



MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

GREEN & COMPLETE STREETS ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 22, 2024



Agenda

1. Roll Call
2. Consent Agenda*
3. GCSC Review Procedure
4. Old Business
 1. Update on Walk Signal Improvements
 2. North Main Street Update
5. New Business
 1. Comprehensive Plan Update
 2. Vision Zero Program Update
6. Announcements, Staff Updates, and Public Comment

Asterisk indicates items listed as "for action"



ROLL CALL

Item #1



GCSC Members

Voting

- Alana Deluty
- Rosie Jaswal
- Cedric Ye
- Doug Johnson*
- Kathleen Gannon**
- Denise Greenidge**

Non-voting

- Alex Ellis (Planning)
- Nate Urso (DPW)
- **Sophie Worsh-Farnum**
(Sustainability)
- Cpt. Luis SanLucas
(Public Safety)
- (City Forester)

* Term expired 12/31 but no replacement appointed yet by City Council

** Term expiring 1/31, no new appointments made yet by Mayor

CONSENT AGENDA

Item #2



Consent Agenda

- Make meetings more efficient by grouping items that need approval but don't merit discussion
- Today:
 - Accept: Minutes from 1/25/24 meeting



GCSC REVIEW PROCEDURE

Item #3



GCSC web page

<https://www.providenceri.gov/planning/gcsc/>

CITY OF PROVIDENCE



MAYOR BRETT SMILEY



CITY HALL

DOING BUSINESS

EVENTS

NEWS

PVD 311

EXPLORE

Green and Complete Streets Advisory Council (GCSC)

ABOUT

Streets and sidewalks carry not only people and goods, but also various utilities and stormwater runoff. City streets also represent a sizeable portion of the city's overall land use, house many of its publicly managed trees, and serve as windows into the city for visitors and residents alike. City streets and sidewalks must serve people of all ages and abilities, while creating more mobility and independence for young people, seniors, and people with disabilities. They serve motorists, non-motorists, residents in wheelchairs, parents pushing strollers, kids biking and walking to school, and people who can't afford to use, or prefer not to use motor vehicles.

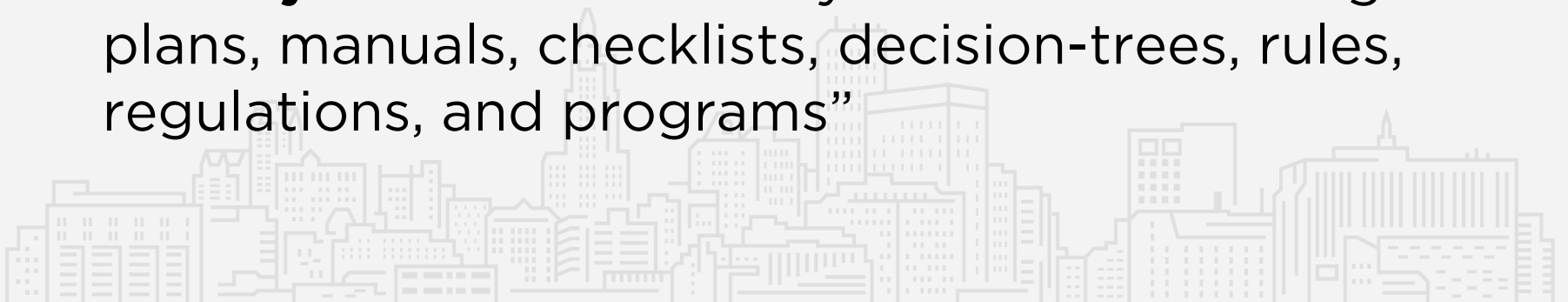
The City of Providence will develop a safe, reliable, equitable, efficient, inviting, integrated and connected multimodal transportation system that will promote access, mobility and health for all users and abutters, while also improving environmental quality and reducing polluted stormwater runoff. The City will create a connected network of right-of-way facilities accommodating all modes of travel to the maximum practical extent. This network will promote walking and biking on city streets and sidewalks, provide access to public transportation, beautify and shade the City's parks, schools, healthy food retail establishments, and reduce and treat polluted stormwater.

The **Green and Complete Streets Advisory Council** was created by ordinance in July 2021. Its responsibilities are to:




Review Procedure

- **Review of Conceptual & 30% Plans**
During project development, make recommendations to improve design
- **Waivers** from requirements of ordinance
Mode-specific, GCSC approves or denies
- **Traffic calming:** in edge cases, after traffic study, GCSC can recommend Traffic Engineer give “preliminary approval”
- **All City activities:** annually review “all existing plans, manuals, checklists, decision-trees, rules, regulations, and programs”



Amendment changes

Signed by Mayor Smiley 12/21/23

- Adds “any removal of complete streets features” to scope of review
 - Adds 2 alternate members to GCSC
 - Members would now serve until replacement appointed
 - Tweaks traffic calming thresholds to fix too wide eligibility of short, low-traffic streets
 - Requires other boards to seek GCSC opinion if relevant (while keeping to required deadlines)
 - Big changes after review need waiver if reduce safety
 - Specifying in the ordinance that a quorum of GCSC is 3 voting members
- 

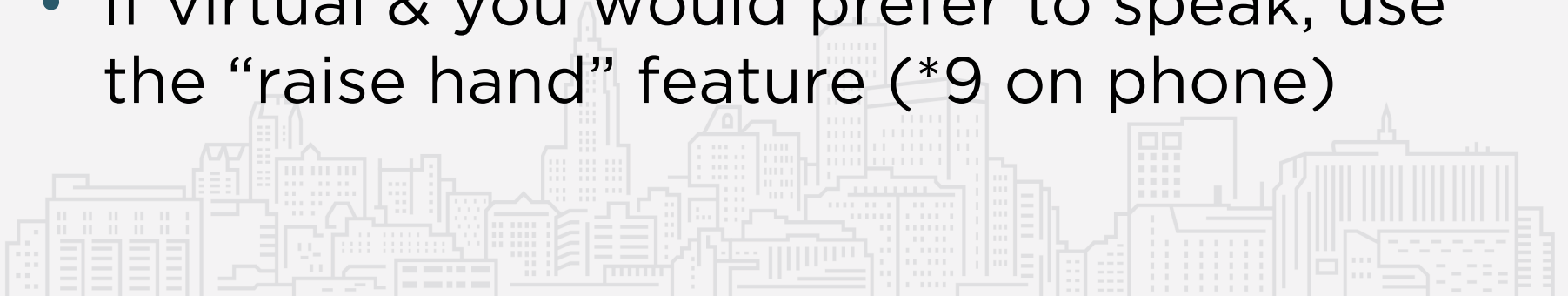
Vision Zero Policy Responsibilities

- Provide community input from a range of stakeholders to the Task Force as it develops, implements, evaluates, and reports on the Action Plan or makes revisions thereto. The Task Force shall meet and consult with the Advisory Group ... on an as-needed basis.
- Consult with community members about their concerns, priorities, and goals on an ongoing basis, not just during initial policy development.
- Collaborate with the community and gather feedback from community members and stakeholders in order to communicate this information to the Task Force.
- Work with the community to identify emerging issues or address existing problems.
- Empower community members to address issues that matter to them by sharing decision-making responsibilities.



Public comment

- Opportunity during each item & for general topics at end of meeting
 - Wait for Chair to recognize you
 - Please keep comments to 2 minutes
- If participating virtually, put questions or comments in Q&A, staff or Chair will read them out
- If virtual & you would prefer to speak, use the “raise hand” feature (*9 on phone)



OLD BUSINESS

Item #4



UPDATE ON WALK SIGNAL IMPROVEMENTS

Item #4a



Status of Walk Signal Improvements

- How many signals have had LPI added?
- What is the status of other signal improvements for pedestrian safety that GCSC recommended?
 - No Right Turn on Red
 - Empire/Weybosset
 - Recall at exclusive phases including Clifford/E Franklin
 - Adopting recommended standards



NORTH MAIN STREET UPDATE

Item #4b



NEW BUSINESS

Item #5





MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Comprehensive Plan Update

Status Report
Green & Complete Streets Committee
Department of Planning & Development

February 22, 2024



Contents

1. Community Engagement Overview
2. Draft 'Growth Strategy' Map
3. Next Steps



Process Overview



Engagement Process



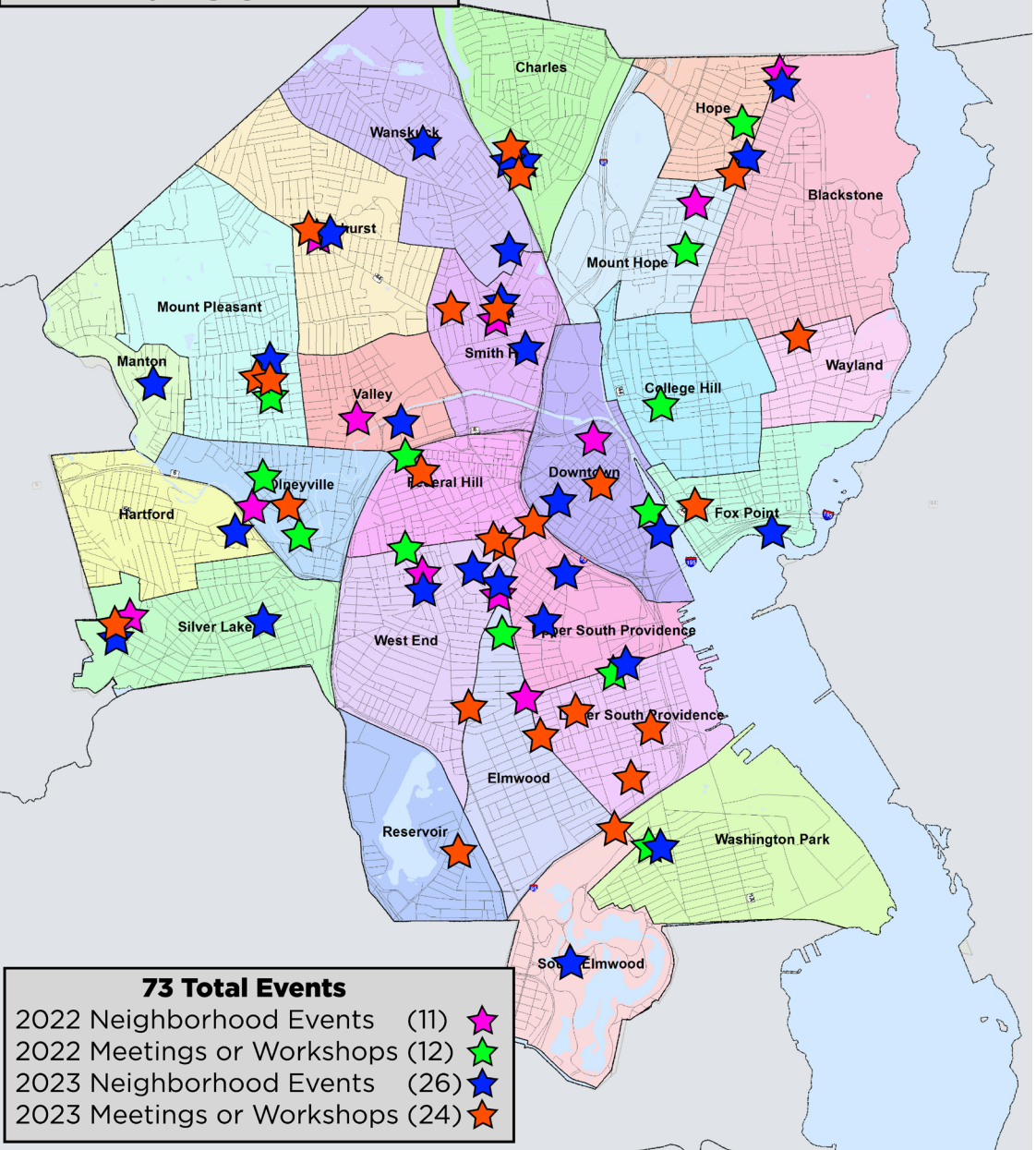
Plan.ProvidenceRI.gov

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

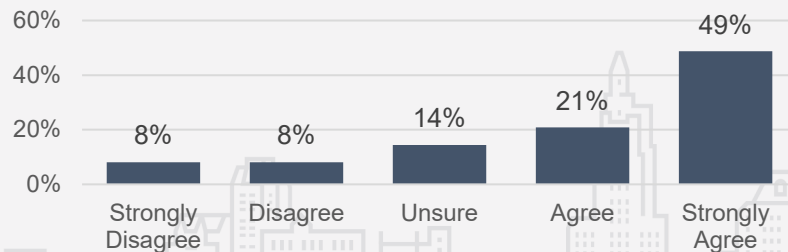


Takeaways: HOUSING

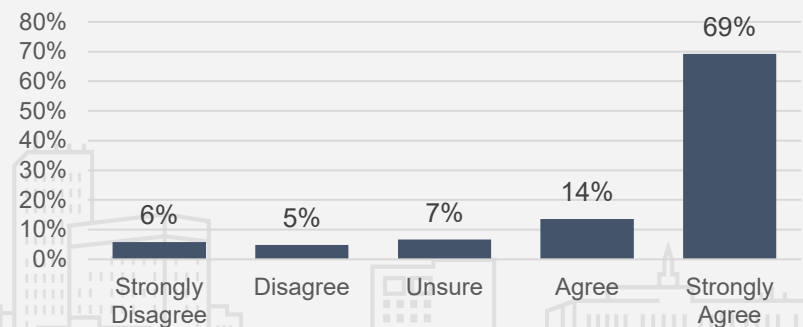
- Demand for housing action from across the demographic spectrum.
- Widespread support for affordability in all neighborhoods, more housing types + densities, infill development on under-utilized parcels.
- Concerns: student housing impacts, design review.

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**

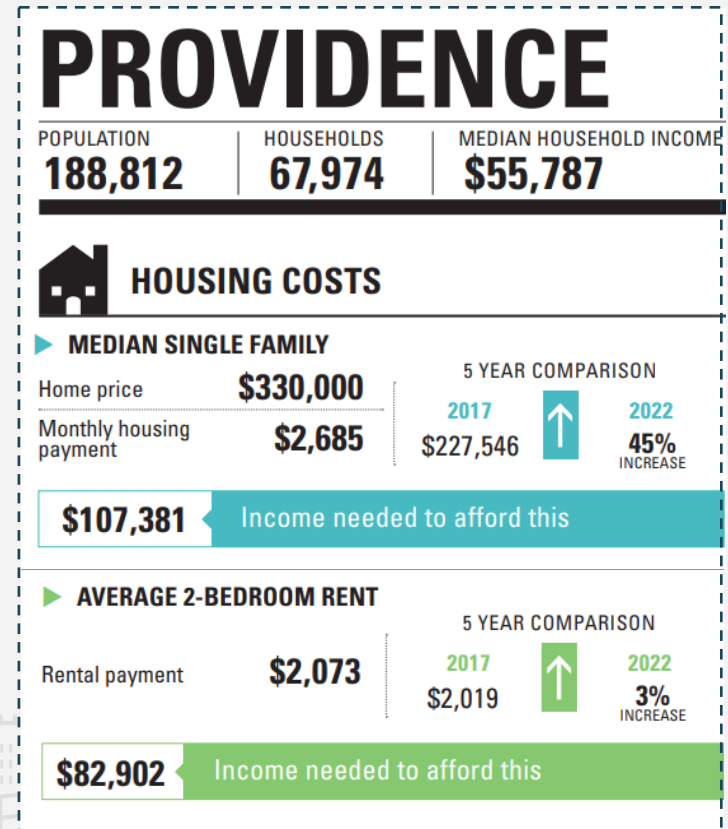
Policy Directions

- Housing
- Land Use
- Mobility
- Climate



Housing

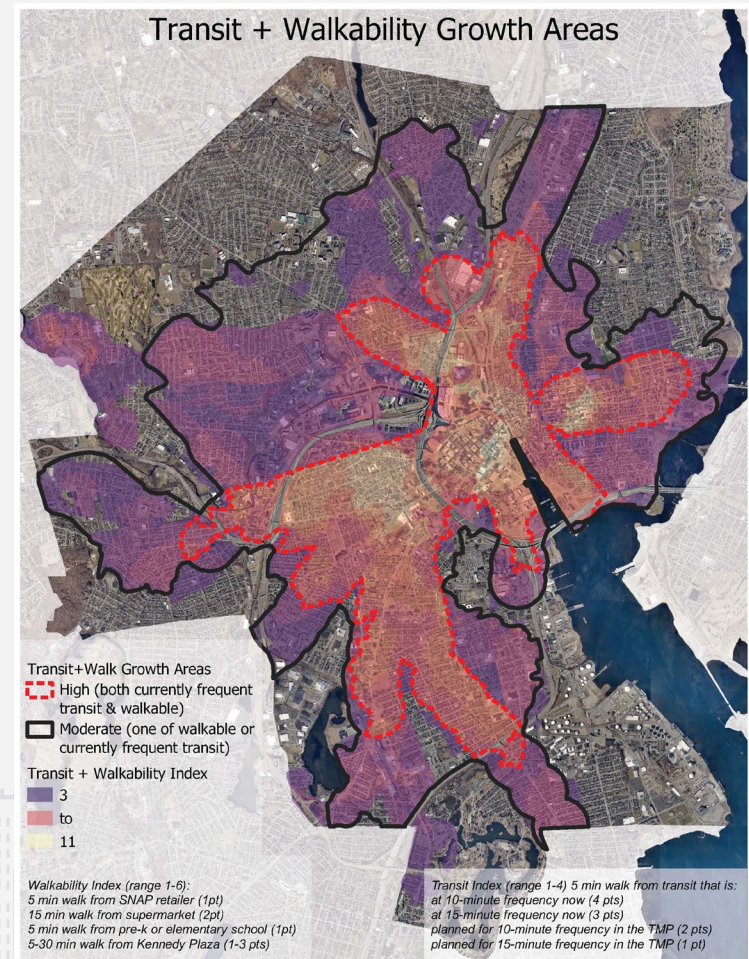
- New policies must dramatically accelerate the production of new housing, including deed-restricted, affordable units.
- Multi-faceted strategies to include:
 - Land use & density changes
 - Enabling new housing typologies
 - New & expanded sources of funding
 - Proactive redevelopment of vacant & blighted 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

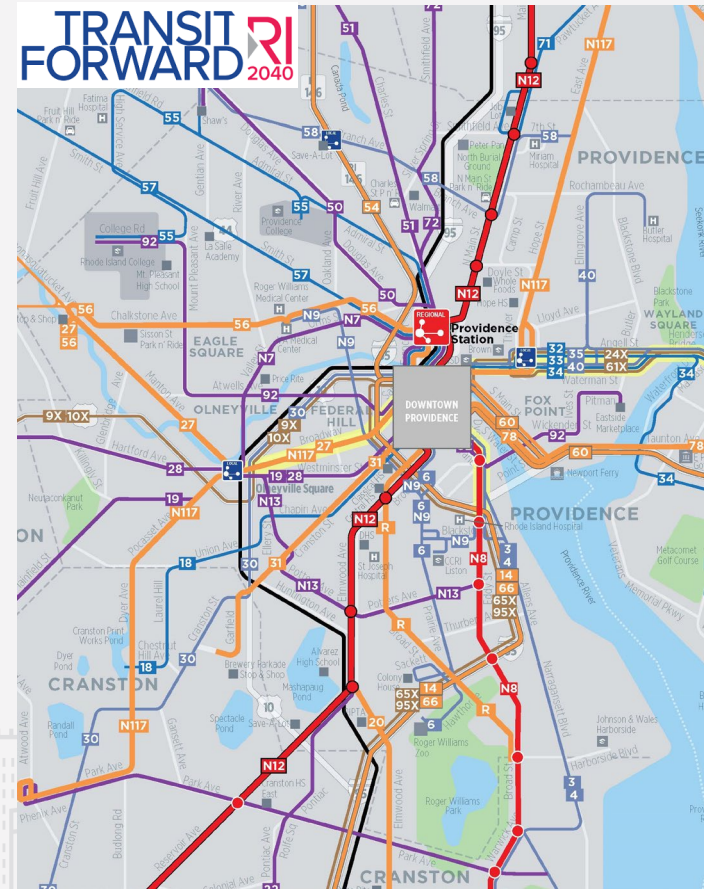
- High density commercial, mixed-use, & residential development should continue to align with amenities, transit, & walkability.
 - Potential to refine height incentives for affordability, design, & street activation.
- More opportunities should be identified for multi-family housing in residential neighborhoods.
- 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

Mobility

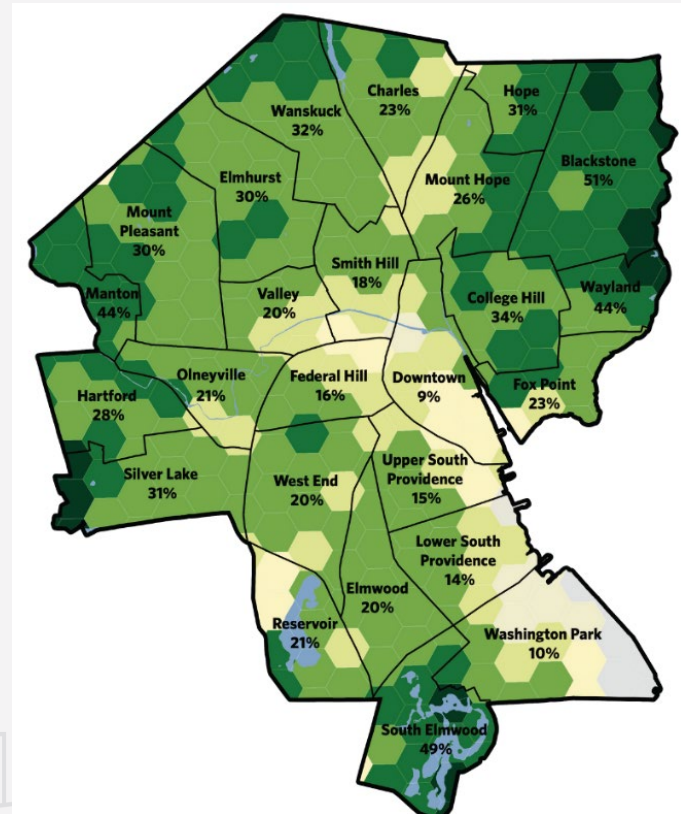
- Plan for & implement complete street network improvements that provide safe & convenient connections for all road users.
- Align mobility & land use policy with adopted State & Federal Plans, incl. Bicycle Mobility Plan & Transit Master Plan.
- Align mobility planning with climate change & public health goals, including:
 - Encouraging mode shift to reduce transportation sector emissions
 - Incorporating green infrastructure into all projects
 - Initiatives to reduce diesel freight trucking & associated air pollution
- Anticipate future needs, like EV charging infrastructure



**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

Growth Strategy



What is a Growth Strategy?

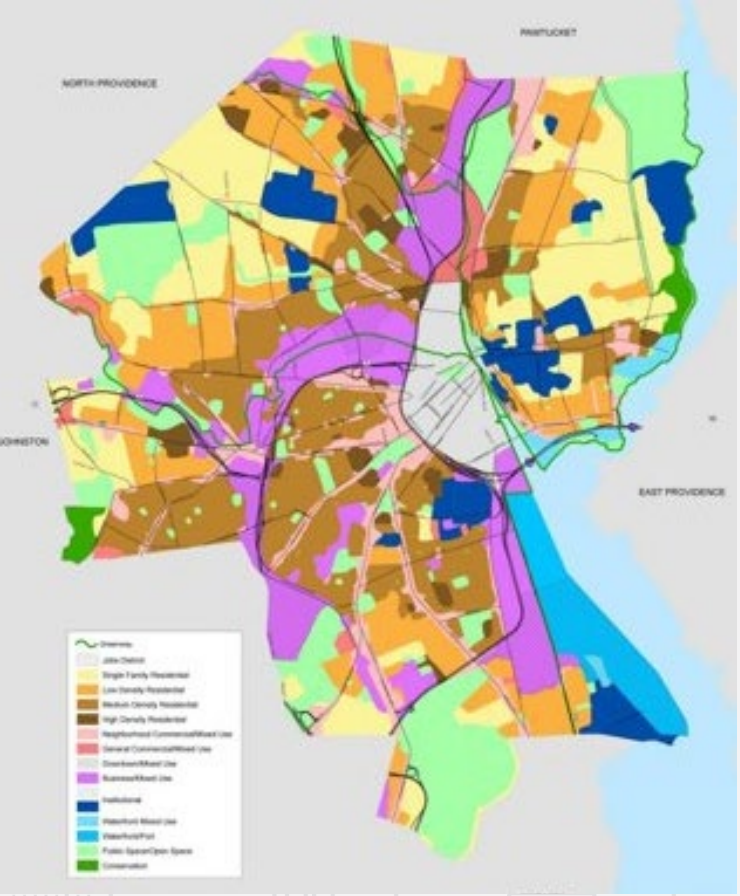
- A conceptual map intended to visualize and inform the Comp Plan's future land use strategy.
- A generalized answer to the question: **where and how should Providence grow?**
- Implemented via the Future Land Use Map and the Comp Plan's specified objectives and strategies.



Providence Tomorrow (2014)



2014 'Growth & Stability'



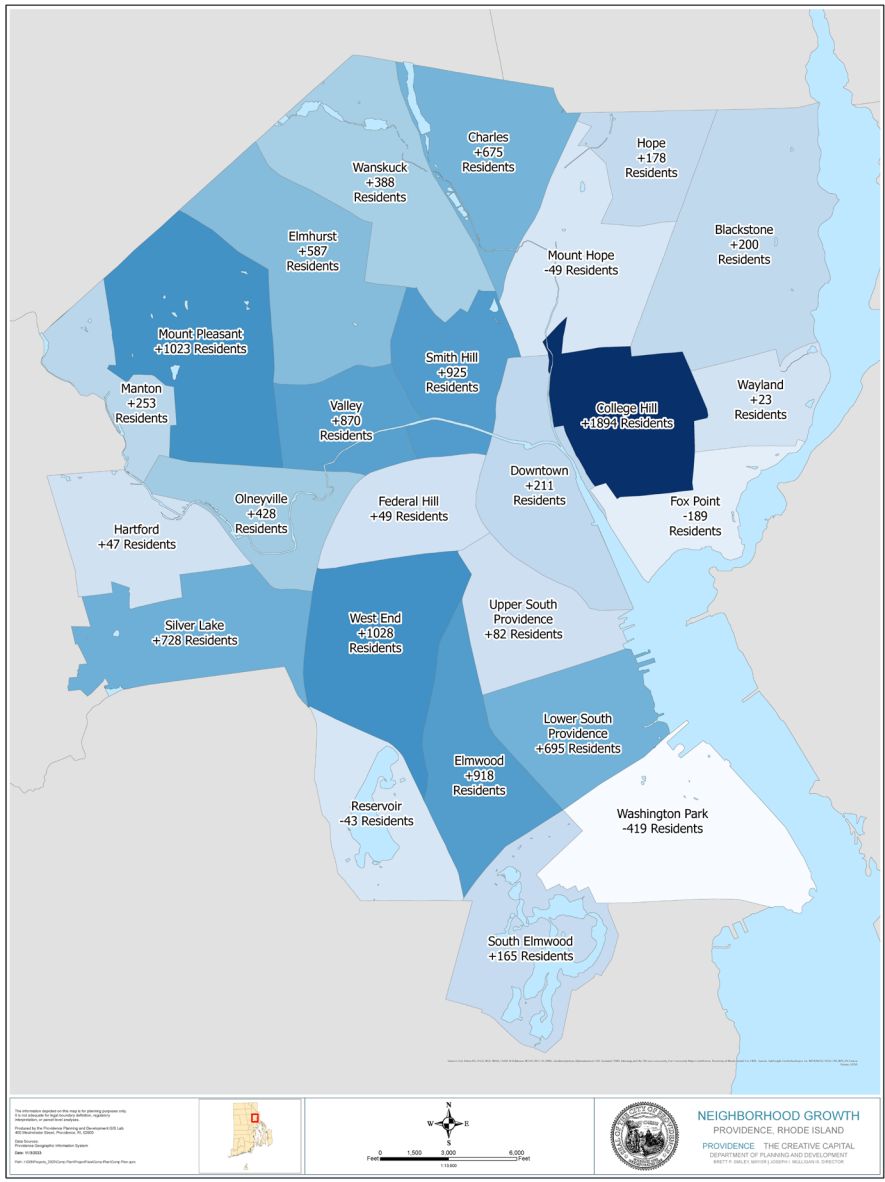
2014 Future Land Use

What informs the draft Growth Strategy?

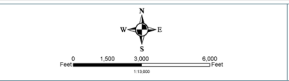
The Strategy is a product of a variety of data gathering and analysis, including:

- Population growth and development trends
- Community engagement findings
- Best practices in planning and development
 - Especially re: density, Transit-Oriented Development
- Analysis of the existing built environment

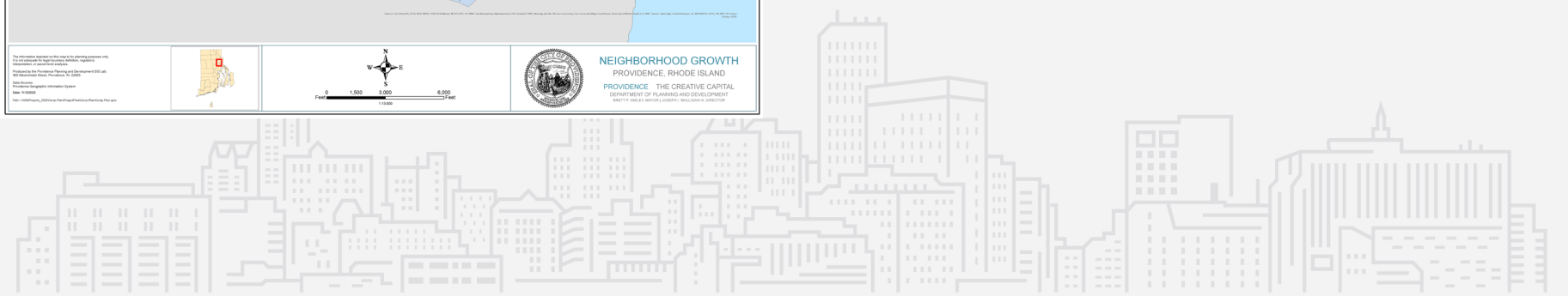


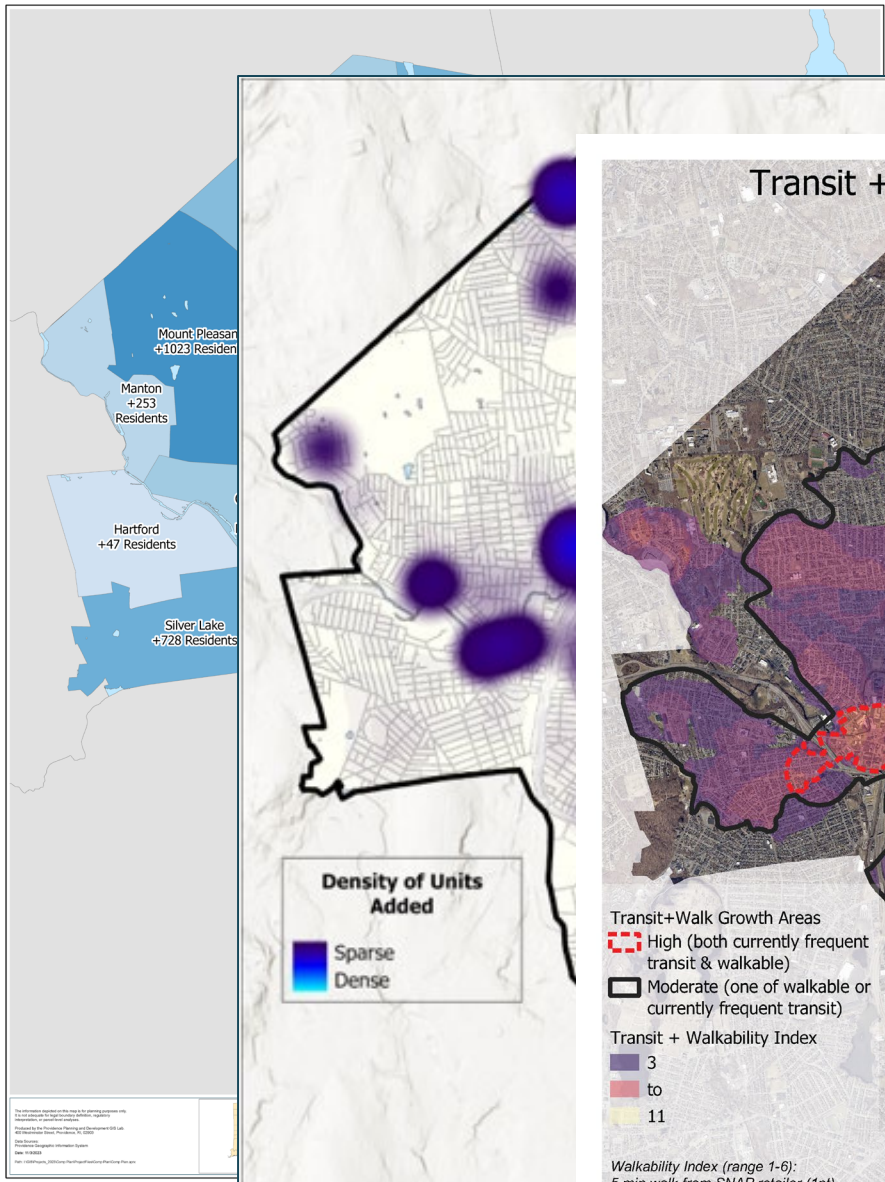


The information contained in this map is for planning purposes only. It is not intended to be used for legal purposes. It is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for legal purposes. It is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for legal purposes.

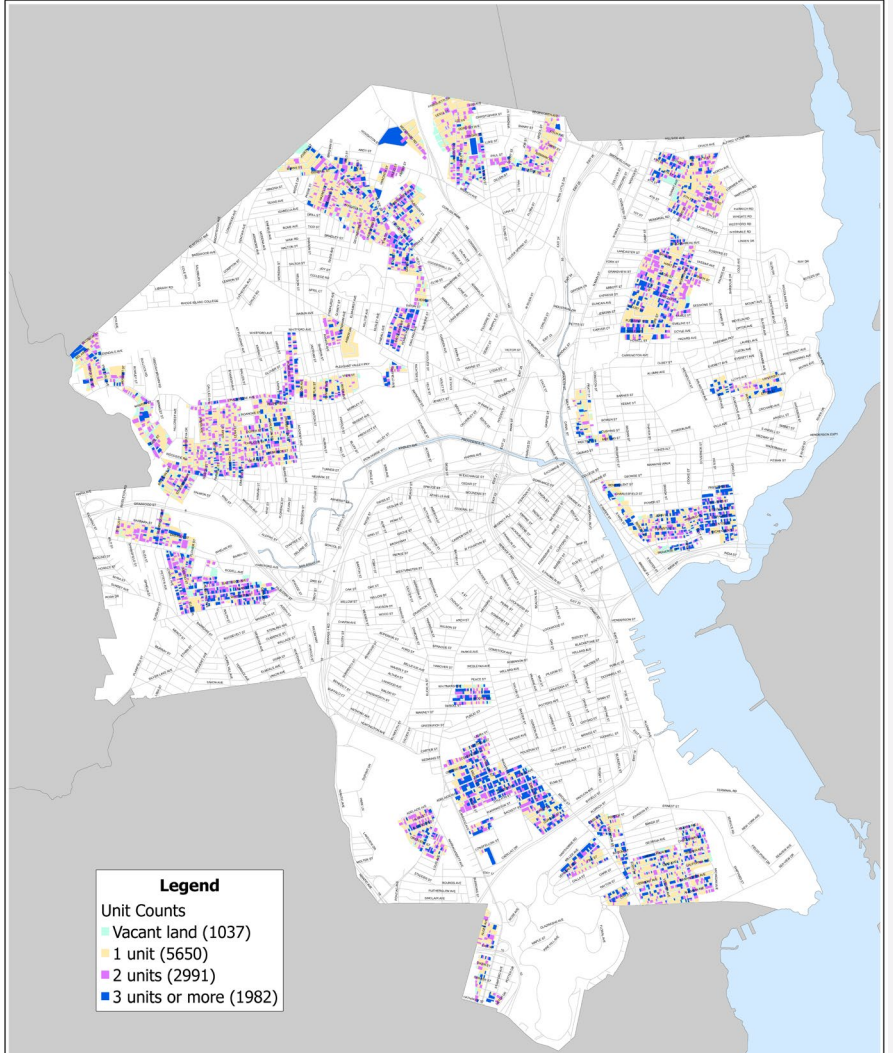


NEIGHBORHOOD GROWTH
 PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
 PROVIDENCE THE CREATIVE CAPITAL
 DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
 BRITTY BIRD & PARTNERS ARCHITECTURAL STUDIO





Transit + Walkability Growth Areas



This information is intended for informational purposes only. It is not intended to be used for legal or financial purposes. It is not intended to be used for legal or financial purposes. It is not intended to be used for legal or financial purposes. It is not intended to be used for legal or financial purposes.

Growth "Controls"

Targeted strategies will be included in the draft plan that aim to moderate growth in line with best practices and community input, including:

- Zoning regulation re: use, building scale, dimensions
- Design guidelines and standards
- Student housing and short-term rental regulation
- Climate resilience strategies
- Mobility investments & regulation



Growth Strategy Proposal



Legend – Definitions (1 of 2)

Priority Growth – Mixed Use

- High-amenity areas with the best transit service & mobility options, suited for large scale, dense, mixed-use development

Growth Corridors – Mixed Use

- Commercial and transit corridors with areas and nodes suited for mixed-use and high-density residential infill development.

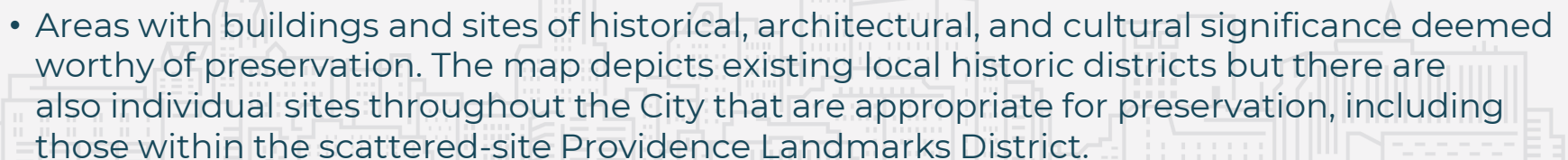
Enhanced Growth – Residential

- Primarily residential areas of varying densities with limited mixed use that are suitable for higher-density residential growth due to their proximity to Downtown, high degree of mobility options, and the built environment's existing prevalence of high-density housing.

Managed Growth - Residential

- Primarily residential areas of varying densities with limited mixed use. New development in these areas should not change the overall existing development patterns.

Historic Districts

- Areas with buildings and sites of historical, architectural, and cultural significance deemed worthy of preservation. The map depicts existing local historic districts but there are also individual sites throughout the City that are appropriate for preservation, including those within the scattered-site Providence Landmarks District.
- 

Legend – Definitions (2 of 2)

Institutional

- Areas for growth of educational and healthcare institutions.

General Industrial

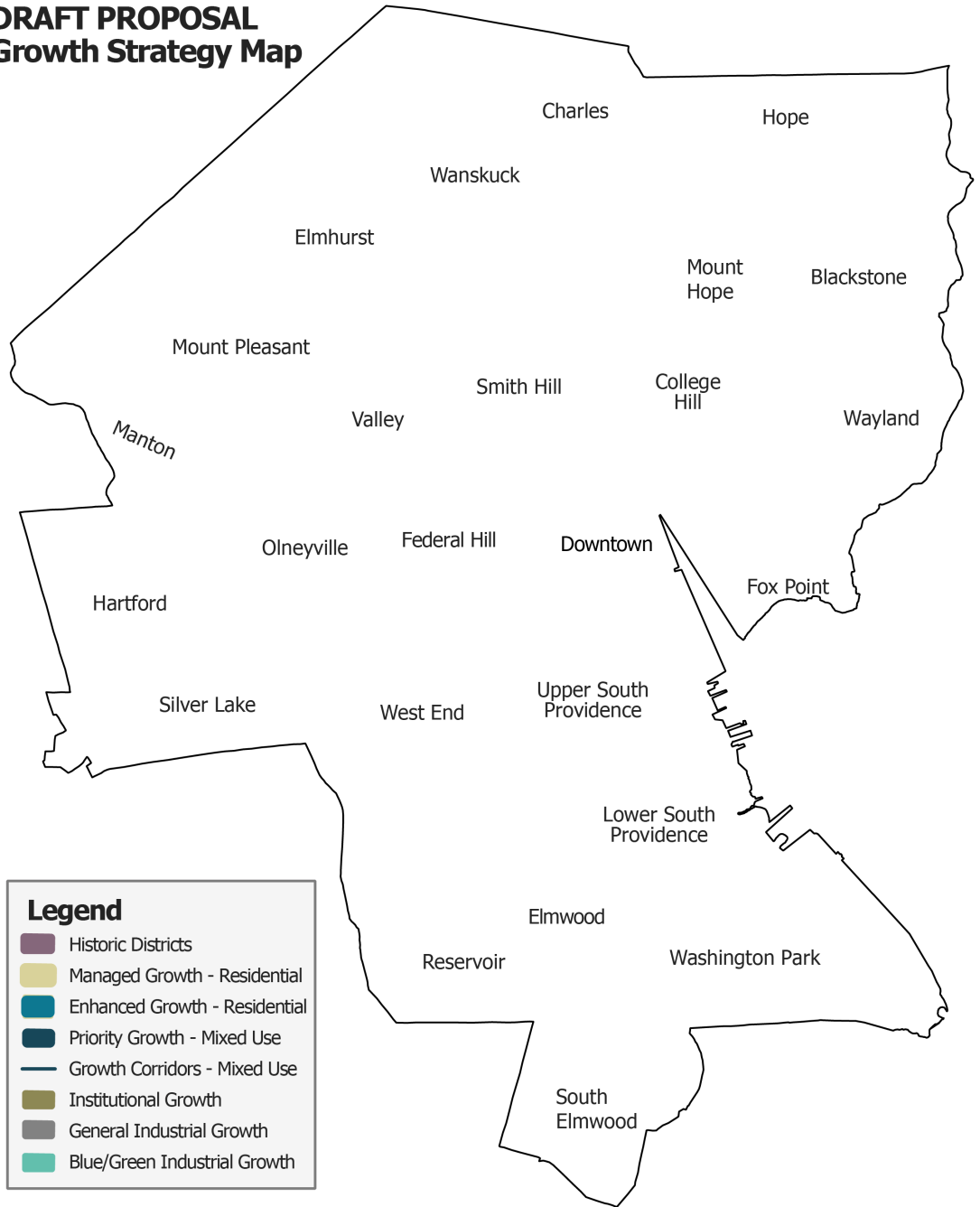
- Areas for business and industrial growth without residential uses.

Blue-Green Industrial

- Areas for water-dependent industrial growth, prioritizing clean, sustainable, and resilient economic development.



DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



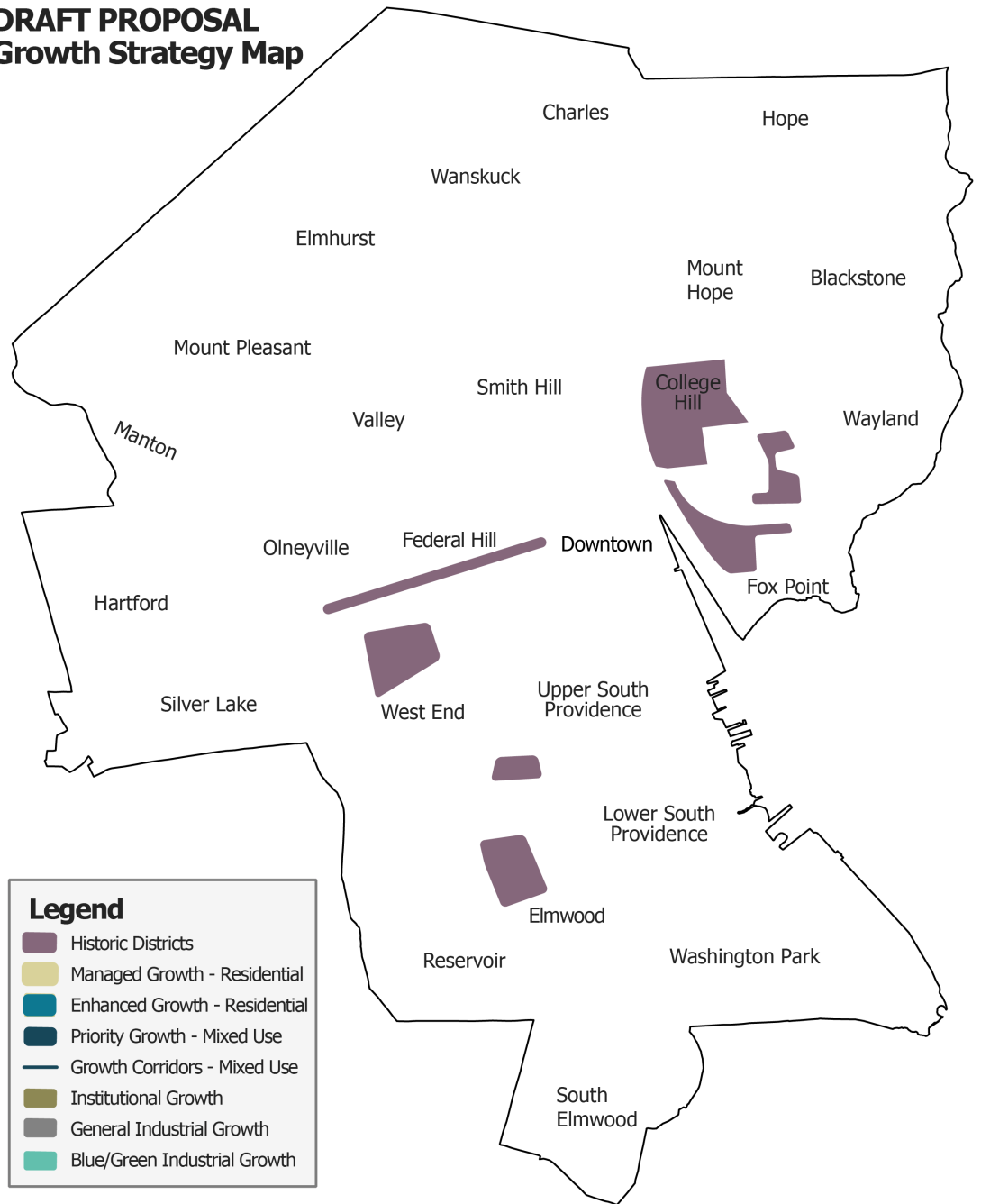
Legend

- Historic Districts
- Managed Growth - Residential
- Enhanced Growth - Residential
- Priority Growth - Mixed Use
- Growth Corridors - Mixed Use
- Institutional Growth
- General Industrial Growth
- Blue/Green Industrial Growth



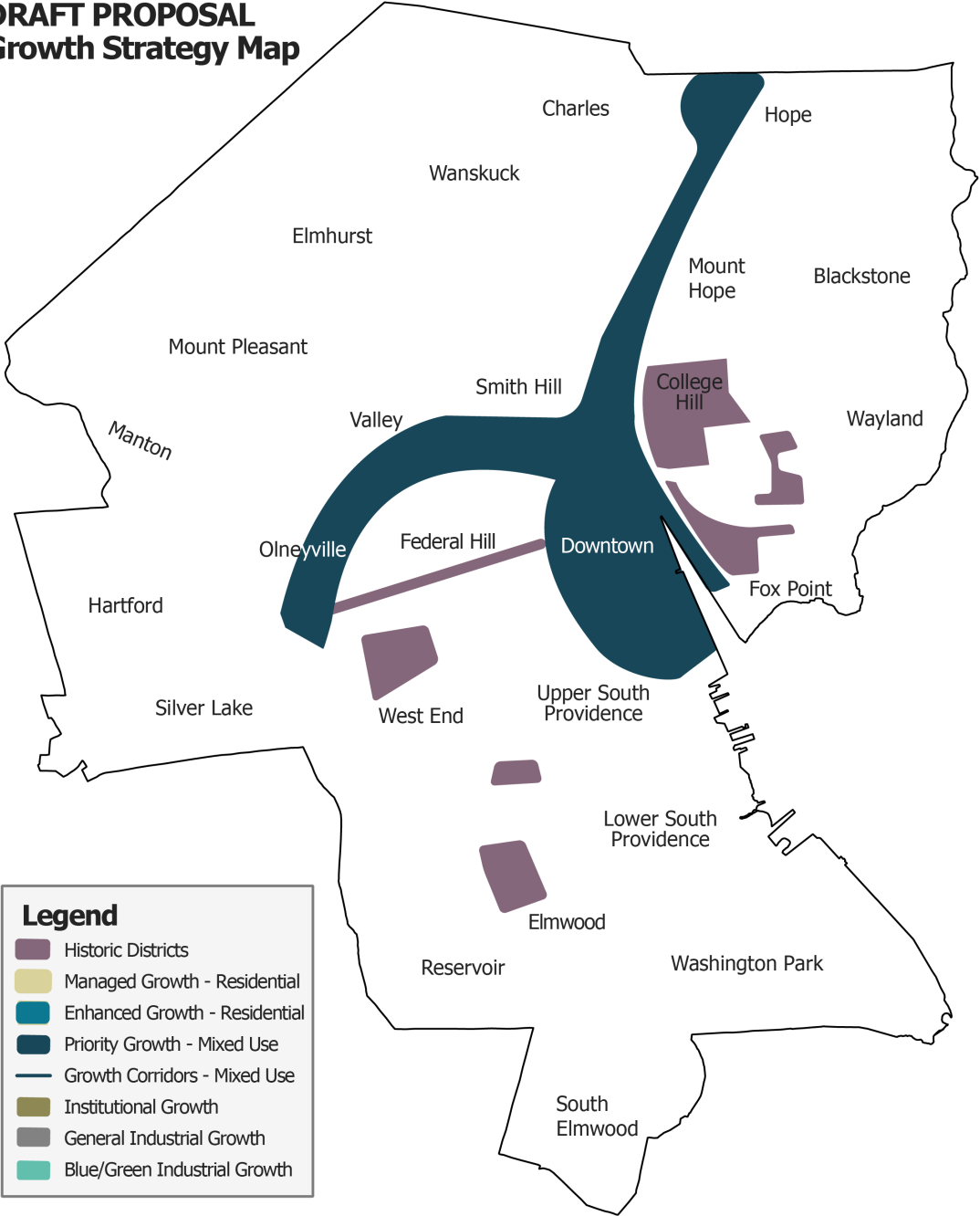
Historic Districts

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



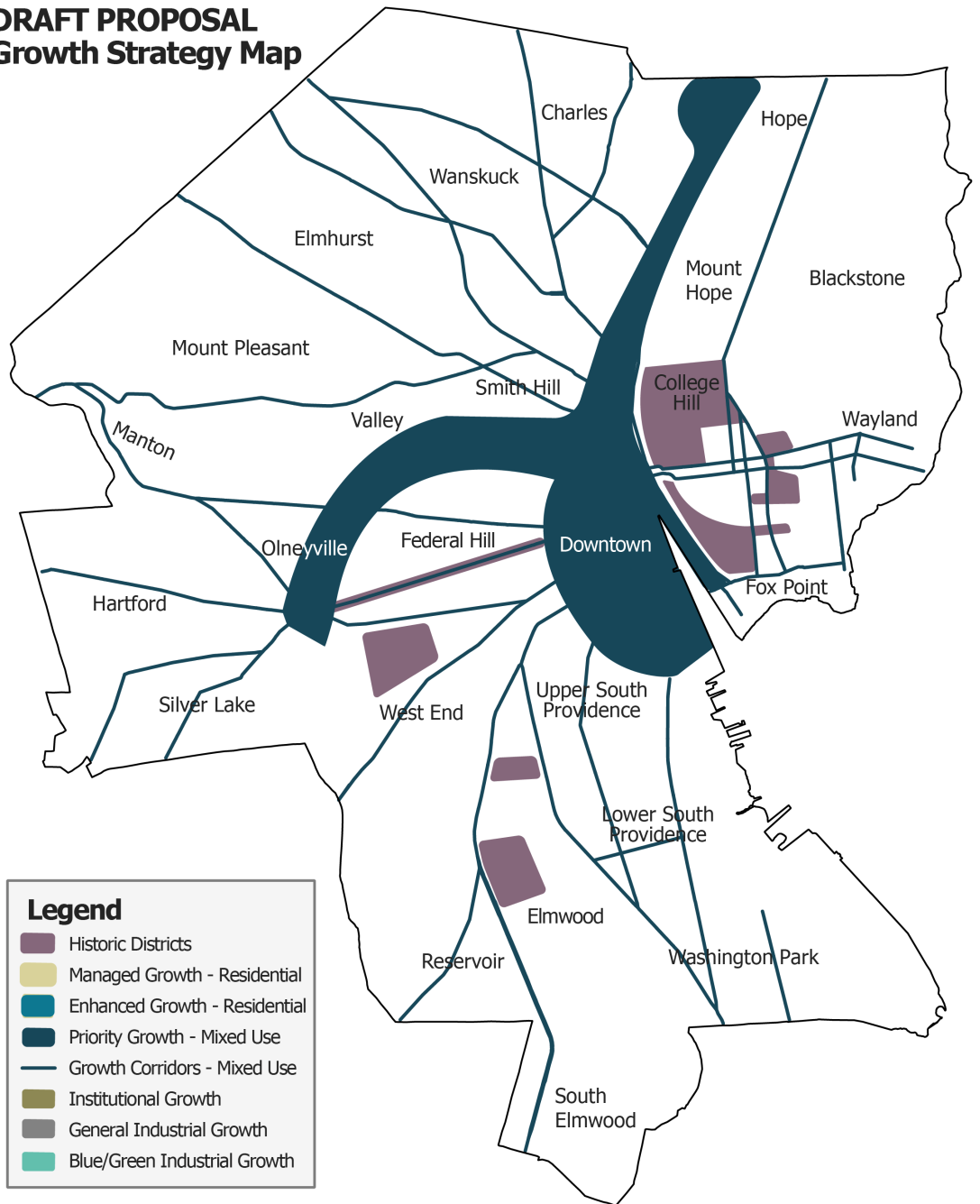
Priority Growth

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



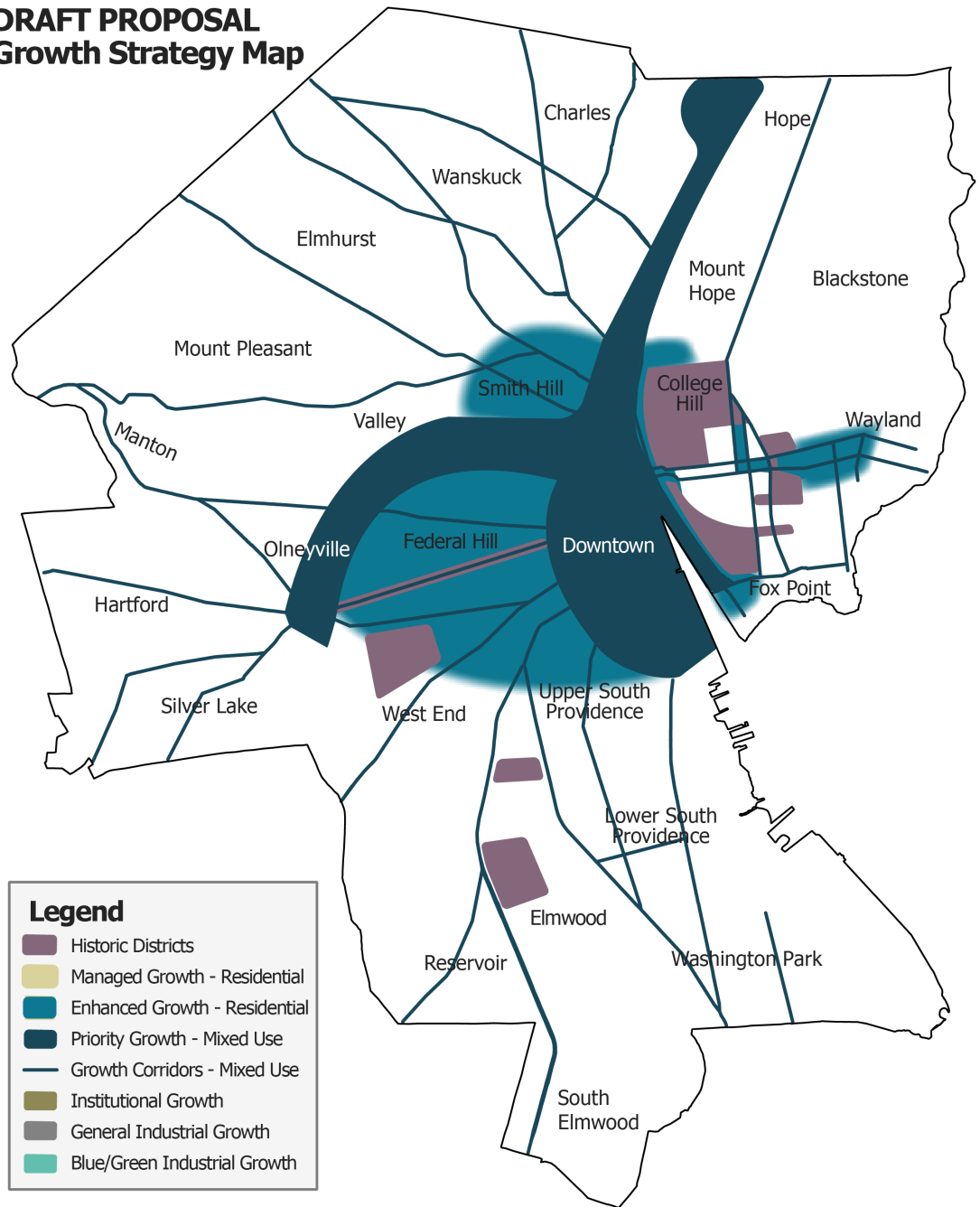
Growth Corridors

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



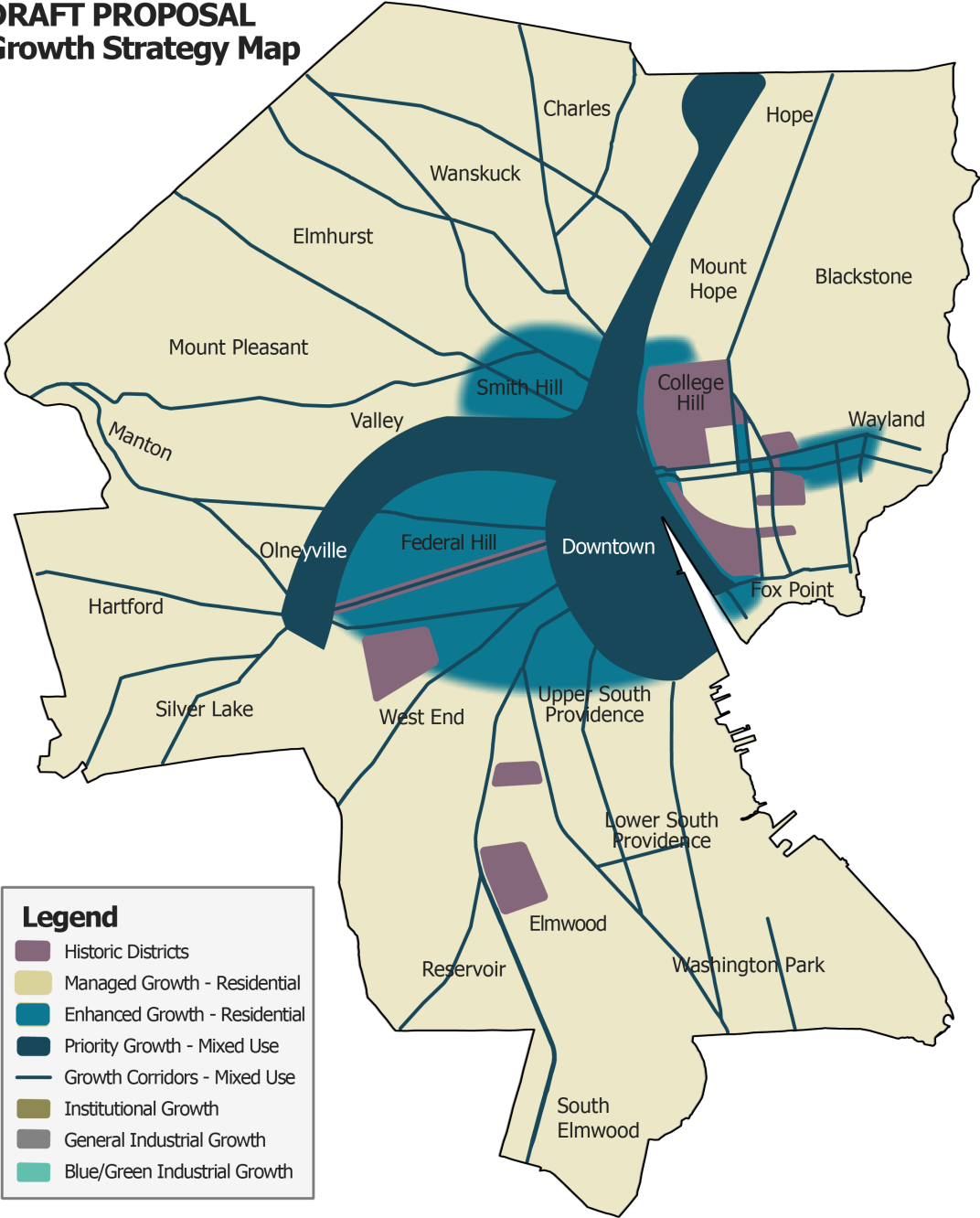
Enhanced Growth

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



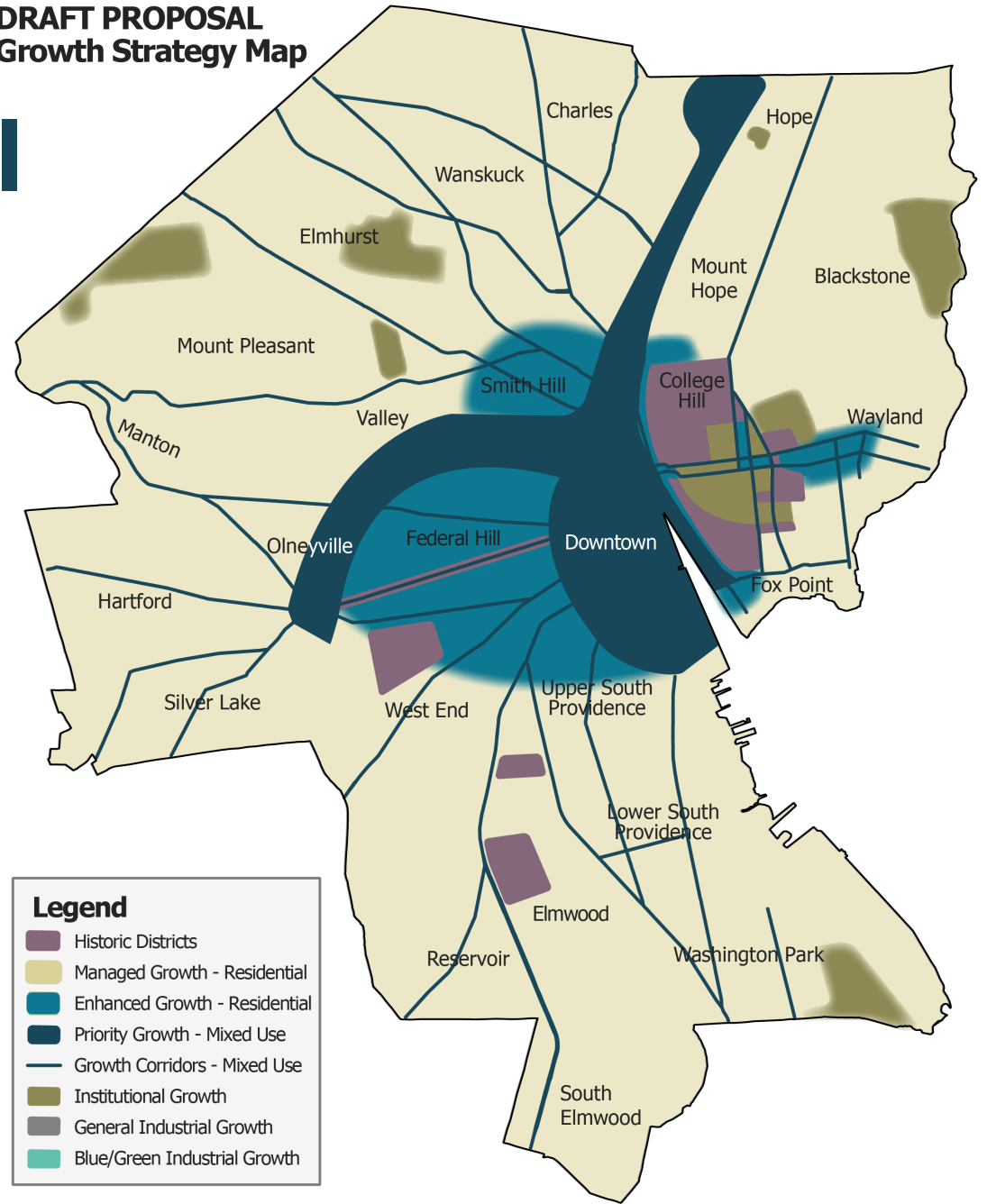
Managed Growth

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



Institutional

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



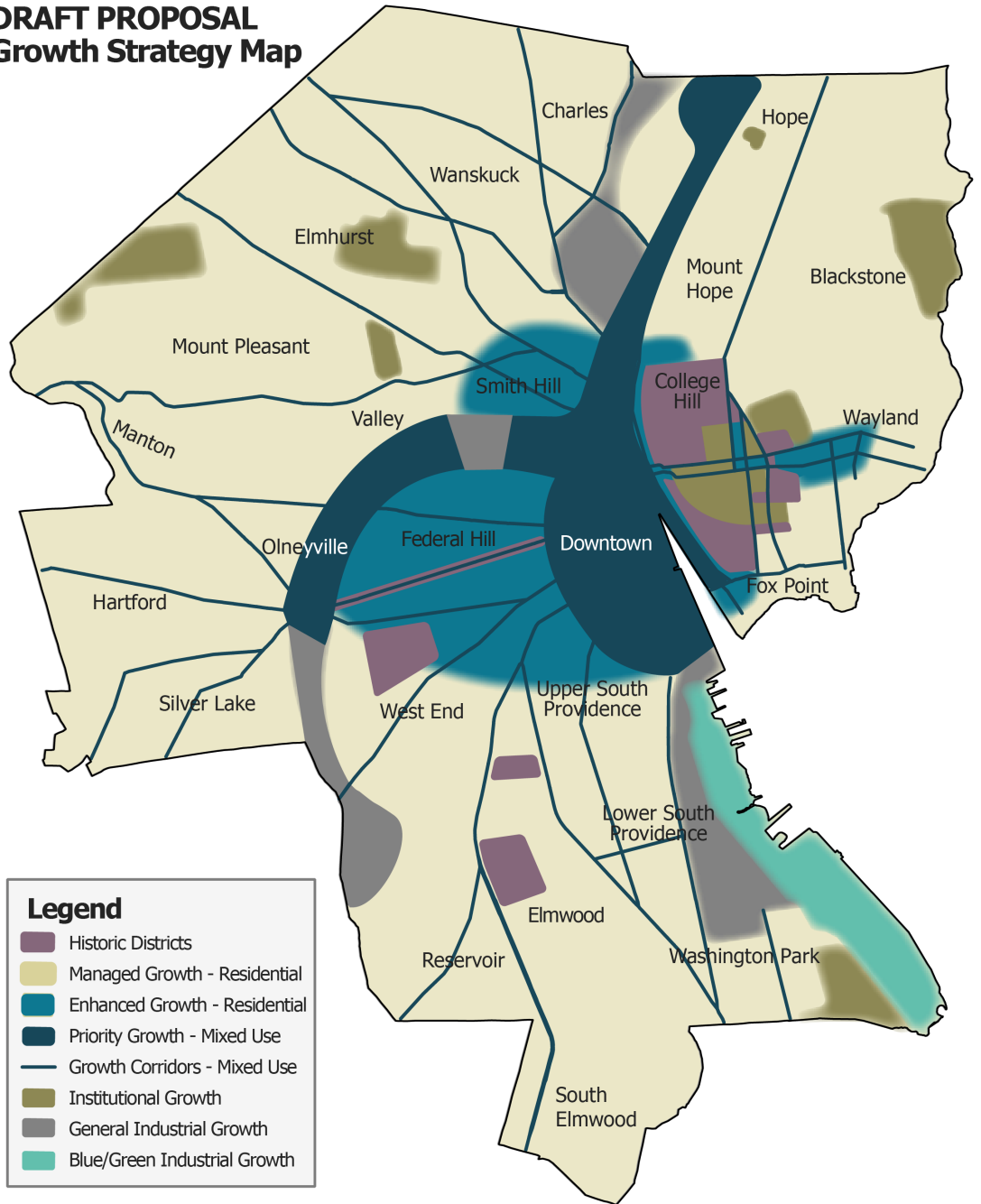
Legend

- Historic Districts
- Managed Growth - Residential
- Enhanced Growth - Residential
- Priority Growth - Mixed Use
- Growth Corridors - Mixed Use
- Institutional Growth
- General Industrial Growth
- Blue/Green Industrial Growth

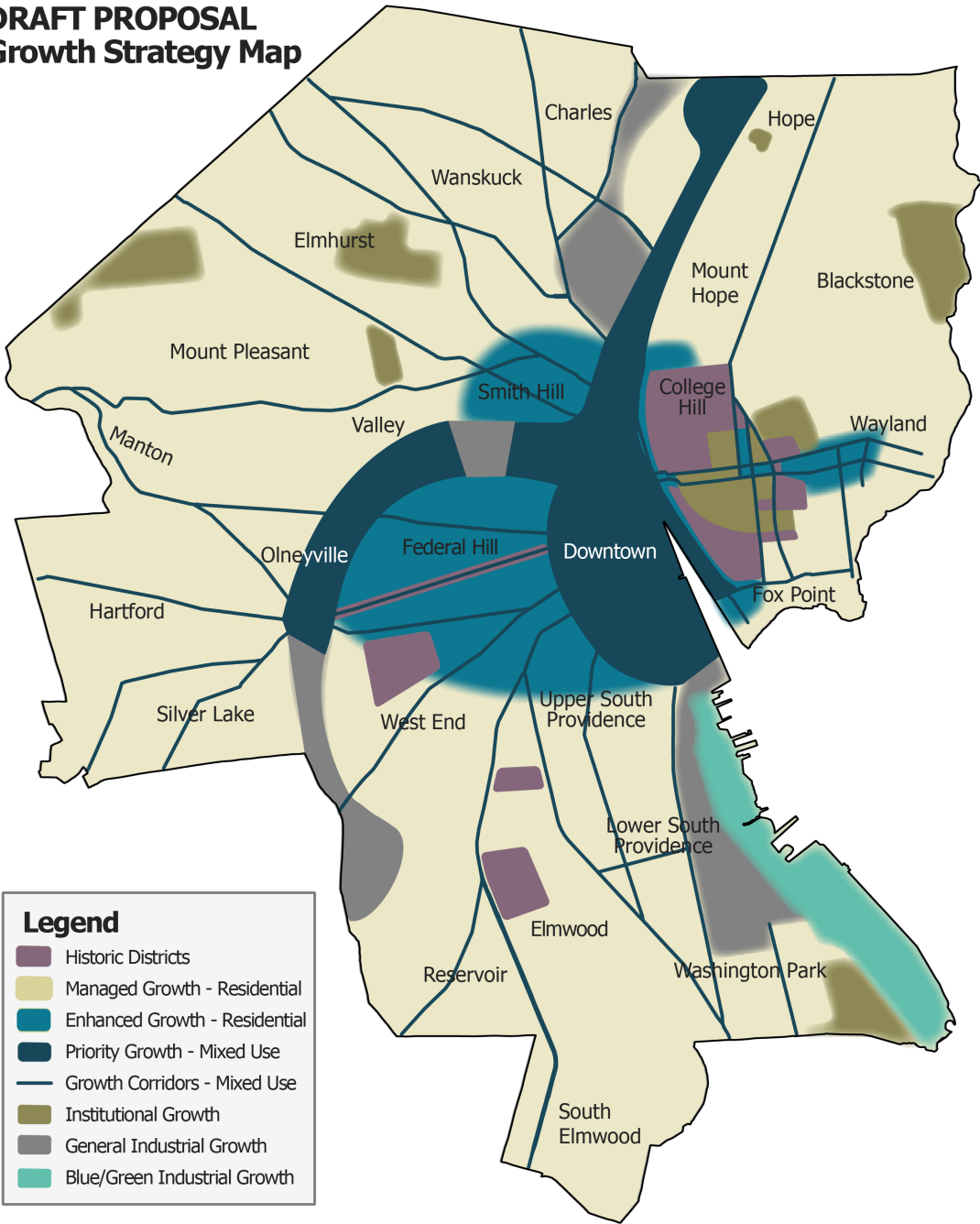


Industrial

DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



DRAFT PROPOSAL Growth Strategy Map



Legend

- Historic Districts
- Managed Growth - Residential
- Enhanced Growth - Residential
- Priority Growth - Mixed Use
- Growth Corridors - Mixed Use
- Institutional Growth
- General Industrial Growth
- Blue/Green Industrial Growth



Next Steps

March 2024:

- Land Use Presentation at City Plan Commission

Spring 2024:

- Draft Plan Publication & CPC Presentation
- *Five Community Feedback Events*
- CPC Public Hearing

Early Summer: City Council Review and Hearings



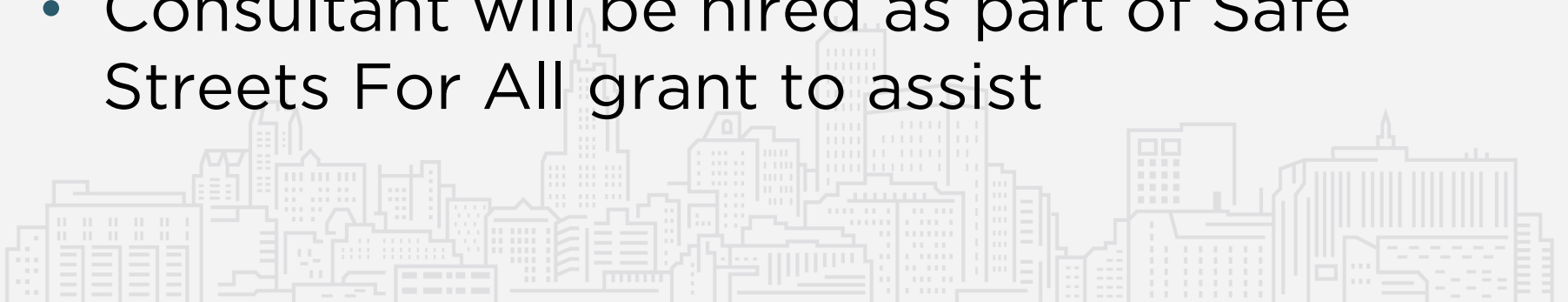
VISION ZERO PROGRAM UPDATE

Item #5b



Vision Zero Policy

- Enacted yesterday morning, 2/21/24
- Establishes 2030 as the goal for attaining zero incapacitating traffic injuries or deaths
- Requires updated Vision Zero Action Plan in 12 months (2/21/25)
- Internal “Task Force” will work with GCSC to draft updated plan
- Consultant will be hired as part of Safe Streets For All grant to assist



ANNOUNCEMENTS, STAFF UPDATES, PUBLIC COMMENT

Item #6



Projects Update

- Comp Plan
- RAISE & SS4A updates, new applications (RAISE N Main, intersections SS4A)
- Micromobility Program
- 2024 repaving & sidewalk work plan
- 2024 SS4A schedule
- 6-10 update



THANK YOU

City of Providence

