

# Comprehensive Plan Update

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City Council, Ordinances Committee  
Department of Planning & Development

September 11, 2024



# Contents

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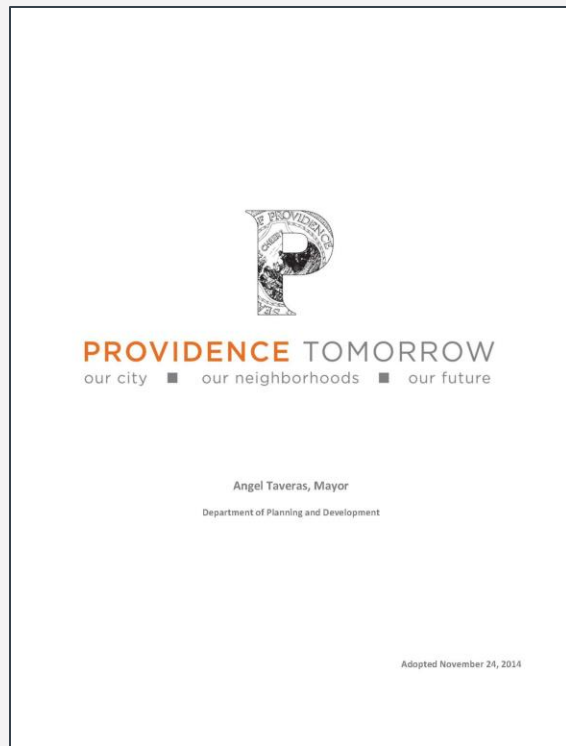
## Comprehensive Plan Overview

- Engagement Process
- Key Policies
- Land Use Changes

## Next Steps



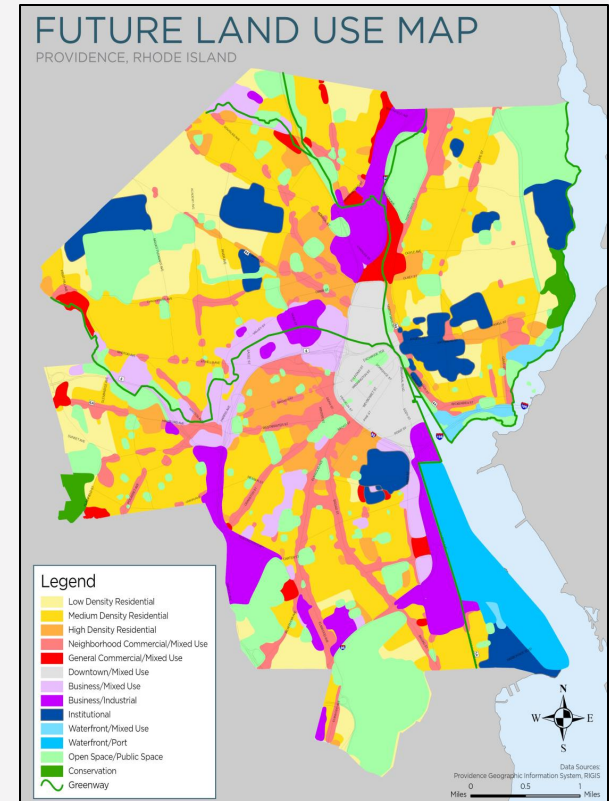
# The Comprehensive Plan



Providence Tomorrow  
(2014 - Today)

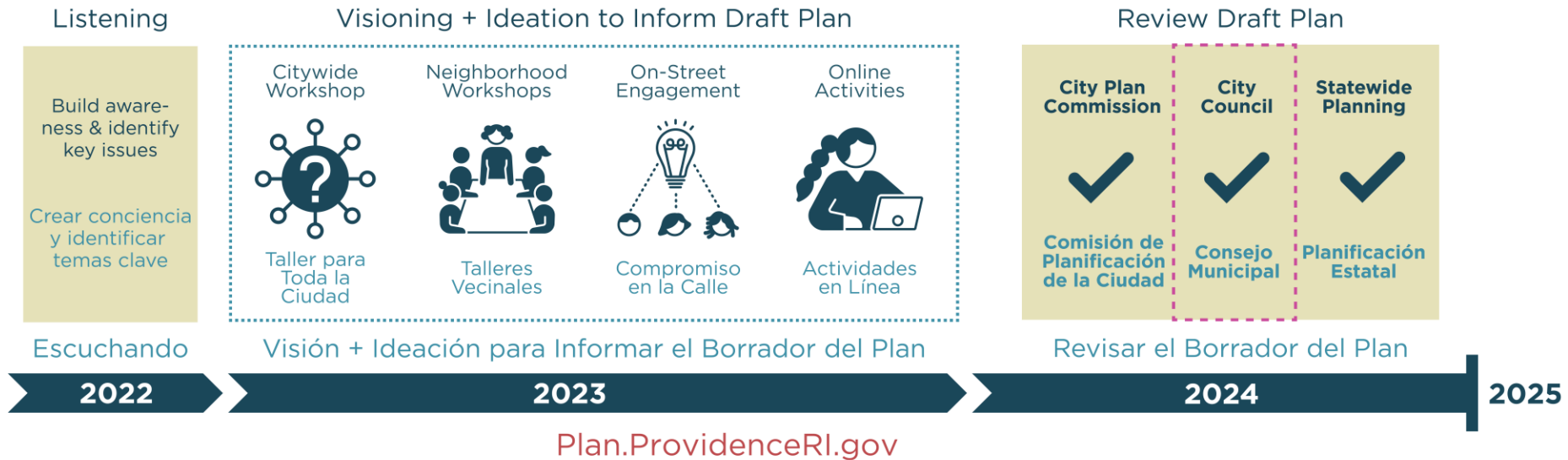


Elements of a  
Comprehensive Plan



Future Land Use Map

# Engagement Process



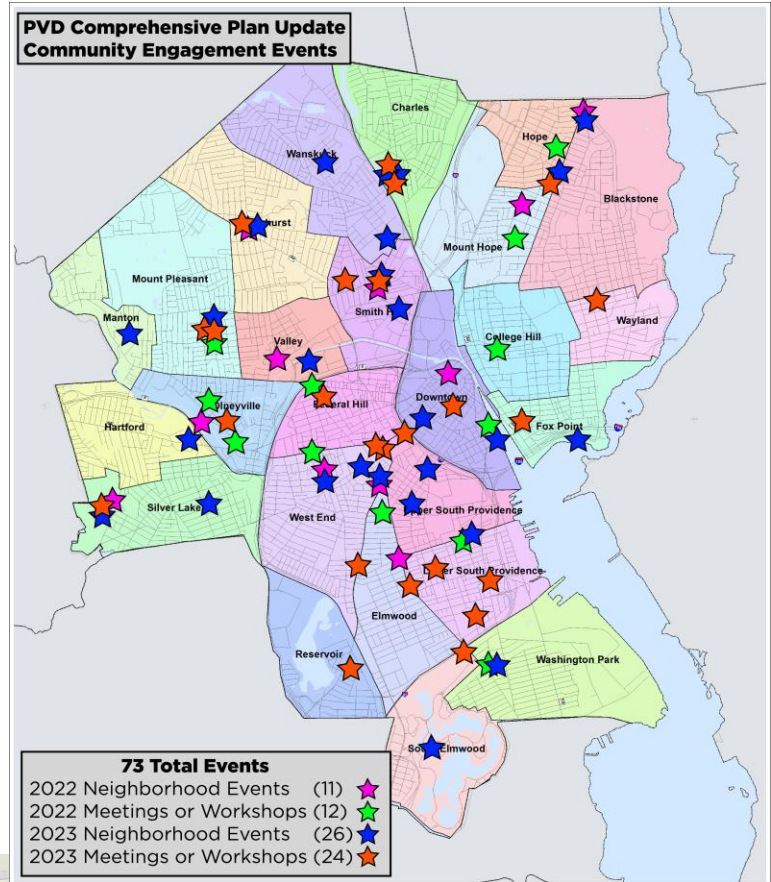
✓ 75+ neighborhood events with community partners

✓ 15 Ward Workshops with PVD City Council

✓ 2,000+ online submissions

Full engagement process summary at: [plan.providenceri.gov](http://plan.providenceri.gov)





## Community Survey Results

# What issues 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.

Full engagement  
process summary at:  
[plan.providenceri.gov](http://plan.providenceri.gov)

More Respondents

# Key Policies

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# VISION

**A more prosperous, sustainable, and resilient Providence for all.**

A city that is vibrant, affordable, sustainable, healthy, safe, beautiful, and rich with economic opportunity.

A city that thrives because it supports and empowers the people, places, and quality of life that make it unique – while welcoming new communities, new forms of development and economic opportunity, and new ways of living – to all our benefit.



# Comprehensive Plan Elements

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- Sustainability, Resilience & Environment
- Built Environment
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Mobility
- Arts & Cultural Resources
- People & Public Spaces
- Community Services & Facilities
- Land Use



# Sustainability

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Prepare for climate change and enhance the natural environment via best practices in:

- reducing fossil fuel emissions
- improving resilience to extreme weather
- environmental conservation
- centering equity and environmental justice



September 2022 Floods  
Corey Welch, WPRI



# Built Environment

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Preserve & enhance PVD's unique urban design by:

- Improving design standards and review processes
- Encouraging adaptive reuse of existing structures and green building practices
- Expanding historic districts and preservation



Smith Hill's Holden Street  
Providence Preservation Society



# Economic Development

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Adapt & grow PVD's economy through:

- Investments in key sectors (blue economy, life sciences, and arts/culture)
- Workforce and small business development
- Improvements to city infrastructure and services



Iron Pour  
The Steel Yard





# Housing

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Respond to the housing crisis by encouraging production of new housing and rehabilitation of existing units, with emphasis on:

- Long-term affordable housing
- Housing for populations with special needs
- Housing near public transit
- Energy efficient and accessible housing design



Bowdoin Street Rowhouses  
One Neighborhood Builders



# Mobility

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Accelerate transition to a multi-modal transportation system via strategies that aim to:

- improve safety and connections for all
- increase trips made via public transportation, walking, and biking
- align with local and state plans and federal guidelines



The R-Line Bus  
Rhode Island Public Transit Authority



# Arts & Cultural Resources

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Codify goals & strategies created by Providence's creative community that:

- Center the wellbeing of artists and culture-bearers
- Foster a vibrant and equitable artistic and creative culture
- Provide myriad benefits to Providence's civic life, neighborhoods, public realm, and more.



PVD Fest



# People & Public Spaces

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Continue investment in and expansion of Providence's parks system with:

- responsive programming
- investments in climate resilience
- improved green space access and links
- expanded community participation opportunities



Dexter Park Playground





# Community Services & Facilities

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Establish goals and strategies to improve the quality and coordination of city services and public facilities across diverse topics ranging from utilities to schools and recreation centers.



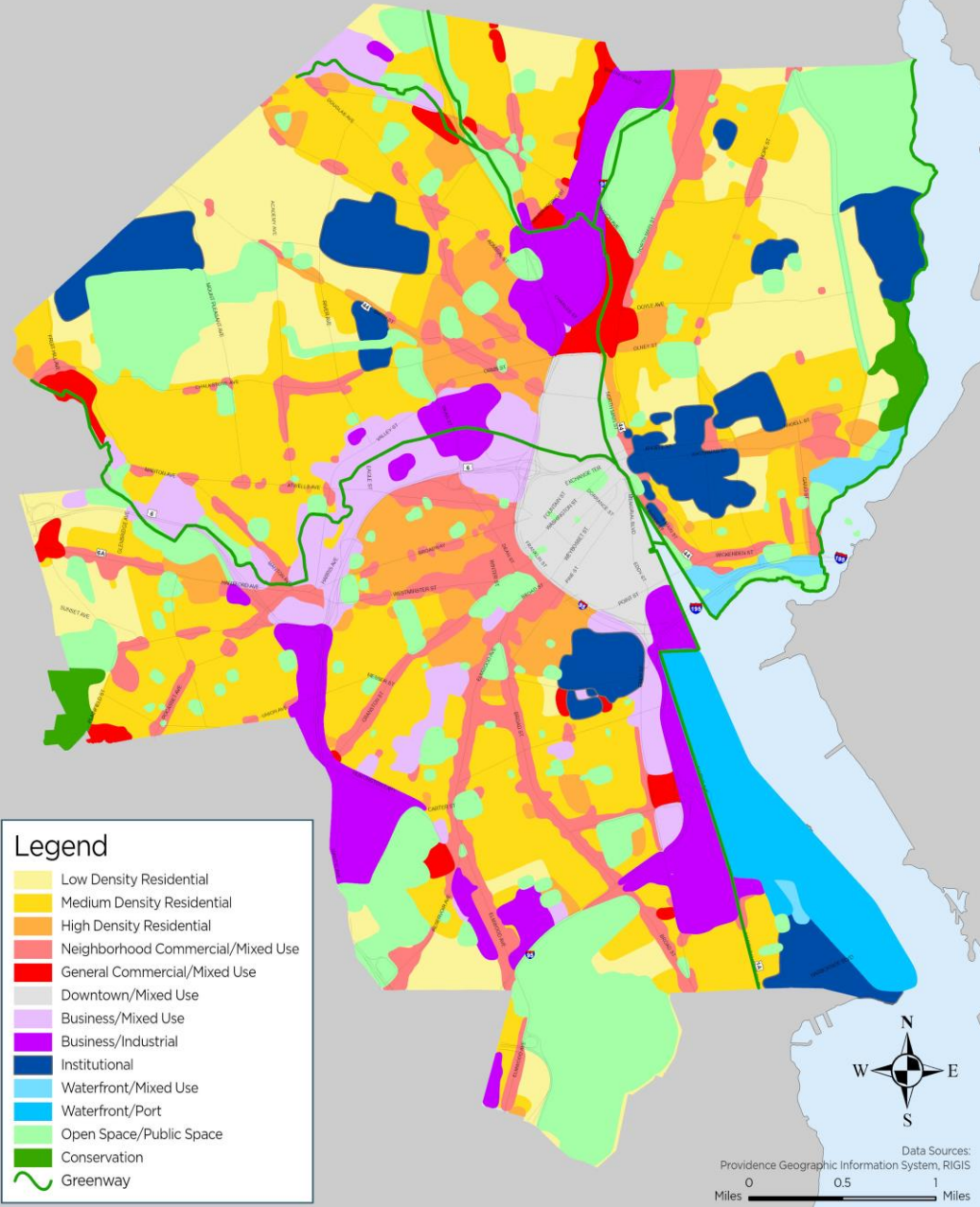
Davey Lopes Recreation Center



# Land Use

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

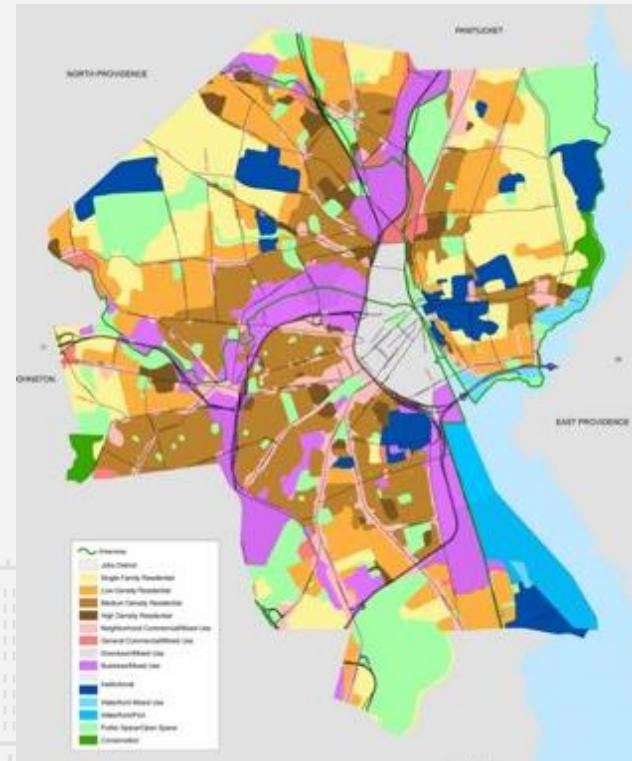
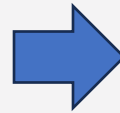


# Land Use: Context

- **Providence Tomorrow** (current Comp Plan passed in 2014) encouraged most growth in Downtown, transitioning industrial areas, and commercial corridors.



"Areas of Stability & Change"

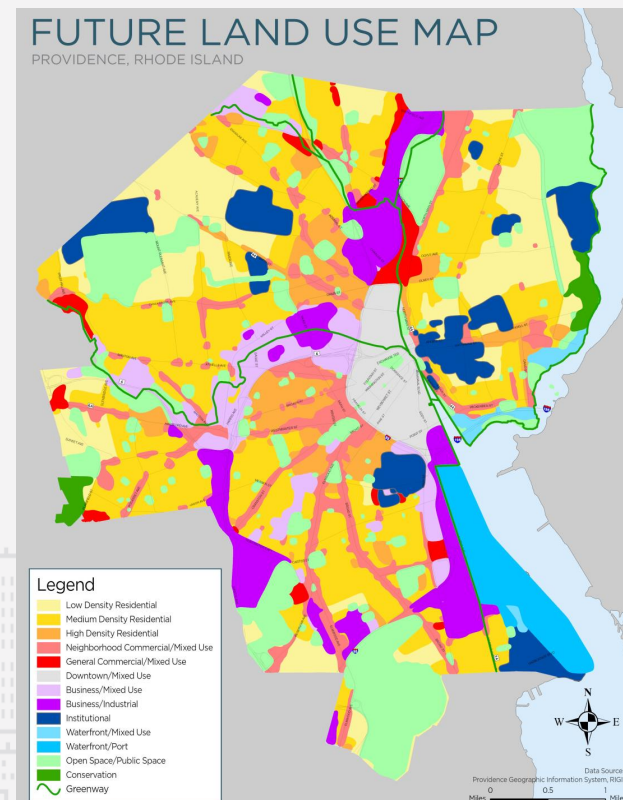
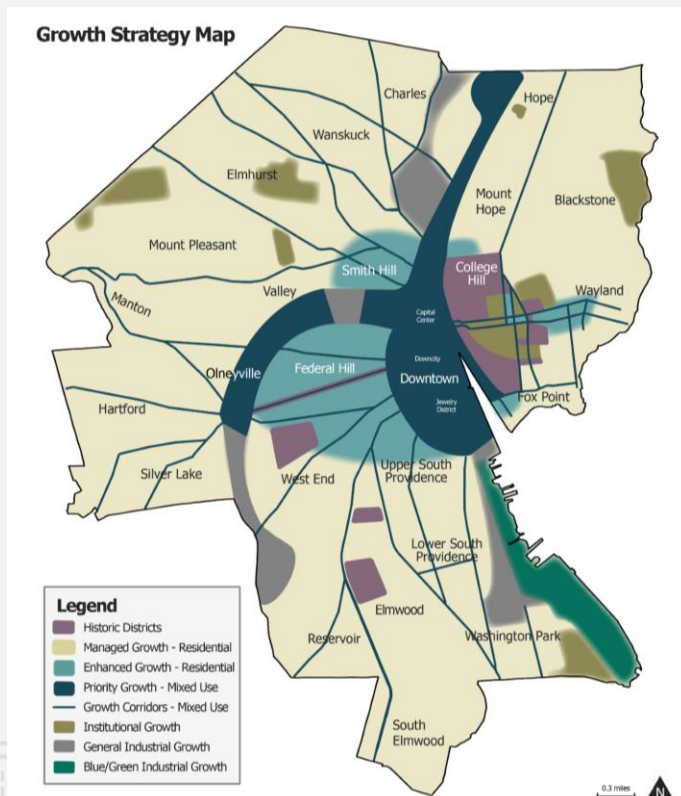


Future Land Use



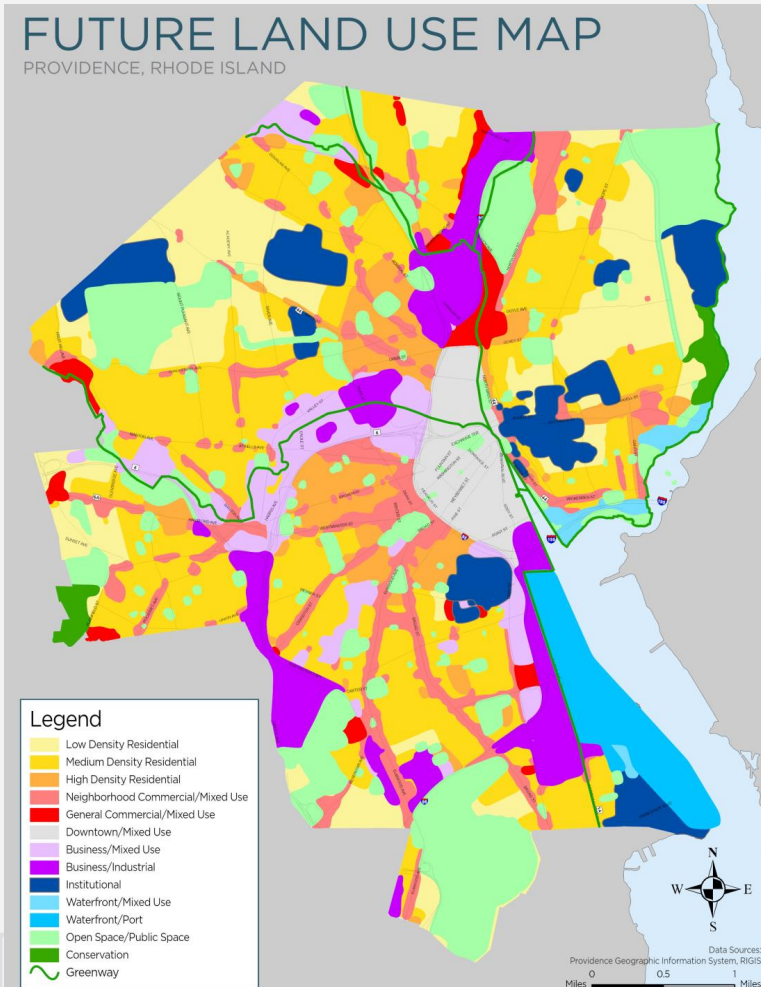
# Land Use: Growth Strategy

- **In this draft Plan**, land use policies respond to the housing crisis by continuing to encourage growth in mixed-use areas, while also enabling more "infill" development in residential areas.





# Future Land Use Categories



- Commercial / Mixed Use
- Residential
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Open Space

# Future Land Use: Commercial / Mixed Use

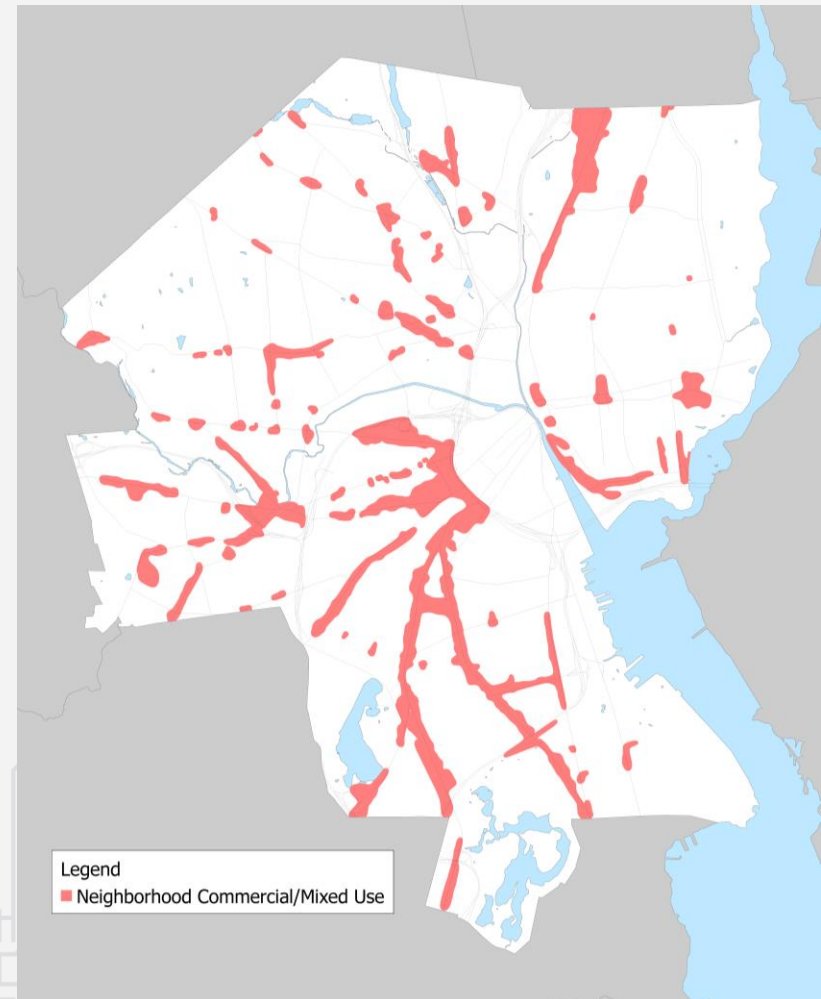
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In *neighborhood commercial / mixed use*, continue policy of promoting walkable urban environment via a mixture of:

- ✓ High-density residential uses
- ✓ Neighborhood-serving commercial uses

New buildings may be up to four stories, with incentives that may add up to two additional stories in exchange for desirable public amenities.

*C-1 and C-2 zones to be combined.  
Zoning to primarily be C-2 & R-4.*



# Examples: Neighborhood Commercial / Mixed Use

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Branch Avenue



Wickenden Street



# Examples: Neighborhood Commercial / Mixed Use

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Broad Street



Westminister Street



# Future Land Use: Residential

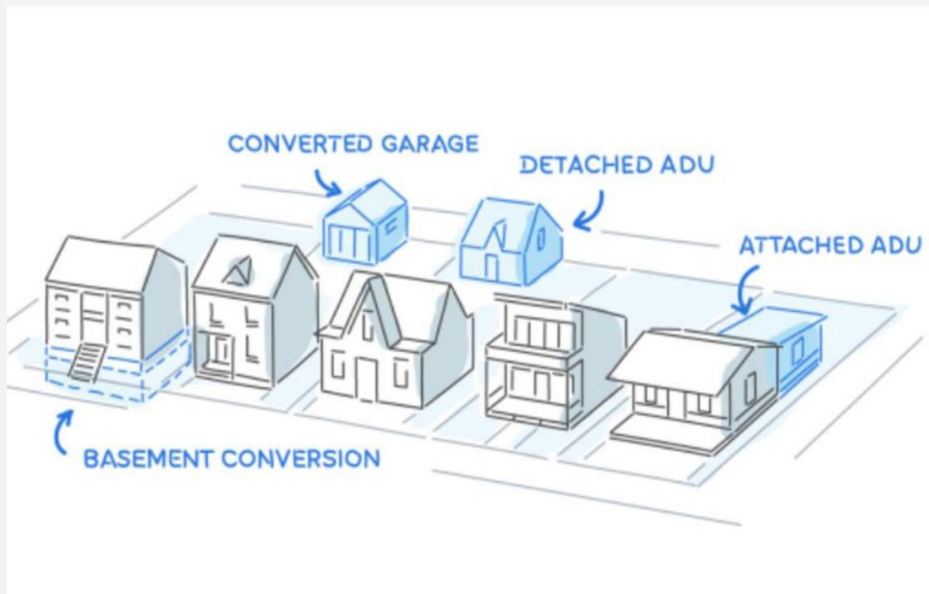
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In *residential* areas, move from four to three designations, with changes to align with the following goals:

- In **low density** residential areas, allow more housing types while preserving the scale of neighborhoods
  - Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), cluster development, low-density rowhouses
- In **medium density** residential areas, make it easier to build what already exists
  - Combine R2 & R3, three-family houses, small apartment buildings
- Expand **high density** residential by identifying areas where multi-family apartment buildings are appropriate based on transportation options and amenities



# Examples: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



Types of ADUs  
(City of Cincinnati)



ADU Garage Conversion  
1192 Westminister Street (WBNA)

# Examples: Rowhouses

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Draper Rowhouses  
Cooke Street



SWAP Rowhouses  
Bridgman Street



# Examples: Cluster Development

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Third Street Cottages (Langley, WA)  
Ross Chapin Architects



Cottage Court (Carlton Landing, OK)  
Kerney Homes





# Examples: Adaptive Reuse

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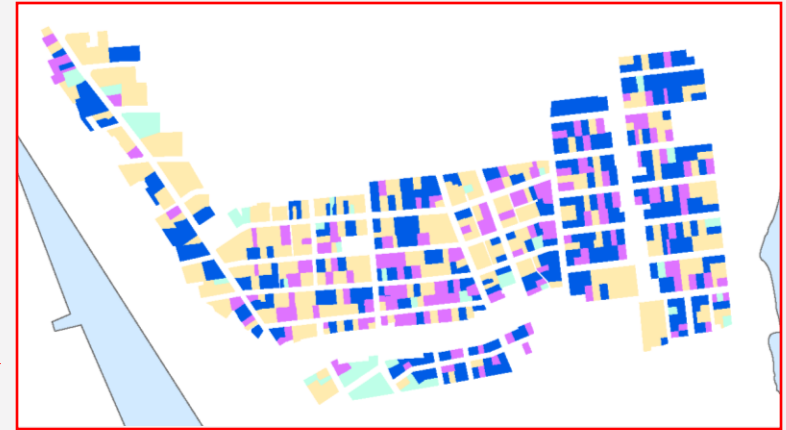
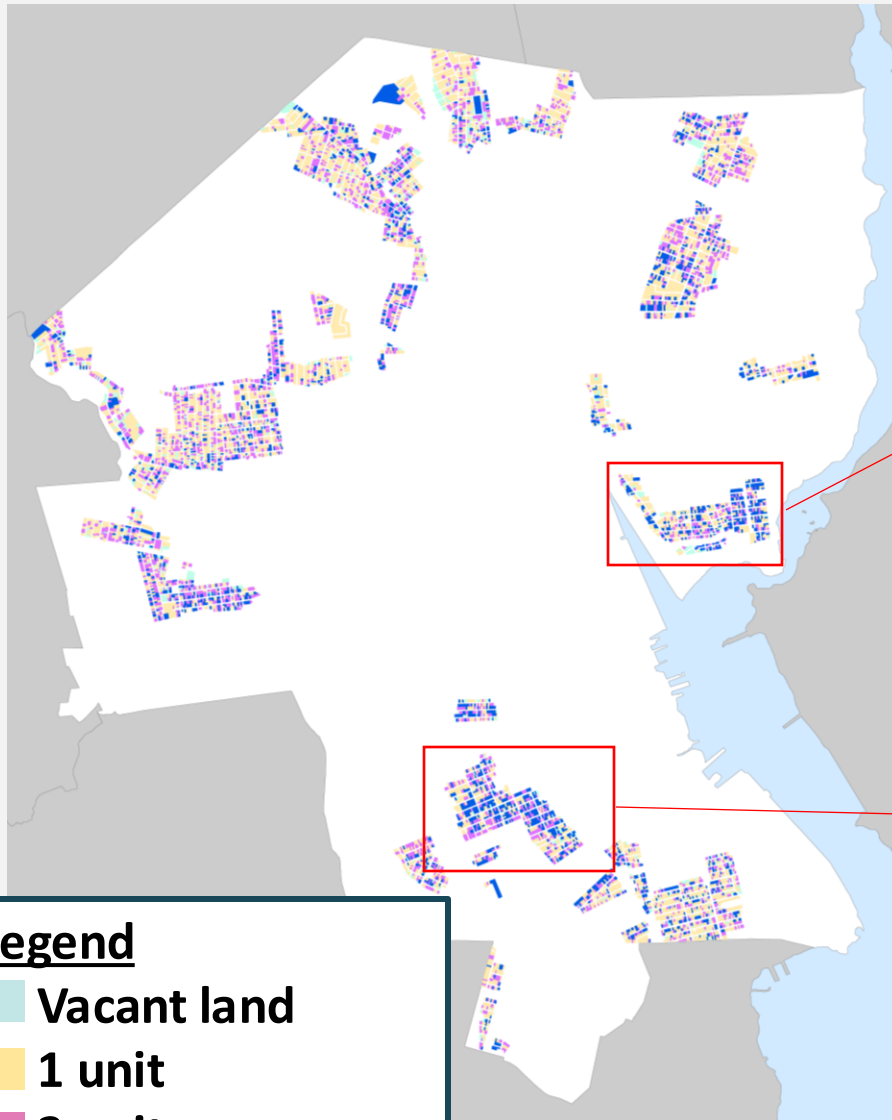


Imperial Knife Factory  
King Street







Union Baptist Church  
East Street

# "Nonconforming" Uses in Today's R-2



## Legend

-  Vacant land
-  1 unit
-  2 units
-  3 units or more



# Examples: Medium Density



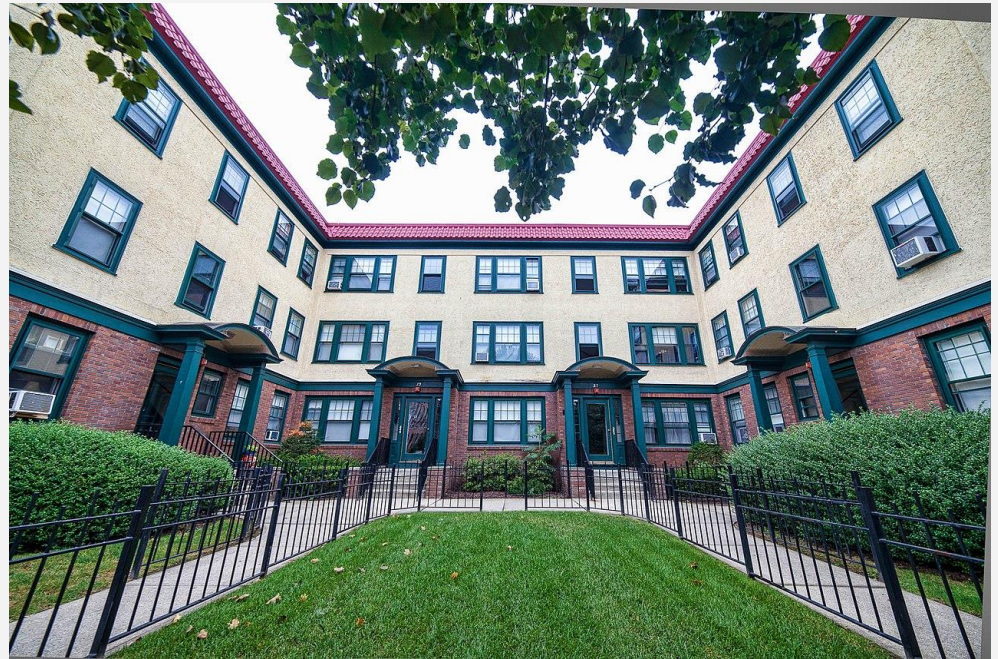


# Examples: Multi-family Apartments

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Blackstone Blvd



Ontario Apartments





# Design Standards & Review

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Committed to strengthening design standards for all new development.

Committed to improving design review processes.

Solutions that balance the need to encourage design quality and innovation, while avoiding financial burden and inefficient, unpredictable processes.



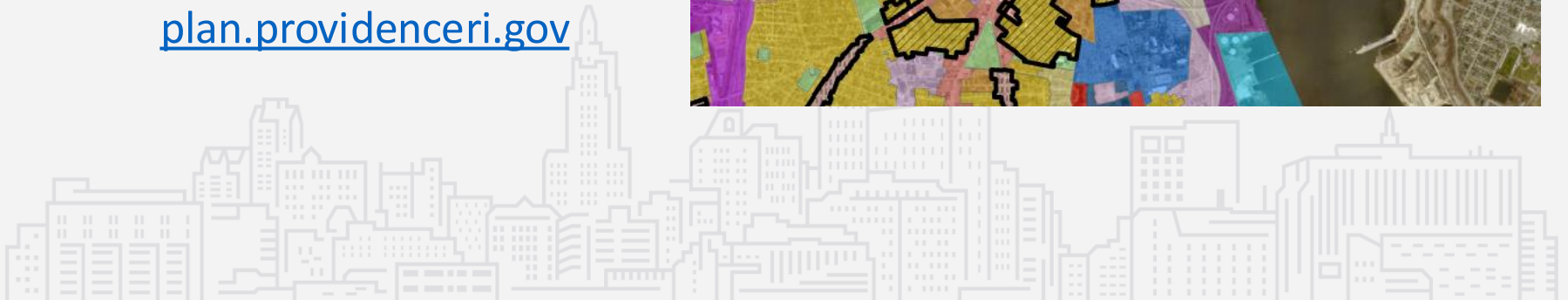
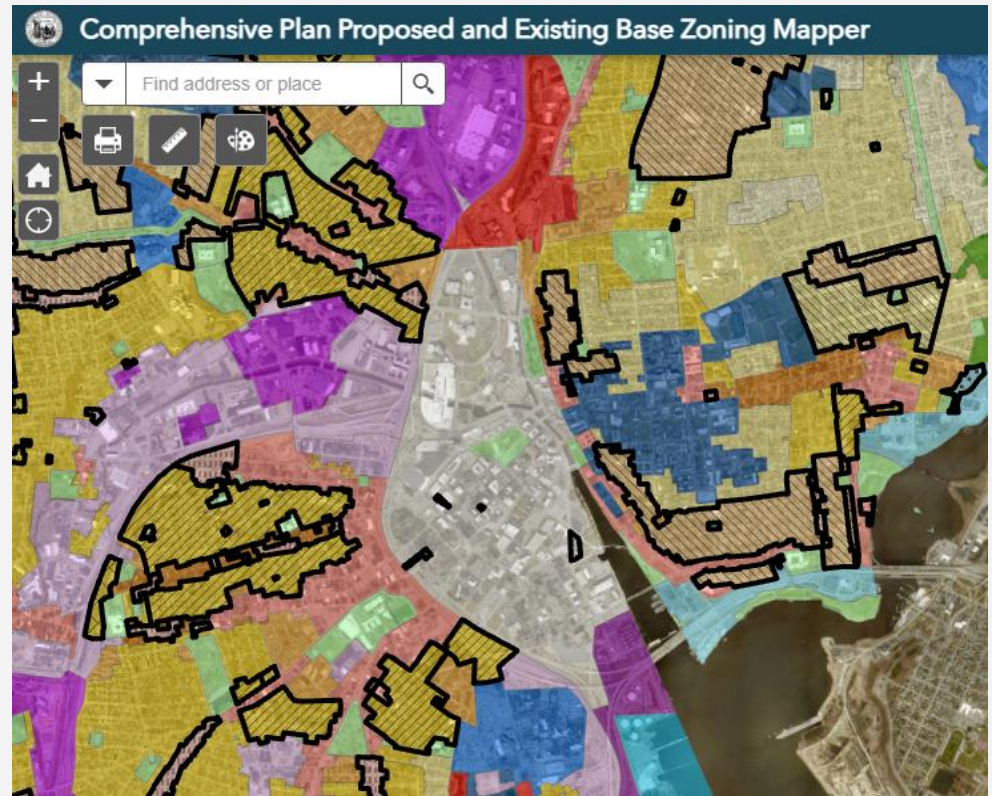
The Trayne Building Extension  
Westminster Street

# Interactive Map

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[plan.providenceri.gov](http://plan.providenceri.gov)



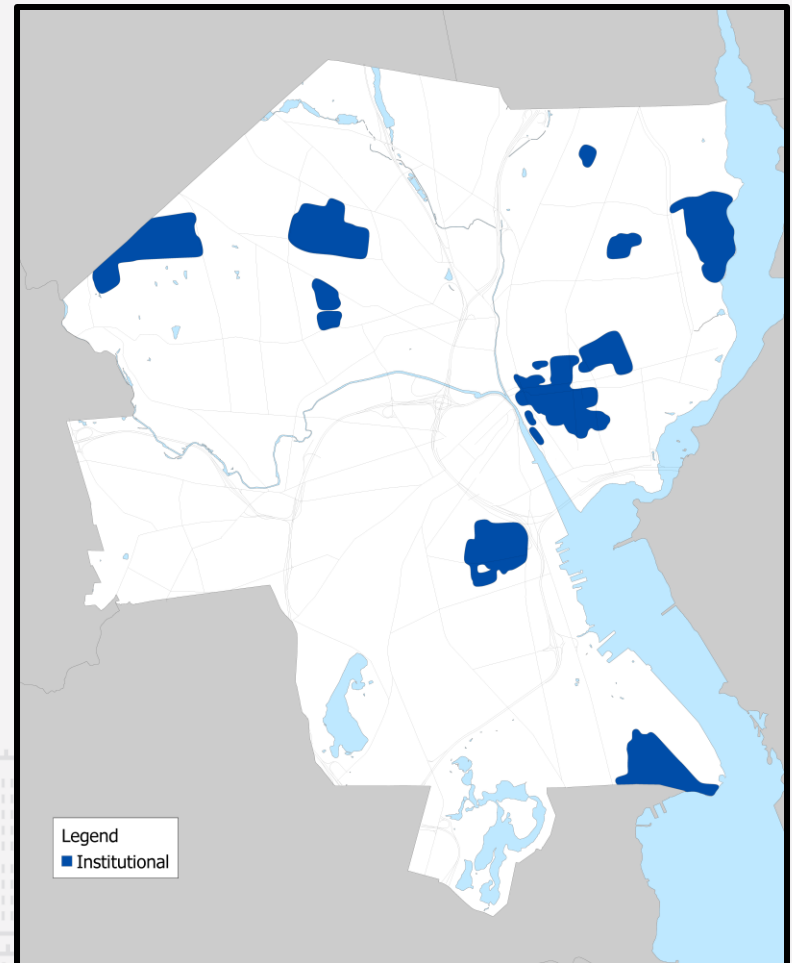
# Future Land Use: Institutional

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No proposed expansion of institutional areas.

Encourage growth of hospitals and universities within consolidated institutional areas.

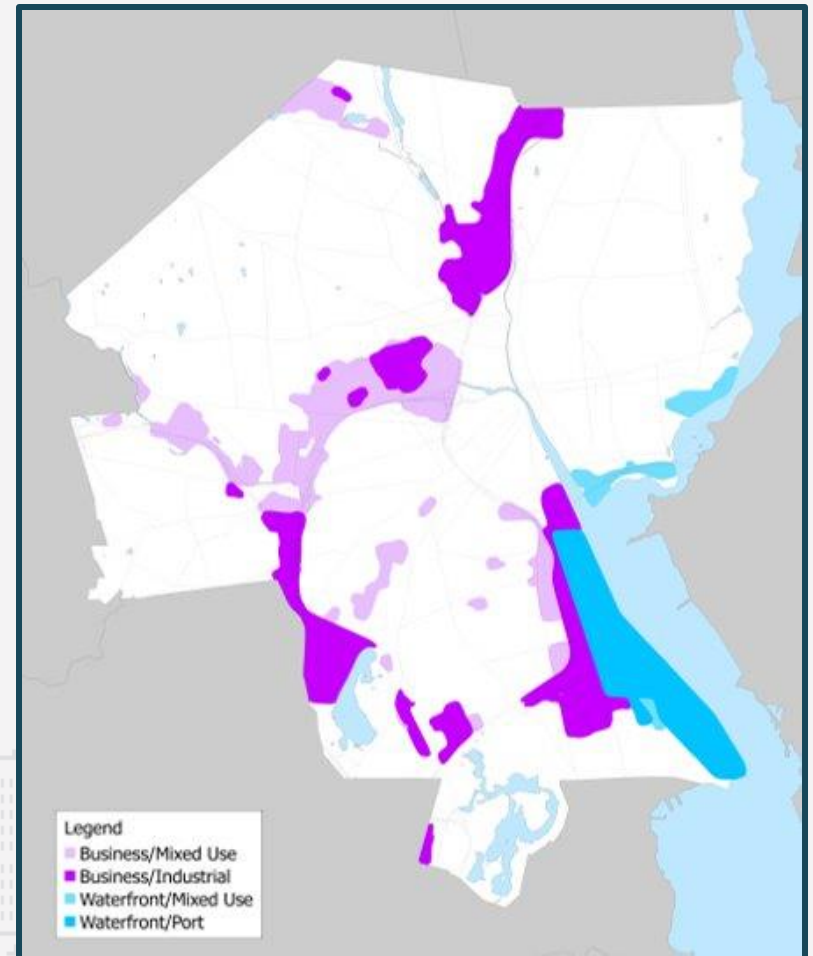
Require colleges and universities to take responsibility for student behavior off-campus, while also better regulating purpose-built student housing.



# Future Land Use: Industrial

Shift industrial land use policy to better align economic, environmental, and public health goals, by:

- Encouraging the growth of clean and sustainable industries, including off-shore wind
- Preparing for the transition away from carbon-intensive industries
- Allowing for the prohibition of future uses that are determined go against public health or climate goals

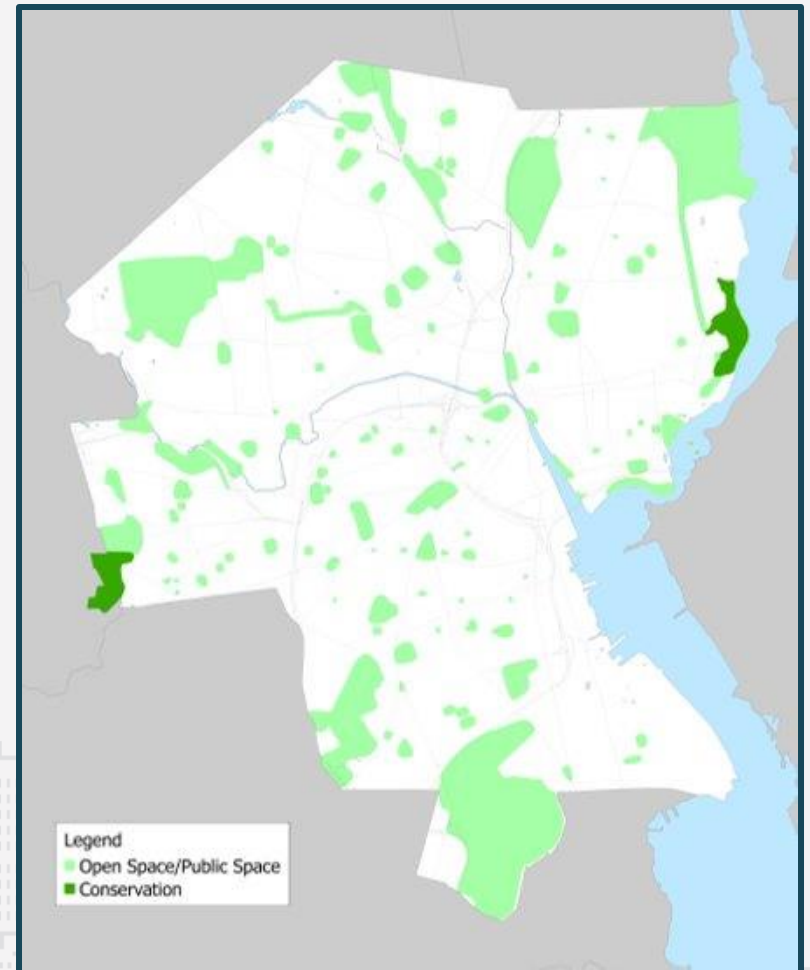




# Future Land Use: Open Space

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Continued preservation and expansion of open space and conservation areas.



# Next Steps

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- **City Council Public Hearing: September 16**
  - 5:30PM in Council Chamber at City Hall
  - Hosted by Ordinance Committee
  - Potential to be extended to September 30
- City Council passage: October / November
- Zoning changes under consideration: Fall / Winter
- State approval target: January 2025



# THANK YOU

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[www.plan.providenceri.gov](http://www.plan.providenceri.gov)

[planning@providenceri.gov](mailto:planning@providenceri.gov)

