of Public Parks. In addition, species diversity is required but does not include specific standards that would guarantee such a mix of species. This diversity increases resiliency in the City’s ecosystems by ensuring that if one species experiences decline due to climate or other ecological factors, the system remains robust.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Include specific requirements for the use of native species, which could be initiated with the use of the “Providence Tree List.” Include a formula that guarantees a resilient mix of species (species diversity) to ensure the long-term health and efficacy of buffers and other open space resources.</i>
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**Buffer Yards**

Buffer yards are dedicated planting areas comprising trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and other plantings located along lot lines shared by incompatible uses, such as residential and industrial uses. Buffer yards can offer numerous benefits:

- Buffer yards can mitigate a number of impacts and provide a visual screen between incompatible land uses. They can also create privacy between neighboring properties, particularly for residential uses.
- Buffer yards can help to attenuate noise levels between different land uses.
- The plantings and green space that compose buffer yards can help to slow and infiltrate stormwater, and improve water quality by filtering out pollutants. They can also improve air quality by catching and filtering airborne pollutants such as dust and other particulate matter.

Currently, Section 1506 (Screening of Parking Lots from Residential Districts) provides for a type of buffer yard (“Where a parking area in any district abuts a lot in a residential district, the parking area shall be screened by a solid wall, a uniformly painted tight board fence, or a hedge of compact evergreens or other suitable plantings.”). This provides a screen but does not provide the true benefits of a buffer yard, which, as stated above, is larger and designed with significant plantings. A new buffer yard requirement would benefit the City, particularly in those areas where more intensive uses abut less intensive uses.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Require a buffer yard between incompatible uses (residential vs. nonresidential/industrial) on larger sites that can accommodate such buffer. The integration of stormwater management techniques should be encouraged in the buffer yard.</i>
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**STORMWATER + FLOODING**

The City must take action now to prepare for the long-term impacts of climate change. With a dense built environment located on a major estuary, extreme heat and flooding are of major concern to Providence. As discussed in the CJP, adaptive zoning actions can help to mitigate potential impacts of climate related hazards.

Of note, Providence’s stormwater management is a layered control comprising a City ordinance, a state ordinance, and additional controls from commissions such as the Narragansett Bay Commission. It exists outside of the Zoning Ordinance and therefore is outside the purview of this Assessment. However, it is recommended to continue to review, evaluate, and potentially revise the City’s stormwater management ordinance to ensure consistency between all levels of control and address any City specific issues related to its implementation and effectiveness.

<b>Other Ordinances</b>	<i>Continue to review, evaluate, and potentially revise the City’s stormwater management ordinance. In particular, green infrastructure* techniques and low impact development** should be considered as part of an updated stormwater ordinance.</i>
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\* Green infrastructure stormwater management utilizes a combination of techniques and features that work together to slow down the flow of stormwater, remove pollutants, and promote infiltration. This includes rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, and rainwater harvesting, among others.

\*\* Low-impact development (LID) is defined by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as “systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration, or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat.” LID is a technique that is implemented on a site specific basis, as the design must be tailored to existing site conditions and constraints.

**Elevation Zoning Techniques**

Elevation zoning is a method of control that seeks to protect areas most likely to be affected by flooding, and to direct intensive development in a manner that minimizes risk from the impacts of sea level rise, increased precipitation, and the evolving impacts of stormwater runoff. Elevation-based zoning regulations may, for instance, require new development within defined areas to be constructed at or above a certain base flood elevation, or specifically designed with measures that protect against impacts of flooding, such as wet floodproofing. Calibrating the standards correctly requires modeling of conditions and testing of regulations to ensure that they are fine-tuned to the varied geographical areas within Providence. Elevation zoning is a specific type of zoning that is distinct from building requirements within flood zones. This new zoning technique is not in wide use at this time, but cities like Charleston, South Carolina have established policy for its implementation in their recently adopted Comprehensive Plan and zoning update currently underway.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>As part of this Assessment, there are no specific recommendations for implementation of elevation zoning. This type of zoning tool requires additional research and modeling to determine the proper standards.</i>
<b>Comprehensive Plan Action</b>	<i>In addition, it is best to implement when adopted policies, such as those within the Comprehensive Plan, specifically call for its use and can support the additional studies needed at both the state and local level</i>

## HOUSING

The CJP policies related to housing within the City of Providence are comprehensive. They address issues of affordability, energy efficiency, and anti-displacement strategies. Ensuring access to housing that is affordable, energy efficient, and that protects current neighborhood residents is a necessary step in achieving climate justice and reducing the City's overall carbon footprint. Though housing issues are not addressed solely by zoning, there are a number of zoning actions that may facilitate an increase in housing supply within Providence:

- Allowing for more density and more height in critical areas, such as those where transit is present or envisioned, can be a powerful tool to create new housing units in the community. The current zoning structure may not clearly articulate a vision for this type of development within the City; moving forward, an enhanced palette of residential districts may be a powerful tool to target areas of the City that are appropriate for a denser, urban development pattern.
- Conversely, thinking smaller can also provide new, more affordable housing options. In the City's neighborhoods, a few alternative development forms should be considered to allow for creativity and flexibility in the development of new housing types to meet a variety of needs and preferences. These may include regulations pertaining to accessory dwelling units – to clarify where and how they are allowed to be developed within the City.
- The City may wish to consider including standards for cottage courts or pocket neighborhoods. These forms allow for small lot residential development in a manner that organizes various dwelling types around a common courtyard or shared open space, designed as a cohesive whole and maintained in shared stewardship by residents. Such a development form can also incentivize the creation of smaller, potentially more affordable units through provisions that encourage smaller square footage in exchange for additional development potential. Cottage court development is intended to create a gentle increase in density in single-family neighborhoods, allowing for single-family homes on lots that are smaller than the district standards. It is not intended for higher density and multi-family districts. Specific development standards for the development as a whole are included within the ordinance to ensure a coordinated and cohesive development.
- The City's regulations need to encourage and/or facilitate the development of middle density housing – those forms of housing falling between traditional detached single-family and more intense multi-family or mixed-use development. These forms of housing are a critical tool in providing expanded housing options in a manner that respects established neighborhood context.

### Comprehensive Plan Action

*These types of zoning actions need to be backed by adopted housing policy that provides clear guidance as to their proper implementation, which is typically part of a Comprehensive Plan.*

*The City's Planning Department is currently evaluating ways to create more housing within Providence, which can provide a policy framework that works in tandem with updates to the Comprehensive Plan.*

*In addition, the City adopted the Anti-Displacement and Comprehensive Housing Strategy in February 2021. This will inform the housing strategies the City will undertake, including zoning updates.*

*Please visit the following site to view the plan:*

<https://www.providenceri.gov/planning/comprehensive-housing-strategy/>

**ADMINISTRATION**

Community participation is an integral part of collaborative governance. In order to build long-term sustainability and equity in Providence, robust engagement must be integrated into land use and zoning processes city-wide.

***Additional opportunities for neighborhood input***

Requiring a neighborhood meeting prior to a formal submittal of a proposed development project can provide an important opportunity for neighborhoods that may be impacted by new development. During a pre-development neighborhood meeting, developers present their concept plans and solicit feedback from attendees. This meeting is conducted by the developer and would not be the responsibility of the staff. Community feedback must be documented and included as part of the formal submittal of the application so that the official bodies who are responsible for recommending and approving the development are able to assess the proposal within the context of the neighborhood’s dialogue regarding the project.

If a neighborhood meeting requirement is included as part of the ordinance, it is key that it be limited to projects over a certain size threshold that would have significant impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, it is important to note that such a meeting is for informational purposes only and intended to gather feedback. No comments made such meeting are binding upon the developer or the official bodies who will be approving the proposed.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Require a neighborhood meeting as part of larger development projects within the land development project and City Plan Commission development plan review approval processes. This standard would include requirements for timing of the meeting, notice, rules for conduct of the meeting and documentation of input and attendance, and the inclusion of such documentation as a part of the formal submittal. A project threshold will need to be established to determine which developments would be subject to such a requirement.</i>
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***Membership of the Interdepartmental Review Committee***

Providence has the Interdepartmental Review Committee (IRC) comprising City officials and staff who review development proposals and provide technical feedback. The purpose of the IRC is to ensure that proposed developments comply with local regulations and standards, and to identify and address any potential issues or concerns early in the planning process.

Developers are required to submit their proposed plans for review before they can proceed with their projects. The IRC provides feedback and make recommendations to the developers, which may include suggested changes to the design or layout of the proposed development, or requests for additional information.

Membership of the IRC can be expanded to include a member of the Sustainability Commission, to provide feedback and recommendations that reflect the policies of the Sustainability Department and the policies of the CJP. It is important to note that this review is structured to ensure that there is compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and other codes, and that recommendations for additional changes outside of that scope are provided only as recommendations and are not binding.

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Expand IRC membership to include representation from the Sustainability Commission and/or Sustainability Department.</i>
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**USES**

Uses allowed within the Ordinance have direct impact on environmental sustainability and quality of life. New types of sustainable uses, such as clean energy and local food production, should be broadly permitted throughout the City with standards flexible enough to accommodate new technologies.

In addition, many of the CJP policies have a particular focus upon industrial uses and other polluting and potentially hazardous uses and their impacts on the City, specifically the neighborhoods that surround these areas. While a number of the use-related policies within the CJP require additional planning efforts or adjustments to the City’s Comprehensive Plan, there are a number of actions that can be taken now to begin mitigating some of these impacts.

**Sustainable Uses**

There are several new uses that can be integrated into the Ordinance, whether as principal or accessory uses, that provide opportunities for increased sustainability, energy efficiency, and/or new technologies. Initial evaluation of the current use structure has indicated that the following uses could be added to the Ordinance:

1. The current permissions for accessory structures, including those within the permitted encroachments, are quite permissive and cover a broad range of sustainability-focused uses. However, one newer use that the Ordinance does not currently address is “powerwalls” - rechargeable lithium-ion battery stationary home energy storage products. Typically mounted on a wall, these structures require permissions for encroachment into required setbacks. For example, encroachment may be limited to a total of 25% of the wall area.
2. Individual composting is allowed, but the Ordinance should address permissions for other composting operations. Neighborhood/local composting services should be added to the use matrix. These are uses that function as a central location where residents can drop off their food scraps, yard waste, and other organic materials. It is important to note that all such facilities must comply with the Rhode Island Solid Waste Regulation No. 8, Rhode Island Organic Waste Recycling Facilities (Composting Regulations) (250-RICR-140-05-8)
3. The Ordinance should encourage the establishment of clean/green industrial uses. Clean/green industrial uses refer to industrial processes, products, and services designed to minimize environmental impact, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote sustainable practices. However, these uses would currently be considered one of the current industrial categories (light or general) so further evaluation is required to see if either of these categories, in practice, have excluded these types of uses.
4. Regulations for solar panels have occasionally conflicted with the design guidelines of historic preservation, particularly in terms of location. While the review and guidelines of the Providence Historic District Commission (HDC) are outside of this Assessment and the Zoning Ordinance, continued discussion with the HDC to allow for more flexibilities in the location and design of solar panels is recommended.

<b>Zoning Action (Items 1-3)</b>	<i>Continue to evaluate the use structure and incorporate sustainable uses as identified above</i>
<b>Other Ordinances (Item 4)</b>	<i>Work with the HDC to create more opportunities and flexibilities to incorporate solar panels on historic structures.</i>

**Industrial Uses**

Heavy industrial uses, generally those within the categories of General Industrial and Tank Farm in the Ordinance use structure, have significant environmental impacts and are a major concern of the CJP. As is the case nationwide, emission levels and other environmental impacts are primarily regulated by state and federal agencies. Municipalities rely on the permits issued, and the reviews and inspections conducted by these agencies to regulate the impacts and enforce compliance.

In Providence, permitting and enforcement of emission control does not fall under zoning authority, and is outside of the purview of this study. However, a few municipalities have started to look at the environmental impacts of development as part of the zoning approval process. The intent is to assess potential impacts from new development or expansion of existing operations on air quality prior to establishment of the use. Such assessment is in addition to



that required by state and federal authorities. Outlined below are two recent examples - Chicago, Illinois and Camden, New Jersey.

***Chicago, Illinois***

In March of 2021, the City of Chicago adopted an Air Quality Ordinance which incorporates performance standards as part of plan review for heavy industrial uses. The regulations create a review process and expanded public review opportunities for intensive manufacturing and industrial operations. For reference, the following uses are subject to this ordinance: Class III/IVA/IVB/V recycling, container storage, freight terminal, intensive manufacturing, production, and industrial service, outdoor storage of raw materials, as a principal use, warehousing, wholesaling, and freight movement, waste-related uses, coke and coal bulk material uses, windrow composting, and manganese bearing material uses. In addition to review against zoning regulations, public health (air quality) and transportation elements are reviewed. An air quality control plan and a traffic impact study are required in addition to standard site plan submittals.

More specifically, per the City of Chicago: “The air quality impact study will model potential emissions from the business and its proposed operations. Applicants will use air modeling software, such as the U.S. EPA’s AERMOD and EPA MOVES, to evaluate emissions from various sources, such as processing equipment, diesel engines of yard and on-road vehicles, paved and unpaved surfaces, material handling, and wind erosion of stockpiles. In addition to a written report, applicants will submit data files for review by CDPH.”

What is important to note is that the air quality impact study is reviewed by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH). CDPH offers opportunities for public comment as part of its review process and the recommendation is sent to the City’s Zoning Administrator to be included as part of the final site plan review recommendation.

Because the expertise for analysis of a study of this sort is found outside of the planning department, implementation of such an additional layer of review and approval requires coordination with other departments and the adoption of a separate ordinance, as Chicago has done.

***Camden, New Jersey***

Camden includes an environmental impact assessment (EIA) as part of site plan review for certain uses. This requirement emerged from planning efforts the City undertook to address environmental justice on a comprehensive level. The City requires an EIA to be prepared by a licensed professional engineer or planner. It must describe the proposed development, as well as benefits to the public which will result from the proposed project, the suitability of the site for the use, and the facilities to be constructed. In addition, the “resident population, working population and visitor population shall be estimated.”

The City’s EIA is applied broadly, rather than just to heavy industrial uses with potential environmental impacts. In relation to industrial impacts more specifically, it requires the following:

- “An analysis shall be conducted of existing air quality and noise levels as prescribed by the New Jersey State Department of Environmental Protection and this chapter.
- A discussion of both the negative and positive impacts during and after construction, including specifically those negative impacts that are unavoidable. The specific concerns that shall be considered include air quality degradation and noise levels.
- The measures that will be employed during the planning, construction and operation phases which will minimize or eliminate negative impacts that could result from the proposed project shall be described, including noise reduction techniques and screening and landscaping intended to enhance the compatibility of the project with its surroundings.”

Like Chicago, the Camden regulations have been adopted as a separate ordinance (Chapter 739 Sustainability Requirements) outside of zoning.

Ordinances such as those in Chicago and Camden fall outside of zoning and are therefore outside the scope of this study. However, the City of Providence can include a requirement to provide additional information for the performance of certain uses in order to evaluate the environmental impacts. This creates more transparency in the review process by disclosing any mitigation efforts that will be used. The intent of such additional information is not to create additional approval criteria for a use, as this would potentially conflict with state and federal agencies, and when conditions are imposed upon a use within the Ordinance they must be objective and able to be measured and verified. Rather it is intended to provide a non-binding, informational report of how the use would be a “good actor” within the community.

Examples of requested information can include:

- A layman’s summary of how the use is complying with required state and federal permits, when applicable
- Air pollution reduction technologies for stacks, exhaust pipes, or other such equipment or facilities
- Plans to minimize odors, emissions, noise, dust, and glare
- Flooding controls (flooding and storm surge assessment and adaptation/mitigation)
- Energy efficiency or renewable energy elements
- Waste minimization or re-use programs
- On-site or off-site green stormwater infrastructure

<b>Zoning Action</b>	<i>Consider the addition of an informational report for certain uses that may have significant environmental impact.</i>
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**PORT OF PROVIDENCE**

The CJP has specifically targeted “Restrict[ing] the import and storage of hazardous and polluting materials in the Port with a goal to phase out such materials by 2040.” Key policies within the CJP include:

- Work towards a zero emissions, pollution-free port: Implement strategies to reduce climate and other pollution from port operations including vessels, trucks, cargo-handling equipment, and other industrial processes.
- Work towards a clean port economy: Restrict the import and storage of hazardous and polluting materials in the Port with a goal to phase out such materials by 2040
- Update zoning ordinance to prohibit new fossil fuel infrastructure and address cumulative health impacts.

These polices within the Climate Justice Plan for the Port of Providence are perhaps the most significant zoning/land use issue within the document. However, many of the actions proposed require additional planning efforts before they can be implemented in zoning. Policies must be established and adopted within the Comprehensive Plan before any of the more significant zoning changes can be contemplated. As the State of Rhode Island is a consistency state, as described above, the current Comprehensive Plan does not reflect the changes to the waterfront described within the CJP.

Additionally, the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) is the primary agency in charge of planning for and protecting all Rhode Island coastal areas and zones. The Port and adjacent waterfront area near Allens Avenue is classified by CRMC as an Industrial Waterfront and Commercial Navigation Channel, which is defined to allow commercial and industrial water-dependent activities. All development proposals that occur within 200 feet of the water's edge fall within the purview of the CRMC and must conform to the policies determined by the CRMC. The CRMC must be considered as a partner in addressing the CJP’s port related concerns.

**Industrial Uses and the Port**

Throughout the CJP, numerous strategies are proposed that focus on significantly reducing the industrial activities within the Port and surrounding Port-area neighborhoods, which produce most of the area’s heavy pollution. The CJP’s proposed policies related to mitigating pollution from Port activities are the most ambitious of the document’s strategies.

The Port of Providence is a medium-sized port located on the Providence River and the northernmost arm of the Narraganset Bay estuary and is the principal port of cargo and petroleum for the entire state of Rhode Island. The port facilitates international and domestic trade with freight rail and highway access to major cities throughout the northeastern United States and into Canada. The port has over 2,000 ships calling annually and handles over one million tons of cargo. The types of vessels utilizing the port comprise oil/chemical tankers (38%), bulk carriers (24%), and general cargo ships (8%).

The Port accommodates several water-dependent utility and energy-related businesses that are, at present, essential to Providence and the regional economy. Because this area performs vital economic activities, the City’s 2014 Comprehensive Plan specifically calls out the critical importance of ensuring that water dependent and industrial businesses are prioritized within zoning, allowing them to expand and succeed.

Again, as the State of Rhode Island is a consistency state, Providence is required to maintain an ordinance that is consistent with the City’s comprehensive plan, and the current Plan’s future land use goals explicitly prioritize maintaining heavy industry within the Port. Significant modifications in waterfront activities as discussed in CJP will be



the most challenging amendments to make, as such policies would run counter to many of the Plan's main economic objectives. Prior to any substantial zoning changes being considered within the port area, such policies must be incorporated and adopted within an updated Comprehensive Plan.

<b>Comprehensive Plan Action</b>	<i>Significant modifications in waterfront activities per the CJP goals and policies currently run counter to many of the Comprehensive Plan's main economic objectives. Prior to any substantial zoning changes being considered within the area, such policies must be incorporated and adopted within an updated Comprehensive Plan.</i>
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### III. Specific Topic Areas

Two specific initiatives are a focus of the CJP - Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) and Green Justice Zones. As discussed earlier regarding anti-displacement strategies, implementing these types of regulations are not a straightforward zoning amendment but rather a much larger effort that requires policy support in the Comprehensive Plan and additional plans, policies, and ordinances adopted outside the City's Zoning Ordinance, though there may be cross-references to them within ordinance once in place.

Because of their prominence within the CJP, this Assessment has provided some background on these initiatives and case studies of other cities that have implemented them. As the City of Providence undertakes a Comprehensive Plan update, this is an opportune time to begin a more detailed discussion these tools and their potential incorporation as a policy within the updated Plan and eventual implementation.

#### COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT

Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) are legally enforceable contracts executed between community-based organizations and developers, or a public agreement between a municipality and developer. CBAs typically bind developers in two ways: 1) CBAs impose requirements like those of typical land use regulation, with a focus on reducing negative externalities of the project; and 2) CBAs establish community development obligations, such as providing jobs and support for community development projects. Community groups value CBAs because they give greater and more direct control over their neighborhoods and can address community issues specifically not covered by zoning regulations. When a CBA is formed, developers provide commitments for a range of agreements that benefit the community in relation to the proposed development project, in exchange for community support and project approval. CBAs promote inclusiveness by ensuring that community concerns are heard, addressed, and that all parties are held accountable for ensuring that the commitments made are fulfilled.

The results of a literature review of CBAs indicated the most common commitments negotiated through such agreements are:

- Affordable housing requirements
- Wage standards
- Public open space
- Job training and local hiring requirements
- Contribution to economic trust funds
- Community services

Community Benefits Agreements have been implemented in a variety of cities, including:

#### ***Staples Center, Los Angeles***

In 2001 a coalition brokered a Community Benefits Agreement with an entertainment district next to the Staples Center in Los Angeles. The agreement included requirements for 20% affordable housing units and \$1 million for park improvements and recreation facilities. In addition, 70% of jobs created by the development would pay a living wage. This is widely considered the nation's first CBA and provides a model for ensuring low-income residents are considered when major developments are built in their communities.

#### ***Hill District, Pittsburgh***

In 2008, One Hill Coalition represented some 100 community groups to broker Pittsburgh's first Community Benefits Agreement with the Pittsburgh Penguins. The Penguins were building a new arena, and in exchange for community support the hockey team agreed to support \$8.3 million in neighborhood improvements, including the development of a grocery store and youth center. Part of the agreement also included benchmarks for local hiring, livable wages, and protections for workers to organize.

#### ***Detroit, Michigan***

In 2008, residents of the southwest Detroit Delray neighborhood launched the Southwest Detroit Community Benefits Coalition requesting community benefits to protect the quality of life in the context of the pending Gordie Howe International Bridge project (GHIB). The CBA requested a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) as part of the benefits. The HIA was intended to monitor and inform efforts to mitigate potential adverse health effects of land use and infrastructure decisions and to offer future opportunities to promote environmental justice in disproportionately impacted communities.

However, when the CBA was adopted in 2016, the decision to build the GHIB had already been made by federal, state, and local governments. This case is an example the complexity of addressing the potential effects of major infrastructure on health, given the decision-making role of multiple sectors, agencies, and levels of government, which is similar to challenges faced by Providence’s Port-area frontline communities.

In 2021, the City of Detroit amended the City Code to include a Community Benefits Ordinance (CBO). The CBO is triggered by projects of \$75 million or more in value, receives \$1 million or more in property tax abatements, or by receiving \$1 million or more in value of city land sale or transfer. This law requires developers to proactively engage with the community to identify benefits to address potential negative impacts of certain development project.

***Kingsbridge Armory, New York City***

In 2013, the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Alliance created a Community Benefits Agreement with the developer of the Kingsbridge National Ice Center. In exchange for project support for the conversion of the former military armory into a hockey center, living wages were agreed upon, community space and free ice time for Title 1 schools was guaranteed, and a benchmark of 50% of non-construction jobs coming from local community members was set. The developer also agreed to fund a scholarship for residents to learn to install and maintain the facilities geothermal and solar power systems.

***Newport, Rhode Island***

In 2021, the City of Newport updated its Comprehensive Land Use Plan with amended development goals for the North End Neighborhood. The update includes strategies to utilize CBAs as mechanisms to bolster larger equity goals in particularly sensitive areas. Furthermore, the Plan calls for the City Council to establish a North End Benefits Committee, which should include residents from the neighborhood and City as a whole that experience the most significant inequities.

The case studies above suggest CBAs are feasible strategies to mitigate adverse effects on quality of life from future developments. The cases of Newport and Detroit particularly illustrate the use of CBAs as an effective catalyst for the reconsideration of zoning in ways that more consistently acknowledge equity and public health, and may help to address impacts of future industrial uses or large scale development. Establishing policies within the updated Comprehensive Plan can set the stage for future use of CBAs within the City of Providence, such as evidenced in the City of Newport.

<b>Comprehensive Plan Action</b>	<i>Explore potential policies within the updated Comprehensive Plan for future use of CBAs within the City of Providence.</i>
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**GREEN JUSTICE ZONES**

A key strategy in Providence’s CJP is the establishment of Green Justice Zones in frontline communities. Green Justice Zone programs seek to implement land use tools and strategies to improve community health and promote environmental justice by identifying communities where the health of residents may be disproportionately affected by major sources of pollution. While these areas would not be official zoning designations, they would denote areas within frontline communities where targeted investments in sustainability and equity can be made. The City would provide the necessary resources to support these communities, and the goal of the zones would be to achieve health equity, improve quality of life, and create climate resilience in established frontline communities. To execute this strategy, the CJP calls for the following practices to be considered: microgrids in critical community spaces, establishment of resiliency hubs, participatory budgeting processes, improvements to weatherization and energy efficiency, training and job opportunities directed at local community members, and policy and regulatory changes to prevent further burden in frontline communities from pollution.

- In Minneapolis, Minnesota, the City Council approved a resolution establishing the Green Zones policy in 2017. Goals included improvements to air quality, healthy food access, encouragement of self-determination and accountability, and the stimulation of a green economy. Within the two zones, Task Forces were created with the intention of developing work plans to design and prioritize initiatives for their neighborhoods.
- The City of Richmond, California established a Green Justice Zone in 2019. The zone is a 3.5-square-mile area that contains uses that are considered hazardous: a refinery, chemical plant, and hazardous waste facility. The zone provides resources to residents to reduce pollution and improve environmental conditions in the area.

- In 2016, the City of Portland, Oregon established the Cully Neighborhood Green Justice Zone. The area has a high concentration of industrial uses that impact the neighborhood residents. Community members and local organizations work together to develop strategies to reduce pollution and improve environmental health, such as green infrastructure projects, promoting sustainable transportation options, and advocating for stronger regulations and enforcement of environmental laws.
- Los Angeles, California has identified several Green Justice Zones throughout the city (Wilmington, Boyle Heights, and Pacoima). These areas have high levels of pollution and are home to many low-income and minority residents. The city is working to improve environmental conditions in these areas through community engagement and targeted investments.
- In 2020, the New Orleans established a Green Justice Zone in the Lower Ninth Ward, one of the areas most devastated by Hurricane Katrina. With high levels of pollution, the Lower Ninth has struggled with environmental injustices for many years. The Green Justice Zone aims to address these issues by providing resources and support to residents and working to improve environmental conditions.

As evidenced by the above examples, these Green Justice Zones are cooperative efforts between communities and local government, and extend beyond the reach of zoning regulations. The CJP provides a solid foundation from which Providence, and frontline communities in particular, can begin to build; establishing policies within the Comprehensive Plan and planning for the allocation of resources from the City and other agencies operating within these areas can set the stage for implementation of Green Justice Zones.

The State of Rhode Island does not currently have any formal Green Justice Zone in place. However, in 2015 the State Department of Health announced the Health Equity Zone (HEZ) initiative as an approach to preventative work that leverages place-based and community-led solutions to address the social determinants of health. The State has invested more than \$30 million in public health funding towards HEZ's, with funding aimed at developing sustainable infrastructure that can positively impact socioeconomic and environmental conditions driving disparities. There are currently three HEZ's in Providence - Central, East, and South Providence. At this time, no formal resolutions, ordinances, or Comprehensive Plan policies involving Green Justice Zones have currently been adopted, but there is work underway by the Sustainability Department to create Green Justice Zone Maps which can work in concert with initiatives such as this. These maps evaluate the full range of issues under Green Justice – pollution, contamination, climate hazards, flooding, and social vulnerability, among others. These Maps can help to implement policies that may be part of the updated Comprehensive Plan as well as prioritize climate justice actions and allocation of resources.

<b>Comprehensive Plan Action</b>	<i>Establish policies within the Comprehensive Plan and plan for the allocation of resources from the City and other agencies operating within these areas can set the stage for implementation of Green Justice Zones.</i>
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## Appendix: Frontline Communities Zoning Data Analysis

The City of Providence’s Climate Justice Plan (CJP) identifies communities within the City that are suffering the most significant environmental consequences of pollution. These are low-income communities of color that are also experiencing “economic, ecological, and democratic” injustices. The neighborhoods identified in the CJP are South Providence, Washington Park, Olneyville, Manton, Silver Lake, Wanskuck, and the West End, which make up 34% of Providence’s total land area. In order to provide context regarding zoning and frontline communities, a zoning analysis of all eight frontline communities has been executed.

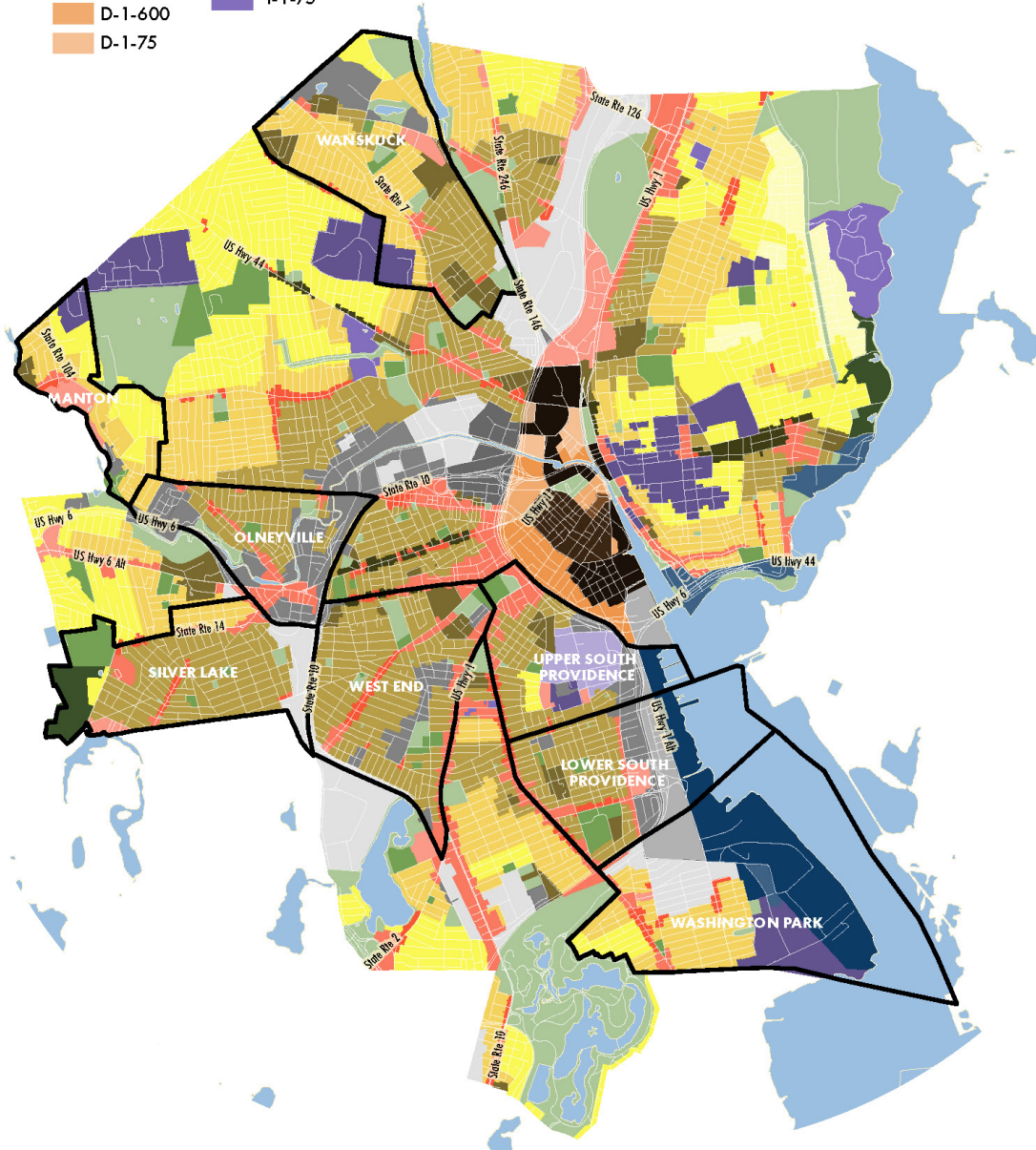
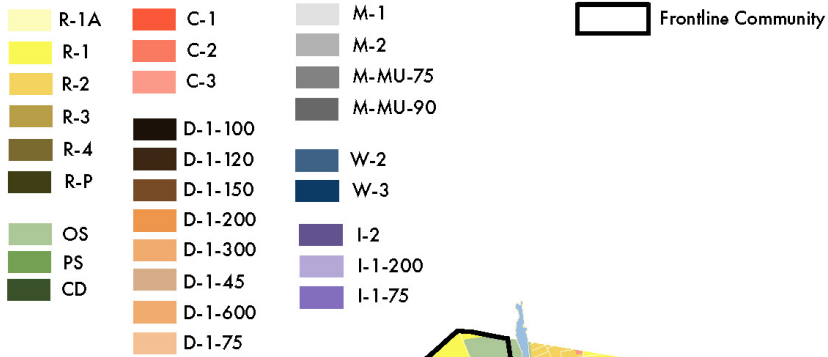
The maps below show the frontline communities and current zoning in Providence with each frontline community identified. The following table provides a key to the zoning district abbreviations.

GENERAL LAND USE CATEGORY	ZONING DISTRICTS
Residential Districts	R-1A Residential District (single-family) R-1 Residential District (single-family) R-2 Residential District (single-family, two-family) R-3 Residential District (single-family, two-family, three family, rowhouse) R-4 Residential District (all dwelling types) R-P Residential Professional District (allows small-scale commercial)
Commercial Districts	C-1 Neighborhood Commercial District C-2 General Commercial District C-3 Heavy Commercial District
Downtown Districts	D-1 Downtown District *The numbers after D-1 indicates the maximum height (in feet) allowed
Industrial Districts	M-MU Mixed-Use Industrial District M-1 Light Industrial District M-2 General Industrial District
Institutional Districts	I-1 Healthcare Institutional District I-2 Educational Institutional District *The numbers after I-1 indicates the maximum height (in feet) allowed
Waterfront Districts	W-2 Mixed-Use Waterfront District W-3 Port/Maritime Industrial Waterfront District
Open Space and Public Space Districts	OS Open Space District PS Public Space District CD Conservation District (protect City-owned natural areas)

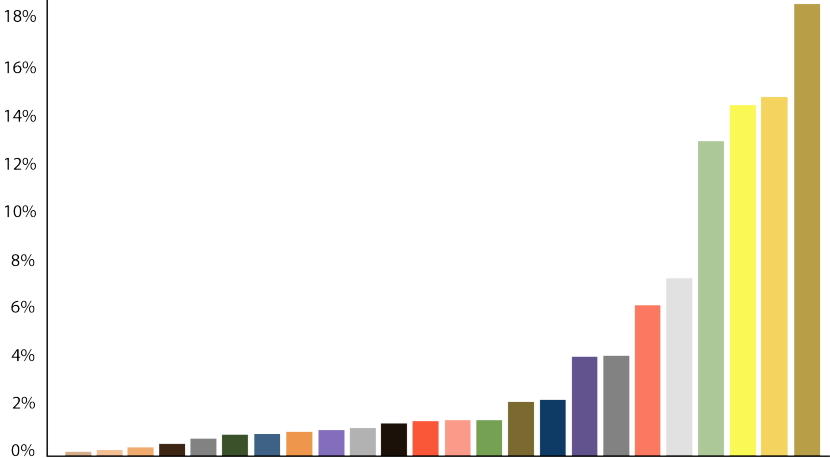




ZONING DISTRICTS



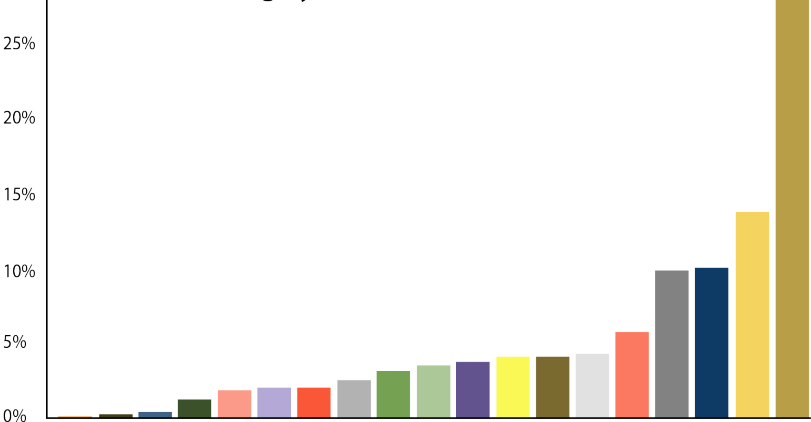
Non-Frontline Zoning by Area



ZONING DISTRICTS

R-1	OS	D-1-100	M-1
R-2	PS	D-1-120	M-2
R-3	CD	D-1-200	M-MU-75
R-4	C-1	D-1-300	M-MU-90
R-P	C-2	D-1-600	
I-1-75	C-3	D-1-45	
I-1-200	W-2	D-1-75	
I-2	W-3		

Frontline Zoning by Area



ZONING DISTRICTS

R-1	OS	D-1-200
R-2	PS	M-1
R-3	CD	M-2
R-4	C-1	M-MU-75
R-P	C-2	M-MU-90
I-1-75	C-3	
I-1-200	W-2	
I-2	W-3	

When examining the frontline communities as a whole, the analysis found the following trends.

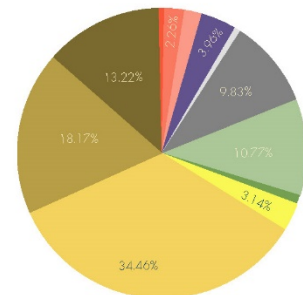
- 100% of industrial port zoning is in frontline communities. Specifically, Washington Park and Lower South Providence.
- A majority of the more intense industrial zone, M-2, is in frontline communities.
- There is also a significant amount of the light industrial/mixed-use zone in frontline communities. However, the intent of such district is to permit a mix of industrial and commercial uses that are more compatible with adjacent neighborhoods and lower intensity uses.
- Seven out of eight frontline communities are impacted by major highway infrastructure, either through being bisected or bound by these transportation corridors.
- Residential zoning in frontline communities are typically higher density zones.
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) overlays are in Upper South Providence and West End following portions of I-95, Reservoir Ave., and Elmwood Ave.
- Only 15% of all public and open space zoning falls within the frontline communities.

**Wanskuck**

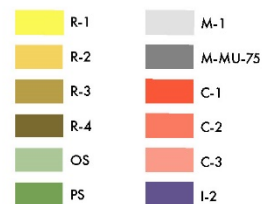
Wanskuck is located in the northern/northwestern edge of Providence, bound by Route 146 to the east of the neighborhood, which sees an average of 64,200 vehicles a day. Wanskuck also has a small portion of the Providence College Campus. A majority of Wanskuck is zoned R-2 Residential, a moderate density with single-family and two-family housing. Open Space and Industrial Mixed-Use are the next largest zoning categories after residential.

The area surrounding Wanskuck tends to be lower density residential. There is also a large area of light industrial use to the east. The Wanskuck neighborhood holds less commercial zoning than the surrounding area. Compared to other frontline communities, Wanskuck’s commercial zoning skews more toward heavier commercial uses (C-2 and C-3) versus lighter neighborhood commercial.

**WANSKUCK ZONING BY PERCENTAGE**



**ZONING DISTRICTS**

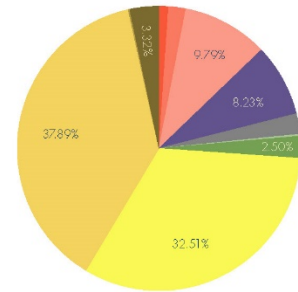


**Manton**

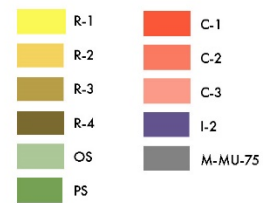
Manton near Route 6 is located on the western edge of Providence, with its western edge bound by the Woonasquatucket River. Manton has a small portion of Rhode Island College’s Campus along its northern edge. Manton holds the lowest density residential with 32% of its land area zoned R-1 and 38% of its land area zoned R-2. The C-3 Heavy Commercial District is the next largest zone in the neighborhood at 10%.

The area surrounding Manton is similar to the neighborhood in terms of residential zoning. In the area surrounding Manton there is a large portion of open space, this is primarily due to the Triggs Memorial Golf Course. Compared to the surrounding area, Manton has a higher proportion of commercial zoning which is also more intense than the surrounding area.

**MANTON ZONING BY PERCENTAGE**



**ZONING DISTRICTS**

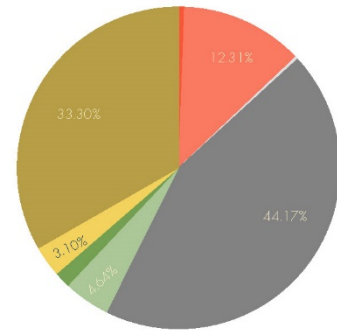


**Olneyville**

The Olneyville neighborhood is bound by the US-6 and Route-10, with the Woonasquatucket River on the southern and western borders of the neighborhood. Zoning in Olneyville generally allows more intense uses. 44% of Olneyville’s area is zoned for mixed-use industrial, while R-3 zoning covers 33% of the land use in the neighborhood, allowing a range of residential uses from single-family to rowhouse. The commercial zoning in Olneyville is predominantly C-2 General Commercial.

To the east of Olneyville there is a large area of industrial zoning surrounding similar residential zoning. To the west of Olneyville residential uses transition to lower density with no industrial zoning.

**OLNEYVILLE ZONING BY PERCENTAGE**



**ZONING DISTRICTS**

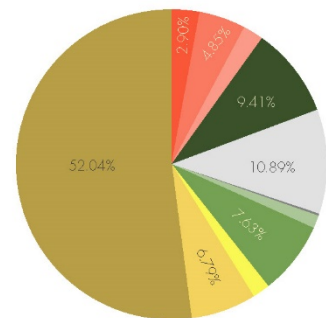


**Silver Lake**

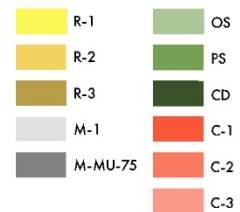
Silver Lake is generally bound by the State Route 10, State Route 14, and edge of the City of Providence. Silver Lake’s zoning is similar to nearby Olneyville with light industrial zoning and R-3. 52% of Silver Lake’s land area is zoned R-3. Silver Lake includes a large park and conservation area, Neutaconkanut Park and Neutaconkanut Hill Conservancy, along its western edge. These are zoned public space and conservation district respectively.

North of Silver Lake the zones transition into less intense uses with more R-1 and R-2 zoning and very little industrial zoning. Silver Lake abuts Olneyville and West End, both of which have a large amount of area zoned R-3 along with areas of industrial zoning. West End and Silver Lake have a similar zoning make up though the industrial zones differ slightly. While Silver Lake holds M-1 light industrial, West End is M-MU-75, a light industrial mixed-use.

**SILVER LAKE ZONING BY PERCENTAGE**



**ZONING DISTRICTS**

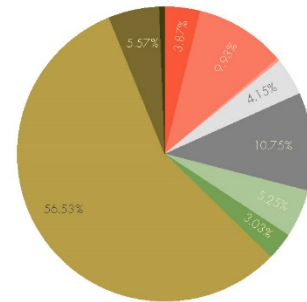


**West End**

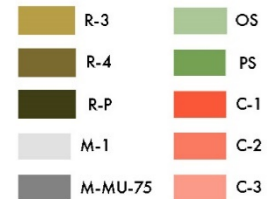
West End is bound by State Route 10, US Highway 1, and Westminster Street. 57% of West End is zoned R-3, while 11% is zoned for light industrial mixed-use and 10% for general commercial. The northeast corner of West End, which is near downtown Providence, has a cluster of public uses zoned PS and OS. The Armory Historic District Overlay is located in West End, and Along Elmwood Ave on the northeastern edge of the neighborhood there is a small portion of TOD Overlay Zoning.

West End and Silver Lake are neighbors and share similar zoning characteristics with the majority of land area zoned R-3 and about 10% zoned light industrial (M-MU in West End and M-1 in Silver Lake). West End is adjacent to Downtown Providence, where the Downtown Zoning Districts are introduced.

WEST END ZONING BY PERCENTAGE



ZONING DISTRICTS

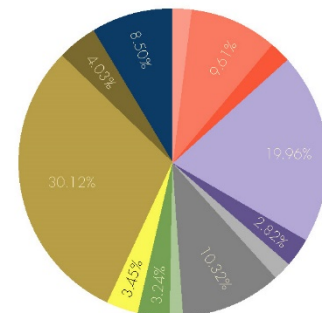


**Upper South Providence**

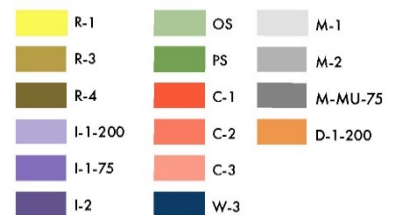
Upper South Providence is located in the northern portion of South Providence. It is bound by the Providence River, Interstate 95, Broad Street, and Public Street. 30% of Upper South Providence’s land area is zoned R-3. The next largest category is Healthcare Institutional for a cluster of health care providers, including Rhode Island Hospital and Hasbro’s Children Hospital. Upper South Providence has mix of industrial uses including mixed-use industrial, and the beginning of the industrial waterfront zoning, W-3. Additionally, the area along Broad Street has a TOD Overlay Zoning.

Upper South Providence is similar to surrounding areas in its residential zoning (R-3). It is unique from the surrounding the area due to the large portion of land area dedicated to healthcare uses. Upper South Providence is adjacent to Downtown Providence and is the beginning of the Port, with a smaller portion of industrial waterfront zoning compared to the other Port neighborhoods.

UPPER SOUTH PROVIDENCE ZONING BY PERCENTAGE



ZONING DISTRICTS

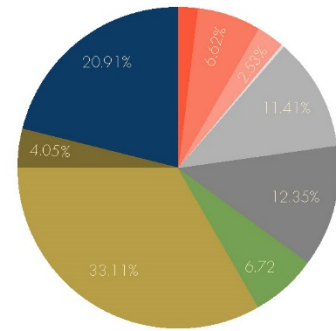


**Lower South Providence**

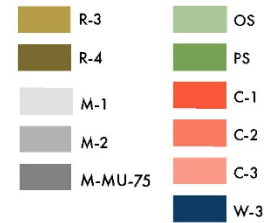
Lower South Providence is the southern portion of South Providence. It is bound by the Providence River, Interstate 95 to the east and south, Broad Street, and Public Street. 33% of the land area is zoned R-3. 44% of the land area of Lower South Providence is zoned for industrial use, with 21% industrial waterfront, 12% mixed-use industrial, and 11% general industrial. The high proportion of industrial zoning is centered around the Port and highway access.

Lower South Providence is part of the group of neighborhoods with industrial waterfront zoning. Similar to the neighborhoods to the north, the most prevalent residential zone is R-3. Public Space Zoning in the neighborhood is mostly public schools, which is comparable to Upper South Providence.

**LOWER SOUTH PROVIDENCE ZONING BY PERCENTAGE**



**ZONING DISTRICTS**

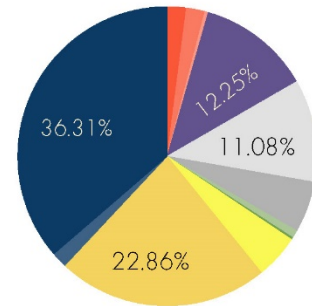


**Washington Park**

Washington Park is bound by Providence River to the east, Interstate 95 to the north, and Roger Williams Park and Zoo to the west. 36% of Washington Park's land area is zoned industrial waterfront and an additional 11% is zoned light industrial. The residential zoning in the neighborhood is of lower density than the neighborhoods to the north, with 23% R-2. 12% of land area is zoned Educational Institutional, which is the Johnson and Wales Campus.

Washington Park has Providence's largest amount of industrial waterfront zoning, and the neighborhood abuts a large area of land zoned for open space. The housing in this area is less dense than the nearby neighborhood of Lower South Providence but is comparable to the area west of Broad Street.

**WASHINGTON PARK ZONING BY PERCENTAGE**



**ZONING DISTRICTS**

