

PUBLIC STREET PROJECT

WORKSHOP 01-05 + SURVEY REPORT

Spring 2023

Engagement Meetings

The goal of the Public Street Waterfront Project is to transform the area into a safe and accessible space for the neighborhood residents. The Steering Committee organized a series of in-person meetings, a virtual meeting, and a survey to gather community input, in recognition of the importance of understanding how the site is currently being used and to develop a shared vision for the site's future. Feedback and responses were distilled into this report.

STUDENT VISIONING WORKSHOP - 01

November 18, 2022
360 High School

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP - 02

December 13, 2022
MET School - 325 Public Street

WPNA/PPA WORKSHOP - 03

January 12, 2023
Washington Park Library

REJC/SPNA WORKSHOP - 04

January 31, 2023
Lifespan Health Institute

VIRTUAL MEETING - 05

February 23, 2023
Via Zoom

ONLINE SURVEY

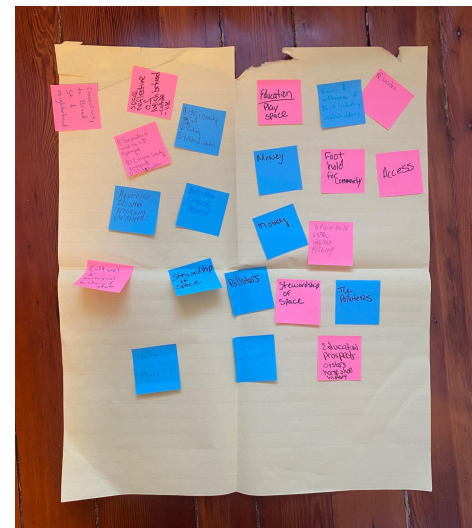
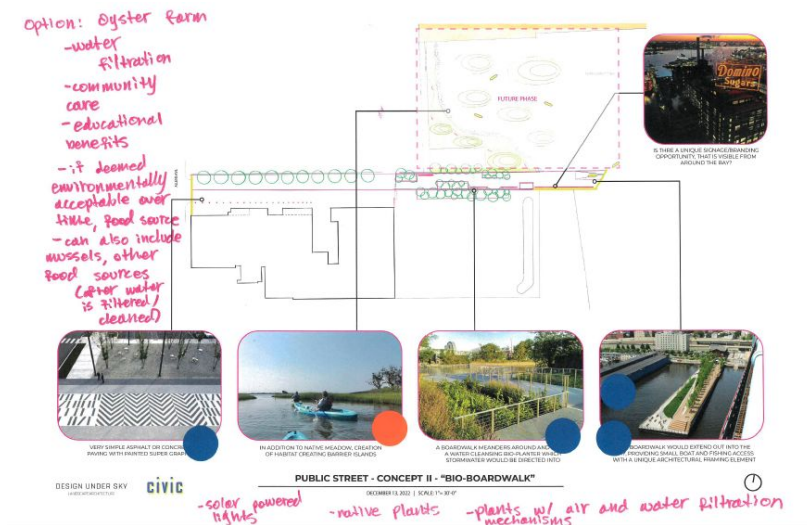


Public Street - MET School Community Workshop

01 Goals for Public Street

02 Priorities for Public Street

03 Challenges + Opportunities for Public Street



Goals for Public Street

The **Goals Activity** recognized 16 goals for Public Street and encouraged participants to select their top three goals and why they are important. The goals that were included in the activity were taken from the results of a previous Public Street Community Engagement conducted in October 2021.



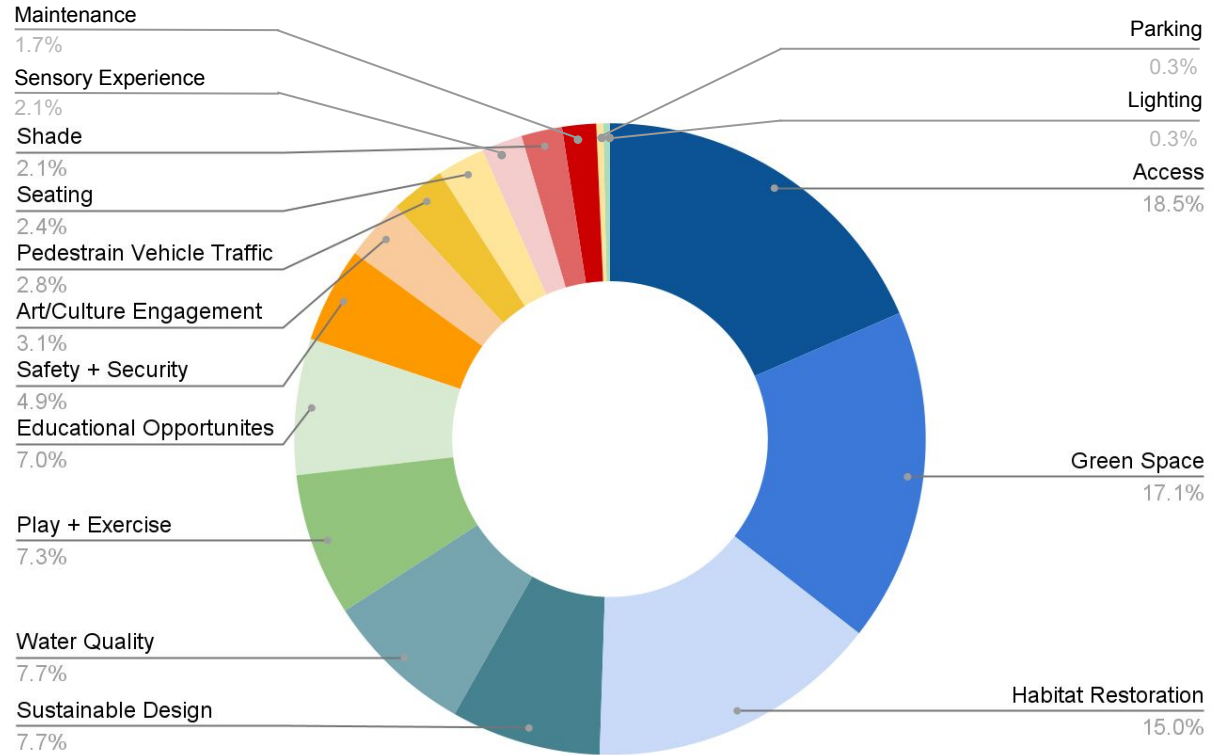
Public Street - SPNA/REJC Community Workshop

Goals for Public Street

The participants expressed that an important goal for Public Street is to provide the residents with a space that will uplift and bring hope to the community. According to participants, this space should give the people a place to relax, rest, and allow for easy access to walk along the water. Participants favored a design that is aesthetically beautiful but functional; it should have a complete message with a clear statement of intention.

The pie charts documents the top goals for Public Street:

1. Access
2. Green Space
3. Habitat Restoration
4. Sustainable Design
5. Water Quality



1. Access - Overview

Included here are some highlights of feedback for each of the top goal categories.

ACCESS

The South Providence waterfront is sealed off from the citizens; the community needs a space that allows everyone to capture the benefits of the views, nature, and connection to the water.

CONNECTION TO THE WATER



FAMILY ORIENTED

Need more spaces that welcome the community access to the river. May expand beyond just the end of the street, both along the shore and into the river.

CONNECTIVITY



SCOOTER/ BIKE STATIONS



DEFINED PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY



CONNECT TO EXISTING BIKE PATHS

This project could connect with other Allens Ave open areas including Collier Point, STB / J&W shoreline and other waterfront projects. Opportunity to bridge together other green spaces (Roger Williams Park)

BRIDGE TOGETHER



POINTS - PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The design should extend elements onto Allens Ave and Public Street, to funnel people into the site.

EXTEND DESIGN



RESTORE I-95 UNDERPASS

2. Green Space - Overview

Included here are some highlights of feedback for each of the top goal categories.

GREEN SPACES

Take into consideration the natural landscapes of the site's history - return of a natural-like green space

LANDSCAPE HISTORY



HEALTH BENEFITS

An outdoor space for the people of South Providence and guest to frequently utilize and explore/interact with nature

CALM SPACE



IMPROVE AIR + SMELL



SHADE



NATIVE FLORA + FAUNA

Introduce big native canopy trees. It is currently difficult to find spaces for large trees and lush native planting and farming

NATIVE PLANTING + FARMING



PERMEABLE SURFACES

Provide a green healthy space within South Providence's Urban contaminated area.

ADDRESS POLLUTION



SALT TOLERANT VEGETATION

3. Habitat Restoration - 4. Education Overview

Included here are some highlights of feedback for each of the top goal categories.

HABITAT RESTORATION

The river needs to be cleaned for the health of the rest of the Bay, to preserve existing wildlife and all that is connected.



Wildlife habitat that will attract nature and allow for observation throughout the site (birds, aquaculture).

HEALTH

ECOLOGICAL CHANGE OVER TIME

ATTRACT



RESTORE THE ENVIRONMENT

Can the current environment we occupy sustain us if our system could not provide? By restoring habitat, there is an increase ability to create food source space.

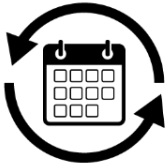
FOOD SOURCE



PRESERVATION + RECLAIM HABITAT

EDUCATION

Create an opportunity for persons of all ages to be familiarized with the natural world in which they occupy.



Provide historical, cultural, environmental, ecological information, and how the waterfront has changed (QR code/ vandalism proof).

ACROSS ALL AGE GROUPS

YEAR ROUND

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION



CENTER FOR YOUTH VOICES

Gathering space containing paced educational opportunities. Possibility of supporting field trips (K-12) and research site (college + universities)

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM



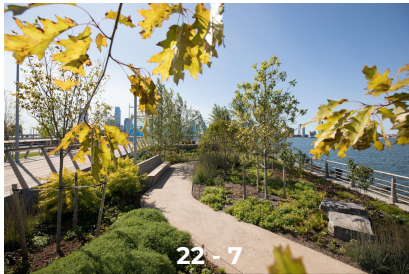
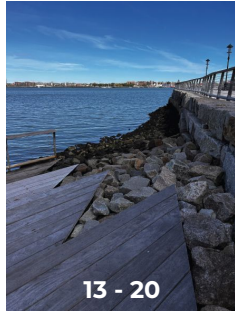
GARDENING COURSES

Top Priorities for Public Street

The images receiving the most votes are included here.



Secondary Priorities for Public Street



Design Elements:

Signage - Clear, provide diverse languages, consistent and bold, large signage at the entrance, staggered signs with small amount of information, sign located at the corner of Allens and Public St to preview the site

Aesthetic - Preference of Old Industrial, cobblestone stamped surfaces, integration of the industrial history and fabric, less of a modern/sleek design

Greenery - Wetland plants, creative gardening, less asphalt based and more soil based, asymmetrical contours of trees and rocks, native meadows and mowed path, habitat creating barrier islands, permeable and planted areas

Materials - Comfortable materials that can be used throughout the year and at different seasons, bamboo screen, pavers, glass bottom deck, stone path

Lighting - Solar power lights, Decorative Arc - lighting with name of the street

Features - Painted super graphic, allow for creativity and color, Avenue concept art, amphitheater, benches and wooden seating, place for kayaks, seating at water's edge (with viewing windows), winding path to the water, bold design features/text, minimal fencing

Challenges for Public Street

Process : Questions / Concerns

- How to market Public Street for leisure?
- Will DEM/CRMC permit barrier islands?
- What is the vision and influence of port/industry stakeholders?
- Will there be anti-displacement efforts to combat gentrification?
- Can space be publicly (*community*) owned?
- How much funding will go towards maintenance? Long-term after initial capital expense?
- Can the City ask DEM whether the asphalt plant's DEM license is being monitored for compliance and enforced?
- Can the City buy Conley Wharf building and make it a community space?
- Concern : Community buy-in

Operational : Questions / Concerns

- Will Public Street be open all day?
- Currently overseeing Collier Point Park for elicit activity, how will this space be monitored?
- How will safety and security precautions be applied? Could lighting or other elements be an alternative to security cameras?
- Can boat tours of the bay be offered from Shooter and/or Public St. to get people out of the water?
- Can the salt piles go away in the summer to allow for community events to happen on the Eastern Salt's property?



Public Street - MET School Engagement



Public Street - WPNA/PPA Engagement

Challenges for Public Street

Pollution

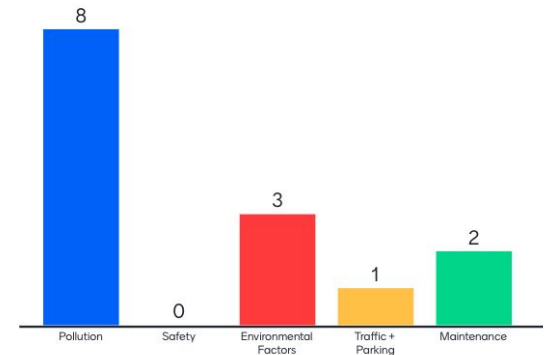
- The community should be advocating for the elimination of the large corporations that are polluting the environment and the waterfront
- Bordering businesses should take responsibility for pollution and cause of contamination
- All of the polluters surrounding the site creating smells and sound disruptions, and they will continue to make the space unappealing
- Site Contamination at RI Energy Site
- Increased exposure to noise, air, and water pollution from industries and vehicles when recreating the site
- Debris and physical disturbances are stored near the site including asphalt and salt pile
- What can be done to eliminate the smell from the asphalt plant?

Maintenance + Environmental

- Invasive plants and animals
- Will there be enough green space?
- Overall maintenance and clean up
- Maintenance of educational programs
- It is hard to be on Public St. on days when the wind is blowing the smells toward one's direction
- Encampment for the non-housed
- Trash such as plastic waste (styrofoam, single use throwaway bottles, bags, etc.) tend to collect in green spaces, constant clean up

Access + Safety

- Conditions on Allens street that deter easy access to the site
- Access! How can we safely bring people to the space (on foot)?
- Approach to the site during all times of the day with concern of pedestrian accessible and walkable spaces
- Needs to be inclusive to all abilities.
- Security for users in the walled-in cul



Challenges for Public Street

Traffic

- ADA Accessibility - not a walkable city, so what does it meant to invite more people to the space (parking and traffic)?
- Pedestrian, bike, and public transit access is extremely limited and unpleasant
- Without light rail or decent public transportation, cars will have trouble parking
- Parking: Is it necessary?
- Should redirect the traffic from abutting businesses away from Public Street

Location / Continuity

- Allens Ave feels very disconnected from the residential part of the neighborhood
- The highway is a barrier, imposing and intimidated. Could it be removed?
- Change the surrounding businesses
- "It has been difficult to envision and see the design when the surroundings are the way that they are."
- How to create a smooth transition from urban + high traffic/truck zone area vs a water + habitat + green space?
- Proactively thinking about how to prevent gentrification as we beautify the port. How can we not let that happen?

Water Concerns

- Elevation from Allens to water
- Storm drain end of the road in low elevation could be hazardous
- Concern for was pollution, hazards in water, and water contact
- Kayaking could be potentially dangerous on an active port, given the surrounding land use and boat traffic
- Questioning the use of boat access. Is it necessary?
- Is the water safe at Public St? If not, how will the people become aware?
- Safe to fish or eat fish from the river?
- Getting community input about how water is used recreationally.
- Not limited by fear of falling into the water and liability?

Opportunities for Public Street

Water Quality

[Improvement]

- Opens options for **local resource** use and reduces need for outsourcing and pollution. **Water = Life.**
- Opportunity for **stormwater filtration** (on a small scale) to remediate flooding
- A place on the water for fishing, habitat restoration, **aquatic farming**, and **aquaculture** (oysters, kelp, algae, mussels and other seafood.
- Using oyster fishery (farming) or other **ecological solutions** to mitigate pollution.

Safety

[Lighting]

- **Safe and effective** lighting that is dark sky compliant, however should be **cautious of “overlighting”**. The high lit path should be **welcoming** to all people.
- Better/more lighting to **safely access** the site at dusk and dawn.

[Sight Lines]

- Provide a high canopy to **keep views open**
- View corridors and **low vegetation** - everything should be **visible + open**

Maintenance

[Cleaning]

- Cleaned up area/stree,**usable clean** space for residents.
- **Regenerative area** that has been polluted, with pier that **blocks** access to **hazards**.
- Plan for park maintenance and **litter control**
- Seasonal **events promoting reduction of waste**, petrochemical/ plastics and other single use throwaway materials that are **polluting waterways & wilderness**.

[Deteriorating Building]

- The possibility of acquiring the neglected and **unmaintained building**, for **future collaboration**.

Opportunities for Public Street

Art

[Collaboration]

- Open space that prioritizes the arts, history, and culture.
Financial opportunities, including selling art.
- Rotating **art exhibits** and possibly collaborate with **RISD** for sculptures or art.
- **Street murals** (hand prints of community members), **performances**, or artistic elements as you arrive.
- **Inspiring** and artistic area

[Indigenous]

- Involves indigenous communities and incorporate **indigenous art**.

Recreation

[Play + Exercise]

- Provide a comfortable space for **light recreation** and outdoor activities such as kayaking and **kid friendly** play materials.
- Large recreational **structure** (rubber) for mobility, exercise and play.
- Yoga classes
- **Family centered** attractions and activities - duck boats, splash pads, ect.
- **Free public access** to events, activities, or festivals
- **Promote wellness** and exercise

[Features]

- **Marketplace** that supports cottage industries and local farmers
- Possible future **swim spot** (10-year goal). In the meantime, splash park or **water features** (fountains) with statue.
- Food trucks, fairs, farmers markets



Public Street - SPNA/REJC Community Workshop

THANK YOU !