

Comprehensive Plan Update

Community Engagement Process

City Plan Commission
2023 End of Year Report
Department of Planning & Development

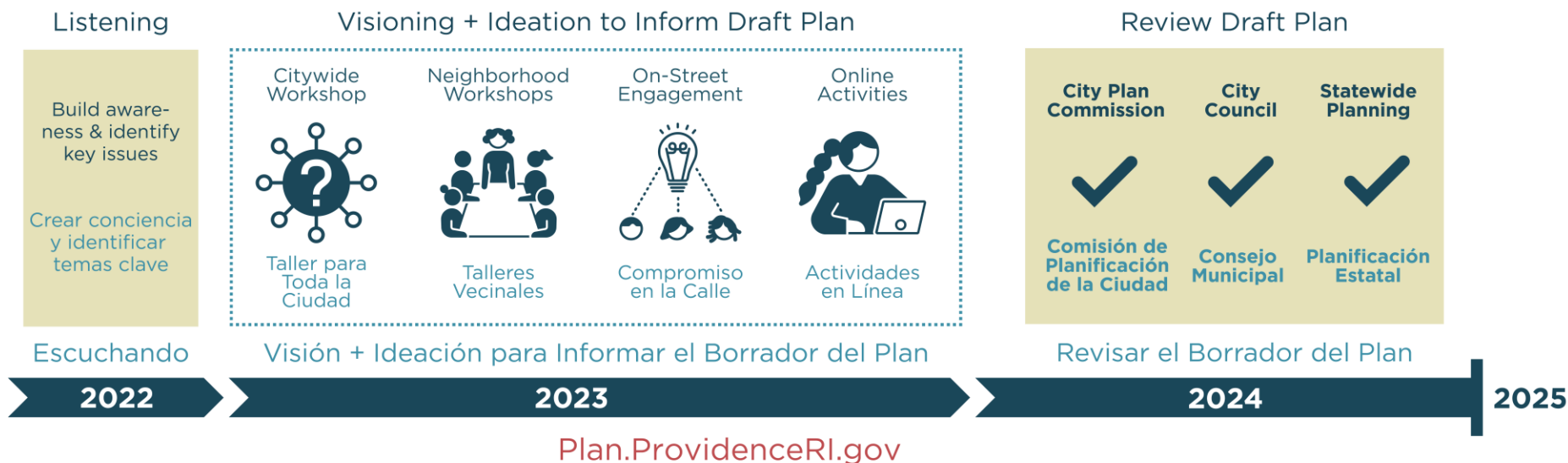
December 12, 2023



Process Overview



Engagement Process



Guiding Principles:

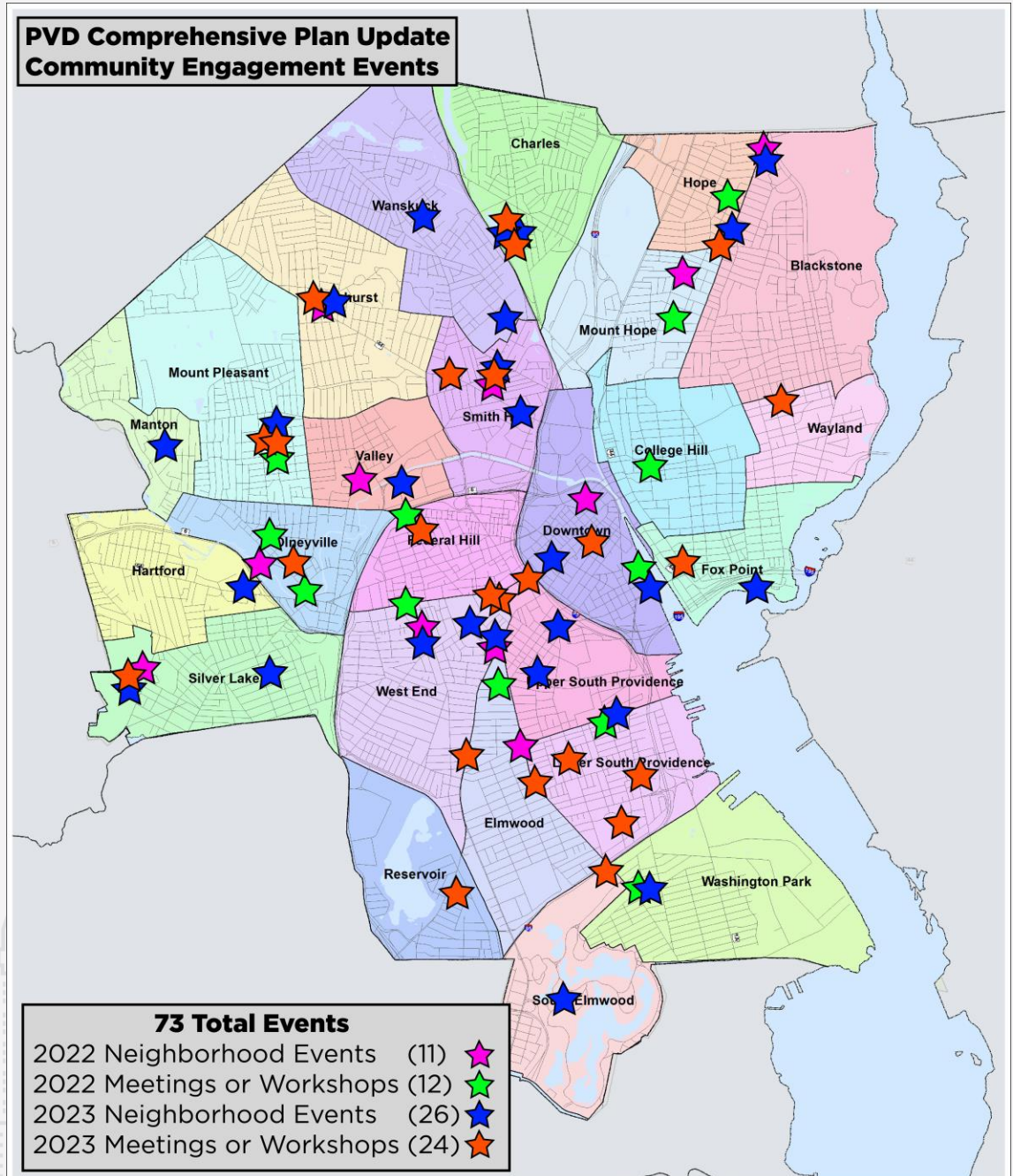
Transparency, Equity, Accessibility, Iteration, Collaboration



PVD Comprehensive Plan Update Community Engagement Events

Engagement #s

- Outreach at over 55 neighborhood events with various community partners
- 15 Ward Workshops in partnership with PVD City Council
- Over 2,000 online submissions







Preliminary Takeaways

- Vision
- Strengths & Weaknesses
- Priority Issues



Emerging Vision

A future Providence that is...





A future Providence that is...

Affordable	Housing for all, equitably distributed, displacement prevented
Sustainable	Carbon-free, climate-resilient, nature healthy & conserved
Connected	Compact, safe, convenient multi-modal links
Empowering	Opportunity-rich, diverse & resilient economy
Vibrant	Healthy, homegrown, thriving arts, culture & food scene
Beautiful	History & architecture preserved, strong pride of place
Welcoming	Diverse, inclusive, sense of belonging for all
Healthy	Clean & healthy air, water, streets, homes



Strengths & Weaknesses



What do we appreciate most about Providence?

1

Diversity, Community,
Neighborhoods

2

Arts, Culture, Food,
Creativity

3

Size, Scale, Walkability,
Accessibility

4

Beauty, Architecture,
History

5

Parks, Rivers,
Waterfront, Trees

Top 5 Themes

Based on repeated words,
phrases & sentiments in
survey responses

What do we want to see improved in Providence?

1 Housing Affordability

2 Educational Opportunity

3 Transportation, Mobility

4 Green Space

5 Downtown &
Neighborhoods

Top 5 Themes

Based on repeated words,
phrases & sentiments in
survey responses

Priority Issues



Priority Issues

Community feedback highlighted **housing & land use**, **transportation**, and **climate & sustainability** as priority topics for policy change in this Comprehensive Plan Update.

Prioritize the issues that need to be addressed as Providence grows over the next 20 years.

- 
- 1 Build more quality, affordable housing
 - 2 Provide safe, convenient, affordable transportation options
 - 3 Improve sustainability & climate resilience
 - 4 Provide & maintain quality City services & facilities.
 - 5 Manage growth to preserve quality of life.
- Top 5 Top**

Top 5 Topics

2023 Survey



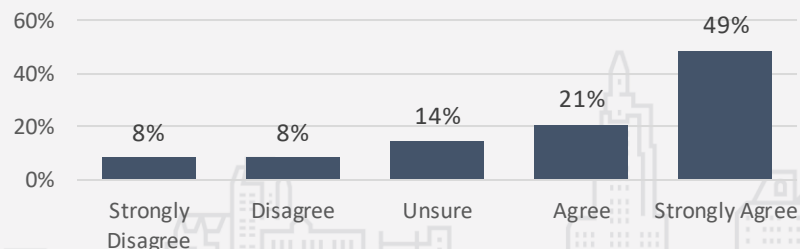
Workshop Brainstorm Board

Takeaways: HOUSING

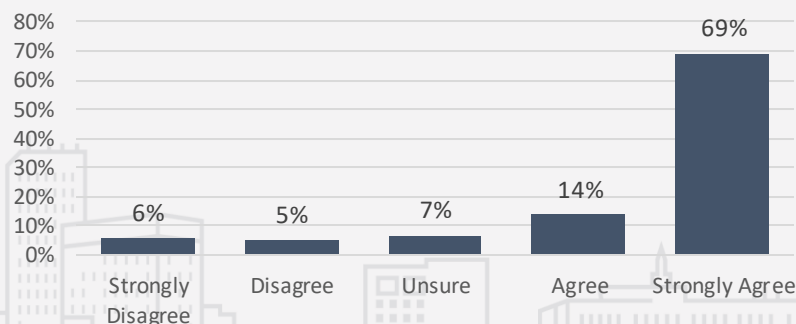
- Demand for housing action from across the demographic spectrum.
- Widespread support for affordability in all neighborhoods, more housing types + densities, infill development on under-utilized parcels.
- Concerns: student housing impacts, design review.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding housing in Providence?

"Higher densities (more housing units per property) should be allowed in new housing development to relieve pressure on rents and home prices."



"Affordable housing should be encouraged in every neighborhood in Providence."



2023 Survey

Takeaways: TRANSPORTATION

- Ease of multi-modal connectivity highly valued across City.
- Participants want policy to prioritize alternatives, especially transit.
- Safety, climate, and public health concerns are driving attitudes.

What neighborhood characteristics are most important to you?

- 1 Affordability
- 2 Easy to get around without a car
- 3 Safety
- 4 Diversity
- 5 Proximity to Parks

Workshop Polling

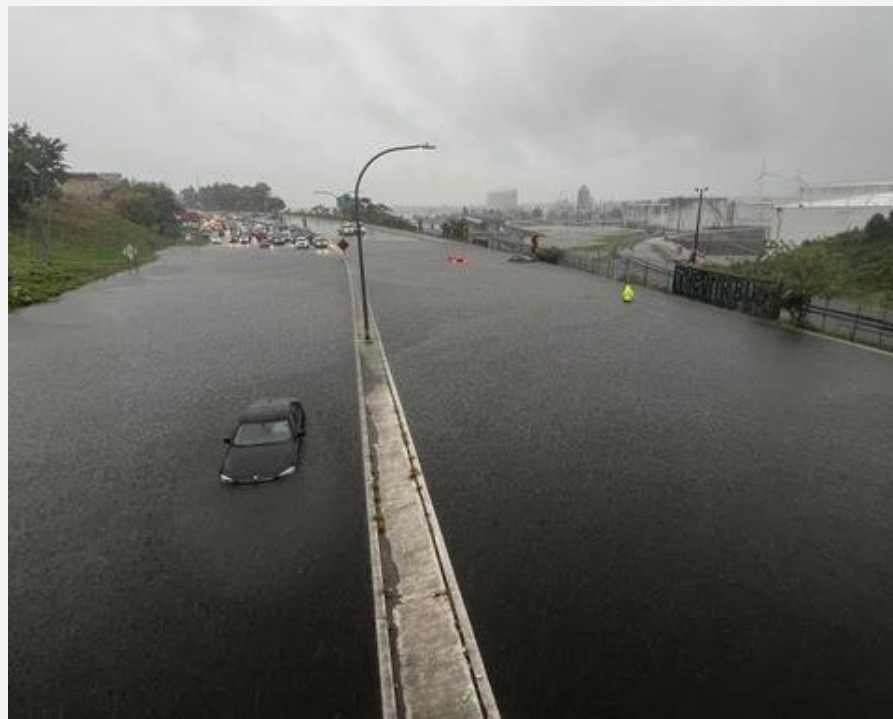
What transportation priorities are most important to you?

- 1 Encourage use of non-car options (walking, biking, public transport, etc)
- 2 Improve the quality of public transit
- 3 Move people & goods efficiently
- 4 Improve EV infrastructure
- 5 Improve convenience of using a car

2023 Survey

Takeaways: CLIMATE

- Eliminating carbon emissions & improving climate resilience are a top priority issue for Providence residents – especially given recent storm events.
- Emissions suggestions focus on decarbonizing transportation, energy, & encouraging net zero buildings.
- Resilience suggestions focus on widespread greening, de-paving, and investments in "frontline" underserved communities.



September 2022 Floods, I-95 in Providence
Corey Welch, WPRI

Prominent Neighborhood-Specific Topics

- Student housing impacts on quality of life & rental market
- Proximity of industry, highways to residential neighborhoods & impacts on public health, quality of life
- Connectivity & safety issues related to highways or arterial roads
- Over-paving, parking lots, lack of green space & effects on youth + heat, stormwater
- Concentrations of social services & safety, quality of life impacts



**Health Equity & the Comp Plan Workshop
November 2023**

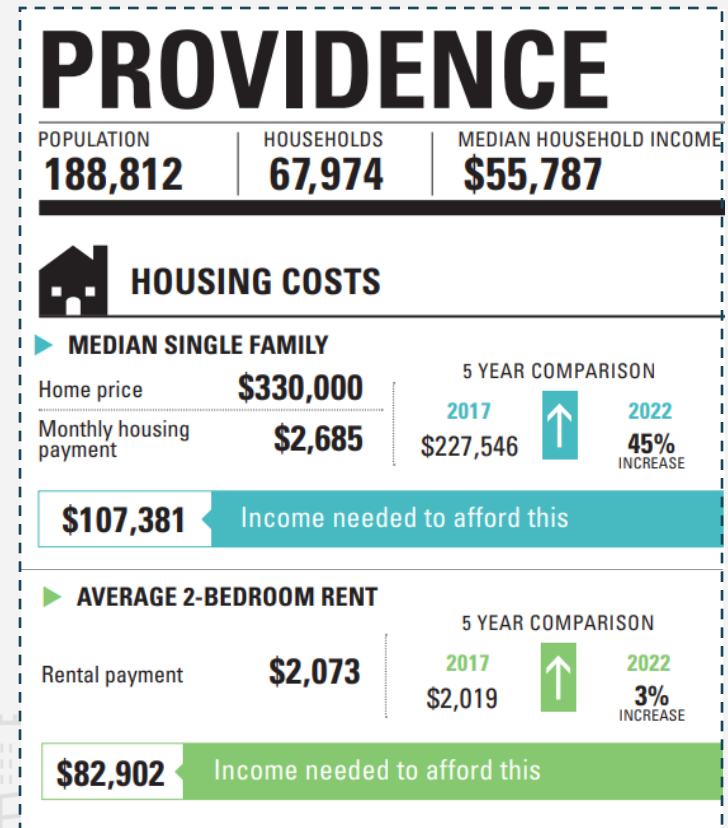
Policy Directions

- Housing
- Land Use
- Mobility
- Climate



Housing

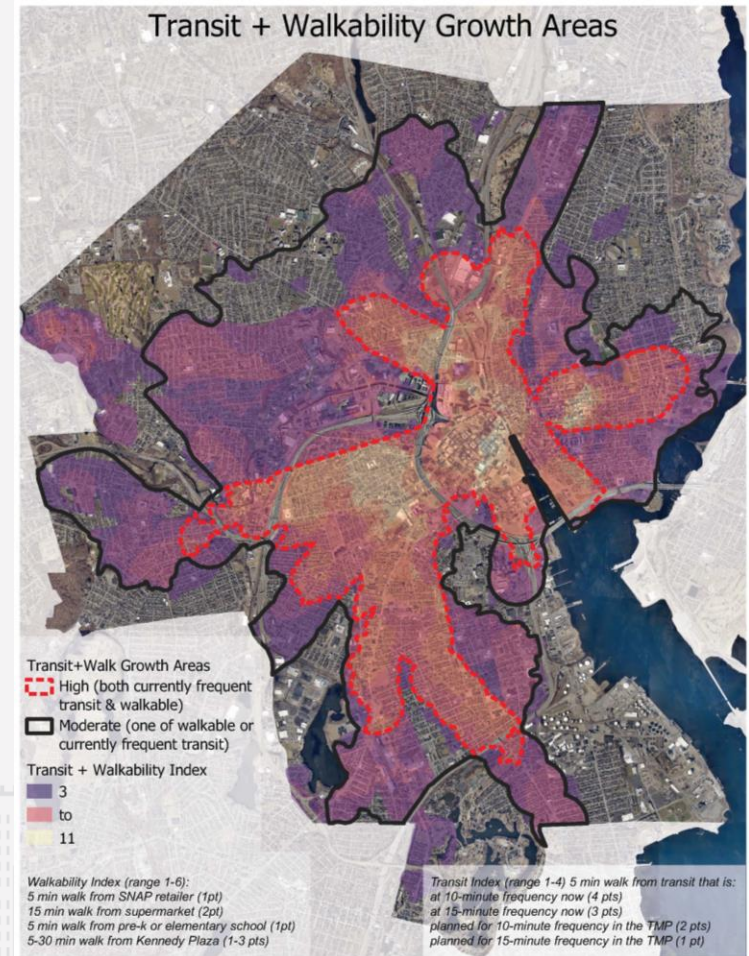
- New policies must dramatically accelerate the production of new housing, including deed-restricted, affordable units.
- Multi-faceted strategies to include:
 - Land use & density changes
 - Enabling new housing typologies
 - New & expanded sources of funding
 - Proactive redevelopment of vacant & blighted properties
 - Further streamlining of development permitting processes
 - Addressing inflationary impacts of student housing on rental markets
- As development increases, adaptive reuse and design standards must be incentivized.



Providence Housing Facts
HousingWorksRI 2023 Fact Book

Land Use

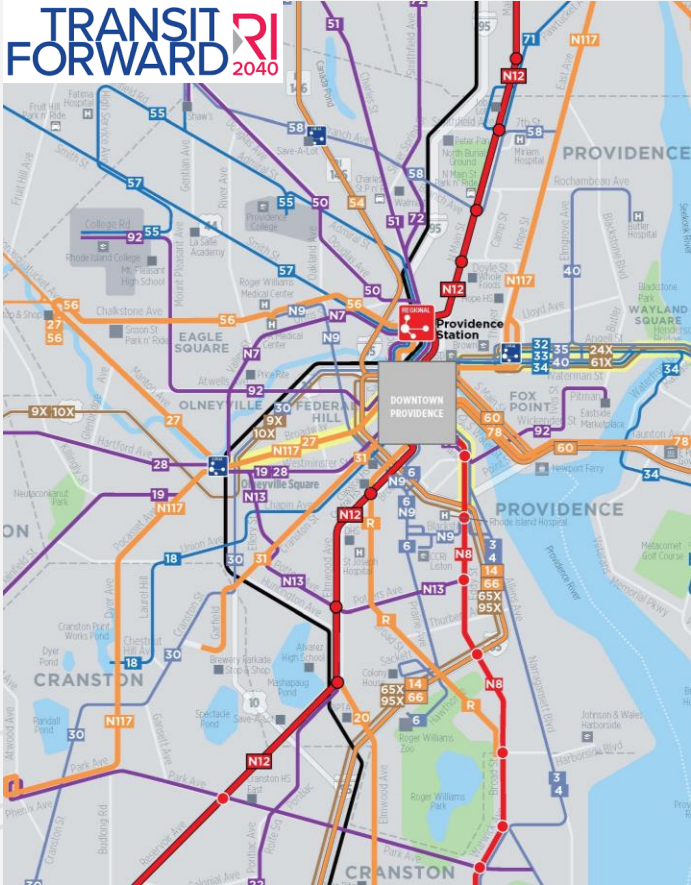
- High density commercial, mixed-use, & residential development should continue to align with amenities, transit, & walkability.
 - Potential to refine height incentives for affordability, design, & street activation.
- More opportunities should be identified for multi-family housing in residential neighborhoods.
- Industrial uses to be preserved in locations to strategically position PVD for economic development.
- A cleaner, greener waterfront that balances climate resilience, recreation, and public health with blue & green economic activity.



Transit & Walkability Index Map
Example of Ongoing Department Analysis

- Anticipate future needs, like EV charging infrastructure

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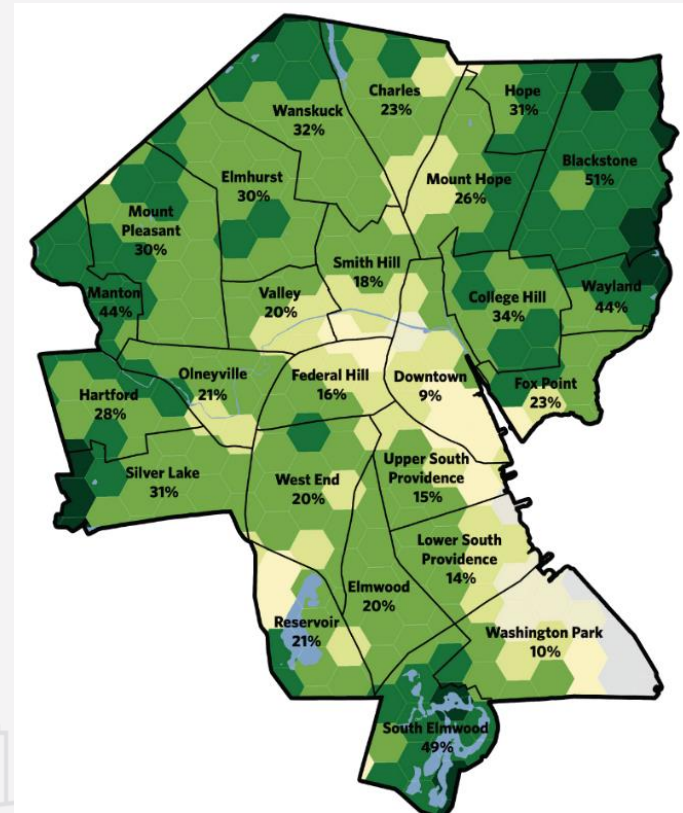


Providence Proposed Transit Service

Rhode Island Transit Forward Master Plan

Climate & Environment

- Plan for carbon emissions reduction in line with Climate Justice Plan and State Act on Climate goals
 - 45% below 1990 levels by 2030
 - 80% below 1990 levels by 2040
 - Net-zero emissions by 2050
- Incorporate new best practices in building siting, design and energy standards to improve emissions, stormwater management, resilience to sea level rise, flooding.
- Preserve, protect, establish green & blue infrastructure (ex: tree canopy, rivers)
- Prioritize climate resilience investments in disadvantaged 'frontline communities' expected to face disproportionate impacts.



Providence Urban Tree Canopy (2018)
UVM Spatial Analysis Lab via PVD Tree Plan

Next Steps



Next Steps

January 2024: Engagement Report + Draft Growth Strategy

- Publication + community feedback opportunities

Spring 2024: Draft Plan

- Publication + community feedback opportunity, CPC hearing

Spring-Fall 2024: CPC, City Council, State review, edits, approvals



THANK YOU

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